

Hope, Gratitude and *Solidarity*



THE BOARD OF THE DUTCHESS COUNTY INTERFAITH COUNCIL STANDS SHOULDER TO SHOULDER with so many religious and non-religious organizations in denouncing the murder of George Floyd. We support peaceful protests that ask our nation to address the unaddressed causes of racism that sicken our society and our souls. The work ahead of us is profoundly challenging, but our faith traditions demand that we look upon each other with the eyes of compassion.

We call all people to sit in judgment upon their hearts, knowing that it is our actions and our inaction that reveal our character. Let this be the moment where the oppressed are heard, supported, and uplifted. Let this be the moment where those who have ignored the pain of racism in America awake to see the injustice suffered by too many Americans. Let this be the moment we work together to bring about justice for all.

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE to our CONGREGATIONS

Congregations and their members have an incredible opportunity to help the environment and local green innovation economy while also producing much-needed income, by participating in DCIC's partnership with **Nexamp Community Solar**.



New York State's community solar program allows utility customers to subscribe to a share of a local solar farm and receive credits on their utility bill for 100% of the energy produced by that share, while also paying for that electricity at a 10% discount. There is a special incentive in place for sign-ups by September 30th: Nexamp will make donations to both DCIC and the home congregation that

signs up for an organizational account. In addition, individual congregants can sign up for personal accounts. For each participant, Nexamp will make a significant donation to the home congregation. There is no cost to join, no equipment installed, no long-term commitment, guaranteed savings, and no cancellation fee. This offer is available for residences (both owned and rented) as well as congregant-owned businesses and is available whether or not the home congregation signs up itself.

We urge everyone to bring this opportunity to the attention of your clergy and board members as well as friends in the many congregations that are part of the DCIC family! We thank Vassar Temple and Temple Beth El and their members, who are already seeing savings on their organizational and personal utility bills as well as donations to support both DCIC and their congregations.

Call **Yushi Kawasumi**, Community and Channel Manager at Nexamp, at (201) 314-3799 or email him at ykawasumi@nexamp.com. Yushi is available to meet virtually or speak with any Board of Trustees, property committee, or congregational gathering to discuss this opportunity. This is easy, financially beneficial, and socially responsible. This is a win!

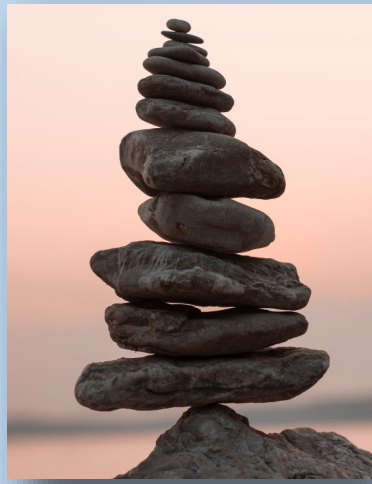


A Story Circle in RECTANGLES

Many asked for more! On **Thursday, July 30** we will hold our second Zoom story circle, 7-8:30.

To attend, please register by sending an email to: DCICstory@optonline.net

Once you register, you will receive a Zoom link for the gathering.



MEDITATION FROM ANI DEPA, Kagyu Thubten Choling Buddhist Monastery

<https://www.kagyu.com/>

They used to be called “service workers”: the people who prepare our food, deliver our packages, drive our buses, clean our offices, and staff our nursing homes. Then, the coronavirus changed this

country’s collective vocabulary. Now, these people are “essential workers.” They may not be paid a livable wage or have access to dependable health care. They may even be forced onto public assistance.

And the rest of us cannot survive without them.

If these workers are essential, their lives and their humanity are essential as well. If there is anything covid-19 has revealed, it is how deeply our fates are tied. The task before us is enormous, but we must not flinch from it. More than tragedy, more than grief, more than fear – the commitment to one another must be the legacy of this time.

These workers have changed our understanding of what the word essential means. Using a piece of toast as a starting point, Ani Depa from the Kagyu Thubten Choling monastery in Wappingers Falls, offers a reflection/meditation that shows how deeply we are all connected in this world.

Take a few moments to let your mind and body relax.

Let yourself be relaxed, yet present and aware.

Now call to mind something that you ate in the most recent meal you had, perhaps a piece of toast, or a salad. (If you are doing this meditation before you eat you can use the food on your plate)

Using a piece of toast as an example...

Think about all that went into bringing that piece of toast to your plate. The toast is made up of many ingredients- wheat or other grains, water, yeast, maybe seeds etc.

Let us take one ingredient, the wheat flour:

Who planted the wheat, furrowed the ground, harvested the wheat?

Enormous effort goes into those jobs.

Who are these people- all of whom have families – hopes and dreams, joys and sufferings?

Then the wheat is processed into flour.

Who does that?

What is it like working long hours in a plant, processing wheat?

Who packages it, loads it on trucks?

Who ships it to the bakery?

Further-

Who made all the machines, the trucks and the planes used in this production and transportation,

and who mined the metals that those machines are made of?

What is it like working in mines, on assembly lines?

When the bread is baked, packaged, shipped to the store, and stocked on shelves -

Who are the people who do all this?

What are their days like as they labor to produce our food?

Finally, the person who sold you the bread or delivered it to your door-

What is that person's life like, what challenges and what sorrows does that person have?

All these people can be seen as what one of our teachers, H.H. Karmapa calls our "mothers of benefit", because through their labors we are sustained and without the help and labors of others we would not be able to live.

Through this contemplation we see that the interconnections that keep us alive are vast, almost limitless. A huge web of interconnection and interdependence. This was tracing just one ingredient in one piece of food. When we look at all the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the cars we drive, the houses we live in, we begin to feel the deep connection that we have with all beings, our mothers of benefit.

Recognizing and appreciating this connection and all the efforts of so many beings, we send them our deep gratitude, and our sincere wishes for their happiness. We hope that they will be free of all suffering and that any difficulties and sicknesses that they have may be pacified. May they and their families have all they need to sustain themselves and experience joy and freedom.

And finally, we make the heartfelt aspiration that we ourselves will be of benefit to all beings in whatever way we can.

In memory of all those who have lost their lives due to Covid-19 . . .

The number of confirmed deaths due to Covid-19 has surpassed 100,000. Those who have died were mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, friends, beloved members of their community. In remembrance of those in our communities who have passed away from the virus, Dutchess Interfaith Council has established a “In Memoriam” page on our web site listing the names, ages, and a one sentence tribute of those who have died. [Dutchesscountyinterfaith.org](https://www.dutchesscountyinterfaith.org)

[CLICK HERE](#) to leave the name, age and a one sentence tribute to be added to our websites “In Memoriam” page.



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