#### HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## THE CONNECTING LINK

Connecting together to worship and praise our God!



**MAY 2021** 

**Note:** As we return for in-person worship, masks and social distancing practices are required. Should the COVID-19 situation change, preventing us from worshipping in person, you will be notified. Sunday worship continues to be livestreamed on our *Facebook* page at *Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church* and is also recorded and then available for viewing on our website at *www.hickoryhillspres.org* on Sundays by noon.

#### WORSHIP WITH US ON SUNDAYS

**10:00 a.m.** (Traditional Worship) **5:00 p.m.** (Contemporary Worship)

#### **PRAY WITH US**

Join us for Daily Devotions and Morning Prayer on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. on *Facebook Live* at *Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church* or at another time later in the day.

#### CONTACT US

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

8426 West 95<sup>th</sup> Street, Hickory Hills, IL 60457

Phone: 708-598-3100

E-mail: hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org

As a mother I want to be

#### humble enough

to realize I haven't mastered it all.

### brave enough

to keep trying, and

### thankful enough

to see the grace in it.

#### **INSIDE:**

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## A Letter from Rev. Edie



Rev. Edie Lenz Pastor

#### Hickory Hills Family -

Many of you know that we have been praying for the Netter family and Molly's nieces and nephew in the deaths of their parents in South Africa. The journey for the children has only just begun. As they are now orphaned, Molly is working to gain custody of the children and bring them here to the U.S. This will be a long journey and will require much preparation and patience. It will also be an expensive journey with lawyer fees, court fees, and a lot of work is needed to make it happen, particularly, in the midst of a pandemic.

I have asked Molly to share her powerful story with you. After you have read her story, I want to share with you how we at HHPC are hoping to assist.

"When my brother told me that his wife had tested positive for COVID-19 a little after Christmas Day, I did not think much about it. I went about living my "busy" life of being a mother-wife-healthcare provider and student. A few days later, my brother called again and told me that he had taken his wife to the hospital.

"She is now in a COVID unit," he said; my heart sank, but I still did not think much about it. I would ask how she was doing, and my brother would say, "not good, oxygen was 77% last night." Honestly, I could not imagine anyone sustaining with an oxygen level of 77%. She was in the hospital, getting oxygen therapy and maintaining at 77%. Something was not right with that picture. I chose to believe my lie--My brother did not know what he was talking about; the number he was telling me about was heart rate, not oxygen saturation.

The moment of my awakening came the morning my brother sent me his wife's voice text. Her voice was breaking. She was asking for her toiletries; she ended with "My oxygen dipped to 44% last night." She was gasping for breath. I remember raising my voice to my brother as if he could do anything about it. "Benjamin, she cannot sustain at 77%...what are they doing?" "Molly, I do not know." There was that sadness in his voice.

He later told me that he did not want to talk about his wife's condition anymore because it stressed him out, and he wanted to leave it with God. I told him I was not going to ask anymore. A day

after, he called again and left a voice text, "Molly, call me when you get a chance...I am scared. I am aware that nothing is permanent. I trust God, but I cannot deny the fact that I am scared." Benjamin was my oldest brother; he was scared. His wife was now on an ICU floor, which was just about the last time we heard about her. No phone calls, no updates. My brother sounded ok with "mild symptoms." We decided he would battle the virus at home early on. When he started having mild symptoms, we thought that was going to be it. He promised me that he was going to beat the virus. My brother was a private person, and for some reason, he had reached out to every family member, letting them know about his wife's illness and his mild symptoms, "pray for us."

The night of the 17<sup>th</sup> of January into the 18<sup>th</sup>, I found myself awake; eyes wide open. My sleep had not been that great, but this particular night, I was wide awake. Around 2:00 a.m., I got a phone call from my brother; he wanted to *FaceTime*. He had never wanted to *FaceTime*. Unfortunately, the reception was terrible, and we resorted to a regular phone. He told me that his chest hurt. He had puked the medicine he had taken. His

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oxygen was at 62%, and his heart rate was at 150. I asked him he if wanted to go to the hospital, he said no. He talked with an oxygen level of 62%, so I told him to sit still. I hung up and said I was going to call back soon. That soon never came. His older son texted and said my brother wanted to go to the hospital. I said, ok. They went and sent him back to wait for his turn for a COVID-19 test. They drove back home, but my brother said he would sit in the car to catch his breath. He never got out of that car. I received a phone call that he was not breathing. It took about an hour for an ambulance to come; he had been gone for a while. They left him there, and the funeral home came almost 3 hours later. His 14-year-old son witnessed all this. The girls had gone to stay with a family friend.

I later learned that my brother was fumbling the day he died to write a note asking me to please raise his children. He told his son that I was one to make all decisions. "He trusted you and said everything you said would be the right decision."

His wife died on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January. He and his wife leave three dependent children, their names are Dali (14, boy), Nafe (10, girl) and Yankho (2, girl), they lived in Johannesburg and are right now living with friends of my brother. I have applied for custody of the children, but must wait for the courts to decide. Then we will work to bring them here to the U.S. This is even more difficult now because of COVID. I am told Nafe is getting anxious, she is afraid I will change my mind. I speak with her a lot; Dali does not talk much.

The days that followed their deaths were a daze—making funeral arrangements for two. Pain. Lots of pain. For some reason, whenever I feel like this, memories of my father always surface. On the day I texted Pastor Edie, I felt crushed, and somehow. I drifted back in time. I literally heard my father's voice, "Wherever you go, make sure you surround yourself with people who know Christ; with them, you will always have common ground." I found myself picking up the phone and talking to Pastor Edie. My father has always been right. The outpouring of support from the church; the conversations we have had. I have seen the face of Christ amid this ugliness. "There may be weeping at night, but joy comes in the morning." Thank you for being that "morning." I feel anchored and want to thank you very much for showing our family the face of Christ."

HHPC Family, our world often feels out of control and we often feel we have little ability to impact the needs and lives of others. We DO have the opportunity to make a difference in this circumstance. Session has voted to use the full proceeds from the annual *Rummage Sale* to benefit the Netter Family and the cost of bringing Dali, Nafe, and Yankho to live with them. In this small way, we can shine the light of Christ a bit brighter.

The Rummage Sale will be held May 20-22. Donations of items are now being accepted. Please continue to pray for the family, for the journey they are on, and the children in particular.

Peace and love in Christ, Rev. Edie



Dali, Nafe and Yankho with their parents.

Please continue to pray for the family, for the journey they are on, and the children in particular.

## Worship Services, Readings, Reflections



The following readings and sermons are ones that Rev. Edie will focus on during Sunday in-person worship. You can participate in virtual Sunday worship livestreamed on *Facebook Live* at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings and then recorded and posted on our website at *www.hickoryhillspres.org* by noon on Sunday. If you are worshipping from home, and don't have Internet access, you may read and reflect on these scripture passages in your bible.

Date	Readings	Sermon Title
Sunday, May 2	John 15:1-8; 1 John 4:7-21	Discipleship: A Reflective Life
Sunday, May 9	John 15: 9-17; 1 John 5:1-6	Discipleship: Living in Authentic Community
Sunday, May 16	Acts 1:1-11; Luke 24: 44-49	Discipleship: Aligned with Jesus
Sunday, May 23	Acts 2:1-21; Ezekiel 37: 1-14	Can These Bones Live?
Sunday, May 30	Isaiah 6:1-8; Romans 8:12-17, 26-30	Trinity: Unending Connection

## Reflections on Discipleship

- What does it mean to YOU to be a disciple of Jesus? What difference does that make in your life?
- As disciples, we need both, times spent specifically with God and time spent in community. How are you living into each of those needs? What do you need to do differently?
- Disciples work to align their lives with the teachings of Jesus – where are you "out of alignment?" Where are you working to better align your heart, mind, and soul?



## **Church Musician's Corner**

by Greg Rolla

One of my favorite contemporary church composers is Andrae Crouch (1942-2015). He was an American gospel singer, songwriter, arranger, record producer and pastor. Referred to as "the father of modern gospel music," he was known for such compositions as "The Blood Will Never Lose Its Power," "My Tribute," and "Soon and Very Soon."

Crouch collaborated with artists Stevie Wonder, Chaka Khan, Bob Dylan, Barbara Mandrell, Paul Simon, Elvis Presley and Little Richard. He paved the way for early American contemporary Christian music during the 1960s and 1970s, and modern gospel during the 1980s and 1990s. Crouch's original music arrangements were heard in the films, "The Color Purple," for which he received an Oscar nomination, and Disney's "The Lion King," as well as the NBC television series "Amen." He also received 7 Grammy Awards, induction into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 1998, and a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. This month will feature some of his most popular gospel songs during service.



### **A Picture Worth A Thousand Words**



They say a picture is worth a thousand words.

If you would like to try your hand at creating a special poem for your mother for Mother's Day, inspired by a personal photo of her or the both of you, this would make a lovely and personal greeting card for her special day. You can use the following instructions as your guide. If your mother has departed, this would make a beautiful memorial keepsake.

#### **Instructions:**

- 1. Take a few moments to observe everything about the photo (use the picture at left or use a personal photo of your own).
- **2.** Write down as many words as you can to describe what you see.
- **3. Begin brainstorming.** Write down words that describe how the photo makes you feel.

Express your inner feelings as best as you are able. What emotions come to mind? Are there any connections you can make to your own life? Does it trigger a certain memory? If so, write them down.

Ex: Words for brainstorming picture at left could be:

Mother – Child - Hands – Clapping – Tent – Fun – Love – Teddy Bear - Curtain

5. Once you've brainstormed, you'll be able to use your words and ideas to begin writing the poem.

Who knows? You might be able to bring out your poet within! (If anyone would like to submit their poem and picture for the newsletter, we would love to share it with our readers. The poem you create doesn't need to rhyme, just needs to express your inner feelings.)



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.

The following is a complete list of those we are remembering in prayer. If you have pictures of any individuals for whom we are praying, please bring them to the office, and the photos will be posted on the bulletin board in the Knitting Room. 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); Bob; Bob F (Ar); Brad (Andrew); Cindy (Katie); Chris (Bernie); Chloe (Kim); David (Karen H); DeSean (Kim); Francie (Karen G); Gabriel (Katie); Gary and Valarie (Kim); Gene (Grace); Glenda (Melanie); Heidi (Diane C); Gracie (Kim); Ira and Kathy (Scott); Jackie (Karen G); Jackson; Janet (Evelyn); Jay (Susan); Jerry (Joan); Jerry (Sandy B); Joe (Katie); Joe (Shirley D); Joyce (Sandy B); Julie W (Andrew); Justin (Karen H); Kathy (Bernie); Kathy (Linda L); Katie; Katie B and her husband Joe; Kim B (Jeni); Kyle W; Leanne (Karen H); Lynn (Diane); Mackenzie (Bernie); Marj (Charlie); Michael (Karen H); Michael (Shirley); Mike (Karen H); Mike (Kim); Pat (Karen H); Patty (Katie); Paula (Bernie); Pete (Esther); Peter (Katie); Phyllis (Katie); Rae (Karen G); Roger (Sandy B); Rose (Katie); Sandi; Sandy (Mel); Sandy J (Bernie); Shannon; Sharon (Tom M); Suzanne (Bernie); Tierney (Shirley D); TJ (Katie); Tim (Charlie); Tracy (Noelle L); Trevor (Donna); Yvette (Kim); Wanda (Jeni)

#### We pray for those in need of strength and healing.

Bob (Dave D); Carol S (Ar); Dali, Nafe and Yankho; Dina and Al (Cindy); Edward (Evelyn); Erin Beal and children; Frankie (Bernie); Guy K; Gwynn (Katie); Harry (Katie); Irene and Tiffany (Katie B); Isaiah (Kim); Jessica (Joan); Joan; Joellen (Mel); Karen K (Ar); Kirsten (Kim); Marj and Dar (Melanie); Michelle (Katie); Nancy (Jeni); Tabby, Grace and Christy (Kim); Tammy (Gordon); Natalie (Bernie); Pam (Katie); Patti (Jeni); Sandy D (Ar); Stephanie, Mackenzie and Savino; Susan (Katie)

#### We pray for groups who are in need.

Healthcare providers and others in harm's way, especially **Jean, Kaitlyn, K, and Molly**; those in hospitals and facilities with other health needs besides COVID-19 who cannot have loved ones with them; those in lockdown and isolation; 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.

For the Lenz family on the death of Rev. Edie's Grandma **Helen**; for family and friends of **Dick** (The Delaneys); for families and friends of **Mary Jo** who recently passed away; for the **Mendoza family** on the death of **Laurie** (Tom M); for the family and friends of **Willie** who passed away on April 26 (AR); for 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.

For those who are struggling mentally and emotionally at this time with the prolonged isolation; Coronavirus upsurge throughout the world; **Gina** (Bernie); **Jenny** D (Andrew); those who provide essential services we need; **Ziarko family**; **Dimmick family**; churches who are struggling to reach members and care for people; the injustice and violence around the country

#### We give thanks for the faithfulness of God.

For the gift of our Savior and the hopes of a new year; 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

+



Now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

(*Jude 24*)

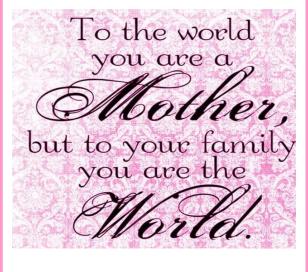
**Benediction:** A blessing at the end of a religious service. Why is it started **before** this report? If you are wondering, let us know.

We finished Chapter 3 of *The Good and The Beautiful Life, The Grand Invitation*.

A sermon, given by the greatest person who ever lived, on the Beatitudes. Do you remember Pastor Edie using the above recently?

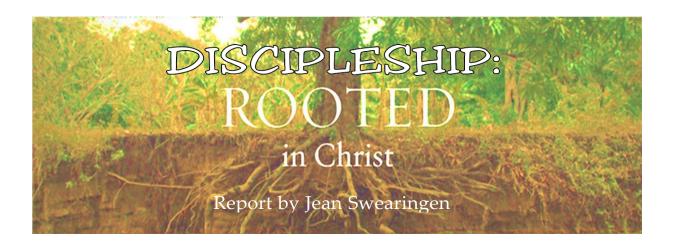
We look forward to having you join us this month as we continue to look into who can enter the kingdom of God.

Love and Hugs, Arlene Pearson



## Happy Mothers' Day to all of our mothers!

Love and Hugs, Arlene Pearson



The Discipleship Committee has exciting plans for Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church (HHPC). Planning is in progress for activities into the summer months!

#### Pop Tabs

The April 2021 newsletter shared that HHPC had delivered pop tabs to The Ronald McDonald House. Our estimate was just over 100 lbs. Although we have not received the official letter, a call to The Ronald McDonald House informed us we delivered 138 lbs.! Again, we are waiting for official documentation, but believe we have now donated 843,822 pop tabs! If these numbers prove true, we are 124 lbs. shy of our goal of 1 million pop tabs! Keep saving!

#### **Recognition Sunday**

Plans continue for Recognition Sunday which will be held on May 23, 2021. HHPC has graduates for 8<sup>th</sup> grade, high school and college. We will recognize and celebrate their accomplishments!

#### **HHPC T-shirts**

As of this writing, HHPC is working with a printer and finalizing the proof work. Information regarding HHPC T-shirts will be shared when the design is finalized and orders can be accepted.

#### Vacation Bible School (VBS) – June 14-17, 2021

HHPC will be celebrating VBS this year with focus on the theme, *Concrete and Cranes*. We have already started planning.

Sign-up sheets will be available soon. Please feel free to let us know how you can help.

Discipleship will meet on Sunday, May 9th at 11:15 a.m.

A Blessed Mother's Day to All Our Moms, Jean



## VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR HHPC SPRING SPRUCE UP!

#### SUNDAY, JUNE 6, 2021 AFTER WORSHIP

(Weeding, new rock and other small landscape projects)

~~Thank you~~



### MISSION REPORT

by Kim Ambrosat

God continues to work through us in our Mission ministry here at HHPC. Thank you to all who continue to serve those in need.



## May Mission: THE UNDY 500

**Underwear Collection** 

Our Mission focus for May is *The Undie 500* to support the work of BEDSPlus. We often overlook and underestimate the value of a clean pair of underwear, but for many, this is a challenging expense. As you are out shopping, pick up a pack of new underwear for any age or size. At the end of the month, these donations will be given to BEDSPlus to benefit those they are serving.

#### **UPDATE:**

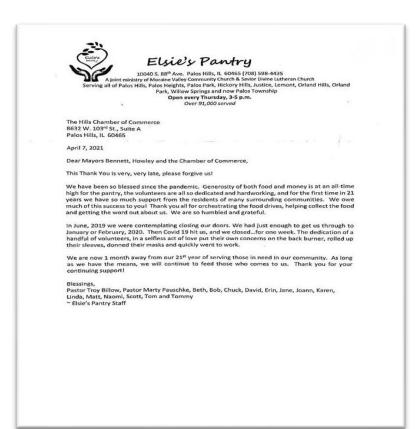
#### **PLASTIC CAPS AND POP TABS**



We are 124 lbs. short of 1 million pop tabs for donation to the Ronald McDonald House in Oak Lawn.



We have collected 448 lbs. of plastic caps. We are almost to our goal of 500. Keep up the collecting! The following letter of thanks to the Hickory Hills Chamber of Commerce was received from Elsie's Pantry. HHPC will continue to do our part to help keep Elsie's Pantry a vital resource for our community.



#### **UPCOMING HHPC MISSIONS**

JUNE – Dakota Partnership – Swimsuits & Towels

JULY – School Supplies

AUGUST – Feed My Starving Children

SEPTEMBER – Hygiene Kits – Church World Service

OCTOBER – Tree of Warmth

NOVEMBER – Reverse Advent Calendar – Elsie's Pantry

DECEMBER – Jones Center – Children's Gifts

## **UPCOMING EVENTS!**



## HHPC DRIVE-THRU COMMUNITY MEAL

MONDAY, MAY 3, 2021 5:30 PM - 6:00 PM

#### THIS MONTH'S MENU:

Chicken Fajitas, Beans & Rice & Jell-O

Want to help? Call Evelyn Garlic 708-752-1529

## **VBS IS BACK!**



#### **CONCRETE AND CRANES**

MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY JUNE 14, 15, 16 & 17, 2021 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM



## HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY MAY 20, 21 & 22, 2021

#### **SALE HOURS**

Thursday, May 20 9:00 AM - 7:00 PM Friday, May 21 9:00 AM - 7:00 PM Saturday, May 22 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

#### **DONATION DROP-OFF TIMES**

 Sunday, May 16
 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

 Monday, May 17
 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

 Tuesday, May 18
 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

 Wednesday, May 19
 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Call Grace at 708-423-6378 if you would like to volunteer.

#### Don't Dump – Donate!

Got any unneeded items from your attics, basements or closets?

Donate them for the HHPC Rummage Sale! Items such as old tube TVs and computer monitors cannot be accepted.



# HHPC T-SHIRTS WILL BE ON SALE SOON!

See page 8 for information.



**Thank you ALL** for your support, love and cards for my dad (and father-in-law). We love our church family!

Hugs, Rick and Jeni Vogl



The Connecting Link invites our newsletter friends to share their personal stories or pictures with our readers. Don't be shy! We are happy to include them in the newsletter. E-mail them to the office at hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org. (Submissions should include a brief description of picture/event.)



God bless those celebrating their birthdays in May.

May they be filled with happiness and joy
throughout the year!

John Kemp	May 2
Myrnalyn Delalamon	May 3
Luz Korzeniewski	May 10
Carol Sack	May 10
Francine Costello	May 10
Wilda Duncan	May 11
Greg Majersky	May 26
Karen Golema	May 29



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 at 708-598-3100 or via e-mail at <a href="https://hhbc@hickoryhillspres.org">hhbc@hickoryhillspres.org</a>.

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

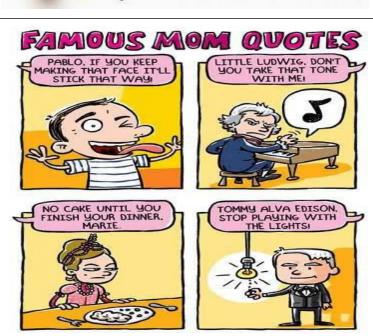


## LOL TIME

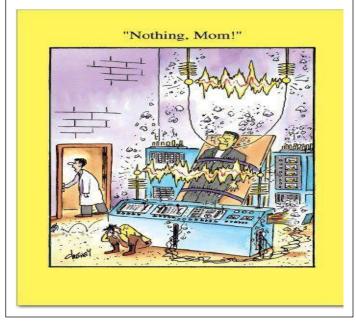
Sending out an LOL (Lots of Love) to all Moms!











### **MAY 2021**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
10:00 AM In-person Worship 5:00 PM REV In-person Worship	1:00 PM In-person Women's Bible Study 5:30 PM – 6:00 PM HHPC Drive-thru Community Meal (Fajitas, Rice and Beans, Jell-O)	9:00 AM Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	9:30 AM Prayer and Care in our homes 6:00 PM Worship & Music meets on Zoom	9:00 AM Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	7	9:00 AM HHPC Visioning Meeting (Until 12 noon)
MOTHER'S DAY 9 10:00 AM In-person Worship 11:15 AM Discipleship meets 5:00 PM REV In-person Worship	1:00 PM In-person Women's Bible Study 7:30 PM Session meets	9:00 AM Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	9:30 AM Prayer and Care in our homes	9:00 AM Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	14	15
*****	17 1:00 PM In-person Women's Bible Study ccepting donations	9:00 AM Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	9:30 AM Prayer and Care in our homes	9:00 AM Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	21 Rummage Sale 5-	22 20 to 5-22
REV In-person Worship  23  RECOGNITION SUNDAY 10:00 AM In-person Worship 11:15 AM Board of Deacons Meet 5:00 PM REV In-person Worship CONTENT FOR NEWSLETTER DUE	1:00 PM In-person Women's Bible Study	9:00 AM Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	9:30 AM Prayer and Care in our homes	9:00 AM Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	28	29
10:00 AM In-person Worship ONE CHURCH, ONE SERVICE	31 MEMORIAL DAY					SIN

### 8426 West 95th Street Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

Hickory Hills, IL 60457

#### **CURRENT RESIDENT OR**

DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT HOLD

## THE CONNECTING LINK

A monthly newsletter from the Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

Connecting together to worship and praise our God!

