



**HILLTOP**  
United Methodist Church

**ECHOS**  
May 2014

[www.mankatohilltop.org](http://www.mankatohilltop.org)

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## FROM THE PASTOR

A few weeks ago I preached a message entitled “Living into Community: Practicing Hospitality” and it really began to speak to me. If you recall we talked about how the practice of Christian hospitality isn’t so much about offering cookies and coffee to visitors, but more so about actively inviting people into your life. An invitation by you to another human being, for coffee, to lunch, to your home, to church, says to that person; “you matter to me,” “You are worth the effort.”

I have high hopes that Hilltop will be an inviting people, but even as I was preaching about it, I began to ask myself the question, “Fred, are you inviting people into your life?” Yes, I got friends, but am I making a conscience effort to expand my friend zone. There a lot of folks who I think God is asking me to invite into my life more deeply, but I can think of a zillion reasons why I just can’t; I’m way to busy, my house is a mess, I got enough friends, maybe when things slow down a bit. However, Christine Pohl’s words in her book “Living into Community” continue to come back to me. She writes, “In God’s remarkable economy as we make room for hospitality more room becomes available to us for *life, hope, and grace.*”

Christine understands the practice of invitation as a means of grace, not only to the recipient of the invitation but to the one offering it. Much like the spiritual disciplines of prayer, communion, or scripture study, practicing the discipline of invitation can be a channel in which God imparts grace to us. I don’t know about you, but I could use more *life, hope, and grace* in my life, so I have stepped up my discipline of invitation. For about a month solid now, Stacy and I have invited folks to dinner after church, to worship, to the pork feed, and even over to Windom for Easter Dinner and we have been blessed because of it. I had forgotten how good it feels to expand my community – to say to another, “You are good for me!” So much grace comes to us when we increase our space for another human being.

In discussing this with a United Methodist pastor planting a church in Rochester he said, “Guess what our

mission statement is?” I anticipated a sentence or two or at least a phrase. It was one word - “Invite”. Wow, that’s easy to remember, and I think it profoundly captures what God in Christ has done for us - He has invited us in! Because we have been invited in, we are now freed to invite others in.

I pass this on to you, because yes, of course, I want you to invite people to Hilltop often and always, but mostly I pass it on to you because I have found life, hope, and grace in simply incorporating this discipline into my own spiritual journey.

The scripture text that comes to mind for me over and over again as I think about invitation is when God says in Genesis 2:18 – “*it is not good for the man to be alone*”. God has hard-wired us for community, and practicing invitation moves us into His design.

- Be blessed, Pastor Fred

## Interested in Joining Hilltop Church?

If you are contemplating joining our church, Pastor Fred invites you to meet with him over coffee in the pastor’s office at 10:15am on June 1<sup>st</sup>. This meeting is designed to help you connect and to allow you to ask the questions you might have before joining. Any question is appropriate (*What does it mean to be a United Methodist? What do we believe about baptism? Did God create aliens?*). It will also be a chance for Pastor Fred to share with you the vows of membership. This meeting will last 90 minutes and is offered to you with no expectation that you join. Just come, get to know us, and ask your questions. Should you decide to join we will gratefully receive you during our worship on June 8<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am.



### Mary Martha Circle

Date: May 14th

Time: 1:30 pm

Hostess: Anita Riese

Devotions: Marci Fast

Project: Quilts

## AD COUNCIL (ABRIDGED MINUTES)

### REPORT FROM PASTOR FRED

#### Reminders:

- “Acting our size” as a mid-sized church
- Implement changes to our “DNA” with an outward focus
- Goal - plant a church in 2016

#### Other business:

- Met with worship consultant, Cathy Townley. She will be sharing her experience with Fred, the Ad Council, and the Vision Task Force along with suggestions on how we can improve our worship experience.
- The Scholarship Committee recommended that JJ Morgan receive the full scholarship of \$1,000 for seminary expenses. Jeff Adams motioned to approve the \$1000 scholarship for JJ Morgan. Paulette Adams seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- Carissa Lick requested to do a two-day educational event focusing on heritage and immigrants. This was well received with the Council but would need further development.

#### Next Steps of the Vision Task Force:

- It is important to be clear in how we communicate. We should avoid cultural language and communicate as if we are speaking with a visitor to Hilltop.
- Continue to use the “so that” clause to evaluate our activity within the church.
- Move into the direction of small group ministry, which provides a place for discipleship and education. Identify leadership or “hosts” to launch small groups. Consider a shorter timeframe, such as “trimesters”, for small groups to meet.
- Identify the one thing that Hilltop should be known for in the community.

### REPORT FROM FINANCE

- Church Roof Fund has been placed in an investment account.
- Anonymous gift of \$15,214.29 received for parking lot fund.
- ECHO food shelf total donation: \$1,596.

- Endowment Fund—The current market value of the Education and Leadership account is \$23,645, and the current market value of the Property account is \$15,000.

### REPORT FROM THE TRUSTEES

#### Projects completed this month:

- Artwork hung on the Welcome Center cabinet.
- Observation windows were installed in the doors to Michelle’s office, the Youth Leader’s office, and the Drama/storytelling room.
- Air conditioner purchased for Michelle’s office
- A new wireless hub was placed in the Tech room (Thank you Aaron Daby).
- New stands for goodie bags were delivered.
- Trustees met with Brad Nelson about electrical needs, and are waiting on a quote for wiring for air conditioning and lighting in Michelle’s office.
- Demo and construction of the new tech room window is complete.
- Schwickerts performed annual maintenance on boiler equipment .

### Parking Lot Update

Last year, the old parking lot was removed, a new base laid and a first layer of blacktop applied. This was allowed to settle over the winter. Thanks to many generous gifts and cash on hand, we were able to pay the entire \$42,000 and did not need to borrow money. This year, parking lot completion will cost an estimated \$33,000 to do the top layer of blacktop, landscaping and install concrete bumpers along the grass by the building. We received an extremely generous gift in April of more than \$15,000 to help us complete this project. Please prayerfully consider a gift to help us remain debt free!! Many thanks for the support of our generous Hilltop family!

*-Bill Scherer, Trustees Chair*

### 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. Submit to [office@mankatohilltop.org](mailto:office@mankatohilltop.org) and be sure to include “newsletter article” in the subject line.

# COMMUNITY

## YOUTH DIRECTOR

You will remember that about two years ago Hilltop leadership identified that a key area of our ministry focus must be in the intentional discipleship of our youth. We believe that crucial to that endeavor is having a youth director on staff who has obvious gifts for youth ministry, but even more a personal and passionate faith in Jesus that is contagious.

Most of you are aware that our youth director, Ashley Parish, has accepted another position to pursue an opportunity in her vocation. We ask for your continued prayers of support for Ashley and Collin as she steps into this new calling. Ashley's new job began after Easter so if you would like to pass on your goodbyes and prayers she can also be reach at amneitzke03@gmail.com.

Our Staff Parish Relation's Committee is already at work in our search for a new youth director. You can help by getting the word out by linking folks to this job posting:

<https://minnesotaumc.org/news/classifieds/youth-director7/>

## NOTES

CORRECTION: In the Easter Flower insert, the flowers given by Beverly Cox should have read in memory of Carroll Northamer, not Carol.

Thank you for sending all of those nice cards! - Norm Gullickson

Heartfelt thanks for the prayers and card; they lifted Len's spirit. He experienced many complications that required time in ICU but thankfully he is now on the road to recovery. Hopefully we will be leaving back to Georgia in the next couple of days where he will continue to receive care. We are definitely blessed by each of you. - Thanks again, Kaye and Len

Worship Attendance Statistics					
Sundays:	8:15	10:15	2014 Total	2013	2012
Apr. 6	54	174	228	192	192
Apr. 13	46	175	221	198	215
Apr. 20	141	247	388	344	354
Apr. 27	45	131	176	178	149
<b>Average</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>228</b>

## MAY BIRTHDAYS

Brady Phillips	5/01	JoAnn Hutchinson	5/18
John Harrington	5/02	Bruce Long	5/19
Amy Brown	5/03	Judy Argetsinger	5/19
Herb Fast	5/03	Amber Cole	5/20
Kim Waknitz	5/04	Cameron Burke	5/20
Doug Smithson	5/05	Bailey Feuling	5/21
Wayne Baumgartner	5/05	Dewey Marble	5/21
Katie Grunloh	5/06	Cindy Scherer	5/23
Scott Page	5/07	Darlene Meyer	5/23
Brady Andersen	5/08	Don Putzier	5/23
Jeff Adams	5/08	Scott Johnson	5/23
Brittni Johnson	5/09	Whitney Page	5/23
Darlene Gullickson	5/10	Jeffrey Brown	5/24
Kari Pratt	5/10	John Steinbauer	5/25
Peter Bittner	5/12	Nic Lamphear	5/26
Scott Harmon	5/13	Eddie Putzier	5/28
Bill Allevan	5/14	Marty Saigh	5/28
Norm Wilson	5/14	P.P. Philip	5/28
Mackensie Daby	5/15	Heather Medd	5/29
Bill Goebel	5/17	Mary Bittner	5/29
Evelyn Roseberry	5/17	Leah Baumbach	5/30
Janet Marble	5/17	Paula Wilson-Steinbauer	
Adela Scherer	5/18		5/30

## MAY ANNIVERSARIES



Ron & Margaret Beaty	5/04
Jim & Kay Svobodny	5/19
Dale & Shirley Ashpole	5/20
Rhonda & Howard Friesen	5/20
Don & Steph Putzier	5/21
Amber & Coty Bruender	5/23
John Steinbauer & Paula Wilson-Steinbauer	5/23
Beverly & Duane Cox	5/24
James & Paulette Booker	5/26
John & Kim Beaty	5/26
Kelly & Mike Vandermuss	5/29
Amy & Mike Daufenbach	5/30

## MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

### HILLTOP! DID YOU HEAR THE "ECHO"?

What "echo"? In March we donated over 400 pounds of food and other items and \$808.00 to Echo Food Shelf. Even better...our donation was matched dollar for dollar and because clients of Echo can purchase \$9.00 worth of food for every dollar donated...our \$808.00 donation grew to a donation of \$14,544.00! We give thanks that God has blessed the members of Hilltop with generous hearts.

### SUPPORT HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Habitat is a nonprofit, housing ministry which builds simple, decent, and affordable homes with and for working, low-income families in need in the communities around greater Mankato. You can help support this ministry in two ways - recycle your unwanted electronics or donate cash via "Get on the Beam". Your unwanted e-matter (cameras, GPS devices, cellphones, MP3 players, laptops, toner cartridges, and ink jet cartridges; sorry no cylinder cartridges from copiers) will be collected at our donation corner in a bin marked Habitat Recycling Program and sent to the Funding Factory to be recycled. The "beam" is also located in the Narthex. Just sign your name on the beam when you donate a dollar or more in the attached bank. The "beam" becomes part of the framework for a Habitat house.

### COMMUNITY GARDEN

It is that time of the year for us to start thinking about gardening . If you are interested in having a plot in the community garden, there will be a registration meeting on Monday, May 12 at 7:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall. We have several changes this year so your attendance is important. The meeting will last approximately 45 minutes with beverage and snack provided. Contact Rhonda Friesen at 245-3321 or hrfriese@hickorytech.net if you have questions.

### SPRING CLEAN UP and PANCAKES!

Many hands make light work! Our annual spring cleaning will take place Saturday, May 17th from 9:00 am - Noon. Come enjoy a breakfast of pancakes and sausage at 8:00 am, then find a fun task! We plan to wash windows, dust high and low in the sanctuary and fellowship hall, and clean both the storage garage and furnace

room. Bring extra cleaning supplies if you are able. There is a signup sheet in the narthex - this will help the trustees with planning for breakfast.

### HILLTOP CHURCH PICNIC

Come enjoy a day of family fun on Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM, as we end our Sunday School year and begin our summer worship schedule. The potluck will begin immediately following the 10:15 AM service and weather permitting will be held outdoors on the church grounds. The Fellowship Committee will have games and activities for all ages: bean bag toss, ladder golf, minnow races, gunny sack races, and lawn games. All we ask is that you bring your favorite dish to share.



This will also be our monthly mission potluck, with proceeds benefitting Africa Uplifted (Sierra Leone). Africa Uplifted enriches the lives of the people of Sierra Leone through support of initiatives in the areas of basic healthcare, primary education, essential physical needs, spiritual nurturing and economic development. Bob Berg & Steph Putzier have gone to Sierra Leone a total of 6 times as members of medical mission teams with Africa Uplifted. Steph & Leslie Putzier were scheduled to return there in June, but the trip was cancelled due to the outbreak of Ebola virus in West Africa. Steph will go in November, instead. Proceeds from a free-will offering will enable the mission team to purchase medications, medical supplies, mosquito nets, and other vital components to help improve the lives of the people of Sierra Leone.



### SALVATION ARMY DINNER

Hilltop will be serving the Noon meal at the Salvation Army on **Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup>** from **11:00-1:30 p.m.** If you would like to help serve or provide desserts or milk, please contact Rhonda Friesen at 245-3321 or hrfriese@hickorytech.net.

### CRAFT CLUB

The last Craft Club meeting of the season will be Saturday, May 3 at 9:00am. We thank Shari Schroeder for organizing the monthly get-togethers this past winter.

# May 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
 <p><sup>2</sup> Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.</p> <p><i>Romans 12:2</i></p>						
<b>4</b> 8:15a Worship 9:15a Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:30 Salvation Army Meal	<b>5</b> 12:00p CCTV Worship 6:15p Men's Softball Caswell 1	<b>6</b> 1:30p Women's Bible Study 5:30p Prayer & Share 6:30p Emmaus Fourth Day	<b>7</b> 6:00p Emerge (Youth) 6:30p Choir Practice 8:00p Faith Growers 9:00p CCTV Worship	<b>8</b> 12:00p Bulletin Deadline Multiple Blessings Garage Sale	<b>9</b> 7:00a Men's Morning Risers Multiple Blessings Garage Sale Million Meal Marathon at Centenary	<b>10</b> 8:00a Craft Club
<b>11 Mothers' Day</b> 8:15a Worship 9:15a Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:15 Mission Potluck	<b>12</b> 12:00p CCTV Worship 7:00p Community Garden Registration Mtg. 7:15p Men's Softball Caswell 3	<b>13</b> 1:30p Women's Bible Study 5:30p Prayer & Share	<b>14</b> 1:30p MaryMarthaCircle 6:00p Emerge (Youth) 6:30p Choir Practice 8:00p Faith Growers 9:00p CCTV Worship	<b>15</b> 12:00p Bulletin Deadline 6:30p Committee Mtgs. 7:30p Ad Council Mtg.	<b>16</b> 7:00a Men's Morning Risers	<b>17</b> 8:00a Spring Clean Up and Pancakes
<b>18</b> 8:15a Worship 9:15a Sunday School -Family Day 10:15 Worship 11:15 All Church Picnic	<b>19</b> 8:00a Newsletter Deadline 12:00p CCTV Worship 6:15p Men's Softball Caswell 4	<b>20</b> 1:30p Women's Bible Study 5:30p Prayer & Share	<b>21</b> 6:00p Emerge (Youth) 6:30p Choir Practice 8:00p Faith Growers 9:00p CCTV Worship	<b>22</b> 12:00p Bulletin Deadline	<b>23</b> 7:00a Men's Morning Risers	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 9:00a Worship	<b>26 Memorial Day</b> 12:00p CCTV Worship	<b>27</b> 1:30p Women's Bible Study 5:30p Prayer & Share	<b>28</b> 6:30p Choir Practice 8:00p Faith Growers 9:00p CCTV Worship	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>

MN UM Annual Conference - Wed., May 28th - Fri., May 30th



[www.mankatohilltop.org](http://www.mankatohilltop.org)

Pastor Fred Vanderwerf  
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Hilltop United Methodist Church

## MINNESOTA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

### Join Bishop and Char Ough for a Holy Land pilgrimage in January 2015



Clergy and laity of the Dakotas and Minnesota Conferences are invited to join Bishop Bruce and Char Ough on a Holy Land pilgrimage, January 7-16, 2015. Deepen your faith and understanding of the scriptures, experience

the landscape of the Bible, meet Palestinian Christians, and learn of their work in the West Bank of Palestine and in Israel.

Registration information and daily itineraries will be sent to all clergy and congregations in the coming weeks. Scholarships are available for clergy traveling to the Holy Land for the first time with Educational Opportunities Travel. Two continuing education credits will be offered to all clergy who take part in this experience.

Don't miss this spiritual pilgrimage of a lifetime. Save the date and start packing!

### Million Meal Marathon - May 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>

**Location:** Centenary UMC, 501 S. 2nd Street, Mankato

Volunteers are still needed for four shifts: Friday 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Saturday 9-11 a.m., 12-2 p.m., 3-5 p.m.; plus set-up and break down. Call Michelle Behsman in the Hilltop office at 507-387-3877 to register.

### Hope UMC hosts Watoto Children's Choir



On Wednesday May 28th at 7:00 p.m. the internationally acclaimed Watoto Ugandan children's choir will present a concert in the sanctuary of Hope United Methodist Church in Blue Earth, MN.

The concert is free and open to the public. There will be free will offering to support their education and living needs. To learn more go to:  
<http://www.watoto.com/the-choir>