

## START OF TRANSCRIPT

**[00:00:00]**

The following is a message from Wellsprings Congregation.

**[00:00:05] Rev. Lee Paczulla**

Hi, everybody. I'm coming to you from my kitchen.

**[00:00:09]**

And no, this is not a fancy new Instagram filter. I did do this to my hair this week. But none of you have seen me for a few days because none of us have seen each other for a little while.

**[00:00:22]**

And I know that for so many of us, this week has really been wild. Right. A lot of different things going on for some of us, a lot of stress, a lot of uncertainty, a lot of fear. This moment might be the first time in a few days that you have had a chance to stop. So if that's true for you, stop take a minute. Let your eyes close. Take a deep breath, let your shoulders fall. When things change in the world like this, especially when we have these eerie situations where so much is changing and yet a lot of other things seem totally normal. It throws our insides into all kinds of turmoil. We are trying to make sense both intellectually and emotionally of so many different things at the same time. So I'm glad that you are here. I'm glad that you're taking a moment to just be where you are. You are here and you're alive. And you're with us. And together, we are a ton more prepared and capable.

**[00:01:41]**

For whatever is coming. When we're together, we're in a much better place. To be able to face it.

**[00:01:50]**

Our message series for this spring has been all about being a friend to each other. And I was going to talk today about mutual support.

**[00:02:02]**

Which feels relevant.

**[00:02:04]**

I was going to talk a little bit about how often we see that phrase you are enough and how. While it's so true that we are each beloved and worthy and whole, we also are made to be interconnected with each other. Right. In your family, maybe there's one of you who cooks and there's one of you who does the dishes. Maybe somebody is the fun one in one of your friendships or relationships, and somebody is the one who makes sure that all the bills get paid.

**[00:02:35]**

Maybe in your workplace and your neighborhood, you're the one that prepares while somebody else is the one who performs. Or maybe you're the one with the best jokes and it's somebody else who knows how to console. All of us need all of us. None of us actually can do it all by ourselves.

**[00:03:03]**

Being a friend in these times, but really in any time. It's all about remembering how much we rely on each other. And prioritizing that. We depend on those various parts that all of us plays.

**[00:03:24]**

What we're doing right now in this country feels like some kind of bizarre, large scale spiritual practice to me. Right. It's like a big sacrifice that we are making. And I don't know if we've ever attempted spiritual practice on this scale in America before that. Close to examples I can think of are things that happened before I was born. The stories that people tell me about what it was like in World War Two, what it was like during the Depression.

**[00:03:48]**

And I hope that because we're making these big changes right now, that comparisons to things like that will seem ridiculous in the future. I hope that by being as kind and as careful as we can with each other right now.

**[00:04:05]**

Those comparisons will seem way out of scale.

**[00:04:10]**

There's a story that I love from a podcast I listen to, it's a podcast that maybe you should start listening to because we might all be listening to more podcasts in the days to come. It's called the Anthropocene Reviewed. Now I had a look that bored up. Also the Anthropocene, which is the human centred experience of the planet. Right. So there is "cene" all around us and there's "anthro" us. Right. So the Anthropocene reviewed is a podcast that the host John Green describes as a podcast where we review different facets of the human centered planet on a five star scale. So he reviews and maybe five or 10 minutes. Just anything. And gives it a five star rating. Somewhere in there. Here's a here's a short but incomplete list of the things that the host, John Green has reviewed. He's reviewed the song Auld Lang Zine. He's reviewed Sunset's. He's reviewed the notes app on your phone. He's reviewed chemotherapy. Probably didn't go so well. He's reviewed the human capacity for Wonder. He's reviewed Hawaiian Pizza, very controversial. He's reviewed Rock-Paper-Scissors as a decision making tool. He's reviewed prom. Hmm. And the idea of love at first sight.

**[00:05:37]**

On Episode 8 of this podcast, John GREENE reviews whispering. And he tells a story about the first time his daughter Alice whispered to him.

**[00:05:54]**

He starts off first explaining that he has this other friend, a friend of his named Alex, and he says Alex is usually a pretty calm, chill person, but whenever he's running behind or he's on a tight schedule, Alex will become totally different. He's visibly stressed and anxious. He says things to his family like we've got to get a move on. And John Green says when he gets like this. Alex's wife, Linda, calls him Airport Alex.

**[00:06:26]**

So John Green says, much to my chagrin, he says I am usually airport Alex. John Green worries constantly he's worried about being late for appointments. He's worried about things being canceled. He's worried about people leaving him. His daughter, he says, is never airport. Alex. He remembers this one morning when she was just three years old. His wife was out of town for work, so everything Alice related was his responsibility. And he said it was 8:30, 7 a.m.. Twenty three minutes from being late to daycare.

**[00:07:14]**

My daughter was eating her toast excruciatingly slowly, long pauses in between bites to consider her picture book that she'd brought to the table. And he says, I kept telling her to finish. This is your eight minute warning, I'd say, as if she had any idea at 3 years old what eight minutes actually meant. He said he tried to line everything up for departure just to be ready to go when she was ready. Right. So he got the shoes. He got the car keys. He got the coat. He got her backpack. Now only six minutes to go. And he said, for the love of God. Alice, eat your toast. OK. It's cinnamon toast. It's got cinnamon and sugar on it. And I cut the crust off for you. What more do you want?

**[00:08:03]**

All right. You know what, that's it. We're at a time. You need to put on your shoes. And at the pinnacle of his frenzy, he said Alice looked up at him. And asked, Daddy, can I say a secret? So John Green leaned over and Alice cupped her little hands over her mouth. And even though they were alone in the house, she whispered. John says, I can't tell you what she said. Of course, because it was a secret, but he said, I will say that the content of her message was not the point. Totally unremarkable. What stopped me dead was her whisper. I had no idea she could whisper. I didn't know she knew what whispering was. In a whisper, he said the vocal cords don't vibrate. The motion is so small. It's more the absence of something than the presence of something. It's more breath and sound. He says being busy is a way of being loud. And what my daughter was telling me was that she needed some quiet space. For her voice. To be heard.

**[00:09:31]**

She was telling me that I didn't need to be airport Alex.

**[00:09:36]**

Not right then. She was reminding me that this moment mattered. And that in this moment we were OK.

**[00:09:49]**

Alice is older now, and John Green says that these days when his daughter whispers to him, it's usually to share a worry that she finds embarrassing or frightening.

**[00:10:04]**

It takes courage, he says, even to whisper our fears.

**[00:10:10]**

But I'm so grateful that I'm a person she trusts with them. I'm so grateful we have each other. Even when I don't quite know how to answer her worries. But often, he says, I find myself responding to her whispers with the same few words.

**[00:10:31]**

You'll be OK. You'll be OK.

**[00:10:37]**

I said last week. And my message back in Bell Hall. That it's part of our DNA here at Wellsprings. We believe in the power of community. That healthy human relationships, friendships, loved ones. These relationships offer a connection to the sacred.

**[00:11:02]**

We need that today, this week.

**[00:11:08]**

And even if those connections are a quiet whisper now compared to the loudness of our busy world that we have long been used to.

**[00:11:19]**

Even if those connections, those relationships are a quiet whisper now, they are still here and they still nurture that greater relationship. That relationship to the source of all love and all compassion.

**[00:11:40]**

There's a rabbi at a synagogue in Los Angeles. The Rabbi Yosef Can Nevsky, and he sent an email this week to his congregation. An email a lot like the one I sent to all of you on Thursday night. An email a lot like the ones that rabbis and imams and pastors and priests, I'm sure have been sending all over the country. And in his email to his community, in the midst of all of the logistics and practical updates that he needed to share, he also took a moment to suggest that they take some care with that phrase that we're all using now social distancing. The phrase, he says, has become kind of a shorthand for all of the very important physical precautions that we are in a world now where we need to take if we want to protect ourselves and each other.

**[00:12:35]**

We are still getting used to this. But at the same time, he says that phrase social distancing. I want us to take it lightly. I want us to be careful how we use it, because the last thing we need right now is a mindset of distance and disconnection. We need to be thinking as much as possible, we need to be practicing and noticing. Thinking in the exact opposite way, he says every hand we don't shake must become a phone call. Or a text that we send. Every embrace that we avoid with each other has to become a verbal way of expressing warmth, has to become. I miss you. How are you? I wish we could be together. Every inch, he says, and every foot that we physically place, all six feet of them between ourselves and each other must become a thought about how we can help if the need arises. Our physical distance is strange. It may still be scary. It may still be hard. We have worries out there about things that are outside of our control. But maybe we also can begin to practice looking for reminders all around us that we don't always need to be airport, Alex. That may be just for a moment here and there.

**[00:14:14]**

We can listen to the small voices. The whispers. The breath's. There are around us and that are also inside of us.

**[00:14:26]**

As Rabbi can Baffsky said to his congregation. Who knows if it was for this time that we have been practicing? Who knows if it was for this time that we have committed ourselves to walk in God's ways.

**[00:14:46]**

Amen. And may you all live in blessing.

**[00:14:53]**

Take a moment to close your eyes, to bow your head.

**[00:14:56]**

Relax your shoulders and pray with me.

**[00:15:04]**

God of our hearts. God, beyond our understanding. And yet here. God who we cannot explain or define. But who is around us? That force of love and connection, that force of miracles.

**[00:15:30]**

That force of all of the things that we can't understand. In these times, may all of us learn to listen and notice and look. For that source of connection. To listen and notice and look differently than we ever have before. May all of us across this whole country find the space in our hearts to make room for the quiet voices.

**[00:16:00]**

To make room for the labored breathing. For the truth of our dependence on each other. And made this time of distance, teach us to remember just how vital and life-giving all of our connections to each other really are. These prayers that I have spoken. And for the prayers that everyone is carrying on their hearts this morning. We say an.

**[00:16:38]**

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END OF TRANSCRIPT



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