



March 19, 2020


STAYING CONNECTED TO YOUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

Dear Hills Church,

While we are not gathering in person in the usual ways right now, we are working in new ways to stay connected as a community of faith. The church building may be closed, but there are other ways of connecting, and we are all learning how to make the most of these alternative avenues.

Relationships within the church community are a valuable means of support, and a defining practice of our faith. As a Congregational church, we know the value of the *congregation*. At a time when physical contact needs to be limited, we can respond by learning how to be more authentically engaged in other ways. This week’s newsletter includes some ideas along those lines that are already in the works. We hope you will take a minute to share your ideas, too.

This Sunday’s Scripture Readings
Psalm 23
John 9:1-7

Peace

Matt Wooster

ATTEND WORSHIP BY VIDEO

Last Sunday, March 15, we experimented with our first video recording of a worship service. If you missed it last Sunday, it is still available to view on the church Facebook page. In the future, we will work to improve our technique and to broaden access for a virtual worshipping community. The church’s Facebook page is “public” and a method of connection that is readily accessible. You do not need to be a Facebook user and have a Facebook account. All you need to do is paste the following URL into the “Search” bar of your computer or internet browser – and Click!

<https://www.facebook.com/wellesleyhillschurch/>

Also, the Order of Worship for this Sunday’s Worship Service is accessible through the church website – hillschurch.org. Clicking on it will allow you to download this document – and print it out – making it easier for you to follow along as you watch the service – and allow you to anticipate what will be coming..

NOON PRAYERS FROM THE HILLS

You can use this same URL to tune into the church Facebook page at noon on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays for a brief time (5-15 minutes) of reflection and prayer with one of the ministers. These prayers will be accessible for viewing later as well.

Tuesdays: Anne Marie Holloway
Wednesdays: Matt Wooster
Thursdays: Judy Swahnberg

CONTACT YOUR MINISTERS

Although we are not regularly in our offices at the church these days, you can still reach your ministers by phone and email. Please use the contact information below to be in touch with any of your ministers and know that they will be there for you if you want to:

- Share a prayer request,
- Have a conversation for pastoral care, or
- Simply share updates and receive a prayerful blessing by phone.
- Just hear a comforting and familiar voice.

Rev. Anne Marie Holloway: annemarie@hillschurch.org - Rev. Judy Swahnberg: judy@hillschurch.org

Rev. Matt Wooster: mattw@hillschurch.org

VIRTUAL MEETINGS FOR SMALL GROUPS

Confirmation Class, church support boards, WHCC ministry teams, and other small group meetings will be held “virtually” – using Zoom, teleconferences, and other online platforms - until further notice. Information for joining these virtual meeting will be shared directly with meeting participants.

CANCELLATIONS AND POSTPONEMENTS

- This year’s Easter Egg Hunt – and this year’s Rummage Sale – have been cancelled.
- The following programs have been postponed until a future date:
 - Special Music Sunday: Sunrise Mass
 - Clergy-led Book Group discussion of *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*.
 - Afternoon Tea at the Hills Church

AND HERE IS A VERY HELPFUL GUIDE TO MEDITATING – IN YOUR LIVING ROOM FROM MARY HILL CANAVAN AND JUDY SWAHNBERG

1. Set aside thirty minutes or so – and settle into your time of Meditation:

Settle into a comfortable chair, close your eyes, and take three long, slow breaths focusing on “breath in....breath out.”

Allow yourself to grow still.

Let go of any distracting thoughts.

Become aware of God’s unconditional love for you.

2. Open in prayer:

Gracious God, we are grateful for this time “together” even as we are apart this morning. In the midst of the uncertainty of these days, help us to pause and let go for these next few moments; to lay our burdens down and give our souls rest, so that we may then live out this day renewed with hope and faith, reminded that you are ever with us on this journey. Amen.

3. Choose either a sacred reading or a simple centering prayer to meditate on:

A Sacred Reading: Read aloud – and slowly - Psalm 121 three times. Pause between each reading.

A Centering Prayer: Read the following verse one time slowly:

“Be still and know that I am God.”

“Be still and know that I am.”

“Be still and know.”

“Be still.”

“Be.”

4. **Meditate for 15 minutes, resting in stillness:** If thoughts begin to enter in, gently re-center yourself.

5. **Close by praying the Lord’s Prayer and then give yourself a few minutes to reflect.**