



News From Holland

Newsletter of Holland First United Methodist Church

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Rev. Chris Hughes, Pastor

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Web Site: www.hollandum.org

Chris' Corner

“Live every day as if it mattered.”

² *"Honor your father and mother"--this is the first commandment with a promise: ³ "so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."* **Ephesians 6:2-3**

On May 10th, 1908, Mrs. Anna Reeves Jarvis, a Methodist in Philadelphia and the driving force behind a nationwide Mother's day, honored the memory of her mother, as churches across America celebrated the 1st congressionally mandated Mothers' Day!

As I think about how to honor the memory of my mother, Frances Sward Hughes, I remember how Mom, like Anna Jarvis made a difference that has outlasted her lifetime.

There are a lot of stories I could tell you about my mom: how she overcame crippling childhood arthritis to bear and raise six children; how she filled our home with love and the smell of fresh-baked bread; how she led the family in singing around the piano from the Methodist Hymnal, the Cokesbury Hymnal, and a collection of well-loved music from Reader's Digest that sits on the piano in our home today.

The stories that mean the most to me, however, are the stories my brothers and sisters heard from the people leaving her funeral at Dilworth United Methodist Church in Charlotte, NC. The 600 seat sanctuary was filled with people who came to honor my mom, because she had touched their lives.

There were young women who'd received a scholarship through a memorial fund my mother helped establish. Mom had followed their careers, and written and called them on a regular basis to encourage and strengthen them.

There were men and women my mother had taught to cook and bake at the agricultural extension service.

There were the families of the critically ill women, Mom used to visit, even while she herself was struggling with cancer.

There were the women in the neighborhood who knew that mom always had a listening ear. No matter what she was doing, mom would pull up a stool and invite them to help her in the kitchen as she prepared a meal, or experimented with new recipes to share with others.

Frances Hughes lived a motto she'd adopted from a dear friend who preceded her in death by a few years: *"Live every day as if it mattered."* This month, I honor my mother by trying to live the same way.

Thank you Mom, for making a difference in my life, and in the lives of so many others.

Grace & Shalom,

Chris

SERMON TOPICS FOR MAY

Date	Scripture	Sermon
May 7 Communion Day CTLC Collection	<i>1 John 3:16 –24</i>	“Staying ‘in the Box’!”
May 14 Mothers’ Day	<i>John 13:31 –35</i>	“Go Mediate”
May 21	<i>John 15:1-8</i>	“He’s the Vine-We’re the Branches”
May 28	<i>John 15: 9-16</i>	“Chosen and Appointed”

UMW News

We continue the study led by Chris Hughes at the home of Kathy Hegar on May 17, 2006. We will gather at noon to enjoy a soup and salad luncheon. Let Kathy know if you will be able to join us.

Judy’s News**Adult Sunday School**

Our class is growing!!! We still have room for YOU! The discussions are great! Stay for an hour after church. You will want to come back.

Prayer Circle-May 3rd

We will meet at 6:00 p.m. with the quilters. Bring your prayer concerns.

Cowboy Church-May 21st

The Sportsmen Club Band will be back. They were awesome and enjoyed being there so much, they asked to come back. Let’s get the word out so that we have a great crowd!

Luncheon-May 24th

In May we will have lunch on Wednesday, the 24th at **Yank Sing Chinese Buffet** on the Loop (next to Applebee’s). Please notice it is a different place. They have a wide variety of Chinese and American foods. We will meet at 11:30 a.m.

Parish Nursing

SABBATH – A HEALTHY HABIT

Chris and I discovered the real meaning of Sabbath almost by accident. We began our married life together in Jerusalem, Israel in 1993. Our first apartment was a sublet on the Jerusalem/Bethlehem border. No buses run on the Sabbath (Friday at sunset till Saturday at sunset) in Jerusalem and a bus is the only means of transport for the majority of folks there, including us. So...Chris and I were forced to stay home on the Sabbath and, even better, came to enjoy and crave these times together. We would awake on those Sabbath mornings to kids playing ball in the streets that were usually clogged with traffic and noise. It reminded me of snow days in my childhood in Ohio.

There were strict guidelines for what you could and could not do. Chris and I developed a Sabbath routine of rest, communicating with each other, and taking short walks to the local synagogue as we greeted folks along the way. It became our favorite day of the week and we often would remind each other that Sabbath was coming. We have tried to keep some form of this Sabbath in our lives since our return to the States.

Is there a big list of Sabbath does and don'ts? Well, observant Jews have a long list but the Bible says to "remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy." (Exodus 20:8 KJV) Sabbath rest was first shown to us when God did it after creating the world. (See Genesis 2:3) God rested on the seventh day and blessed that day and called it holy.

Do you take one day a week to rest and keep that day holy? What does that day look like for you? I encourage you to take a Sabbath rest each week as a sign that God rules the universe so capably. Taking a Sabbath rest also reminds us to take time to be thankful. Sabbath rest gives us space for reflection of our last week, our life, God's work in our life and where we are going in life. One of my favorite verses is Psalm 46:10 and also one of the most challenging aspects of Sabbath rest – stillness – "Be still and know that I am God". For one day a week we can and must lay aside our "To Do" lists and focus on the power of God and not our own power. For me, a doer, this is a very difficult concept but a very rewarding one when I do it. One of my favorite benefits is spending time with family and friends during my Sabbath rest. Lastly, and most importantly, I develop a friendship with God, my very best Friend that NEVER lets me down, when I spend time with God during my Sabbath rest.

The Hebrew word for Sabbath means "stop, cease, pause, rest, desist." First, decide what to stop doing. I encourage you NOT to develop a legalistic list of do's and don'ts but rather to intentionally free your schedule so that you can experience God and enjoy getting to know God better. Next, decide what to start doing. Jewish people who celebrate the Sabbath have festive meals with candles and prayers, family walks, and a short celebration at the end of Sabbath to remind them to take the sense of Sabbath with them all week long. What habits could you form as a tradition for your Sabbath that would help you feel closer to God? Enjoying nature, praying for the prayer requests you have received that week, Bible study &/or devotions, journaling, reading aloud as a family, bike rides, nurturing your marriage.

Be warned, trying to do a bunch of "spiritual" stuff on your Sabbath day will probably backfire. Who wants to have that much structured discipline on their day of rest? The temptation will be to forego Sabbath for fun. Hey, how about putting fun into your Sabbath? God is the most fun one I know. God invented fun! Focus on stopping the doing, the activities of our everyday lives and allowing room in your life and your heart for God. Doing things, even good things, often help us to miss the rest that God wants us to receive.

Since Chris and I have begun experiencing a true Sabbath, we have come to better know the Grace of our Lord.

Stopping our 'To Do' list reminds us on a weekly basis that God loves us and that God's love does not depend on what we do but on whose we are. God made us and chose to love us. Nothing we do or don't do will make God love us more or less. God just wants to spend time with us – so that we may get to know each other better. How you do your Sabbath is up to you. Practicing the Sabbath reminds us of the fragrance of God's magnificence, God's grace, and God's abundant love. May you celebrate the Sabbath and get to know God better.

Trusting in the Great Physician – Jesus Christ,

Becky Hughes, RN, MHA

Parish Nurse