

HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE CONNECTING LINK

Connecting together to worship and praise our God!



Worship with Us

Due to the current coronavirus pandemic and the State of Illinois *Stay at Home* order, the 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Sunday worship services **inside the church** will not be held until further notice. However, you can participate in virtual Sunday worship with Pastor Edie Lenz at 10:00 a.m. and daily devotions (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) on **Facebook Live** at Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church.

Note: There will be no worship services inside the church during the month of May.

Pray with Us

Join us for Morning Prayer on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 9:00 a.m. on **Facebook Live**.

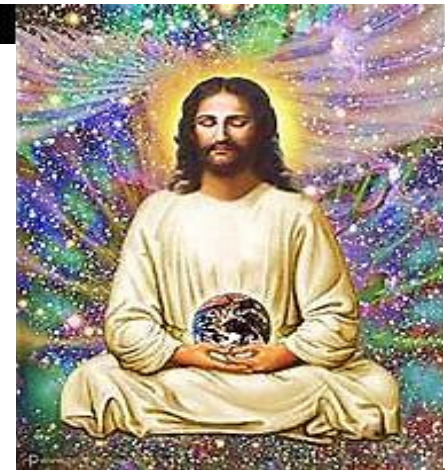
Contact Us

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church
8426 West 95th Street, Hickory Hills, IL 60457
Phone: 708-598-3100
E-mail: hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org

Visit Us Online

www.hickoryhillspres.org

“He’s
Got
the
Whole
World



in
His
Hands.”

INSIDE

<i>A Letter from Rev. Edie; Reflections</i>	2,3
<i>Worship Services; Readings</i>	4
<i>Stay at Home ideas</i>	5
<i>Women’s Bible Study</i>	6
<i>We Lift in Prayer</i>	7
<i>HHPC Online Connections during the Pandemic</i>	8
<i>Birthdays; Contact Information Changes</i>	9
<i>LOL Time</i>	10
<i>HHPC Micro Food Pantry</i>	11
<i>Cancelled and Rescheduled Events at HHPC</i>	12
<i>Prayer and Thoughts</i>	13

A LETTER FROM REV. EDIE



Rev. Edie Lenz, Pastor

Our last newsletter was published for the month of March 2020. It was intentionally a double issue because Bernie had her knee replaced at the end of February and didn't anticipate being back in the office until after Easter. Take a moment and let that sink in for you; it has only been 2 months since we published a newsletter. So much has happened since then. What was normal for us just 8 weeks ago has become completely different. We have new terms we use all the time: COVID-19, Social (*or physical*) distancing, virtual communion, and *stay at home* order, just to name a few.

The things we have taken for granted, things that have come easily or that we did without thinking have been rethought, changed, and become a lot more complicated – trips to the store, connecting with friends, even a walk in the park have changed. A colleague in New York reflected last week that what was weighing on him was how much more complicated things are; that what used to be automatic requires all sorts of new thoughts and procedures. I suspect this resonates with you as it does with me. Our world as we knew it just a few short weeks ago has changed so as to be almost foreign all at once.

I have challenged you to grieve well, to acknowledge the difficulties, the pain, the sorrow, the lost moments. I have done this because I believe we must grieve well if we are to heal as our world will eventually come back

together. We must name the pain, the isolation, the loneliness, the frustrations. We must grieve with those who have lost loved ones. We must hear the struggles of those who are out of work and those still going to work. We need to sit with the disappointment around graduations, birthdays, weddings, and even funerals. We need to sit with the grief, not because it ends with grief, but because that is the place to begin.

We need to begin with grief so that we are freed to also be thankful. As we grieve, we also become aware of the good gifts we have received, the moments of grace, hope, creativity and blessings that have come from this required slowing down, this change of life patterns, this time of world solidarity. I have witnessed amazing acts of creativity, people who have talent I didn't even know of, sharing their gifts with the world. If you are looking for entertainment, inspiration or something new, you will find it offered freely by the people of the world right now.

This generosity of spirit should remind us that we all have something to offer, we all have something to share. In our own context we have received gifts from several people connected to the congregation and many more who are not.

The Micro Food Pantry was an idea I saw online and floated to the Mission Committee. In less than a week, a

beautiful pantry was built, and installed by Jason Fedran (Jeni Vogl's son). Those of us who have been keeping track of the pantry have been overwhelmed by the generosity of the community. We have actually had to take items out of the pantry because it has been so well stocked by the people of Hickory Hills. Our worship services have been created and enhanced because of the gifts and skills of people who are often behind the scenes, those with technical skills and creative ability far beyond mine (thank you, Ashley and Andrew). Our music has been beautiful, the gift of piano and song recorded over miles by Gabriella and in the sanctuary by Greg. I am so thankful for your encouragement, cards, and phone calls – keep caring for one another well. Keep praying for one another, your community, and particularly the needs that have arisen out of the pandemic.

As we look forward, I want to name the reality: that we are not yet sure when we will be able to be back together in person. Not only that, we do not yet know what it will look like when we do gather together. We may have to make some changes to our usual ways of meeting together; we

(Continued on next page.)

Letter from Rev. Edie

(cont'd from p. 2.)

may have to continue in this pattern for some time. We simply are unsure what the course of this disease will be. But there are some things that are certain and I want to name a few of them for you. As we seek to make plans and as we anticipate what will come, I think we can name the foundations on which we stand.

Our firm foundation is in Christ; we have celebrated the resurrection, the assurance that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ – not death, not COVID-19, not physical separation, for God is with us, the Spirit resides in us and gathers with us even when we gather via phone or internet. The foundation of our particular church is firm as well. We stand together; you have been through hard times and you have endured. You have experienced hardship, uncertainty,

and a lack of leadership and you have not only survived, but you have thrived. Together we are the Body of Christ, separated by miles and a virus, but our hearts are united in Christ. Our hearts are united in purpose and mission: *To Seek God's Word, to Share and Celebrate God's Love, and to Serve Jesus Christ in the World.* Even in our distance we seek to find ways to do this.

There are some other things I think we can name: our leaders are committed to caring for the church and its resources well and they are committed to making timely decisions that take into account our values as a community, as well as the wisdom and the directives that come from the scientists around this disease. The Session has been meeting every other week via Zoom in order to keep working together and to meet the needs of the congregation. We have begun to wonder together what our

gatherings will look like and what will need to happen in order for us to keep one another safe and be able to be together. The Deacons have faithfully fulfilled their charge and will continue to call as needed to update you to any changes in our life together in the coming weeks.

Beloved of God, know that you are missed. I miss your faces and your voices. I miss connections and all of the parts of life done together. Also know that this too shall pass. There will be a day we will gather to sing together in the presence of God. In the meantime, my prayers are for your strength, health and growing in Christ. May we learn from this time the true nature of what it means to be the church of Christ. May we never take for granted the beauty of God's presence, and the joy of gathering with God's people. May you be strong and courageous, ever receiving, ever giving in the presence of God's Spirit.

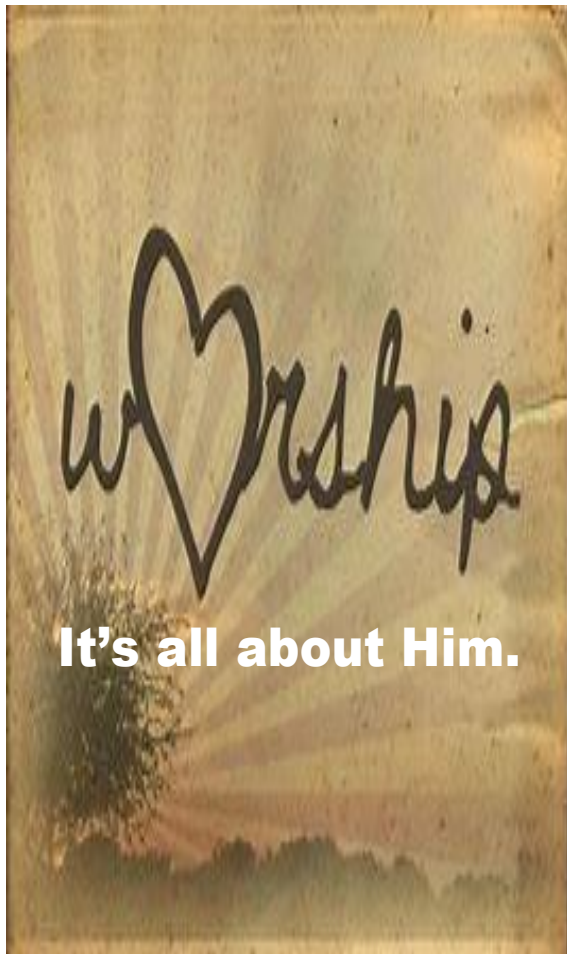
I miss you and love you, *Rev. Edie*

Reflections

Stay-at-Home Time: An Opportunity to Reflect and Grow

- As you have spent time during the *stay at home* order, what have you missed the most?
- What have you learned about what you believe and the role of faith in your life?
- How are you practicing your faith in new ways?
- What is helping you engage, learn or grow?
- Where are you seeing God at work?





NOTE

HHPC offers virtual Sunday worship on *Facebook Live* with Rev. Edie at 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. In addition, worship services are prerecorded and available on our website at hickoryhillspres.org each Sunday morning.

Sunday Worship May 2020

The May sermons shown below are ones that Rev. Edie will focus on during the 10:00 a.m. Sunday worship. If you don't have Internet access, you may read and reflect on these Scripture passages in your bible. **Virtual communion** will be celebrated **Sunday, May 3** during **Facebook Live** Prayers at 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

MAY 3

4th Sunday of Easter

Reading(s): Psalm 23, John 10:1-10;
Acts 2:42-47

Sermon: What IS the Church?

MAY 10

5th Sunday of Easter

Reading(s): John 14:1-14;
1 Peter 2:2-10

Sermon: Dwelling of God/
Living Stones

MAY 17

6th Sunday of Easter

Reading(s): 1 Peter 3:13-22;
Acts 17:22-31

Sermon: Be Always Ready

MAY 24

7th Sunday of Easter

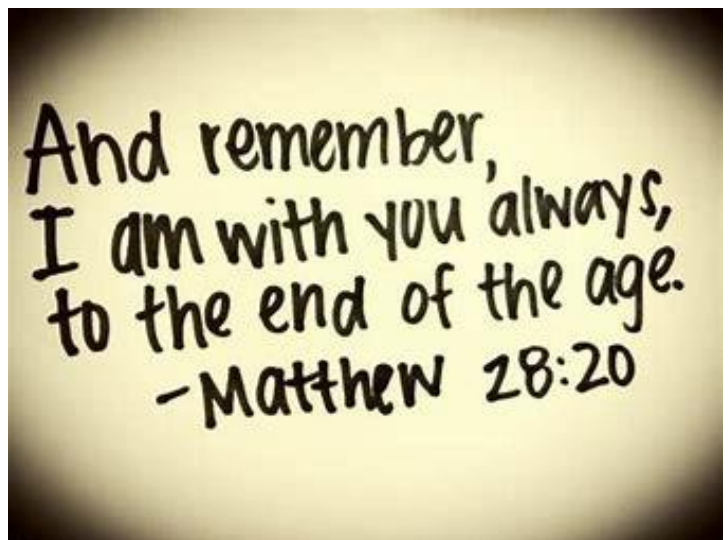
Reading(s): Acts 1:1-11;
1 Peter 5:6-11

Sermon: Ascension: Is Now
the Time?

MAY 31

Day of Pentecost

Reading(s): Acts 2:1-21;
1 Cor. 12:4-13; John 20:19-22
Sermon: Come, Holy Spirit





Wondering What to Do During the Stay-at-Home Order?

For those of us being asked to stay at home (except those who have essential jobs) during this epidemic, and are looking for enjoyable and enriching ways to spend their days, here are some ideas:

- Start your day with your family or on your own with reading a page from your favorite meditation book. Reflect on these written words quietly or with your family. Family members can share their thoughts with everyone, which provides different perspectives.
- Get creative in the kitchen by searching through some cookbooks you have for some of your favorite recipes or give some new ones a try. Search online for recipes where there is an abundance of delicious foods. You might even try cooking up and serving a different ethnic food each day of the week for something different.
- Write your own cookbook that you can pass on to your family members. Include all your favorite recipes, especially the

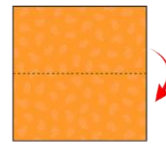
ones you know your family enjoyed.

- How about taking an online class? This could be learning a new language. You certainly have time to do it!
- Start a garden in your backyard or on your balcony. There are many ways to grow vegetables and herbs inside, too. Gardening can be very therapeutic.
- There are several sites that you can use to have a virtual happy hour with your friends. Happy hour can be drinking tea together or your favorite beverage. This get together will be enjoyed by all.
- Pull out the old family albums and enjoy looking through them.
- Have everyone write on a slip of paper what creative idea they can come up with. Put these slips of paper in a basket and have a person pick one out of the basket and that will be the idea used for the day.

Make a No-Sew Bandana Face Covering

Materials:

- Bandana (or square cotton cloth approximately 20"x20")
- Rubber bands (or hair ties)
- Scissors (if you are cutting your own cloth)



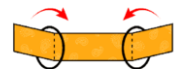
1. Fold bandana in half.



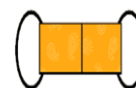
2. Fold top down. Fold bottom up.



3. Place rubber bands or hair ties about six (6) inches apart.



4. Fold sides to the middle and tuck.



5.



6.



“Women at The Table”

A Women’s Weekly Bible Study
(Mondays at 1:00 p.m. from September through May)

C ompassion
H as
R ighteousness
I n
S itting
T il
I nside
A ll
N egativity

D elivers
U nderstanding
T o
Y ahweh

P rayer
R esponds
E very
V oice
A t
I nfinite
L ord’s
S overeignty

“The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nought; he frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!” --Psalm 33:10-12



Stay safe, stay strong and stay positive during this time. Love and hugs, Arlene Pearson

WE LIFT IN PRAYER



The following is a list as of April 26th of those we are remembering in prayer. If you are on this prayer list and wish to be removed or you would like to be added to the list, please call Rev. Edie or the office at 708-598-3100 or e-mail her at pastor@hickoryhillspres.org.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEALING AND THOSE WITH HEALTH CONCERNS.

Addy; Bob and Brian (Grace); Bob F (Ar); Dave B; Danielle (Shannon); DeSean (Kim); DJ (Karen H); Dwayne (Diane); Glenda (Mel); Kathy (Bernie); Kiley (Katie); Linda (Jeni); Lisa (Debbie); Michael (Karen H); Mike W (Noelle); Pat (Gert); Peggy (Katie); Phyllis (Katie); Suzanne (Bernie); Bob, Gary and Valarie (Kim); Wanda (Jeni); Scott and Jeannie

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF STRENGTH AND HEALING.

Aiden (Debbie); Brad and Julie (Andrew); Guy K; Isaiah; Jessica (Joan); Joan; Lori C; Pam (Katie); Russ (Jeni); Stephanie and Savino

WE PRAY FOR GROUPS WHO ARE IN NEED.

Those in lockdown and isolation; healthcare providers and others in harm's way, especially for Jean, Kyle, Kaitlyn, Mollie; those in hospitals and facilities with other health needs besides COVID-19 who cannot have loved ones with them; staff of Pointe of Kilpatrick and other care facilities; teachers, students and parents embarking on e-learning; for those living in domestic violence situations; Gabriella, her co-workers and all who are coping with being furloughed from their jobs

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO MOURN.

Mr. Ruth and his family; Jennifer G and her family in the loss of her husband; family of Sandy who passed away on Sunday (Toni); Noelle Larsen on the loss of her boyfriend; Henderson Family (Linda); Loquist family for the loss of their father; for the families who have lost loved ones in this time and cannot mourn for them as we normally would; for victims and families affected by violence

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED DURING MISCELLANEOUS CIRCUMSTANCES.

Coronavirus spreading throughout the world; Jenny D (Andrew); those who provide essential services we need; the people of New York, New Jersey, Italy, Spain, and other hotspots around the world deeply impacted by the virus; churches who are struggling to reach members and care for people; communities impacted by tornadoes

WE GIVE THANKS FOR THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

Neighbors and family who are willing to help one another; our micro food pantry. The hope and joy we find in the coming of spring; we pray we will find ways to share our hope with the world.

**NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER
THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2020**

Let us pray for our country and our world.

**WE CLING TO THE PROMISES
THAT GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US AND
THAT THERE IS NOTHING THAT SEPARATES
US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD IN CHRIST.**

HHPC ONLINE CONNECTIONS



During this pandemic, we can connect with our HHPC family while we are being asked to remain distanced. Shown below are some options.

ZOOM MEETINGS

If you want to connect with other members of HHPC for an hour or so while we are being asked to remain *distanced*, we will be using a program called **Zoom**.

Zoom is a great tool for two reasons. First, you do not have to have a computer to connect. You can either use a computer with internet and a web camera OR download the free app onto your smart phone. You can be a part of the conversation with or without video.

Second, it is easy to use; you don't need to install a bunch of programs or know a lot. You can simply follow the instructions and get connected.

ZOOM MEETING TIMES

“Social Time” on Zoom

Wednesday Mornings 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Wednesday Evenings 7:00-8:00 p.m.

HHPC WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK LIVE

Sunday Worship with sermon and music available on the website by 9:00 a.m. Sunday morning at hickoryhillspres.org.

Facebook Live Prayers: Sundays at 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church.

Update your contact information

The *Connecting Link* publishes only the names of those members who have submitted a change in their contact information. However, more information can be provided upon request by calling the church office.

No notifications received this month.

If you have a change to your personal contact information, please contact the church office.

Phone: 708-598-3100

E-mail: hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org



May God bless all those celebrating their birthdays in May.

MAY			
2	John Kemp	10	Francine Costello
3	Courtney Freiberg	11	Wilda Duncan
3	Myrnalyn Delalamon	15	Ginger Mercer
5	Ken Dritz	25	Terry Brock
6	Mildred Neil	26	Greg Majerski
10	Luz Korzeniewski	27	Darlene Kibort
10	Carol Sack	29	Karen Golema



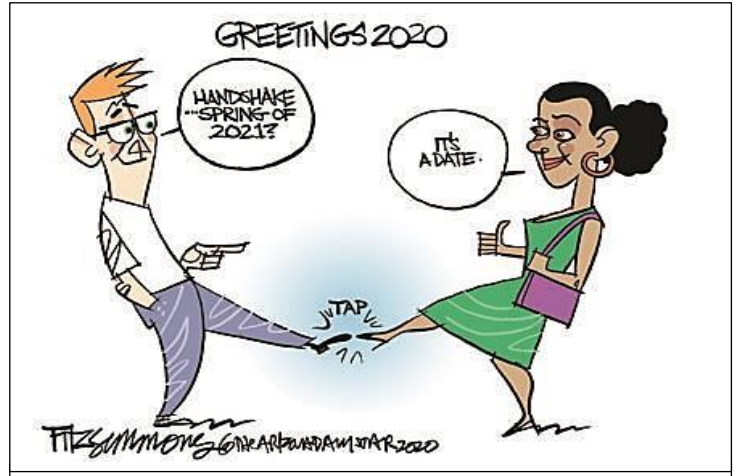
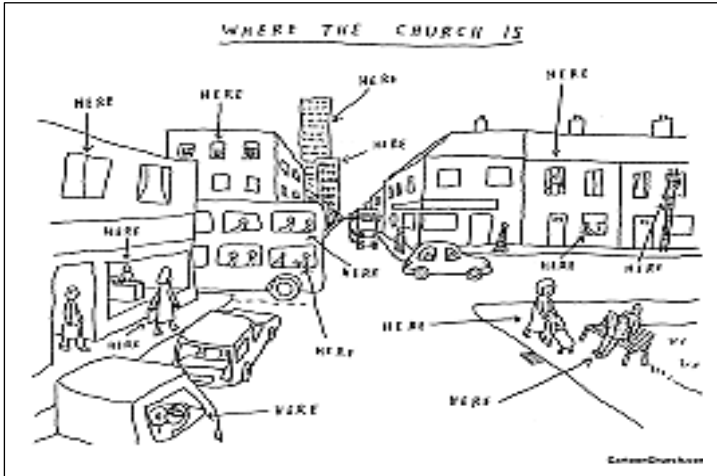
Please Note

Should you notice any omissions or inaccuracies on the birthday list, please report them to the church office as soon as possible.

Thank you.

“LOL TIME”

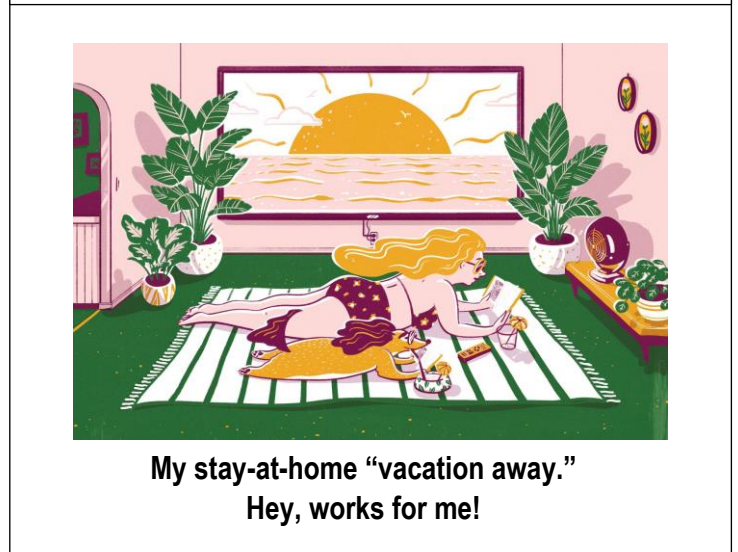
The news these days is filled with many sad stories about Coronavirus (COVID-19) victims and those still suffering, and we continue to remember them in our prayers. This month’s LOL is intended to lift our spirits and bring a smile to our faces during these times of uncertainty.



Bob works from home during the stay and home order and is grateful to escape the distraction of office chit chat.



How to propose to a girl during quarantine.

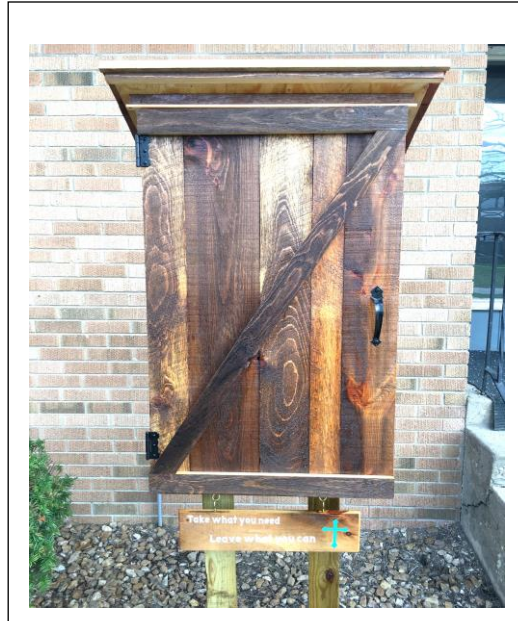


My stay-at-home “vacation away.”
Hey, works for me!

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

MICRO FOOD PANTRY

“Take what
you need.”



“Leave what
you can.”



It's been a long time since I've seen many of you, I miss you! As Elders, we get a chance to connect through **Zoom**. Our work is still being done through technology.

God is at work: in our neighborhood, our world; caring for, reaching out, and engaging with our neighbors near and far. At this time, our work is completely here in our neighborhood.

As many of you are aware, HHPC has implemented a **Micro Food Pantry** right outside our front doors on 95th Street. Rarely does a day go by, that the pantry goes unused *or* is restocked by anonymous donations.

Our relationships that had begun with the **Community Meal** had to come to a complete stop. It is with joy I can announce that for the first Monday in the month of May, we will resume our meals, with a twist! We will celebrate community spirit through a drive-thru, meal-in-a-bag, pick-up. Only time will tell what June will hold for us, but our spirit holds true and we are planning to move forward!

Please continue to pray for one another and the work HHPC continues to do. We are truly blessed! Looking forward to seeing you again!



--Kim Ambrosat

CANCELLED AND RESCHEDULED EVENTS AT HHPC

We are living in unprecedented times.

This has caused much of our life and work together to be postponed or reimaged online.

Working in compliance with the mandates and recommendations of the State of Illinois and other experts, Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church is making plans for the summer.

There may be times when we need to adjust, postpone, or cancel events in order to keep the safety of all participants.

At right, are the current plans for our ministries. Timely information about events and ministries of the church can be found on the website at www.hickoryhillspres.org.



CURRENT PLANS FOR OUR MINISTRIES

Confirmation Sunday is postponed until we are able to complete class and meet with Session.

Kids Club and Women's Bible Study will resume in the fall.

Mother's Day Bake Sale has been cancelled.

Recognition Sunday has been postponed to a later date and will be announced.

Rummage Sale has been postponed. The date is to be determined and will be publicized as soon as possible.

Vacation Bible School currently scheduled for **June 22-25** has been cancelled for this summer. Our primary goal is to ensure the safety of our students and parents in these unprecedented times. We simply do not feel confident that we can ensure health and safety. A letter will be going out to families soon.

Coming to God in Prayer During the Pandemic

Gracious God,

We praise you for the beauty of the creation in which we live. We praise you for your goodness to us, your steadfast love and mercy, and your unending grace.

We come to you today in a time of fear and anxiety. We watch with sadness and growing concern the coronavirus pandemic affecting so much of our world. We pray for all of those who are ill around the world because of this virus and we ask for your healing power to be at work in their bodies and their lives.

We pray for all of those who grieve the loss of loved ones who have died because of coronavirus and ask that you give comfort to their loved ones.

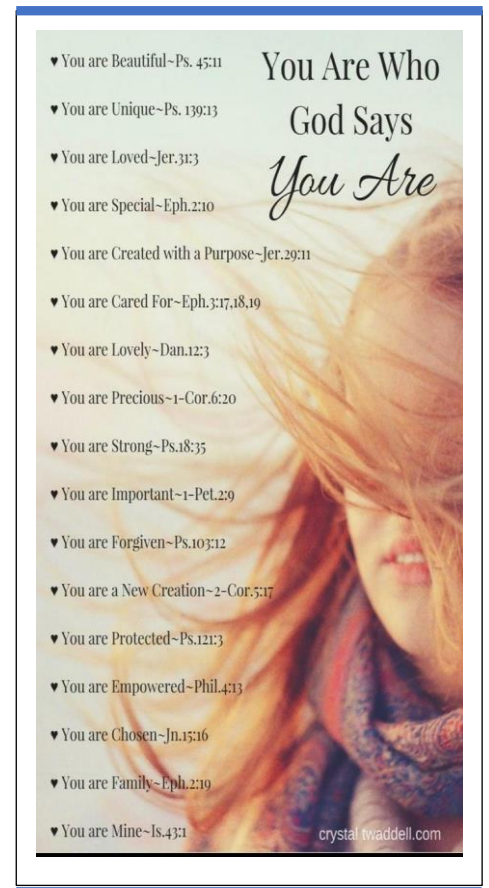
We pray for all the first responders who are working on the front lines of this crisis: doctors, nurses, medical personnel, researchers and public health officials, and we pray for your wisdom, strength and guidance for those who seek to provide relief.

We pray for the most vulnerable of our neighbors, locally and globally, who lack adequate health care, income, and support systems in this time of crisis. May we practice compassion and reach out to those most in need in our community to provide help as we are able.

We pray that you will calm our fears and quiet our spirits. Remind us that you are with us in every moment; that your Holy Spirit never leaves us or forsakes us. Remind us of the truth that is our comfort in life and in death: “that we are not our own, but belong body and soul, both in life and in death, to our faithful Savior Jesus Christ.”

Help us to love you and to love each other well in the midst of our fear and anxiety.

May we continue to praise you for the goodness of your creation, the abundance of your love, and the peace we have that passes understanding through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Amen. --Rev. Susan Clayton





MAY 2020

Connecting together to worship and praise our God!

A monthly newsletter from Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

THE CONNECTING LINK

DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT HOLD

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church
8426 West 95th Street
Hickory Hills, IL 60457