



HILLTOP
United Methodist Church

ECH  **ES**
August 2014

www.mankatohilltop.org

facebook: [hilltop united methodist church](https://www.facebook.com/hilltop.united.methodist.church)

office@mankatohilltop.org

FROM THE PASTOR

Pastor Fred is Back to School

Hilltop family, if you recall in 2012 I was accepted into the Doctor of Ministry program at Asbury Theological Seminary and received a full ride scholarship along with the overwhelming support of Hilltop's Staff Parish Relations Committee to take the opportunity. In addition to year 'round reading, assignments, and dissertation development it also means one month away on campus. I fly out this year on August 4th and intend to be back in the pulpit at Hilltop on Aug 31st.

Thanks to the amazing pool of skilled lay speakers and retired preachers at Hilltop, the pulpit will be well supplied the three Sundays of my absence. As always I encourage you to faithfully attend worship as it is at the center of who we are as a community.

A requirement of the program is that I remain on campus the whole of that time away. This, unfortunately means, I will not be available to return home should deaths, or other pastoral emergencies occur during that time. However, we have both retired pastors on call, and awesome lay people on our pastoral care team, who can and want to minister you during those difficult times. Please keep the following important contacts handy during my absence:

Michelle Behsman, Hilltop Adm. Asst.: 507-387-3877

Paulette Adams, Hilltop Lay Leader: 507-351-0523

John Phelps, Hilltop Ad Council Chair: 507-380-8717

Terri Horn, Hilltop Staff/Parish Chair: 507-380-0309

Donn Rakow, Primary Pastor On Call: 507-920-9941

I would love your prayers during this time away. I shared with you last year about the continual redesign of this program that creates much confusion among the students in the program, unfortunately that hasn't changed, but class time, regular chapel, and time with my cohorts continues to be of immense value and replenishes my

soul. This year we will have two intense classes entitled: "Transformative Mission: Theology and Practice" and "Preaching as Prophetic Witness" as well as a trip to Houston. As I have in the past, I hope to send you a video blurb each of the three Sundays I am gone. Look for me in worship.

Thank you in advance for the way I know you will care for our church and my family.

Be blessed, Pastor Fred

Those Three Things

I wanted to take a moment to remind of our current ministry plan as I unpacked it at our January leadership retreat. The vision in a phrase is this: That Hilltop would grow into being the kind of church that plants a church by 2016. You could imagine to be that kind of church we would really have to bring some important intentionality to who we are now. The three things that we want to bring our best efforts to in the immediate future are these:

1) **Identify that one thing!** Identify one area of mission focus in our community for which we will be known. As you know we engage in all kinds of mission at Hilltop, but this step asks us to identify one in particular that we all totally and completely give ourselves too without regard to ourselves. Stay tuned!

2) **Connect Groups!** As we grow, disconnection can happen if we are not careful. New folks don't know how to fit in, and old folks wonder who are all these new folks. Connect groups are our preemptive response to keep us connected to both each other and to Christ. We are excited to launch these this fall!

3) **Readiness 360!** Read more about this on page 2 of Echoes.

Be blessed, Pastor Fred

HERE AT HILLTOP

Connect Groups

There was a time in my life when my parents thought that I was destined to be a professional student. I changed my major in college like the weather changes in Minnesota – often and unexpectedly! I finally settled into one major and a double minor and graduated with honors - only to enroll into graduate school for four more years of study.

While the goal of an academic education may be to get the diploma, get a job, and get on with life, our education as followers of Jesus is a lifelong pursuit that has much more to do with the journey than it does with finishing. A student of Jesus (a disciple) is one who learns and lives from the teachings of Jesus – seeking so much more than information. The disciple of Jesus longs for *transformation* – not to merely understand what is good and right and true, but to do what is good and right and true – and beyond that – to BECOME what is good and right and true. The goal of the disciple is to become like Jesus.

The decision to follow Jesus – to be His disciple – is personal and one we must each make individually. But the process of becoming more like Christ, of being transformed into His image, is not something we can do alone. The Bible is clear that we are made for community; we are made for CONNECTION. We need others to journey with – and they need us. You may have heard the illustration of the lonely ember - Several logs burn brightly together, but pull one burning ember out and place it alone on the hearth and its flame will diminish and quickly turn cold. Place the ember back into the fire and it soon begins to glow again with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

What about you? Have you made the decision to follow Jesus? How are you doing as His student? Have you surrounded yourself with other disciples to learn and grow with – or to burn and glow? © Connect Groups offer a warm and welcoming place to connect with Jesus – to learn of and from our Teacher – as we connect with other disciples on our journey to become like Him.

Watch for more information coming soon about Hilltop Connect Groups! -Stacy Vanderwerf

Readiness 360

Hilltop considers the call to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world to be the most important thing we can do as a church. One option that we are considering to help us make disciples is to equip Hilltop to be a church that plants other churches. One of the first steps in this effort is to determine how ready our congregation is to undertake such a mission, with this in mind, we are asking you to take an on-line survey called Readiness 360.

Completing the survey will take about 20 minutes. You will be asked to give your name so that we can track who has taken the survey, but your answers will not be tied to your name. The results from the survey will give us information about where Hilltop needs to strengthen its DNA relative to our spiritual intensity, relationships, mission, and openness to other cultures so that we can grow to be a fruitful church-planting church. The findings will be reported to the congregation and will be used to develop the next steps in this exciting mission opportunity.

Please go online and login at:

http://readiness360.org/r360/survey_login.php and type in our congregation's passcode: 8555049838.

Set aside 20 minutes to take the survey between now and Monday, 08/15/14 at midnight. If you need help, please contact the church office: 507-387-3877 or office@mankatohilltop.org. Thanks in advance for helping our congregation assess and grow into God's preferred future.

Newsletter Submissions

When submitting newsletter articles, be sure to include the date, time, location, other details, contact name and number, and the name of the team or committee hosting the event. There is a submission form on the shelf by the copier or submit to office@mankatohilltop.org and include "newsletter article" in the subject line. The deadline for the September newsletter is **Monday, August 25, 2014**.

HERE AT HILLTOP

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES



Carissa & David Lick
 Dan & Heather Gowanlock
 Del & Betty Goebel
 Sandy & Wendy Allen
 Scott & Chriss Page
 Merrill & Karen Frydendall
 Todd & Karin Gavin
 Denny Ward/Karin Ambros-Ward
 Scott & Laura Thoms
 Steve & Paula Peterson
 David & Christina Ross
 Kevin & Shari Schroeder
 Herb & Marci Fast
 Mike & Kari Juni
 Kerry & Jim Rausch
 Deb & Will Michalski
 Dan & Lana Held
 John & Peggy Phelps

Thank You Hilltop

To Our Wonderful Hilltop Friends, Thank you so very much for the cards and get well wishes for Bruce during and following his hip surgery. Thanks also for the concerns while we had to be out of our home because of the flooding in Waterville. Thanks especially for the generous gift. We were overwhelmed by it! Many, many thanks. Again thank you to Pastor Fred for his visit to the nursing home to see Bruce. Thanks also for all his prayers and yours during this trying time. He has a lot of work ahead but with such great support from our Hilltop Friends we will make it.

Thanks! Joyce & Bruce Long

Dear Hilltop friends, A heartfelt thank you for all your prayers and concerns, cards, visits, phone calls and for the prayer intervention group during Bill's illness & recuperation. We are truly blessed with a wonderful Hilltop family.

God bless you all, Bill & Wanda Allevan

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

8/05	Deb Birr	8/02	
8/06	Michael Kraywinkel	8/02	
8/06	Jackson Maday	8/03	
8/06	Shirley Ashpole	8/03	
8/11	Taylor Wacholz	8/03	
8/16	Karla Lassonde	8/04	Wendy Pearson 8/22
8/18	Wanda Alleven	8/04	Christina Ross 8/23
8/20	Becky Steinbauer	8/05	Fiona Swanson 8/23
8/20	Carolyn Allen	8/05	Laura Thoms 8/23
8/20	Maggie Steinbauer	8/05	Dale Ashpole 8/24
8/21	Chris Flesner	8/07	Joyce Long 8/24
8/21	Dean Marble	8/07	Leslie Putzier 8/24
8/24	Sandy Allen	8/07	Jack Larson 8/25
8/26	Bill Warmack	8/08	Sasha Jakovich 8/25
8/27	Jordan Phillips	8/08	Chriss Page 8/26
8/28	Josh Adams	8/08	Deb Oachs 8/26
8/30	Avery Johnson	8/10	Jamison Daby 8/27
8/31	Mason Oswald	8/11	Karen Warmack 8/27
	Bill Scherer	8/13	Patti Cole 8/27
	Harry Argetsinger	8/13	Debra Burns 8/28
	Renate Carlson	8/16	Jan Marble 8/28
	Sydney Maday	8/16	Kerry Rausch 8/28
	Jorie Mundt	8/18	Bradley Mundt 8/29
	Jenny Winters	8/19	Arlene Wilson 8/30
	Jenna Aasen	8/20	Jack Olinger 8/30
	Peggy Phelps	8/22	Madden Vanderwerf 8/30



VBS Note

We are taking the summer off from Vacation Bible School and will be giving it some evaluation. Pastor Fred along with those invested in our ministry to children will gather this fall to discuss how best we can provide Christian nurture and instruction to the many children (and their parents) that God continues to place in our care. If you would like to be a part of the discussion or have feedback please email pastor@mankatohilltop.org. In the meantime, parents can look forward to our Kids' Ki-nection returning on Kick-Off Sunday, Sept 7th.

COMMUNITY

Weavers Grief Support Group

Meets on Thursdays in the Fireside Room from 10:00 am-11:30 am at Christ the King Lutheran Church on 222 Pfau St., Mankato. Open to men and women.

Healing Takes Time Fall Retreat

This retreat is for those that have lost a loved one, whether the loss was recent or in years past. It takes place September 19-21, 2014 at the Franciscan Retreat and Spirituality Center, Prior Lake. The retreat will be based on four different types of grief - Widow/Widower's, Loss of Child, Loss through Suicide, and Pregnancy and Small Infant Loss. The main speaker will be Dr. David Gallagher, who wrote "Healing Takes Time". There will be breakout sessions facilitated by those who have experienced that similar loss. Contact JoAnn Hutchinson at 507-625-4631 for registration information.

Leadership Institute at Church of the Resurrection

START DATE: September 24, 2014

END DATE: September 26, 2014

LOCATION: The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, 13720 Roe Ave., Leawood, KS 66224

COST: \$149-\$175 (depending on when you register), plus cost of hotel

Ready to take a fresh look at ministry? Ready for some ideas and inspiration? Ready to connect with other visionary leaders? Ready to do something that could transform your church and community?

Register today for The Church of the Resurrection's annual Leadership Institute. Those who attended the 2014 Minnesota Annual Conference session got to learn from the church's lead pastor, Rev. Adam Hamilton, who is also a well-known author and speaker. This Leadership Institute provides a more in-depth opportunity to continue the learning. The event includes keynote speakers Adam Hamilton and Len Sweet--and offers 80 different ministry workshops led by Resurrection staff and guest speakers.

The Minnesota and Dakotas Conferences are providing bus transportation to and from the event at no cost to participants. Lodging and registration for the seminar

are the responsibility of attendees.

There are three steps to register for this event:

1. Reserve a spot on the bus. Buses will leave from Lakeville, MN; Fargo, ND; Sioux Falls, SD. They will depart the morning of Wednesday, Sept. 24 and return the evening of Friday, Sept. 26. To reserve a spot on the bus, contact Gail Johnson (gail.johnson@minnesotaumc.org or 612-230-6125).

2. Reserve a hotel room. A block of rooms has been reserved at a reduced rate. Transportation to and from the hotel and church will be provided. The block of rooms is at:

Drury Inn and Suites Overland Park

10963 Metcalf Ave.

Overland Park, KS 66120

The block (reserved for Sept. 24-26) includes 50 rooms with double beds and 30 rooms with king beds. Cost is \$81 per night plus tax. (If you only need one bed, please reserve a king room so that the rooms with double beds can be used for unrelated individuals sharing a room.) The hotel has free breakfast and free hot appetizers and drinks in the evenings.

To reserve, call 1-800-378-7946 and provide your group number (2198634--Church of the Resurrection). Be sure to let the person you're speaking with know that the rooms are under the name Steve Trefz. Provide your name and billing information as requested.

3. Register for the Leadership Institute. Go to Leawood website: <http://li.cor.org/>

Choose one "featured session" and two "workshops." Note that attendees using transportation provided by the conference will not arrive in time for pre-conference workshops on Wednesday, Sept. 24 but will arrive in time for the optional "REZ" events at the downtown campus that evening; there is no extra fee for the Wednesday evening events, but registration is required (and be sure to let Gail Johnson know if you plan to attend the Wednesday evening events, as there are limited bus seats available). Registration rates for the Leadership Institute are as follows:

Early bird: \$149 per participant (by Sept. 3)

Standard rate: \$175 per participant (Sept. 4 and after)

Young adult rate: \$49 (25 and under)

Questions? Contact Gail Johnson (gail.johnson@minnesotaumc.org or 612-230-6125).

HILLTOP YOUTH

Both Hands



On Saturday, August 23rd, Youth Group will be partnering with nonprofit Both Hands to work on a North Mankato's widow's home. We will start at 8:00 am.

A letter from JT Olson, Foudrer of Both Hands: The idea for Both Hands came as the result of a simple letter to a friend asking if he'd sponsor me while I golfed. The funds would go to a wonderful ministry for women in crisis pregnancies. My friend sent my letter back with a handwritten message saying that he'd gladly support my efforts if I was working on a widow's house instead of playing golf.

For five years that letter stuck with me, until another friend, who was adopting four children from Moldova, expressed his need to raise funds to pay for it. That's when the idea for Both Hands grew legs. We recruited other friends, found a widow's house in need of repairs, got local businesses to donate supplies and food, and hundreds of people sent in checks to sponsor the workers that day. It was a day I will never forget! We raised enough money to put a dent in my friend's adoption expenses, and totally transformed Miss Lucille's house: Success story numbers one and two!

What's E.J. listening to on her ipod....



It's Not Over Yet, for King & Country

Lay Me Down, Rush of Fools
Greater, MercyMe

You Carry Me, Moriah Peters
Empty Me, Jeremy Camp

Movie Nights

We continue to have our Wednesday movie nights (starting at 6:15 pm). We have watched Facing the Giants, Courageous, The Blind Side, Beware of Christians (documentary), and To Save a Life. All are welcome at our movie nights! Bring friends and family! Drinks and snacks are complimentary at each event :

When God Left the Building

The Hilltop Youth Group will be headed up to the Parkway Theatre (4804 Chicago Ave S Minneapolis, MN) on Thursday, September 4th to screen *When God Left the Building*. The movie begins at 7:00 pm. We will depart Hilltop at 4:00 pm

When God Left the Building is an inspiring documentary that is bringing hope back to the church. This is an opportunity for us to:

- Become part of a movement that will make the difference between decline and vitality in the American church.
- Discover new ways to reach people in your community.
- Be inspired by new ideas surrounding what church in the future will look like.

The film follows a church that has seen its attendance plunge from 900 to 40. In addition to external cultural factors that affect all churches, this church is disintegrating from the inside from a variety of human storms. A pastor who doesn't know who or what God is. Fights over petty things. A faction of angry ex-members that devises a plan to take over the church.

Throughout the story, cameras also visit other dying churches—as well as innovative new forms of church that are thriving. These range from a ministry in a Pennsylvania pub to an outreach in Los Angeles that brings joy to skid-row moms.

By the end of the film, viewers will **EXPERIENCE HOPE** and a refreshing glimpse into how faith may be pursued in the future.

HILLTOP MISSION

Who is My Neighbor?

Looking around Mankato today, you can see a lot more diversity than there used to be. Mankato is now home to a significant population of immigrants and refugees from around the world. As Christians called to love our neighbors, how much do we actually know about these people who are now our neighbors? Join us Saturday, August 23 and Sunday, August 24 as we start to explore our role as Christian neighbors of people from different nations. During this weekend, we will reflect on our own immigrant heritages, learn about the struggles and experiences of immigrants and refugees today, and get a small taste ourselves of what it's like to arrive in a completely new country. We will also look at biblical stories and principles to see what we can do as Christians to reach out in love to our new neighbors. Please join us! No RSVP necessary. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Carissa Lick (carissa.lick@gmail.com).

Here's the schedule for the weekend:

Saturday, August 23 from 9:30-11:30 a.m. (intended for adults)

- Bible Study
- Simulation Activities (What would it be like to be an immigrant/refugee?)

Sunday, August 24 (all ages!)

- 9:00 a.m. - **Refugee-Themed Worship** (guest preacher: Carissa Lick, deacon candidate)
- 10:00 a.m. - **POTLUCK BRUNCH!** The theme is our diverse cultural heritages, so bring a dish from your own heritage to share.
- 10:30 a.m. - **Minnesota Council of Churches presentation on refugee issues** (guest speaker: Leah Elbert, community developer at Mankato Area Refugee Services)

We are also going to start a donation drive for items needed by Mankato's refugee community. Minnesota Council of Churches had not yet finalized a list of requested items at the time of the newsletter printing, but keep an eye out for this list as another way to get involved helping our new neighbors.

Back to School Shopping

The Hilltop Mission Team is asking that you consider the Midwest Mission Distribution Center and the Backpack Food Program as you do your back to school shopping in August. The Midwest Mission Distribution Center is a United Methodist disaster relief facility located on near Springfield, Illinois. They put together school supply bags for students and teachers, in addition to other outreach projects. Please bring your school supply donations to church by the last week in August.

MMDC needs:

Spiral Notebooks	Blunt Scissors
Stick Pens (blue, black, red)	Filler Paper
Unsharpened Pencils	Boxes of White Chalk
Pencil Sharpeners	Chalkboard Erasers
Pencil Erasers	Boxes of paper clips
Rulers	Rubber Bands
24 Box of Crayons	Magic Markers
Protractors	

The Backpack Food Program is accepting the following food items and these donations should be brought to Hilltop by September 28, 2014.

Maruchan Instant Lunch (*2.25 oz any variety, cups only*)

Kraft Easy Mac packets

Chef Boyardee Microwave Pasta Bowl or Rice Bowl (*must be meat variety i.e. Spaghetti with Meatballs or Chicken with Rice*)

Instant Oatmeal packets (*fun kid varieties, other than maple and brown sugar*)

100% juice boxes (*6 oz*)

Apple sauce cups (*4 oz, any variety i.e. Strawberry, peach*)

Fruit cups in light syrup (*4 oz*)

Peanut Butter Snack Cracker Packs (*1.38 oz*)

Nabisco Teddy Grahams (*.5 - 1.0 oz ind. packaged*)

Granola Bars (*1 oz any variety*)

Pudding Cups (*3.5 oz non-refrigerated, fun flavors*)

Gluten Free Snacks (*1 oz ind. packaged i.e. raisins, craisins, gluten free crispy rice bars*)

August Calendar at Hilltop

Details to each calendar event can be found at <http://mankatohilltop.org/calendar/> by clicking on the event.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 7:00a Men's Morning Risers 12:30p CCTV Worship	2 9:00a Organist Practice -12:00p
3 9:00a Worship	4	5 1:30p Women's Bible Study 5:30p Prayer & Share	6 6:00p Movie Night 9:00p CCTV Worship	7 12:00p Bulletin Deadline	8 7:00a Men's Morning Risers 12:30p CCTV Worship	9 9:00a Organist Practice -12:00p
10 9:00a Worship	11	12 1:30p Women's Bible Study 5:30p Prayer & Share	13 6:00p Movie Night 9:00p CCTV Worship	14 12:00p Bulletin Deadline 6:30p Lasting Imprint	15 7:00a Men's Morning Risers 12:30p CCTV Worship	16 9:00a Organist Practice -12:00p
17 9:00a Worship	18	19 1:30p Women's Bible Study 5:30p Prayer & Share	20 6:00p Movie Night 9:00p CCTV Worship	21 12:00p Bulletin Deadline 6:30p Committee Mtgs. 7:30p Ad Council Mtg.	22 7:00a Men's Morning Risers 12:30p CCTV Worship	23 8:00a Youth-Both Hands 9:00a Organist Practice -12:00p 9:30a-11:30a Refugee Study
24 9a Worship 10a Potluck 9a Worship 31	25 8:00a Newsletter deadline	26 1:30p Women's Bible Study 5:30p Prayer & Share	27 6:00p Movie Night 9:00p CCTV Worship	28 12:00p Bulletin Deadline	29	30 9:00a Organist Practice -12:00p



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Pastor Fred Vanderwerf

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Hilltop United Methodist Church

MINNESOTA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Attention Real Estate Brokers

The Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church is seeking a real estate broker/firm for the sale of three properties. The real estate broker/firm may submit a responsive Proposal for one, two, or all three of the properties the conference is seeking to sell.

The properties include a former church camp (Lake George in Kandiyohi County), Historic Wesley on Grant (Minneapolis), and the former Joyce United Methodist Church building (Minneapolis).

The responsive Proposal will comply with all federal, state, and local regulations. Three copies of the responsive Proposal should be sent via United States Postal Service to Minnesota Annual Conference UMC, 122 W. Franklin Ave., Suite 400, Minneapolis, MN 55404-2453 and one electronic copy emailed to BOT.pres@minnesotaumc.org by 10 a.m. August 7, 2014; clearly marked on the outside or in the subject line "Proposal-Real Estate Broker Services." At that time, they will be opened and read. Selection will be made by August 14, 2014.

To view Ad: <https://minnesotaumc.org/news/classifieds/seeking-representation-for-three-properties/>

Early Response Basic Training Course

Dates: September 26 and 27, 2014

Location: Belgrade Avenue UMC, North Mankato

There are two days of training:

- September 26, 6:30-9 p.m. is Safe Sanctuary training; this is required. If you are already trained in Safe Sanctuary procedures, please show the certificate from your church to be exempt from this portion of the class.
- September 27, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. is the ERT training course.

Early Response Teams (ERT) assist survivors of natural disasters. ERTs remove debris, clean out flood-damaged homes and help to prevent further property damage. The course provides the basis skills for you to become a member of the ERT.

Cost: \$35 includes materials, lunch and background check.

Register by Sept. 12, 2014 at <https://www.SignUp4.net/Public/ap.aspx?EID=20144057E>

For more information contact Gary Klason, 320-214-6599 or glkason@gmail.com.