



July 23, 2020

STAYING CONNECTED TO YOUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

CHURCH STAFF SABBATH TIME – JULY 26 – AUGUST 9

The past four and a half months, since we began to practice physical distancing and moved the church’s ministry to virtual connections, have been nothing like normal. The losses and anxiety of the pandemic have rippled through all aspects of our lives, altering our Lent and Easter seasons and creating a strange summer experience.

In New England, summer is typically a time for adventure, growth, and restoration. In the seasonal life of the church, summer is normally a quieter time, when we take a break from weekly newsletters, monthly board meetings, and frequent staff meetings, allowing time for rest and the kind of reflective planning and preparation needed for the new program year in the fall. This year, the unprecedented challenges we are living through have called for the continuation and adaptations of our weekly routines. I am grateful for the work of our congregational leaders and church staff members who have innovated in ways to sustain congregational connection and ministry in new ways. I also know that we need some space to step back. We need time that has the quality of Sabbath.

Over the next two weeks, **July 26 through August 9**, I have called for the church staff to take a break from weekly routines. We will still have (virtual) Sunday worship services and (virtual) Community Hour, and you will always be able to reach a minister for pastoral care. But we will observe a two-week break from the regular newsletter and email updates, from the noontime prayers during the week, and from our usual staff meetings. Some staff members will be on complete vacation leave, and others will be engaged in focused projects, so please keep this in mind as you are reaching out to us in the next two weeks.

The next newsletter from the church will be emailed on August 13 (submissions should be received by August 7). Until then, Sunday worship will continue to be the heartbeat of our congregation, and I trust that God holds us in communion.

Sabbath Blessings,

Rev. Matt Wooster

NEW RACIAL JUSTICE WORKING GROUP TO BE FORMED

In 1848, the founding members of this congregation shared a commitment to the abolition of slavery in the United States, and a pledge to the abolitionist cause was a requirement of membership in the church.

In continuation of our heritage, I am grateful that Church Council has called for the formation of a new Racial Justice Working Group within the church. When formed, this group will initiate opportunities for discussion and education, and will recommend practical steps for the church to continue our ministry of racial justice. Now begins a time of discernment, to receive questions and perspectives from members of

the church, and to seek counsel from experienced practitioners. If you have thoughts to share, or questions to raise, please be in touch with me, or with pastors Anne Marie Holloway and Judy Swahnberg, or you may contact the Office of the Moderator (officeofthemoderator@hillschurch.org). In the meantime, I invite you to pray with me for the ministry of our church, with thanks for what God has done, and hope for what God has yet to do in our midst.



Rev. Matt Wooster

ECUMENICAL WORSHIP POSTPONED, ONLINE WORSHIP TO CONTINUE

A wonderful tradition among Protestant churches in Wellesley has been the chance to worship together on Sundays in August. In consultation with the clergy of St. Andrews Episcopal Church and Wellesley Village Church, we have decided to suspend this tradition this year.

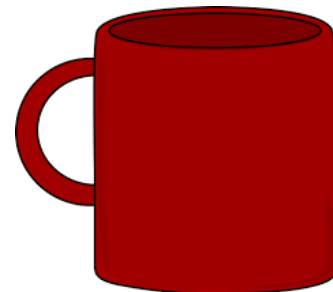
Each of our churches is conducting virtual worship during the summer, and we will continue to worship online every Sunday in August. One of the aspects of ecumenical worship services is the chance to be present together in the pews of each church on alternating Sundays. We look forward to resuming this tradition in future summers, when our church buildings are open for worship.

Here at the Hills Church, worship services will continue to be online every Sunday. The Reopening Task Force is developing a plan for in-person worship to resume in phases, as conditions allow, but no earlier than September.

GRAB A CUP OF COFFEE AND COME TO VIRTUAL COMMUNITY HOUR! EVERY SUNDAY MORNING AT 9:30!

Every Sunday morning, you are invited to visit with our clergy and other members and friends in a “Virtual Community Hour” from 9:30 Sunday morning until the virtual worship services begin to stream at 10:00.

Following a brief welcome, separate “breakout rooms” will be randomly generated to allow for conversations in small groups. The only agenda is to connect with familiar faces and meet new friends, so feel free to bring your coffee and stop in for a quick hello or stay for the full half hour. The dress code is casual. (PJs encouraged!)



Virtual Community Hour will be hosted as a Zoom conference. If you’re not already a Zoom veteran – don’t worry. Zoom is very easy to use. To participate in this Sunday’s Virtual Community Hour by computer, just click on the link you will see in the community hour notice that will be emailed to you at 6:45 on Sunday morning.

THE NEXT 2020 CONFIRMATION CLASS ZOOM GATHERING IS AUGUST

Our Confirmation Crew will have the chance to touch base once again on August 12.

SUMMER PSALMS AND MORNING MEDITATION

Please mark your calendars for Tuesday Morning Meditation throughout this summer as we will be continuing to gather via Zoom every Tuesday morning - from 9:30 - 10:30. Each week, we will meditate using sacred readings from the Book of Psalms.

Zoom is a service that enables groups to connect either by video using your computer or by audio using your phone. To participate, just e-mail Mary Hill Canavan (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.)

Whether you are new to meditation or practice it daily...please join us and be restored during this time together - from wherever your summer takes you.

Peace to you all,
Mary and Judy

Questions? Email Mary Hill Canavan at mhillcanavan@gmail.com or Rev. Judy Swahnberg at judy@hillschurch.org

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS – SUMMER 2020 – THE GOOD NEWS PROJECT!



Is your middle schooler or high schooler doing some good work that will serve to help others this summer? Are they looking for ways to spread the good news of hope and love with those in need?

Let Rev. Anne Marie Holloway know! She would love to share the good news of your young person's good works with our church community by interviewing our teens and their families on ZOOM and featuring these projects of good news, virtually!

Need some ideas? Anne Marie has those, too! There are organizations the Hills Church supports that could use face masks, weekly food donations, diaper and baby supplies, toiletry packs, homemade cookies and more! (All projects can be worked on safely from home!)

Be sure to reach out to Rev. Anne Marie at annemarie@hillschurch.org with your "Good News Project" ideas or questions!

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

ATTEND WORSHIP BY VIDEO

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

Worship services will be available on the website (hillschurch.org) 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.

JOIN REV. ANNE MARIE HOLLOWAY FOR A CUP OF MORNING PRAYER – MONDAYS AT 7:00

Join Rev. Anne Marie Holloway for a cup of morning prayer Monday mornings at 7:00 – on Facebook LIVE.

Begin each week in the quiet presence of God in the early morning hours and focus on prayer.

Each session will be held in the sanctuary of nature in varied outdoor locations (weather permitting). Hills Church friends and families are invited to participate via FB LIVE on a handheld device while finding an outdoor space to practice an ancient form of prayer known as breath prayer and other contemplative prayer practices.



If you cannot make it to the LIVE session, you are invited to visit the Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/257736442343848/> or request to have the recordings sent to you via email.

Please share your prayer requests in advance via email to Rev. Anne Marie (annemarie@hillschurch.org) and those personal prayers of celebration and concern will be lifted up each Monday morning and held in gentle care by our virtual small private Facebook Live group.

SUMMER BIBLE STORY VIDEOS :)

Each month this summer, Mrs. T. and the church staff will be sending out a summer fun Bible story and suggested craft video. Look for them in your inbox on Sunday mornings August 2, and September 6. (For all ages, like the one below :)

FAITH, RACE, AND CULTURE: FAMILY SUMMER PRACTICE

God made us to be diverse, from our skin color to the expressions of our cultures and families. This three session guided faith practice will help families continue teaching their children about empathy, culture, race, and prejudice. "Deep Blue Life: Faith and Culture—Anti-Racism" teaches about "Prejudice and Stereotypes," "Curiosity and Empathy," and "Colors and Cultures."

Designed to use at your own pace over the summer weeks. Basic household supplies needed such as markers, tape, glue, pencils, paper, poster board, yarn, paint and paper plates. All can be adapted.

These wonderful materials are FREE – and they are a great starting point for much needed conversations.! Just read them – and adapt them for your family's needs.

Just click the following link to download the study guide:

<https://www.cokesburykids.com/files/uploads/DeepBlueLifeAntiRacism-1.pdf>

FLAT JESUS FOR EVERYONE!

“Flat Jesus” is based on a children’s book called *Flat Stanley*, by Jeff Brown. In the book, a boy named Stanley is accidentally “flattened” – allowing him to be mailed to lots of different places where he has all kinds of exciting adventures.

Because Church School does not meet during the summer, Sally Tomasetti believes now to be the perfect summer for “Flat Jesus” to help our church family stay connected. Flat Jesus also serves as an important reminder that Jesus is always with us and to remember his greatest commandment, which is to love God with all of your heart, your mind and your strength – and to love your neighbor.

Here’s how it works: Download a picture of Flat Jesus. Color it and cut it out. If you have a popsicle stick, you can tape your picture of Jesus to that to make it like a puppet. Then take him on your adventures this summer wherever they may take you: your backyard, a nearby sports field, family outings and vacations, day trips to the beach And take pictures of Flat Jesus everywhere you go!

Then ask your mom or dad to email your pictures to Sally (sallyt@hillschurch.org), so that they can be shared on the church’s Facebook page with our whole church community.

Just click on this link to download Flat Jesus.

http://ms.wearesparkhouse.org/downloads/SHC/FlatJesus_Spark.pdf?redirected=true

CONSIDER SILVER LAKE’S “SUMMER CAMP AT HOME” BOX FOR YOUR CHILD

Silver Lake Camp in Connecticut is our very own UCC summer camp. Ordering this box from Silver Lake will give you everything you need to participate in a Silver Lake “Summer Camp at Home” experience.

The box will guide you through four weeks of camp programming! Designed to inspire the entire family, you can pick and choose how to engage with the material.

Follow the prompts and instructions for a self-guided experience, join in a cabin group to share the experience (separate registration required: \$10), add on optional activities from Silver Lake’s website, come to the weekly Friday campfires. [Purchase a box from online store](#)*. Sally Tomasetti’s children went to Silver Lake and loved it – and Sally believes this would be a wonderful introduction to sleepaway camp.

Each box includes: a Silver Lake journal and pen, a Silver Lake water bottle, wood cookie necklace/mandala, a friendship bracelet kit, butcher paper, markers, a pollinator garden/mini greenhouse kit, recipe cards, journal prompts, activity instructions, and more. **Cost: \$30. For various ages.**

Just click here to register.

<https://www.silverlakect.org/silver-lake-at-home>

THE WELLESLEY FOOD PANTRY HAS MOVED TO TEMPORARY QUARTERS DURING THIS SUMMER’S CONSTRUCTION WORK AT OUR CHURCH



**Wellesley
Food Pantry**

Due to this summer’s construction at the hills church, the Wellesley Food Pantry will be operating – on a temporary basis – out of the Unitarian Universalist church (309 Washington Street – across from Green’s Hardware) but will be returning to the Hills Church once this summer’s construction work is complete.

In the meantime, it is important for all of us to continue to support the vital work being done by The Food Pantry. The Pantry's website is updated weekly to reflect items in short supply, but they can always use your help with white and brown rice (preferably 2 pound bags), vegetable oil, dishwashing liquid, paper towels, Kleenex, toilet paper, diapers in sizes 5 and 6, 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. Here is the URL - (<http://www.wellesleyfoodpantry.org>).

It is no longer possible to bring your Food Pantry donations to the church, but please continue to drop them in the collection bins at Roche Bros or Whole Foods. OR, you can drop your donations off on Monday mornings – between 8:30 and 10:30 – on the WEST side of the Unitarian Church.

Anything you can do to help will be greatly appreciated.

HILLS CHURCH CALENDAR

THURSDAY, July 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, July 24

- 7:30 p.m. AA Meeting

SATURDAY, July 25

SUNDAY, July 26

- 9:30 a.m. Virtual Community Hour – VIA ZOOM
- 10:00 a.m. Worship Service*** - [Online](#)
- 7:30 p.m. AA Meeting

This Sunday's Scripture Reading Romans 8:26-39

MONDAY, July 27

- 7:00 a.m. A Cup of Morning Prayer – Rev. Holloway - Virtual

TUESDAY, July 28

- 9:30 a.m. Tuesday Morning Meditation – VIA ZOOM
- 1:00 p.m. Clergy Pastoral Care Meeting – Virtual
- 3:00 p.m. Seniors Tea Party - Virtual

WEDNESDAY, July 29

THURSDAY, July 30

- 10:00 a.m. Clergy Worship Planning - Virtual
- 10:30 a.m. Church Staff Meeting - Virtual