



THE CONNECTING LINK



Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church
8426 W. 95th St.

Hickory Hills, IL 60457

(708) 598-3100

Fax (708) 598-3108

www.hickoryhillspres.org

Email: HHPC@hickoryhillspres.org

AUGUST 2012

Minor Ministerial Musings

"O daughter Babylon, you devastator! Happy shall they be who pay you back what you have done to us! Happy shall they be who take your little ones and dash them against the rock!"

(Psalm 137:8-9, NRSV)

Yes, that's in our Bible. And it's interesting, because the first part of Psalm 137 is very beautiful – poignant and sad, but beautiful nonetheless. It is the lament of those who have been taken into exile in Babylon: "By the rivers of Babylon – there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our harps" (Ps. 137:1-2, NRSV).

But by the end of the psalm, the sentiments being expressed are anything but beautiful. And while it is true that the words of this Psalm, the wishes expressed, are statements against the enemies of God's people, the violence and the harshness are still very startling to encounter. Even more startling is the realization that this is a *prayer*. It is a prayer of lament that turns into an angry and violent prayer for vengeance – not vindication, but vengeance. It is a prayer *for* violence.

In talking about prayer, we have talked about prayers that may seem selfish – that is, prayers for oneself, or one's own well-being. But there are prayers that take selfishness to a whole new level. Prayers of lament, or prayers that are simply expressions of sadness about the particular situation of the one praying, can just sound like complaints or pity-parties. And then there are prayers that express anger, and even the desire for revenge. Prayers that wish harm on other people – are those really prayers after all? How can it possibly be okay to pray something like that?

All through Scripture, we are told the stories of those who are oppressed, who are discriminated against, who are marginalized, who are exiled and imprisoned, who are martyred and killed, whose weakness is exploited. The message of the Kingdom of God is that there is hope for all of those people, that abuse and even death do not have the ultimate power or the final say over anyone's life who is in Christ. The message of the Kingdom of God is that we are to work for peace, for justice, for mercy, and for an end to all such abuse and oppression. In the meantime, however, there have been – and are – people who have suffered unimaginably and undeservedly. And the feelings that such abuse and suffering give rise to are very real. We are, after all, only human.

If we were to give our feelings free reign and free expression, however, things could turn very ugly very fast. Can you imagine if the one who wrote Psalm 137 actually began to mount a resistance to Babylonian exile that involved kidnapping and violently killing the children of Judah's captors? Answering violence with violence would certainly not end the exile – it would only perpetuate the violence. Plus, there is that whole sixth commandment issue – "You shall not kill".

But remember what the Psalms are – they are prayers. And remember what prayer is – it is talking and listening to God. There are feelings that we can't control in a healthy way on our own – either by acting openly on them, or by keeping them suppressed in our hearts and minds and souls. But there is *nothing* that God can't handle or control. And in prayer, we are invited to bring *everything* to God – all that we are feeling, all that we are thinking – our joys *and* our sorrows. And yes, even

our laments and pity parties. And yes, even our anger. Because it is God who changes hearts. It is God who changes *us*. It is God who, through Christ, makes us into new creations. And it is God who can calm our anger and sadness, and turn them into redemption and reconciliation and renewed joy.

So yes, it is okay to pray our anger and even our desire for revenge. It is okay to pray our sadness and even our self-pity. It is not only "okay" – it is necessary, so that we can ask God to handle what we cannot. So that we can recognize that God is God, and we are not. So that our feelings don't turn into wrong actions. So that the glory is always God's. Let us pray. See you in church Sunday!

In Joyful Anticipation,
Pastor Lara



HHPC PRAYER REQUESTS

The Family of Lenora Warren on her passing
The Family of Mary Davis on her passing
Mary's nephew, Jerry Bemis, for health concerns
Barb Brown's friend for health concerns
Michael for Hope & Strength
Shirley Dragas' sister, Sheryl, for strength &
her husband Jerry Smith, for health concerns
The Family of Tom Morrell, Sr. on his passing
Tomas Trakas and family on the loss
of Tomas' grandmother
Ivy Taebel's granddaughter, Abby,
for health concerns
Melanie's friend, Crystale Pierce,
for health & strength
Rhett Golema for health concerns
Jean Somerstorfer for health concerns
Scott's co-worker Loretta, for health concerns
Tom Treccani's aunt, Florence Ziehm,
for health concerns
Bob L. for health concerns and
wife Karen for strength
Paul for health concerns and wife for strength
Charley Huenecke's cousin, Mary Zywicki,
for health concerns
Gert Vickers' grandson, Mike, for health concerns
Arlene Kasper's mother, Geraldine,
for health concerns
Jerome Panko for health concerns, & wife Joan
Jim Kupka for healing & Marcia for strength
Ruth, Carol Sack's mom, for health concerns
Dave LaCognata for strength to move forward
Margaret Dawson, Jimmie's aunt,
for health concerns

Ralph Pontrelli for health concerns
Melanie Swindle's neighbor's sister, Kaya,
for health concerns
Katie Crowley's friend for health concerns
Darlene Kibort's daughter-in-law, Carla Murray,
for health concerns
Mary Richer's son, Larry, for health concerns
Donna's daughter-in-law's mother, Barbara,
for health concerns
Bev & Linda Kahn for strength, &
Richard Kahn for health concerns
Toni's son, Jerry, for health concerns
Dave Barker's mom Blanche for health concerns
Susan's friend, Leda, for strength
Ruth Hill for healing
Daniel Esparza for continued healing
Ivy Taebel's son, Dan, for healing
Judy MacGregor, Kirk's grandmother,
for health concerns
Wilda Duncan's friend, Kelly, for lung transplant
Donna's friend, Gail Hensen, for health concerns
Harry Zimmerman for health concerns & strength
Kyle Krueger, in Marine Corps
Dorothy Allen for strength & healing
Our Service Men & Women and their families
Policemen, Firemen, and their families
DelPrete family for strength, faith, &
hope during Jen's battle

**Prayer Groups meet on Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.,
and Wednesday at 9:30 a.m.**

**We encourage you to attend this
Vital Ministry of our church.**

PRAYER is the ENGINE of the CHURCH

Sacrament of Holy Communion- Aug. 5, 2012

SUNDAY	USHERS	LAY READER
Aug. 5, 2012	K. Dritz, C. Pilgrim, R. Raschke	Dave Delaney
Aug. 12, 2012	D. LaCognata	Rick Vogl
Aug. 19, 2012	B. Ambrosat, F. Esparza, M. Maranto	Ken Dritz
Aug. 26, 2012	D. Barker, D. Ciametti, T. Morrell	Kim Ambrosat
SUNDAY	COUNTERS	
Aug. 5, 2012	Susan Frangella	
Aug. 12, 2012	Susan Frangella, Karen Hoffman	
Aug. 19, 2012	Susan Frangella, Sandy Beal	
Aug. 26, 2012	Susan Frangella, Shirley Brunell	

Communion Servers: Dave Delaney, Ivy Taebel



PRAYER AND CARE

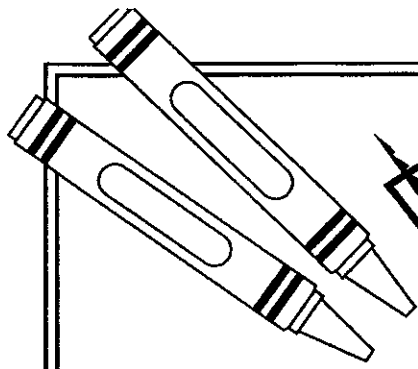
*“And he told them a parable, to the effect that they ought
always to pray and not lose heart.” (LUKE 18:1 RSV)*

The Gospels often mention Jesus’ habit of prayer, usually in connection with important junctures in His ministry. What we need to realize is how prayer affected Him. Like our Savior’s example, we at HIPC don’t take a vacation from praying.

Prayer yielded an incessant refreshing of His spirit on earth and still does so in heaven. Come and refresh your spirit with us in the Upper Room (library).

AUGUST 2012

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
			1 9:30 a.m. Prayer & Care 4:00 p.m. Food Pantry	2 5:00 p.m. TOPS	3	4
5 9:00 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Worship 3:00 p.m. Praise Team 5:00 p.m. REV	6	7 9:30 a.m. Cancer Sewing 6:30 p.m. Prayer & Care	8 9 a.m. Stampers 9:30 a.m. Prayer & Care 4:00 p.m. Food Pantry	9 5:00 p.m. TOPS	10	11 2:00 p.m. Building & Grounds
12 9:00 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Worship 3:00 p.m. Praise Team 5:00 p.m. REV <u>Sept. Newsletter Deadline</u>	13 7:30 p.m. Session Meeting	14 6:30 p.m. Prayer & Care	15 9:30 a.m. Prayer & Care 4:00 p.m. Food Pantry	16 5:00 p.m. TOPS	17	18
19 9:00 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Worship 3:00 p.m. Praise Team 5:00 p.m. REV	20 7:30 p.m. Outreach Meeting	21 6:30 p.m. Prayer & Care 7:30 p.m. REV Committee Meeting	22 9 a.m. Stampers 9:30 a.m. Prayer & Care 4:00 p.m. Food Pantry	23 5:00 p.m. TOPS	24	25
26 9:00 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Worship 3:00 p.m. Praise Team 5:00 p.m. REV	27 7:30 p.m. Deacons Meeting	28 6:30 p.m. Prayer & Care	29 9:30 a.m. Prayer & Care 4:00 p.m. Food Pantry	30 5:00 p.m. TOPS	31	



PUZZLE

KNOW THE WAY

Thomas said to Jesus, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" (John 14:5, NIV).

Directions: To read Jesus' reply, shade in the letters that contain an asterisk (*) and write them in order on the blanks below.

u n s w e r e i a m h w a
y a n t l r u t c h l f i v f e
n o o n a e c s o x m e s
f a z t h e r r o u c d g h
p u m r x e s t j v g o h n

Jes ___ ans ___ d, " ___ the ___
___ d the ___ and the ___
___ to the
___ except th ___."

___ 14:6, NIV

Answer: Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6, NIV

August Birthdays

August 1 – Anthony Lavaretto
1 – Patricia Pilgrim
2 – Susan Beal Frangella
2- Jeni Vogl
3- Shannon Bastien
5 – Carolyn Watson
5 – Dave Ulrich
6- Ashley Maranto
10 – Jimmy Kupka
11 – Gertrude Vickers
12 – David Semani
12 – Don Rys
13 – Agnes Davidson
14 – Tia Del Prete
17 – Paul Bredlau
18 – Jimmie Rehbock
21 – Angie Ochoa
21- Chris Maranto
22 – Christine Fox
23 – Abigail Rellinger
29 – Micki Kluska
30 – Marilyn Betterton

Any omissions or errors should be reported to the church office...

708-598-3100 or

HHPC@hickoryhillspres.org

**If you wish to receive *The Connecting Link* through email, and no longer receive a paper version, please send an email to: newsletter@hickoryhillspres.org and we will place you on the mailing list. Thank you.*



Please recycle this newsletter when you are finished enjoying it. There are recycling bins located around the church. Thank you.

**Do Not Hold
Dated Material**

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #12
BRIDGEVIEW, IL
60455

HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
8426 West 95th Street
Hickory Hills, Illinois 60457