



April 9, 2020

STAYING CONNECTED TO YOUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

PREPARING FOR HOLY WEEK

Dear Hills Church,

On the first Easter, there were no festive gatherings of faithful people, wearing smiles and giving hugs. There were no rehearsed choirs with pipe organ, horns, and timpani to proclaim the good news. Most things in the world seemed to be just the same as they had been the day before. The disciples were hiding behind a locked door, and did not venture out into the streets of Jerusalem.

I wish that this Holy Week was very much like it was last year and the years before. I wish that we were meeting this evening in the hushed sanctuary to share communion, and tomorrow at noon to remember the crucifixion. On Easter morning, I wish that we could greet each other with smiles and hugs, and proclaim that Christ is Risen in all of the familiar and joyful ways.

Instead, we will be sharing worship online, each of us watching and participating in our own homes. This is our new practice of the past few weeks. I'm glad to see that we are getting better at it. I have seen the photographs of our services on the screens of your own homes, with bread for communion on the coffee table.

This year, maybe we will understand that first Easter in new ways.
Maybe we will rediscover the value of things we have taken for granted.
Maybe God will draw us into a deeper relationship with Jesus, the one who finds the lost, and welcomes the outcast, and conquers death.

Peace

Matt Wooster

ATTEND WORSHIP BY VIDEO

We are sharing worship services by video. Join us for worship from your own homes by visiting the church website or the church facebook page using one of the links below. Sunday services will be available here, as well as special services during Holy Week.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH ON THE CHURCH WEBSITE](#)

[CLICK HERE TO GO TO THE CHURCH'S FACEBOOK PAGE](#)

COMMUNION AT HOME

During tonight's Maundy Thursday Worship Service - and this Sunday on Easter morning, we will share the sacrament of communion in our online worship service, inviting the entire church community to prepare in their own homes.

Before viewing these worship services, please prepare some bread. It may be a slice or a small loaf. In some parts of the world, tortilla, rice cake, and cassava are used to share communion.

For us, the element is defined not as a wheat product but as the most common food of the people to break and share. Also prepare a cup or cups of juice (perhaps grape or cranberry) or wine, with or without alcohol.

Set these elements in the living room or kitchen where you experience worship electronically with our faith community. Perhaps you will want to put them on a lovely cloth or fabric that reminds you of a special time, or a person deeply connected with you in the communion of saints.

Beside the bread and cup, you might place a lighted candle, a flower, a plant, or the photograph of someone you wish to bring into the circle of faith. Thank you for your preparation.

NOON PRAYERS FROM THE HILLS

You can also 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.

Rev. Anne Marie Holloway: annemarie@hillschurch.org

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.

**VIRTUAL MEDITATION OR "MORNING MEDITATING ON ZOOM"
TUESDAY MORNINGS FROM 9:30 - 10:30**

For the past several weeks, we have been gathering together for "Tuesday Morning Meditation via Zoom."

Zoom is a service that enables groups to connect either by video using your computer or by audio using your phone. And it is VERY easy to use. And so, we will meet once again next Tuesday morning on Zoom - and we hope you can join us from wherever you are.

Whether you are new to meditation or practice it daily, help us sustain a sense of community together in the midst of being apart.

To participate, just e-mail Mary Hill Canaan (see below) and she will send you an official Zoom "invite" and tell you how to CLICK and Zoom in! And if you have been meditating via Zoom for a while now, there is no need to e-mail Mary - as she will automatically send you a Zoom invite weekly!

Then at 9:30 next Tuesday morning, find a comfortable place to sit with your computer or phone and get ready to meditate with your friends - virtually!

Peace to you all,
Mary and Judy

P.S. Questions? Just email Mary Hill Canavan at mhillcanavan@gmail.com or Rev. Judy Swahnberg at judy@hillschurch.org

THE WELLESLEY FOOD PANTRY COULD USE YOUR HELP



The Food Pantry is keeping its website updated with items in short supply, but they could definitely use your help now with jars of unsweetened applesauce, Kleenex, toilet paper, and diapers in sizes 5 and 6.

They have no diapers in these sizes at the moment - and six to eight families needing them. The Pantry could also use shelf-stable almond and soy milks, and jars of jelly/jam.

For more information about how you could help the Food Pantry at this time, you can always go to their website, which they update weekly. Here is the URL - (<http://www.wellesleyfoodpantry.org>).

Please bring your Food Pantry donations to the church on Monday mornings, between 9:00 and 10:30, and leave them in the Food Pantry bin, just outside the west entrance door – or drop them in the collection bins at Roche Bros or Whole Foods.

Anything you can do to help will be greatly appreciated.

IF YOU HAVE EXTRA KITCHEN UTENSILS, THE NEW LIFE FURNITURE BANK COULD USE THEM

While you are practicing social distancing, this might be a great time to clean out your kitchen drawers and take steps to ensure that any extra kitchen utensils you have make their way to a good home.

As soon as the church reopens, the Christian Service Support Board will be collecting kitchen utensils for the New Life Furniture Bank. www.nelifeb.org – and collection bins will appear at each church entrance.

The New Life Furniture Bank provides furniture and household goods to individuals and families who are transitioning from a homeless environment, victims of fire, military veterans and refugees – and here are some things these individuals and families could use:

Potholders	Serving Spoons
Kitchen Towels	Flatware
Can Openers	Measuring Cups & Spoons
Cutting Boards	Metal Flippers
Vegetable Peelers	Rubber Spatulas

Questions? Contact Donna McCabe dmccabe4@comcast.net

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. Do not stop to analyze the meaning. Do not rush through it. Pause between each reading.

-or-

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 return to a sacred word or phrase to center yourself again.

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

YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFTS ARE STILL AT WORK

At Christmas time, if all families have gifts, any remaining money that was donated as part of the Christmas Gift giving gets put into a reserve fund for emergencies. In this difficult time, one critical need

for many families has been diapers. Many stores are out of diapers, they are very expensive, and some families have lost their means of economic support.

Sue has been able to successfully order these on-line for the families! This not only gets them a much needed item, but frees up additional funds that can be used for food or other critical needs.

So we continue to celebrate the generosity of those of you at the Hills Church!

Thank you.
Bill and Sue Spencer

<p>This Sunday's Scripture Readings Luke 24:1-12</p>
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6, 7, 8 CHURCH SCHOOL

There will be no Church School classes on Easter Sunday.

Church School will resume - via ZOOM on Sunday morning, April 19, at 11:15.

An invitation outlining the details will be sent in a separate email.

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

There will be no Middle School Youth Group meeting this Sunday - but ZOOM-based 6,7,8 youth group gatherings will resume on Sunday, April 19. A special invite with instructions for this "virtual" gathering on the 19th, will be sent out early week.

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH CHECK-INS

Our Confirmands, Confirmation Alumni and High School youth are invited to "check in" following next Wednesday evening's Confirmation Class from 7:30- 8:00 pm.

A devotion/story/prayer and open check in time will be offered to all our high school teens.

PRAYERFUL CHECK-INS -

THURSDAY EVENINGS AT 7:30

FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Sally Tomasetti, Children's Ministry Coordinator, and Rev. Anne Marie Holloway, Associate Minister for Youth and Families, will be hosting weekly check in times for parents of children and youth via ZOOM on Thursday evenings from 7:30-7:45.

Their objective is to provide a sacred and quiet space for Hills Church parents to connect, to pray and to check-in with one another.

Each week a special devotional and prayer will be shared. It is our prayer that our parents will find these weekly check-ins supportive and life giving.

Due to tonight's Maundy Thursday Worship Service, the next Zoom meeting of this group will be Thursday, April 16.

CONFIRMATION

Rev. Anne Marie and Mimi D'Angelo will continue to hold class each Wednesday from 6:45-7:30. The next few weeks will feature a movie clip that focuses on certain aspects of our Faith. We will send our movie clip in advance on Tuesdays via email to be discussed on Wednesday evenings!

Confirmation updates and reminders are sent out via email twice weekly on Sunday and Tuesday mornings! So be on the lookout for further details and a ZOOM meeting invite!

A note about Confirmation Sunday....

With our public schools being closed through May and our Church following this same schedule as our community continues to try to "flatten the curve" of COVID-19, we will be postponing our Confirmation Dinner (Wednesday April 29th) and Sunday Worship Celebration that was scheduled for May 3.

A letter has gone out via email from Rev. Anne Marie describing this in more detail. We look forward to celebrating the year of dedicated and faithful work of our confirmands once we are able to return to our Church building!

FAMILY PROMISE NEWS



Our next hosting was scheduled for April 26 through May 3. The families we were supposed to host then are safe and healthy - and are staying in a (discounted rate) hotel. They are receiving gift cards to purchase groceries - and are not accepting any food donations at this time.

Because we knew this could be a long haul, we developed a plan to raise the money needed to cover the cost of the hotel our guests are staying at. This was about \$600.

We are happy to report that our plan worked - and we have more than met the goal we established. Special thanks to Johanna Winkelman who made many masks in exchange for donations to Family Promise, Susan Westmoreland (our TBE partner) who donated to have masks made for our Family Promise guests and employees, and David and Ann Ingrams who also helped fund our Hosting Week. Polly Fraga donated her theater tickets but we are guessing it is too hard to plan ahead right now so we will save them for the future. Thank you, everyone, for your generosity.

HILLS CHURCH CALENDAR

THURSDAY, April 9 - Maundy Thursday

- 10:00 a.m. Clergy Worship Planning - Virtual
- 10:30 a.m. Church Staff Meeting - Virtual
- 12:00 p.m. Noon Prayers - Rev. Swahnberg*** - [On FB](#)
- 8:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Worship Service*** - [On FB](#)

FRIDAY, April 10 - Good Friday

- 12:00 p.m. Good Friday Worship Service*** - [On FB](#)
- 7:30 p.m. AA Meeting

SATURDAY, April 11

SUNDAY, April 12 - Easter Sunday

- 10:00 a.m. Worship Service*** - [On FB](#)
- 7:30 p.m. AA Meeting

MONDAY, April 13

TUESDAY, April 14

- 12:00 p.m. Noon Prayers - Rev. Holloway*** - [On FB](#)
- 1:00 p.m. Clergy Pastoral Care Meeting - Virtual

WEDNESDAY, April 15

- 12:00 p.m. Noon Prayers - Rev. Wooster*** - [On FB](#)
- 6:45 p.m. Confirmation Class - Virtual

THURSDAY, April 16

- 10:00 a.m. Clergy Worship Planning - Virtual
- 10:30 a.m. Church Staff Meeting - Virtual
- 12:00 p.m. Noon Prayers - Rev. Swahnberg*** - [On FB](#)
- 7:30 p.m. Prayerful Check-Ins