



The Presbytery of Western New York *strongly urges*, wherever possible, for churches to adhere to the 100 percent “stay-at-home” order for non-essential staff. Although the latest executive order from Governor Cuomo allows for “houses of worship” to remain open, it recommends that congregational gatherings not be held, and that any staff or volunteer presence in the church abide by strict social distancing measures. **It is the Presbytery’s view that such a presence in churches should only occur for the most urgent tasks.**

We believe it is an act of Christian love for us to keep our distance for the sake of our congregants, our staff, and the public at large. The Presbytery recommends that churches that are live-streaming or recording services do so from home, rather than from churches. Where onsite live-streaming or recording is necessary, it should involve a minimum of staff, all of whom should practice social distancing.

We know that pastors and staffs throughout the Presbytery are trying every safe means to sustain bonds with congregations, and to care for them even at a distance. As many have already done, we encourage sharing best practices for this sort of care, which the Presbytery will continue to circulate through newsletters and emails.

In that connection, we are attaching two important updates of broad interest from the NY State Council of Churches, and the PCUSA, as well as our webpage.

In faith, hope, and love,
The Presbytery Council and staff