



October 28, 2020

"What do you believe about saints?"

It was a question from a middle school student who had come to interview me for a unit on comparative religion at the local school. This was a few years ago, now, and I can picture him sitting across the table at church. He wanted to know if our church had saints.

It's a good question, right?

Some Christian churches are adorned with statues of saints. Some Christian churches are even named after saints. What about Wellesley Hills Congregational church?

I told him that we celebrate the communion of saints, which is an idea that goes back to the creeds and scriptures of the early church. I told him that I understand the communion of saints to include all the people of God.

To be sure, there are certain people who are remembered with special attention. Last year, Rev. Judy Swahnberg traveled Italy for a spiritual retreat focused on St. Francis and St. Clare. I give thanks for particular saints, but I also give thanks for the communion of saints that includes all the people of God.

Now, if everyone is a part of the company of saints, then it is obvious that being a saint does not mean that one lived a perfect life. Being a saint doesn't mean perfection; it means belonging to God. It means belonging to a community of people that exists beyond the boundaries of time.

All Saints Day is a commemoration of the saints. It is a day recognized by churches around the world on November 1. On the first Sunday in November, it is our tradition at the Hills Church to prayerfully remember those saints who have died in the past year. We will lift their names in prayer in the virtual worship service this Sunday, giving thanks to God for their lives.

With faith, we trust them into the embrace of God's love, into the rest of everlasting peace, and into the company of the saints in light.

Peace,

Rev. Matthew Wooster
Senior Minister