

*Good morning all,*

*Please see this message from Clark Scalera, Advocate for Congregations and Clergy:*

Dear Pastors and Clerks of the Presbytery of the Cascades,

We are so grateful for your leadership and faith during this extended period of challenge and transition. We are cognizant of the added stress and exhaustion which has confronted us over the last five months. As part of my staff report at this summer's Presbytery meeting, I alluded to a number of projects in the works around the Presbytery to encourage self-care, Sabbath, and replenishment for pastors serving in churches and other validated ministries during this time. I am pleased to be able to invite you to participate with us in one of these events - a spiritual renewal retreat:

**From the Center: A Cascades 360 Retreat**  
**Monday, September 28, at 7:30pm—Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup>, at 4pm**  
**Cost: Our gift to you!**

**Leading this retreat will be Rev. Sharon Edwards. She has offered the following description of the event:**

*"It is easy to get dizzy and lose our bearings these days!  
However, gathering from all corners of the Presbytery,  
we will center our minds, bodies and hearts on the One who is the  
source of life and the inspiration for all we do.*

***We are gifted this space for reflection, community, worship,  
creating, renewal and fun."***

We truly believe there is a benefit from intentional time set apart from your day to day life to rest, refocus, and nurture your spiritual life. The event will be held online through the use of video conferencing, but will still offer community as well as individual time and guidance for personal reflection and rejuvenation away from the computer. It will also mirror the Jewish Sabbath, beginning in the evening of Monday, Sept. 28, and wrapping up at the end of the day on the 29<sup>th</sup>, meaning only one weekday needs to be set aside for this time of self-care and renewal. We are designing this so you may participate easily from your home; however, you may consider finding space at a local retreat center with WiFi.

There is no cost for the retreat, but advanced registration is required. [CLICK HERE](#)

**Pastors:** we hope you will strongly consider joining us for this time of spiritual renewal and rest, or that you will seek out other similar spaces. **Clerks of Session:** we hope that you will initiate a conversation with other elders on your Session in support of your pastor's self-care. Because of the sudden social restrictions and need for restructuring how we worship and meet together, many pastors have ended up cancelling their vacations, educational opportunities, and even sabbaticals. While these decisions have been necessary, we are also seeing the toll such a prolonged period of increased demands and stress can take on people. Now is the moment to proactively care for leaders in your congregation and ensure they are getting needed time away, finding space for Sabbath, being reminded of the ways they are held in love.

As always, please know of our ongoing prayers for you and for your congregations, as well as our care and diligent work on your behalf. If there are additional ways we can be of support or encouragement, please let me know! I write with great gratitude and appreciation for you all and your ministry throughout this region.

Grace and peace,  
Clark

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