

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. You can participate in virtual Sunday worship with sermon and music (*prerecorded*) and posted on our website. Additionally, Sunday Prayer is on *Facebook Live* with Pastor Edie Lenz at 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Pray with Us

Join us for Daily Devotions and Morning Prayer on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 9:00 a.m. on *Facebook Live* at Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church.

Contact Us

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church
8426 West 95th Street, Hickory Hills, IL 60457
Phone: 708-598-3100

Visit Us Online

www.hickoryhillspres.org



Inside

A Letter from Rev. Edie	2
Worship Services, Readings, Reflections	4
We Lift in Prayer (<i>Prayer Requests</i>)	5
HHPC Updates	6
Connect Online with HHPC	8
LOL Time	9
Rev. Edie's Surprise Visitors	10
Birthdays, Changes to Contact Information	11

A Letter from Rev. Edie



Rev. Edie Lenz
Pastor

On March 17 (which feels like a lifetime ago), Session voted to close the church building and to move all the ministries we could online in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since that Tuesday night a lot has happened. Through all of the uncertainty, upheaval, and challenges, we have attempted to walk the line of caution and care as well as continue to be the church in the world. We created and are continuing to support a micro-pantry. We have worshiped by prerecorded video and *Facebook Live*. We have worked to support one another as best we can, and most recently, we launched an online rummage sale as an interim step before we are able to have our regular sale. These measures have not always been all that we hoped and they certainly don't replace our usual life together.

Session has continued to meet every other week throughout the pandemic, prayerfully seeking to lead through these unprecedented times. We are working on a protocol for the congregation so that when the time comes, we are prepared to open in a way that seeks to keep people as safe as possible, even as we long to worship and fellowship together. The plan is in a draft form and will eventually be published to the

congregation, but for now, I wanted to share with you some of the things that go into the plan; all the details that we have to take into consideration. I share all of this with you not to discourage anyone but to seek to help you all understand the work that is going on behind the scenes, as well as the weight of the decisions that rest on the shoulders of the Session right now.

We are working on a protocol for the congregation so that when the time comes, we are prepared to open in a way that seeks to keep people as safe as possible, even as we long to worship and fellowship together.

As much as we long to gather together for worship, fellowship, and ministry, the safety and care of our members and guests is our priority. We want to be faithful to God's commands, to love God with all that we are, and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. We see an abundance of caution and intentionality as an act of love towards one another.

We understand an abundance of caution to be a responsible way of

loving each other. As we sifted through recommendations from the Illinois Department of Health, PCUSA, and the CDC, we quickly began to realize that just opening the building was going to require a lot more thoughtfulness, prayer, and intentionality. If you search, you will find lists of activities and the risk levels of infection attached to those activities. For example, going for a walk outside carries a risk factor of 1. In every list, in every set of suggestions, gathering for worship is listed at a risk level of 8. Throughout the pandemic, stories have surfaced over and over of gatherings for worship (including funerals) becoming vectors for infection.

You see, the challenge is that many of our favorite activities, many of the things that mean the most to us, are also favorite ways for this particular virus to spread. Hugs, handshakes, shared meals, and fellowship are some of the activities that bring us closer together, but then can contribute to the spread. In addition, the best of the research suggests that activities like speaking loudly or singing together can actually increase the spread of the disease because of the ways we project our voices and inhale when participating in these activities. In addition, while not naming any names,

(cont'd on next page)

Letter from Rev. Edie (*cont'd. from p. 2.*)

we are aware that many of us are considered “higher risk.” Added all together, this makes for a heavy challenge for the Session to balance our deep desire to be together with the need to keep one another safe.

At our last meeting, we spent over 90 minutes picking our way through the draft, discussing what we needed to say and do. But it was this sentence at the end of the document that carries the most weight: “If someone attending worship or a meeting tests positive for COVID-19, the church will immediately be closed for 2 weeks for a full cleaning. Those exposed will be notified by the church staff or elders.” This, more than anything else, reminds us just how important our decisions are.

What I am now sharing with you is a sample of our draft. Again, this is not intended to discourage, but to shine a little light for you all.

WORSHIP

- Seating 6 feet apart will be measured out and preset. You are asked to arrive as a household and sit together for worship.
- Occupancy will be limited to 50 or less. This is in compliance with the State of Illinois as required by our insurance provider.
- Bulletins will be used to mark seating. If you cannot share your bulletin with your household, extras will be available from the usher.
- Once seated, please do not move around. If you must get up, please make sure you are masked. Greet one

another from afar (*wave, bow, peace sign, etc.*).

- Greg will provide music; there will be no congregational singing.
Congregational responses and reading in unison will be minimized.
- No food or beverages will be served. Fellowship can occur in the parking lot before or after service.
- Communion will be served in the seats, prepackaged or carefully distributed to ensure minimal contact, safe preparation, and serving. Single serve cups with wafers will be utilized.
- All bibles, hymnals, friendship pads, and other handouts will be removed from the sanctuary and the narthex. This includes children’s activities.
- Offerings will be placed in the wooden box with a slot as you enter or leave the sanctuary. While we understand many prefer to use envelopes, you will need to bring your envelope from home. Loose envelopes will not be left out for use.
- The Congregation will be asked to exit the sanctuary gradually. In general, dismiss from the back, by rows, using all three of the exit doors to the sanctuary. The congregation is encouraged to exit the building after service and socialize in the parking lot, not in the building.

As we worked through this and the rest of the document, we began to see that what we most long for, what we have most loved about gathering for worship, may not be what we are able to do together for a while. This then leads us to the questions asked by our Executive Presbyter, Sue Krummel, “What is the

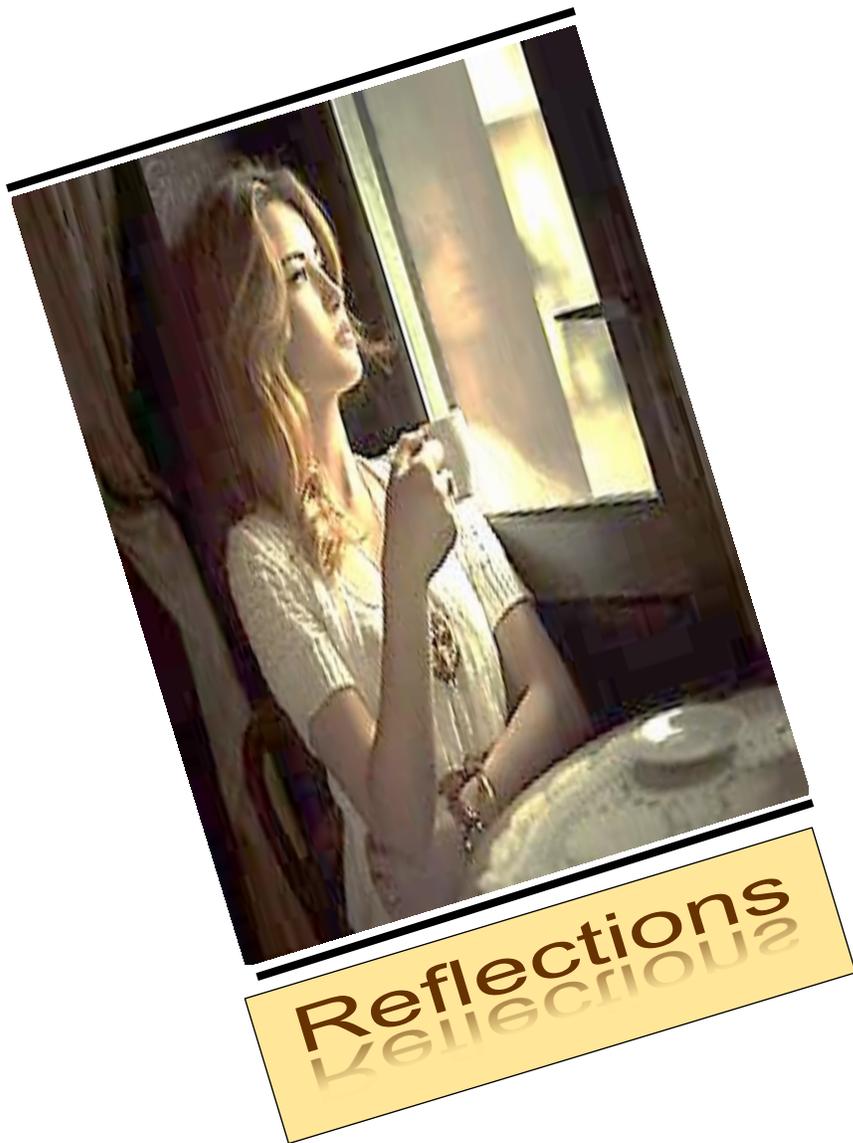
risk? What is the benefit? How will you decide what is best for your church?”

As we continue to work on this, we are aware that many of you have voiced that you will be there when the building re-opens. Many of you have voiced concerns that we care for one another well. Our meeting concluded with the following decision: when the State of Illinois moves to the next phase, we as HHPC will wait 30 days before making a decision to open the building. This will allow us to gauge how the further opening of the State affects the infection rates. It is our deep desire when we do reopen to be able to stay open. In addition, the investment has been made and a camera has been installed in the sanctuary. This camera and equipment will allow us to continue to record and broadcast our services even after we resume worshipping in person.

All of this information may be a lot to absorb. I want to repeat that what I have shared with you is only a part of a draft. Once these protocols are finalized, we will publish them to you all, seeking to ensure as much communication as possible. In addition, you will receive notification when we are ready to reopen the building for worship in-person. In the meantime, pray for the Session and one another. If you have questions, you can contact me or one of the Elders. We will seek to clarify what we can for you.

It is a great joy to serve as your pastor; I miss you all.

Rev. Edie



- How are you caring for yourself in this time of transition and waiting?
- How do you understand God's call to care for one another? How do you understand God's call to love neighbor as self?
- What challenges do you experience when you are asked to consider diversity in your life, in your circles? What challenges arise in our church?
- What does perseverance look like in the face of pandemic?

WORSHIP



The following are readings and sermons that Rev. Edie will focus on during Sunday worship. If you don't have Internet access, you may read and reflect on these Scripture passages in your bible.

You can participate in virtual Sunday worship with sermon and music (*pre-recorded*) on our website at hickoryhillspres.org. **Virtual communion** will be celebrated **Sunday, July 5** during **Facebook Live Prayer** at Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church at 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, July 5, 2020

5th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings: Jonah 1

Sermon Title: *Avoiding Pain (I Had Trouble in Getting to Solla Sollew will be read.)*

Sunday, July 12

6th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings: James 2:1-4;
Galatians 3:28

Sermon Title: *Sneetches - Diversity*

Sunday, July 19

7th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings: 1 Corinthians:13

Sermon Title: *Horton Hatches an Egg - Perseverance and Love*

Sunday, July 26

8th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings: Genesis 1

Sermon Title: *Lorax – Stewardship*

This summer

we will be using the stories of Dr. Seuss to explore themes of faith alongside scripture.





The following is a complete list 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 the church office at 708-598-3100.

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

Addy (Karen H); Amanda and Angel; Ashley A (Noelle L); Bob F (Ar); Bob and Brian (Grace); Bob, Gary and Valarie (Kim); Christiana H (Shannon); Gary and Valarie (Kim); Dave (Karen H); Dave B; Danielle (Shannon); David (Karen H); DeSean (Kim); DJ (Karen H); Dwayne (Diane); Gabriel (Katie); Helen (Rev. Edie); Jackson; Jerry (Joan); John H (Jeni); Kathy (Bernie); Kathy and Dwayne (Rev. Edie); Kiley (Katie); Lee (Rev. Edie); Leida S (Noelle L); Linda (Jeni); Lisa (Debbie); Mackenzie (Bernie); Michael (Karen H); Michele (Rev. Edie); Mike (Kim); Mike W (Noelle); Pat (Gert); Patty (Katie); Peggy (Katie); Phyllis (Katie); Rose (Katie); Russ (Mel); Shavon (Joan P); Suzanne (Bernie); TJ (Katie); Tracy (Noelle L); Trevor (Donna); Wanda (Jeni)

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF STRENGTH AND HEALING.

Aiden (Debbie); Brad and Julie (Andrew); Dick (Rick); Eva M; Guy K; Isaiah; Jessica (Joan); Joan; John (Debbie); Pam (Katie); Peggy (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 Jean, Kaitlyn, Kyle, and Mollie; those in hospitals and facilities with other health needs besides COVID-19 who cannot have loved ones with them; staff of Pointe Kilpatrick and other care facilities; teachers,

students, and parents challenged with e-learning; those living in domestic violence situations; all who are coping with being furloughed from their jobs or who have lost their jobs; those battling addiction; fire and police departments tasked with keeping the peace; the systemic racism and social challenges in our country

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO MOURN.

Family and friends of Dave Barker who passed away May 31; for families who have lost loved ones in this time and cannot mourn as they 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 hotspots around the world deeply impacted by the virus; churches who are struggling to reach members and care for people; the injustice and violence around the country; wisdom for the states that are opening up in different ways

WE GIVE THANKS FOR THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

For neighbors and families helping one another; our micro-pantry; for the return of work for some; for the guidance to find ways to share our hope with the world

**We cling to the promises that God is always with us;
that there is NOTHING that separates us
from the love of God in Christ.**

HHPC

Updates



*By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another." --John 13:35*

Discipleship Report

(by Jean Swearingen)

We are certainly living in a historical time! Our current world events will provide us with stories to tell for years into the future. Our Discipleship Committee is staying aware of world events and will be meeting in early July. Our goal is to work closely with our Session to plan for HHPC's reactivation, as allowed within the laws of Illinois and guidelines provided by our denomination. We will always strive to keep the safety of all we serve as high priority.

It is Summer! It may not be possible to visit church in person. There are still some things to do to support HHPC programs.

Pop Tabs. – Continue to save pop tabs for donation to The

Ronald McDonald House. A family of 7 recently camped for the weekend and saved their tabs. They came home with 47 tabs, which is equal to approximately 0.6 ounces. Every little pop tab can make a big difference. Keep collecting!

Bottle Caps. – Our Kids Club has worked in partnership with our Mission Committee to collect plastic bottle caps. Please continue to save clean plastic bottle caps. That same family of 7 collected 2.9 ounces of plastic caps while camping.

The amounts collected may seem insignificant. The numbers actually prove how no act is too small to start a positive chain reaction in our world.

Stay safe! --Jean



HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
8426 WEST 95TH STREET

ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE
AUGUST 27-29, 2020

THURSDAY AND FRIDAY

9:00 A.M. – 7:00 P.M.

SATURDAY

9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Only thirty (30)
customers
at a time will be
allowed into
the building.

Customers
must wear
masks!

NOTE: We apologize, but we will not be accepting clothing donations this year.



Volunteers needed to help at the rummage sale. If interested, please contact Susan Frangella at 708-822-6758 to sign up.

(HHPC Updates cont'd on p. 7.)

MISSION

LOVE GROW SERVE



*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God,
serve one another with whatever gift
each of you has received. 1 Peter 4:10*

MISSION REPORT

(by Kim Ambrosat)

As we look forward to places reopening, we hope that schools will also be reopening in the Fall. Looking at a new norm, we are going to try branching out in our Mission projects again.

We will continue stocking our *Micro Pantry*. For three months now, it has been stocked with canned goods, cereal, granola bars, toilet paper, personal items, etc. More often than not, when I come to restock, the pantry is bare. Surely the pantry is aiding those in need. Your donations, whether monetary or actual items, are greatly appreciated. I am sending another plea for donations; the need is great! The outpouring of anonymous donations continues, but once again, the need is great.

Working with MC8 in the month of July, we are asking you to sponsor a hygiene kit (or two). In the past we have packed the kits. With our new norm, we have come to learn if we pack actual items, they will sit in quarantine for 60-90 days. MC8 would like to raise \$3,500 or more for Church World Service (*see CWS informational flyer attached to this newsletter as to how you can help sponsor a \$15 kit.*)

Feed My Starving Children is closed for packing until the end of July. We are looking into a packing event in November. Watch for more details.

Our second *Meal in a Bag* was lackluster event. Eight bags were reserved, but only two were actually picked up! The committee has decided for the month of July, we will take a break and regroup. In August, restrictions will be lighter, and we plan to have a barbeque. We hope to have a nice day to be able to gather and eat outdoors. More information will follow as time draws nearer.

Also, at the Community Meal in August, we will have bins for our members to bring school supplies. It is with high hopes that schools will open and supplies will be needed. We ask for any donations you are able to provide.

Continue to pray for one another and the work HHPC continues to do. We are truly blessed!

Looking forward to seeing you again! --Kim



CONNECT ONLINE WITH HHPC



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. If these are not an option, you can use the conference call phone number shown in the next column. 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.

Until we're able to gather together, we continue to connect with our HHPC family while we are being asked to remain physically distanced. Shown below are some options you might consider.

ZOOM MEETING TIMES

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

"Social Time" on Zoom - Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/453079401>

Meeting ID: 453 079 401

Phone number: 1-312-626-6799

Code: 453079401 Password: 167828

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

<https://zoom.us/j/334139038>

Meeting ID: 334 139 038

Phone number: 1-312-626-6799

Code: 334139038 Password: 146187

HHPC WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK LIVE

Sunday Worship with Sermon and Music (*prerecorded*)

is available on our website at hickoryhillspres.org.

Sunday Prayer is held on Facebook Live at *Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church* at 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Facebook Live Daily Devotions and Prayers

Join us on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 9:00 a.m. on *Facebook Live* at *Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church*.

LOL



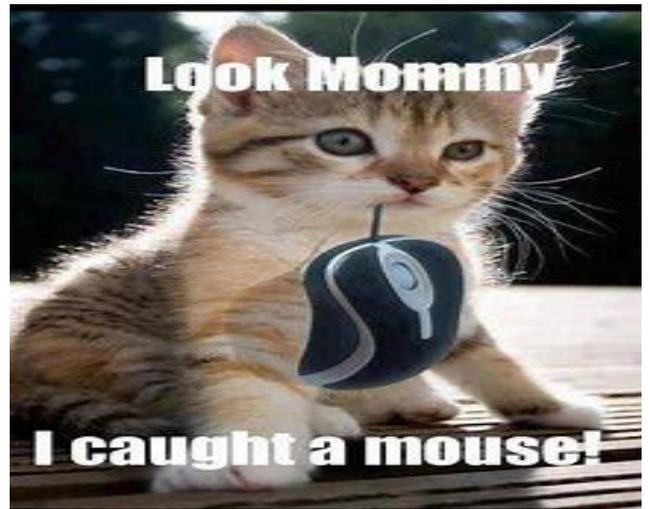
TIME

I swore I said pool not water bowl



FunnyFidos.com

Look Mommy



I caught a mouse!

**Excuse me, Sir you dropped this ...
oh, why are you running?**



**Who needs a groundhog to tell you when
summer is coming...**



Rev. Edie's Surprise Visitors

Have you ever really missed someone or something and longed for their return?

Well, Rev. Edie could truly relate to that, especially during this pandemic time.

While recording her online Sunday worship service which she has been doing over the last few months, Rev. Edie shared with some members about how she truly missed actually being with her HHPC family at worship, and looking at the empty pews made her long for the “good old days” before the pandemic.

Stirred by Rev. Edie's comment, our crafty (*pun intended*) Melanie Swindle used her creative imagination and designed “HHPC member cut-outs,” hoping to temporarily fill the void for Rev. Edie until she could actually be with her flock once more.

Placing individual t-shirts, casual shirts and other fashion choices on clothes hangers, Melanie then enlarged the pictures of the faces of some of our members and secured them at the top of each hanger design and then randomly placed them in the pews. From a distance one might easily imagine that the people sitting in those pews were the real thing.

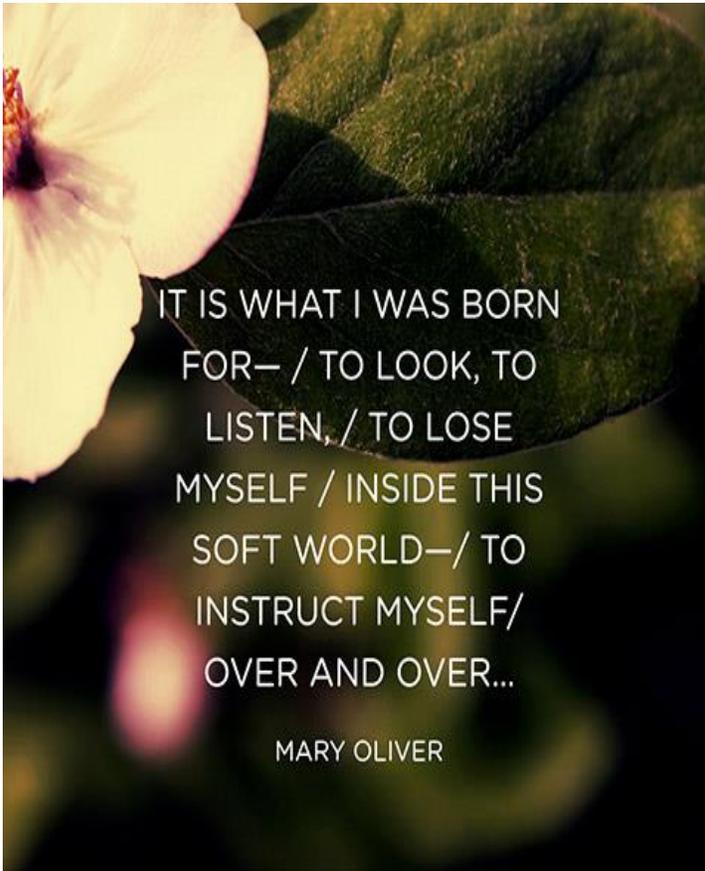
Although we know that these cut-outs could never replace Rev. Edie's faithful flock, one thing we know for sure is that the cut-out people put a smile on Rev. Edie's face, and will be a Wow! moment she will never forget (and neither will we).

We thank Melanie for her talents which are regularly on display here at HHPC. We also thank Rev. Edie for missing us so much as we certainly miss her too!



“A Faithful Flock”





May God bless all of our friends who are celebrating their birthdays in July. May they have abundant joy and happiness always.

Amelia Huenecke	July 1
Mike Korzeniewski	July 3
Robert Swindle	July 4
Toni Kenealy	July 6
Gabriella Ciametti	July 7
Joann Jackson	July 8
Becky Kusina	July 8
Bernie Roche	July 9
Kaylee Knox	July 13
Andy Betterton	July 19
Kyle Ambrosat	July 21
Jarett Ambrosat	July 21
Dianne Flynn	July 22
Lucy Dumke	July 22
Diane Ciametti	July 23
Justin Rellinger	July 23
Steve Zabelka	July 24
Cindy Treccani	July 27
Carri McKinney	July 29

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



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: hpc@hickoryhillspres.org

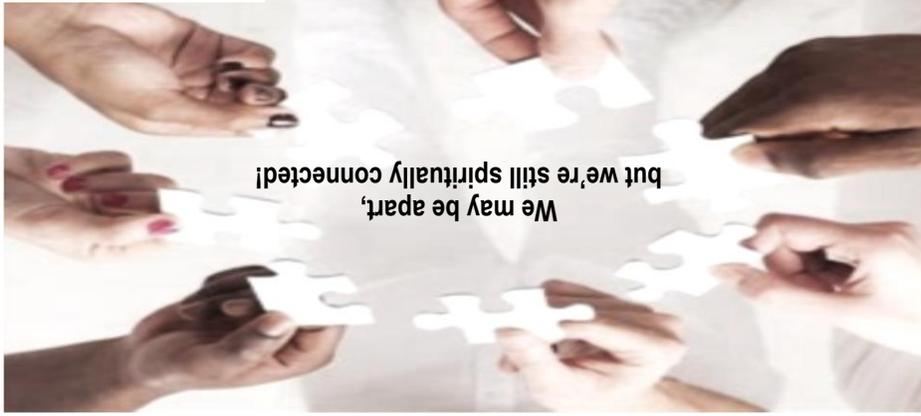


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DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT HOLD

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JULY 2020