

Events at the Hills

April 23, 2020

STAYING CONNECTED TO YOUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

EASTER WAS DIFFERENT THIS YEAR –
BUT STILL BOTH HOPEFUL AND INSPIRING



Rev. Matt Wooster – preaching on Easter Sunday in an empty physical Sanctuary –
but in a virtual Sanctuary filled with joyful Easter worshipers.



Rev. Judy Swahnberg – reaching out to Easter Sunday worshipers
from her back yard.



Rev. Anne Marie Holloway – touching the lives of Hills Church families from her home on Easter Sunday



John Finney – Hills Church Director of Music – bringing the joy of Easter music to all Easter Sunday worshipers.

ATTEND WORSHIP BY VIDEO

Worship services have moved online during the building closure, with worship leaders recording their parts from different locations.

Beginning last Sunday, we are inviting members of the church to submit a short video for use during the Passing of the Peace.

Going forward, worship services will be available on the website early Sunday mornings. The services will also premiere on Facebook beginning at 10:00 every Sunday morning, so that people can worship together at the usual time.

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

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

Also, visiting the church website will allow you to access the Order of Worship for each Sunday morning's 10:00 a.m. Worship Service.

MATT WOOSTER'S SABBATICAL HAS BEEN POSTPONED

Matt Wooster has decided to postpone his sabbatical which was announced last fall - until 2021. The original plan called for a three month sabbatical, beginning on May 1 of this year.

A grant from the Lilly Endowment for Clergy Renewal was received earlier this year – and will still provide funding for Matt's new plans to travel with Betsy and their children to Italy, Scotland, and Ireland, to visit locations with deep histories of Christian spirituality.

FRAUDULENT EMAIL ALERT

Please be aware of fraudulent schemes to impersonate ministers by email. This past week, a series of email messages was sent from a false email address, claiming to be from Rev. Matt Wooster – and using his name and the name and address of our church. Unfortunately, many congregations are experiencing this kind of scam. Typically, the false email will ask for help, in the form of sending gift card information by email.

1. Always be sure that email messages from the ministers or other church staff are from a legitimate email address, ending with @hillschurch.org.
2. We will never ask you to share financial information or personal details by email. Remember that email is an unsecure communication.

For more information, read this alert from the Federal Trade Commission.

<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2019/07/worshippers-targeted-gift-card-scam>

NOON PRAYERS FROM THE HILLS

Did you know you can 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 are 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

During this unusual period in which we are all living, 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 raisins, chicken broth, canned salmon, Kleenex, toilet paper, and diapers in sizes 5 and 6. And

of course, the Pantry can always 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

6, 7, 8 CHURCH SCHOOL

Church School will be held via ZOOM this Sunday morning, April 26, at 11:15.

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

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

A ZOOM-based 6,7,8 youth group gatherings will be held this Sunday afternoon, April 26, at 4:30.

A special invite with instructions for this Sunday's "virtual" gathering, was sent out earlier week.

If you did not get yours, please contact Anne Marie Holloway – annemarie@hillschurch.org.

YOUTH SERVICE PROJECT TO COLORADO POSTPONED

Due to COVID-19, the Youth Service Project to Alamosa Colorado is being postponed until next year. More information to follow in separate e-mails to families.

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.

This Sunday's Scripture Readings Luke 24: 13-35
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**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, are 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.

The next Zoom meeting of this group is tonight, Thursday, April 23.

A PRAYER FROM THE PRAYERFUL PARENTS OF THE HILLS CHURCH

Composed during their April 2, 2020 Gathering

Holy and loving God,

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This day, we find ourselves overwhelmed with gratitude as we peer at the screens of our laptops, ipads and phones and see the familiar faces of those we care about. We celebrate how each ZOOM gathering feels like Christmas morning, and we cannot help but smile as each new face appears in its designated box on our screens.

We gather - and we pray. We share, we cry, we laugh. This new way of being together is strangely comforting.

Our time together brings us back to something resembling "normal" - and we welcome a moment to turn away from the endless stream of COVID-19 news and updates, economic troubles and political battles to focus on kids and spouses, health and safety, food supplies, good wine, funny moments and toilet paper counts...

Help us, O God, as we continue to keep one eye on our family's well being and another on a world so in need. We are finding it challenging to remain calm while we hunker down and patiently wait, and wait, and wait.

Be patient with us, as we find ourselves unable to focus on what's most important. We are each experiencing the strangeness and loneliness of dislocation from being in isolation-- only to find ourselves suddenly enjoying intense moments of connection and contentment.

*We know what is being asked of us is simple -- yet, so complicated and so difficult.
We know others are struggling in different ways - and it pains us.*

It is in this muddled mess of things that we pray to you, O God.

We pray that you show us how to be gentle with ourselves and others as we navigate through these days ahead.

*Help us to reach out to you and to others when we feel overwhelmed.
Help us to hold close those moments where laughter bubbles forth, where signs of life and light bring us peace and give us strength.
Help us when our hearts break, when we are overwhelmed with worry, and when we feel afraid or tired -- or both.
Help us to see and feel your presence in all our moments.*

*And above all, Lord, we pray for a world so in need of your healing.
We pray that you will keep those we love safe and healthy.
Take good care of those who are struggling, who are separated from those they love.
We pray for those losing loved ones, those who are ill, those who are caring for the sick, and the many who feel alone -- and who desperately need to know they are not alone.*

*We pray all this in the name of love.
We pray all this in the name of your son Jesus the Christ, Amen.*

CONFIRMATION

Rev. Anne Marie and Mimi D'Angelo will continue to hold class each Wednesday from 6:45-7:30.

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 for the balance of the school year, 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 (initially scheduled for Wednesday, April 29) 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!

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.**

HILLS CHURCH CALENDAR

THURSDAY, April 23

- 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](#)

FRIDAY, April 24

- 7:30 p.m. AA Meeting

SATURDAY, April 25

SUNDAY, April 26

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

MONDAY, April 27

- 7:30 p.m. Stewards Support Board

TUESDAY, April 28

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

WEDNESDAY, April 29

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

THURSDAY, April 30

- 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