



HILLTOP
United Methodist Church

ECHOS
October 2013

www.mankatohilltop.org

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

office@mankatohilltop.org

'W'isitor Retention 'W'ewisted

Hilltop, as you know the three strategic focus areas for 2013 all started with a "w". The first was 'W'orship Space (which we are addressing by adding a service) the second was 'W'eb site (which has been and continues to be updated at www.mankatohilltop.org) and the final one actually starts with a "V"- Visitor Retention – but that's not as fun, so I am calling it 'W'isitor Retention. I would like to Re'w'isit that if I may, by sharing an article Donn Rakow sent me from Sleepy Eye Faith United Methodist Church newsletter called "Some Do's and Don'ts when it comes to Welcoming Visitors in the Church." These are not exhaustive but you may find them helpful.

First, DO welcome people with a handshake and a smile and tell them how happy you are that they are here. DO ask them their names and if they are from the area. DON'T interrogate them with personal questions.

Second, DO invite them to join you for coffee and fellowship time as well as Sunday school. DON'T tell them the church has a time for coffee and fellowship or point them in the direction of a Sunday school class and then leave them to fend for themselves. DO ask them to join YOU for coffee and Sunday school.

Third, DO let them know that the church has opportunities for service and discipleship at the church, but DON'T invite them to volunteer for the choir or ask them to teach Sunday school on their first Sunday as a visitor. It's important that while they are inspecting the pool they don't get pushed in.

Fourth, DO let visitors know you are happy they are here and you are glad to serve them in any way you can. DON'T give the impression that you are happy they are here only for what they can do for us (see number 3). Visitors want a place to belong and be valued just like the rest of us. They don't want to be made to feel that they are important only for what they can offer us.

Fifth, after the service, visitors may have some questions about the church. Answer them as clearly as possible, but DON'T hold them captive in the pew for half an hour. Be respectful of their time and their desire to leave and get on with their day.

Sixth, immediately after worship DO speak to the visitors first. DON'T greet the long-time members before you engage

the guests. Visitors normally make a bee-line for the exit. If you greet your friends first, you will likely discover that the visitors you intended to speak to next are gone.

Seventh, DO let visitors know about the good things happening at the church. DON'T complain about the problems. If they return and become involved in the life of the church, those will become clear on their own.

I hope some of these tips might help you live into our common focus on 'w'etaining first time 'w'isitors to Hilltop.

Be blessed,
Pastor Fred



**Mary Martha Circle will be meeting on
Wednesday, October 9th at 1:30 p.m.**

Hostess: Marci Fast

Devotions: JoAnn Hutchinson

Project: Birthing Kits

All Saint's Sunday

On Sunday, Nov 3rd a portion of our 10:15am worship will be given to the remembrance of those at Hilltop who have gone on before us to be with Jesus in the past year. You will be given the opportunity to light a special candle in memory of a loved one who has passed on this year or long ago. Please pray with us that this service might offer continued healing to us who grieve, and continued thankfulness to God for the lives of those we have loved so much.



Update from The Morgan's

Hilltop,

It is amazing to think that we have already been here for two years in the “holy bubble” of Wilmore, KY. We are halfway through JJ’s schooling, and it has been a transformative experience for our entire family. We have come to realize a deeper faith and a greater trust in the Lord than we ever knew before. Our time here has challenged us, individually and as a couple, and tested us, our marriage, and our family as a whole. It hasn’t always been easy, but it has been a blessing. We are still being refined, still finding out our strengths and our weaknesses, and finding healing here in all of our brokenness. We have a greater gratitude for the gifts we’ve been given, and the blessings that we have in our lives.

We thank you for the ways that you have supported and loved us over the past two years, and we continue to be grateful for such a wonderful church and body of believers. Thank you for the scholarship that you have once again blessed us with. We are so appreciative of the gift. We still seek your prayers and support as we finish out these next two years and move on the next step in our journey. Our plans are to return to Minnesota once JJ finishes school, and he will seek ordination as an Elder in the Methodist church. (We do joke that we would happily become missionaries to Hawaii, however!)

We have felt your love and your prayers during this journey, and we humbly ask that you continue to pray for us. Thank you for caring for our family, and for being the supportive, loving church that you are.

May you all be abundantly blessed with the richness of God’s love and His mercy.

JJ, Stefanie, Zoey, Zander and Sophia Morgan

Parking Lot Momentum

I hope by the time you are reading this that construction has begun on our parking lot. I have put a lot of faith in our completing the renovation soon. In fact, I ordered two brand new pairs of rollerblades for the boys— a \$75 investment! The boys can’t wait for the UPS truck to bring the skates and the awesome new “personal” skating rink to be constructed!

But my investment and their anticipation seems to be nothing compared to yours. I want to thank many of you who have responded to the challenge from last month’s newsletter to continue the momentum started by our DS’s \$1000 contribution and a church member’s \$5,000 gift. It seems we have now received upwards of \$10,000 (as of 9/22/13) towards this endeavor. Thank you!

I don’t know if you know this, but we are debt free! We paid off our sanctuary debt this year! However we do anticipate taking out a loan again to meet the \$72,000 construction bid for the parking lot. Your contributions are helping us knock that needed loan size way down! Anyone who would like to fuel the momentum can make a contribution by placing a check in the offering and marking “Parking Lot” on the memo line!

Pastor Fred

Oct. Birthdays:

Kevin Phillips 10/01
 Brooke Hartman, Zada Utzinger
 10/03
 Ashley Paegel; Ashley Reed 10/04
 Shaelyn Wilmes 10/05
 Mark Oachs; Scott Foss 10/06
 Shane Sellner; Bob Jesseman 10/07
 Alexa Swindell 10/07
 Sandra Kiewatt; Linda O’Malley
 10/08
 Kari Weber 10/08
 Jim Johnson; Sandy Cooper 10/09
 Susan Larson 10/09
 Louis Allen; Paulette Adams 10/10
 Karen Young 10/12
 John Beaty 10/14

De Born 10/16
 Chris Aasen 10/17
 Jonathon Klaseus; Linda Flowers
 10/19
 Haley Goebel; Deb Findley; Celia
 Pratt 10/20
 Bob Kraywinkel; Terri Goebel 10/22
 Wendy Allen; Norma Preston 10/24
 Terry Berg; Debbie Foster; Kody
 Wall 10/25
 Angie Marble; Alec Scherer 10/26
 Levi Vanderwerf 10/27
 Michelle Harmon 10/28
 Deb Young 10/29
 Bob Nelson 10/30
 Jo Breckenridge; Aaron Cole 10/31

Oct. Anniversaries:

Norm & Darlene Gullickson 10/01
 Russell & Linda Flowers 10/02
 Bruce & Joyce Long 10/02
 Randy & De Born 10/03
 Aaron & Rudi Cole 10/04
 JJ & Stef Morgan 10/05
 Matt & Karla Lassonde 10/07
 Bryan & Kari Pratt 10/08
 Marty & Pam Saigh 10/09
 Bob & Alison Nelson 10/17
 Rick & Mary Gaskins 10/23
 Ramsey & Jennifer Turner 10/23
 Dexter & McKinze Oswald 10/27
 William & Wanda Allevan 10/29
 Kevin & Kari Weber 10/29
 Jim & Barb Reed 10/30

Shared Church Conference

Hilltop United Methodist Church Conference will take place with a cluster of other area UM churches at Hilltop at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 10th. Please plan to attend.

Business conducted at this gathering will include:

- Approval of the Pastoral Compensation Package
- Approval of Nominations
- Approval of Candidates for Ministry
- Approval of Membership Changes by Church Conference action
- Approval of Lay Speakers/Servants

At Our Shared Church Conference:

- we will participate in a variety of tools and options you and your congregation can implement.
- we will enjoy broad participation from the churches gathered.
- we will remember that Jesus Christ does in fact change lives and
- we will provide and have the opportunity to appropriate new life in Christ.
- we will find refreshment and joy in returning to our settings for ministry to be and offer Christ to all, in and for our congregations and communities...
- this as we participate with God transforming lives and the world.

Rev. Phil Strom
Southern Prairie District UMC

Men's Retreat !

This year men's retreat is coming sooner! Join 30+ Hilltop men at Camp Omega Retreat Center outside Waterville, MN, as returning pastor Marc Donaldson shares a message intermingled with food, fellowship, and football. Friday Oct 18th and 19th from 6pm to 6pm. Cost is \$60 non-refundable but transferable and due upon sign up. This is the ultimate male-bonding retreat, meant for us to bond with each other and God. Please sign up at the Welcome Center.



Shoebox Time is Coming

Hilltop will again be serving as a southern Minnesota Collection Center for Operation Christmas Child. Collection week is November 18 through the 25th, so during that week we will have a semi parked in the back parking lot. Churches and community members from around the area will be able to drop off Christmas boxes at selected times during the week, and Hilltop will also receive boxes from Relay Centers in other towns in south central Minnesota. From here the boxes will be taken to the processing center in Minneapolis, and will then begin their journey to the hands of the children who will be receiving them. Last year we shipped 4,109 boxes from Mankato, 180 of which were from Hilltop.

The kickoff for Operation Christmas Child will be in the end of October, giving you a couple of weeks to pack your boxes. There will also be opportunities to volunteer to staff the Collection Center for a couple of hours, and to help load cartons onto the truck. It's a great time to start thinking about how you would like to be a part of this effort!

Paulette Adams
Collection Center Coordinator

Suggestions for shoebox items include:

Toys: Small cars, balls, dolls, stuffed animals, kazoos, harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, small Etch-A-Sketch, toys that light up or make noise (with extra batteries), Slinky, etc.

School Supplies: Pens, pencils and sharpeners, crayons or markers, stamps and ink pad sets, writing pads or paper, solar calculators, coloring and picture books, etc.

Hygiene Items: Toothbrush, tooth paste, mild bar soap (in a plastic bag), comb, washcloth, etc.

Other: Hard candy and lollipops (please double bag all candy), mints, gum, t-shirts, socks, ball caps, sunglasses, hair clips, toy jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries).

A Personal Note: In a separate envelope you may enclose a note to the child and a photo of yourself or your family.

DO NOT INCLUDE: Used or damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives or military figures, chocolate or food; liquid or lotions; medications or vitamins; breakable items such as snow globes, bubbles, or glass containers; aerosol cans.



Mission



There are times that the word “mission” stops me in thought. Each month we present a “mission “ either locally, stateside or international, that we as the Mission Committee feels warranted of the attention of the congregation.

As we gather the items for providing information these different missions we have chosen, I often stop and wonder what it must be on the receiving side and what they feel is their “God called Mission” in life. Do they sometimes make us their priority “mission” through prayer, thanksgiving ? Do they stop and wonder about those of us who have given freely for them?

Just as we ask ourselves at times, if we are worthy of God’s grace and his mission call to us, “to go out and spread the word”, these recipients have the same grace and mission call to them. All of can become someone’s “mission” in life. Wonder how many times I am the “mission “ for someone else and didn’t even know it !

The October Mission Focus is Redbird Mission. Our potluck will be held after our 10:15 Worship service on October 13th.

Red Bird Mission and Clinic have been providing ministries in this region of the Appalachian Mountains since 1921. Today the need remains critical in this isolated, rural distressed area. Chronic poverty, lack of jobs, poor housing, and rugged mountainous terrain provide obstacles to a fuller life for the residents of this area. Red Bird Mission strives to meet these needs through ministry in five areas: Education, Health and Wellness, Community Outreach, Economic Opportunity, and Community Housing Improvement.

Support for these ministries come from churches and individuals across the nation. However, in recent years we have seen a decline in the support we are receiving. We are currently facing a financial crisis that is making it difficult to continue all the areas of ministries we provide. Without more funding today, we will have to reduce the level of ministry provided to this community. Your donations to Red Bird Mission and Clinic will help us continue these vital ministries in this distressed region of Appalachia.

Peanut Brittle

Peanut Brittle News

Fall is the perfect time of the year to make peanut brittle. Our goal this year is to make 400 lbs to be sold exclusively at the Christmas Festival (Dec. 7). A crew of 13 is needed at each of our 3 hour sessions. Everyone is welcome, so come join the fun. Sign up at the Welcome Center for the following dates:

Nov. 04 @ 12:30 Nov. 7 @ 5:30
 Nov. 12 @ 12:30 Nov. 14 @ 5:30
 Nov. 18 @ 12:30 Nov. 22 @ 12:30

If you have any questions, please contact Deb Oachs at 387-4259 or Patti Cole at 345-5855 or Sandy Cooper at 382-1185

This week I was visiting with a new person to our church and she began telling me what she loves about our church. She said, "I love your preaching," which made my day! But what made my week was when she said, "but not just your preaching - your lay preachers are awesome!" She is right! I want to thank those who provided pulpit supply this year. I thank God for their natural gifts, and I thank them for their hard work, and faithful commitment to this ministry. Thanks! Pastor Fred

Thank you to my wonderful church family for additional prayers, cards, hugs and flowers. I really appreciate how much of God’s love you have shown to me.

Tricia Woitas



Attendance-Aug. '12		Attendance-Aug. '13	
	Su		Su
8/5	133	8/4	203
8/12	102	8/11	140
8/19	128	8/18	142
8/26	118	8/25	112
Avg.	120	Avg.	149

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 8:15 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 4p Church Family Social Jack Mcc	30 12p CCTV Worship Broadcast 6:30p Nominations Mtg	Oct 1 1:30p Women's Bible Study	2 1p Staff Meeting 6p Emerge (Youth Group) 6:30p Choir Practice 8p Faith Growers 9p CCTV Worship Broadcast	3 12p Bulletin Deadline 6:30p MIN UM Foundation Mtg	4 Pastor's Day Off 7 Men's Morning Risers	5 1p Organist Practice
6 8:15 Worship with Communion 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship with Communion	7 12p CCTV Worship Broadcast	8 1:30p Women's Bible Study	9 1p Staff Meeting 1:30p Mary Martha Circle 6p Emerge (Youth Group) 6:30p Choir Practice 8p Faith Growers 9p CCTV Worship Broadcast	10 12p Bulletin Deadline 1p Bloodmobile 6p Lasting Imprint	11 Pastor's Day Off 7 Men's Morning Risers	12 1p Organist Practice
13 8:15 Worship 9:15 Sunday School -Family Day 10:15 Worship with Podluck to follow	14 Columbus Day 12p CCTV Worship Broadcast 7p Staff/Parish Mtg	15 1:30p Women's Bible Study	16 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Choir Practice 8p Emerge Lock-In 8p Faith Growers 9p CCTV Worship Broadcast	17 12p Bulletin Deadline 6:30p Com. Meetings 7:30p Ad Council	18 Men's Retreat Pastor's Day Off 7 Men's Morning Risers	19 1p Organist Practice
20 8:15 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 5p Mystery Dinner	21 12p CCTV Worship Broadcast	22 8 News/letter Deadline 1:30p Women's Bible Study	23 1p Staff Meeting 6p Emerge (Youth Group) 6:30p Choir Practice 8p Faith Growers 9p CCTV Worship Broadcast	24 12p Bulletin Deadline	25 Pastor's Day Off 7 Men's Morning Risers	26 1p Organist Practice
27 8:15 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	28 12p CCTV Worship Broadcast	29 1:30p Women's Bible Study	30 1p Staff Meeting 6p Emerge (Youth Group) 6:30p Choir Practice 8p Faith Growers 9p CCTV Worship Broadcast	31 Halloween 12p Bulletin Deadline	Nov 1 Pastor's Day Off 7 Men's Morning Risers 5p Craft Club	2 9 Craft Club 1p Organist Practice



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office@mankatohilltop.org

108 S. **Manitou Drive**
Mankato, MN **56001**

(507) **387 3877**

Mystery Dinner

The Fellowship Team is excited to invite you to a Mystery Dinner which will be held at Hilltop UMC at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 20, 2013. This is a mystery dinner in which the menu is the mystery (not a murder mystery). Diner guests will be asked to sign up in advance either via facebook or at the Welcome Center in the narthex. Please watch for this information in the coming weeks.



The Fellowship Team needs your help to pull off this event. We are looking for both adult and youth volunteers to help in the kitchen and serve the dinner guests. Please call Terry Berg at 625-1865 or Kerry Rausch at 381-8877 if you are interested. We look forward to hearing from you!

October 10th Hilltop UMC will host the

Red Cross Bloodmobile from 1p.m. to 6p.m. Sign up at the Welcome Center to help.

We need people for registration and the canteen for our bloodmobile. The sign up sheet is at the Welcome Center. We also need blood donors. An easy way to sign up is to go to: www.redcrossblood.org; click "Donating Blood"; click "Making an Appointment Today"; enter Hilltop UMC Zip Code (56001) or (just underneath the Zip Code box) enter our Sponsor Code: 017223. Then pick you time, put your name and email.

The Rewards are Great.

The Gratification is immediate.

Give Blood.

