

St. Matthew's Messenger

MAY 2017

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Pennington, N.J. 08534

To receive the monthly Messenger announcements please go to our website <http://stmatthewspennington.org/>, click on the link "sign up for emails" under "About us" to add yourself to our mailing list. *The Church is open for prayer and meditation* during parish office hours on weekdays: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday from 9:30am-4pm and Tuesdays and Fridays till 12noon.

Rummage sale

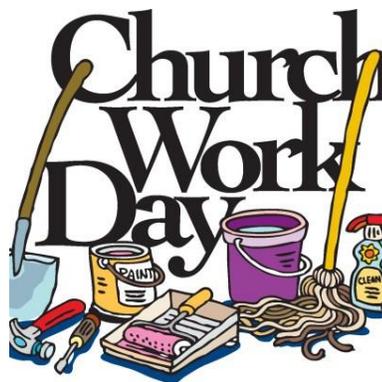
Like all good gardeners, as the first signs of spring begin to show in my yard, I turn my thoughts to the St. Matthew's Rummage Sale! What can I say; I love this ongoing project and all of the wonderful people who make it happen. And while I also love to garden, I willingly give up time in the back yard to make our community better through rummage.



Before we are knee deep once again in piles and boxes and bags of donated items, I want to thank you for prioritizing the rummage sale twice a year over so many of the other entertaining and important things that you have in your lives. You truly make a difference in the lives of the less fortunate, and I truly appreciate all of your back-breaking work.

The schedule for this sale is as follows and I appreciate any help you can give.

Sunday, April 30 th	11:30-12:30	Sale Set-Up, Donation Drop Off
Monday, May 1 st	9-5	Displays, Sorting, Folding, and Donation Drop Off
Tuesday, May 2 nd	9-5	Displays, Sorting, Folding, and Donation Drop Off
Wednesday, May 3 rd	9-5	Displays, Sorting, Folding, and Donation Drop Off
Thursday, May 4 th	9-5	Displays, Sorting and Folding
Friday, May 5 th	9-5 and 6-8	SALE DAY!
Saturday, May 6 th	9-12 and 12-2	SALE DAY and Sale Breakdown



Spring 2017 Property Work Day

Saturday Morning – May 13th, Starting at 9:00 AM

There are many small jobs that are not covered by our cleaning crew or outside contractors that could use our helping hands. This is where we, as parishioners, can share our time and talents to maintain our building and grounds.

Help for an hour, two hours, or more, but come and enjoy the fun and fellowship of working together. A list of planned projects and the sign-up sheet will be located in Belmont Hall after the Sunday services. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Al Krokowski at (609) 204-8412

Kairos

We will celebrate our Second Grade Eucharist Class with a 10 am Family Worship Service on Sunday, May 21st. What IS a Family Worship Service? A Family Worship Service is what you might expect – a service where the entire family worships together! We invite our Kairos youth to join their families for the service instead of being in the classroom. These services are “kid friendly”, differing from the usual Sunday Service in the following ways:



- Our Kairos youth serve as ushers and readers
- We reduce the number of readings
- The sermon is created with the children specifically in mind
- Children are invited to sit at the foot of the altar for the sermon
- We choose child friendly music
- We will have a special reception following the service

We understand that younger parishioners may not have embraced the art of quiet worship – and that’s ok! Worship bags will be available with quiet items for the children to keep their hands busy if need be. We will also have a special reception following the service

Our Kairos church school year will come to an end on **Sunday, May 21st**. This will be the last Sunday of classes before Kairos takes a summer break. This will also be a day of appreciation for and celebration of our wonderful teachers and staff. All grades will begin in their classrooms that morning and will then join the congregation for the media presentation and teacher recognition. Please join us in celebrating this ministry and the people who make it possible.

Thank you to our 2016-2017 Kairos staff!

Primary-Second Grade Teachers

Cindy Luciano – Lead
Gayl Martinez
Brenda McNeil
Teens~
Lauren Bruhl
Julia Drake
Shannon Gribbins
Naomi Kinnamon
Natalie Kinnamon

Fifth/Sixth Grade Teachers

Gioia Miranda - Lead
Ashley Calhoun
Joe McNeil

Seventh/Eighth Grade Teachers

Tim Cooper - Lead
Ti Pearse-Drance

Third/Fourth Grade Teachers

Ginny Buchanan – Lead
John Krisulewicz
Kay Krisulewicz
Sofia Stepanoff

Kairos Director

Lori Cooper

Kairos Photographer

Mick Jones

I am delighted to say that our high school graduating teen teachers will be continuing their education locally and have committed to staying on the teaching staff for next year. Please join us in congratulating **Naomi Kinnamon, Natalie Kinnamon, Ti Pearse-Drance and Sofia Stepanoff**.

Special thank you to **Mick Jones**, for his kind heart, eyes and talent, for capturing the joy and spirit of our children and our ministry in photographs. His beautiful work will be seen in the end of the year media presentation on Sunday, May 21st at both the 8am and 10am services.

Kairos Calendar

Sunday, May 7: Family Worship Sunday celebrating our Second Grade Eucharist Class

- All are invited to join the service and the special reception following

Sunday, May 14: Happy Mother’s Day!

- Regular lessons for grades Primary-6th, 7th & 8th grade join Logos service

Sunday, May 21: Last day of Kairos classes, media presentation and reception to follow

MUSIC MINISTRY

May 2017

A very special thank you to all of those whose singing and playing made our Holy Week and Easter services so beautiful and uplifting. I am very grateful for all who continue to volunteer their time to the parish as choir members, ringers, instrumentalists and their families. THANK YOU!!



It's hard to imagine that the end of the 2016-2017 choir season is nearly here! Rounding out the year are dates on the calendar out of the "norm" from the usual schedule.

Sunday May 7, 2017 10am

Family Worship and Second Grade First Eucharist
Child/Family friendly service and music

Sunday May 7, 2017 5pm

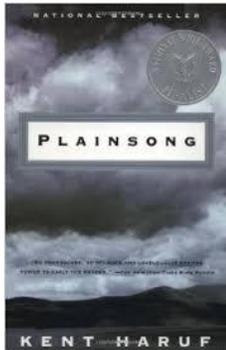
Choral Evensong @ Trinity Church, Princeton

All are invited to attend Trinity's last Choral Evensong of their choir season, in their recently renovated sanctuary. Our adult choir will combine forces with the Trinity Choir to sing repertoire as they make final preparations for their summer residency at Westminster Abbey, UK. Music of Herbert Howells and Malcolm Williamson. Tom Whittemore and Jim Douglas, music directors.

Sunday, June 11, 2017 10am

Choir Sunday

The last choir Sunday before summer break concludes on June 11, with all of the music for the morning chosen by our choirs.



ST. MATTHEW'S BOOK CLUB

May 18 Plainsong Kent Haruf

Kent Haruf reveals a whole community as he interweaves the stories of a pregnant high school girl, a lonely teacher, a pair of boys abandoned by their mother, and a couple of crusty bachelor farmers. From simple elements, Haruf achieves a novel of wisdom and grace--a narrative that builds in strength and feeling until, as in a choral chant, the voices in the book surround, transport, and lift the reader off the ground.

Dear Friends,

Many of us have experienced the pain and bewilderment of losing a loved one: children, parents, spouses, friends, even pets. And, we all know someone who is grieving. Each of us needs support and care in times of grief. And being able to offer that same support and care to each other in times of loss is an essential part of what it means to intentionally nurture Christian community. The following articles by Good Grief are helpful resources for us as we grapple with loss, mortality, and being there for each other in times of grief.

Earth Awareness: excerpts from a letter from the new pastor of the UMC in Hopewell

Dear community members,

If I do not know you personally — please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Kate Hillis, the new pastor of Hopewell United Methodist Church in Hopewell, NJ. I am working closely with Heidi Wilenius as she has begun Hope Rises Up, and also Emily Vickers on an environmental focus group to work under the direction of Hope Rises Up. I hope to make your acquaintance soon enough!



Throughout the month of May, Hopewell UMC is hosting an Earth Awareness Celebration. We have a series of events coming up that are free to all and geared toward the community. You can find the schedule on www.hopewellmethodist.org.

On May 6th from 10AM-12:15PM, we are hosting an Interfaith Panel on the environment with distinguished representatives from some of the major religious faith traditions: Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and Islam. The panel will be presenting on how these major world religions understand the imperative to care for the earth and the work being done in the areas of environmental activism, ecological preservation, and earth care in these different faith traditions. Our panelists are world renowned scholars and activists with much to contribute to this discussion.

I would like to extend an invitation you and others who might be interested in this incredible learning opportunity.

[...]

For more information and to RSVP:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/665263036990320/> or
<https://hopewellboro.nextdoor.com/events/1177543/>

I hope to see you all there!

Pastor Kate

Reverend Kate Hillis
Lead Pastor

Hopewell United Methodist Church
Hope Starts Here
20 Blackwell Ave.
Hopewell, NJ 08525
revkatehillis@gmail.com



WHAT IS GRIEF?

Grief is a normal and natural reaction to death. Love and grief are inseparable – they are yin and yang. So when we lose those we love we experience grief. It is a normal response and it has been a part of the human condition since the beginning of time. You can see grief in every culture. Some cultures embrace this experience more directly than others. Some, unfortunately, sweep this experience under the rug or pathologize it as an abnormality.

GRIEF IS NOT JUST AN EMOTIONAL REACTION, THOUGH. GRIEF IS AN EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL, AND INTELLECTUAL EXPERIENCE.

EMOTIONAL – It is not uncommon to feel anger, numbness, relief, uncertainty, anxiety, fear, depression, apathy, sadness, and joy as a part of the grief experience. All emotions are valid and they vary based on all sorts of circumstances. See some of the variables that influence the grief experience below.

INTELLECTUAL – We experience a range of thoughts about grief, which can include blame, the idea that we could have prevented the death, we often try to “wrap our heads” around the fact that someone is gone, we frequently try to make sense of things, we may try to make meaning, and we may think that the death and our consequential circumstances are unjust. This component also forces us to reimagine our lives and change our expectations, hopes, and plans.

SPIRITUAL – As humans, we try to understand “how” and “why” bad things happen. Often times, this is where we do our meaning making. Religion may play a role, but our understanding of our lives and the meaning of life itself is often at play here. “He was such a good person. How could this of happened to him?” or “why didn’t she ask for help?” etc.

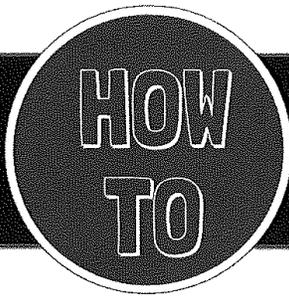
PHYSICAL – Grief is exhausting! For adults, fatigue and feeling like you’re in a fog is not uncommon. For kids, they often experience bellyaches and headaches. Without a safe environment to express their grief, kids often bottle it all up which leads to behavioral expressions that may get a child into trouble. It is not uncommon for grief to cause people to overeat or under eat. It is also not uncommon for a grieving body to be susceptible to illness, as the immune system is often weak during intense grief.

HERE ARE A FEW VARIABLES THAT WILL INFLUENCE GRIEF:

- Culture
- Support system
- The nature of the relationship
- Religion
- How the person died
- Comments that people make
- Stigmas

And many external variables that are outside of the grieving person’s control.





CREATE A SAFE SPACE FOR SOMEONE WHO IS GRIEVING

People's willingness to be vulnerable often depends on feeling safe. Creating a safe environment requires empathy, hospitality, and the right intentions. When we are empathic and try to understand someone's needs, then we can provide a safe space for those hurting to be authentic and vulnerable.

1 CREATE TRUST

Trust changes in new situations. Someone's ability to be vulnerable, share openly, lose a sense of control, and feel exposed is dependent on them feeling safe. Creating a safe environment starts with body language, ability to listen without interruption, not making it about you, and not judging. These are critical components to establishing trust.

2 NO JUDGMENT

Give people the space to share without judgment, advice, or unsolicited feedback.

3 NO INTERRUPTING

Give the person time to share as much or as little as s/he wants. Don't interrupt with questions, your own story, or advice.

4 BE EMPATHIC

Listen with the intent of trying to understand the person's perspective.

5 BE REAL

Death and grief are hard. But, we don't have to pretend like we are corny psychologists on a Hollywood TV set. Be your real and authentic self. You can say, "This sucks so bad." You can laugh and cry with someone. You can make jokes they'd find appropriate. You should be you so they can be who they are.

6 BE OPEN

Be accepting of outbursts and outlandish comments. Maybe the person needs to make a crude or poorly timed joke about the death. Maybe s/he needs to crumble for a few minutes. When you are open and welcome to whatever comes your way, the person has permission to be in the moment and do whatever is needed.

7 CREATE SILENCE

Words are not always our friend. Silence makes some of us uncomfortable, but it is an incredible tool that creates space for more sharing. Silence gives time to process. It acknowledges that words can't make it better, and it honors the intensity of a moment or story.

8 KEEP CONFIDENTIALITY

Assure the person that what is said to you will stay with you, and keep that promise. Don't repeat, allude to, or go telling people something that was shared in confidence.

9 INVITE SHARING

If you are open, you will naturally invite more sharing. By expressing your interest in their wellbeing and attempting to understand and empathize, the person will feel that they can keep sharing and be vulnerable. Encourage them along the way. See our communications tip sheet for more on this.

10 BE VULNERABLE

It's okay to be vulnerable and to be moved by what you hear. Tears are okay, they show you care. But, don't make the person have to start taking care of you, that's not helpful.

11 DON'T MAKE IT ABOUT YOU

...because it's not.