



**HILLTOP**  
United Methodist Church

**ECHOS**

March 2013

www.mankatohilltop.org

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office@mankatohilltop.org

## How is it with your Heart?

In light of the awesome privilege I had a Sunday ago to baptize two children, Bailey and Hannah, into the Christian faith, I got to thinking about their choice made that day to follow Jesus. For them it may have been that first moment to accept the grace God has offered them for themselves. That moment, depending on your faith heritage, might be called the moment they were “saved” or “born again” or “justified.” While you might not actually remember that moment in your own walk we as ‘Methodists’ believe that the moment occurs for all believers. You may have heard that Billy Graham can tell you the day and minute he “gave himself to the Lord” but his wife Ruth cannot. Never-the-less, both have experienced the justifying work of Christ, and John Wesley would say that all believers have that “moment” when God’s grace makes us right even if we ourselves can’t tell you the exact time we moved from degenerate to regenerated.

But here’s the clincher that distinguishes Methodists from our other evangelical brothers and sisters. Our moment of justification is not nearly as important as our ongoing sanctification. Methodist blogger John Meuner says it this way, “Justification or ‘being saved’ or ‘born again’ is but the first dawning of Christianity in the soul of a person. It is important, but only as a starting point. If it is not the beginning of a new life and growing holiness of heart and life, then it loses its value.” Methodists do not embrace a “once saved always saved” religion. “We can unmake ourselves and be unborn. The old self that dies in Christ is a vampire. It will rise again if we allow it.” You see if our focus becomes too much on one moment in time when we said; “yes” to Jesus than our faith is kept in the past and may even prevent us from identifying the reality that today too requires us to say; “yes” to Jesus.

I love how Meuner puts it: “For some Christians, the key question is something like “When were you saved?” For the Methodist, the key question is always “How is it with your heart?” Our “once saved, always saved” brothers and sisters often speak as if the most important thing in our faith is something that happened in the past. Methodists believe the most important thing in our faith is what we are doing today, right now.”

So while Bailey and Hannah will be able to look back fondly on the day they gave their heart to Jesus, what will be more important for them and for us is the daily examination of their heart towards Jesus from here on out.

So, I ask myself and I ask you: “How is it with your heart?” It seems like today and every day is a good time to ask that question.

Be blessed,  
Pastor Fred

**Just a reminder** from the kitchen steward to please label any items you leave in the kitchen and/or in the refrigerators. An example would be "Food for the Alpha meeting, 03/03/13" or "Pancake griddles for the next potluck on 03/03/13". Please sign your name on the note so we have a contact person.

**Are you interested in being a "Walk-along-side/mentor person"** for our first time visitors? The Evangelism Committee will be pairing visitors with existing members to provide a contact person for return visitors. The mentor will be that person who makes certain our visitor is never left "ungreeted", who can give them a tour of the church if the visitor would like one, and answer any questions our visitor might have or direct them to someone who can. Please contact John or Peggy Phelps if you would like to volunteer to be a mentor for this important ministry. Call John and Peggy at 385-0764 or email them at [psphelps@chartermi.net](mailto:psphelps@chartermi.net). Thank you.

**If you are interested in providing treats** at the Welcome Center in celebration of a special event, please contact Peggy Phelps who can give you details about the number of treats typically provided and the cost. Peggy will make certain the coffee and goodies are put out on the appropriate Sunday along with a sign explaining who's special event is being celebrated and who is providing the treats. You can make your own treats, purchase them, or Peggy will shop for you. Contact Peggy in person, by phone at 385-0764, or by email at [psphelps@chartermi.net](mailto:psphelps@chartermi.net).



**Mary Martha Circle**  
**March 13th, 1:30**  
**Hostess: Betty Goebel**  
**Devotions: Wanda Allevan**

Attendance-Jan. '12		Attendance-Jan. '13	
	Su		Su
01/01	106	01/03	188
01/08	172	01/13	180
01/15	161	01/20	155
01/22	158	01/27	123
01/29	176		
Avg.	155	Avg.	162

## ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MINUTES

CHARGE: HILLTOP UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT: REV. PHIL STROM

PASTOR: FRED VANDERWERF

ACTING RECORDING SECRETARY: KATIE GRUNLOH

February 21, 2013

PRESENT: Terri Horn, Don Bohn, John Phelps, Peggy Phelps, Mallory Westphal, Kerry Rausch, Chris Aasen, Kari Juni, Terry Berg, Bob Berg, Fred Vanderwerf, Dan Rivers, Karin Gavin

## WELCOME

John Phelps called the meeting to order with a prayer.

Last month's meeting minutes were reviewed. Don Bohn moves to approve, Terri Horn seconds, all in favor, and motion carried.

## AD COUNCIL PERSPECTIVE FOR 2013

Last month the council discussed the possibility of making an adaptive change on how Ad Council is conducted, putting the focus on visions and strategic pattern, showing direction of where our church is going, and the flow go from Ad Council to Committee teams. This would still allow the teams and committees to be creative.

We also suggested a structural change of placing Council meetings before committee/team meetings but after pastor's consideration this is not nearly as important. However teams and committees will move towards 6 month advance planning this help Tricia in the office as far as communication, allow joint cooperation between committees, and ultimately assist in our focus on Visitor Retention.

## Website discussion:

"Hilltop Google Calendar" was presented to the council and step-by-step instructions were distributed to the members on how to import information/events to the calendar that is publicized on the Website.

The Website Facebook Feed instructions were presented.

## Webpage General Content

Each Committee is asked to look at the website and come up with general information that is helpful to put on the website in the section of their respective committees.

Committees may also prefer to store certain documents (pdf) on the webpage for multiple uses.

If committee chairs feel that they would readily use and update their section of the website, they can be trained in on how to do this.

CHARGE CONFERENCE

A Grant was applied for \$15,000 from the Investing in Congregations Grant team. The first check has been received of \$7,500. Pastor Fred presented the stipulations of this grant to the Charge Conference. All were in favor, no opposed, document was signed.

Pastor Fred moves for closing of Charge Conference. Bob

Berg seconds, all in favor.

COMMITTEE AND TEAM REPORTSTRUSTEES- Bob Berg

A month ago, Bill, Tricia, and Bob met with an attorney and found that Articles of Incorporation with the church was not up to date. The attorney is in the process of re-search.

A bid was received on the west wall. The proposal would be demo the entire inside west wall, move the heating elements out, spray insulation, dry wall over that, tape, and paint. The feeling is that this will cure the problem. The bid was \$9,704. The trustees discussed that this should not come out of the redecorating fund. Fred moved to accept the bid of roughly \$10,000 to refurbish the West wall and use \$5,000 from the memorial fund and \$5,000 from the upcoming pork feed (with 10% of pork feed going to Imagine No Malaria). Chris Aasen seconds, all in favor, and motion carried.

Bob also states that the redecoration committee has spoken with Kids' Kinnection and the Youth Group regarding eliminating one of the sliding walls and the second wall to be replaced with a ridged wall with two large double doors to access the larger room. The Youth has agreed that they do not need a designated area and that would become one of the classrooms. What has been proposed is for Hilltop to do the work/labor ourselves, the only thing being hired would be the taping of the drywall. Confirmation was asked from the council that this is agreed upon with this idea. Approval for the general concept was sought. Karin moved for approval of the concept, Kari seconds, all in favor, concept was moved. Mallory proposed the signs for around the Hilltop building. The expenditure for \$491 to replace the Exit signs around the Hilltop was approved. Some of the signs do not comply with fire code. This will come out of Major Repairs fund.

The Trustees still have not received a second bid from the parking lot.

FINANCE- Don Bohn - Finance reports were presented to the council.

## EVANGELISM – John Phelps

The committee met on 2-21-13

W(V)isitor Retention- is a main focus for Evangelism Committee in 2013. Reviewed our "From Visitor to Apostle" plan and started to implement the plan.

## FELLOWSHIP- Kerry Rausch /Terry Berg

Talking about having a picnic after the Kids Kinnection on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

This Sunday (February 22<sup>nd</sup>) will be game day and maybe have one in March, if all goes well.

The Pork Feed will take place on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

June and July will be softball team support and bring snacks. September was discussed about a possible visit to

McGowans' Farm

A Mystery Dinner was discussed for October.

## MISSIONS- Rhonda Friesen

Change time of committee meetings to after Ad Council: 0 were for this, 4 were against this.

## Cont from page 2

The Mission potluck on March 3<sup>rd</sup> will benefit the Echo Food Shelf. We will also be collecting food and sundries throughout the month of March to fill up the grocery cart in the Narthex.

The Easter breakfast on March 31<sup>st</sup> will be continental style, between the “sunrise” service and the regular church service. The freewill donation will benefit Vine.

We are looking for someone who would like to be in charge of organizing the community garden sign-up.

The funds that were provided for the Manokoh Clinic have been disbursed and will be providing Finance with a copy of the disbursement as to where those funds went.

### STAFF- Terri Horn

No meeting took place, but participation has been great in search for the youth director. Five interviews were conducted, with one remaining, and second interviews will take place. The question was brought up if Staff Parish can approve the person they are recommending without the Ad Council approval and this was agreed upon.

### EDUCATION-Karin Gavin

May 12<sup>th</sup>, will be the ‘mission’ day and will be coordinating a hand-on mission project.

### WORSHIP – Kari Juni

Planning for Easter Services.

Maundy Thursday will be Seder service at 6:30

Good Friday will be a Tenebrae Service at 6:30. 16 readers will be needed.

Easter Sunday; 8:30 service, possibly with the youth leading, 9:30 will be a continental-style breakfast followed by the Easter egg hunt, with a 10:15 service following.

A second service is being looked into further. April will be the high-level plan to council.

### YOUTH – Dan Rivers

YUMY’s was attended and experiences were very good. That same weekend, the youth served at the Salvation Army. Wednesday nights the Bible studies have been very good.

Recently, the lock-in took place and went very well, along with much parental involvement.

The sites for the next month will be Aquire the Fire.

### PARISH NURSE, STEWARDSHIP, SERVICE GROUPS, TECHNOLOGY – No Reports

### PASTOR REPORT

Possibly looking into taking vacation right after Easter.

### AJOURNMENT

Pastor Fred closed us in prayer.

## Mission Committee Challenge

I’M Hungry!!! Who is hungry in Minnesota?

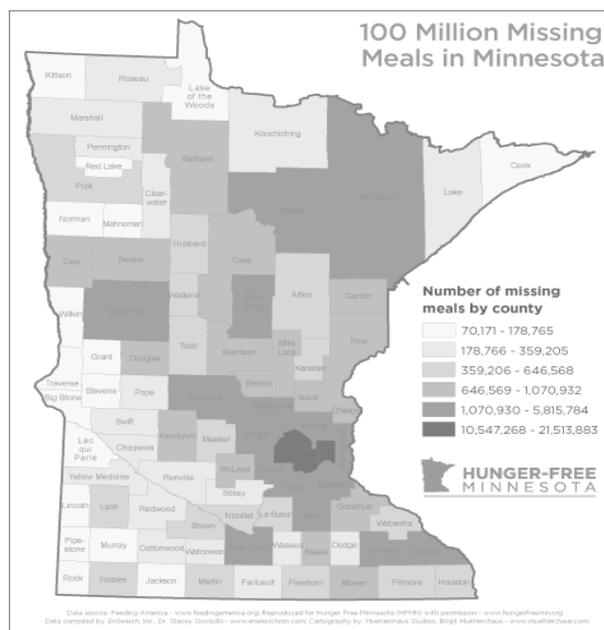
“Do you not know that God entrusted you with that money (all above what buys necessities for your families) to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to help the stranger, the widow, the fatherless; and, indeed, as far as it will go, to relieve the wants of all mankind? How can you, how dare you, defraud the Lord, by applying it to any other purpose?” – John Wesley

More than 600,000 people in Minnesota are hungry. They live in every one of Minnesota’s 87 counties. They live in cities, on farms, in suburbs, in the country, on lakes, on flat land, in forests, in small towns. One in every ten Minnesotans doesn’t know where his or her next meal is coming from. Of those ten, four are children.

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This map shows exactly where hunger lives in Minnesota. Our March Mission is ECHO FOOD SHELF. Isn’t it interesting that we have been directed through generations to serve others, yet it sometimes is the hardest thing to do? One never knows when we may be the “population” that others are serving.

**Our potluck will take place on Sunday, March 3, 2013**





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**We will be having a Seder service starting at 6:30 PM on Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>.**

#### **Good Friday Tenebrae Service**

At 6:30pm on Good Friday we will slowly extinguish the lights of the sanctuary as we listen to the biblical narrative of Christ going to the cross. This service helps us remember just why this Friday, amidst all the violence, is Good.



#### **Easter Sunday Schedule Of Events:**

##### **Sunrise Service 8:30 am**

Our Hilltop Youth design and lead this service with music and drama, with an abbreviated message from Pastor Fred.

##### **9:30- Continental breakfast (rolls, muffins) served after early service.**

**We will also be having our Easter egg hunt at this time.** All children are welcomed to participate in our church wide Easter Egg Hunt. This is normally held on the grounds outside the church (weather permitting).

##### **Easter Worship 10:15 am**

He has risen! He has risen, indeed! Come and celebrate the Risen Lord through worship.