



The United Methodist Church

CHICAGO AREA EPISCOPAL OFFICE

77 West Washington Street • Suite 1820 • Chicago, Illinois 60602
Office: (312) 334-0702

Sally Dyck
Bishop

E-mail: bishop.dyck@umcnic.org

Rev. Arlene W. Christopherson

Assistant to the Bishop/Director of Connectional Ministries

E-mail: achristo@umcnic.org

Date: April 28, 2020
To: Clergy and SPRC chairs
From: Bishop Sally Dyck
Re: Three-Day Sabbath

All of us in the State of Illinois have been under an official shelter-in-place order since March 22. Even the weekend before, clergy and laity teams responsible for worship began to figure out how to continue to worship online. Clergy needed new skills and repeatedly I hear from clergy that they now feel like “producers” rather than preachers. All of this has been rather stressful as more “essential” services of the church—Bible studies, committee meetings, study groups, etc.—have gone “online” in one way or another.

The bishop in Iowa recently proclaimed a Three-Day Sabbath for all clergy between now and the end of May. Bravo for her! Just last week, the Cabinet and I were discussing a similar idea; therefore, I am happy to proclaim a:

**Three-Day Sabbath for all clergy in our conference once
between now and the end of May!**

Having said that, remember that all clergy get four weeks vacation per year. (The Three-Day Sabbath would be in addition to this regular vacation time.) Many of us, myself included, have missed planned vacations due to COVID-19. While clergy and families may have little choice but to do a staycation, it's still important that vacation time be used in order to replenish body, mind, spirit and relationships.

In order to facilitate congregations while clergy are taking a Three-Day Sabbath (at least), the Cabinet and I will offer a pre-recorded service that can be used for worship. It will be available by May 8 and will be a service that you can use any subsequent Sunday.

"Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well." John 1:2

SJD:mla