



Hilltop Highlights

November 2020



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Moving Forward with God *Everyday*

Déjà vu can be troubling or triumphant. Four years ago, as we were adjusting to a new Bishop in our annual conference and preparing for a national election, I wrote an article about living into beloved community. Here is an excerpt:

“Within and beyond the Church, the present times are mired with conflict and divisiveness while God continuously calls the faithful into beloved community...”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. popularized the concept of a “beloved community.” Dr. King envisioned a beloved community as a society based on justice, equal opportunity, and love of one’s fellow human beings. He stated: “Our goal is to create a beloved community and this will require a qualitative change in our souls as well as a quantitative change in our lives.”

Beloved community is not a false or idyllic utopia. It requires living in authentic relationship with one another graciously acknowledging faults and frailties within ourselves and others. It requires active and deliberate love and forgiveness—making the healing grace of God real. Beloved community fully embraces the diversity of all of God’s creation. Rather than homogeneous uniformity, it seeks unity with diversity.

Jesus spent time among all types of people regardless of demeanor, gender, social or economic status, or other descriptors. Jesus defied societal rules of engagement and Pharasaic interpretations of scripture that marginalized many populations. Jesus revealed that the kingdom of God is a “kin-dom” of people unified by love and forgiveness. As Christ is the cornerstone of our ever-expanding faith community and the One who came so all might have abundant life, there is no room for exclusion in the ‘kin-dom’. The beloved community is all-inclusive as God is the Creator and Christ the Redeemer of all.”

I must admit my disappointment that neither our country nor our denomination has made significant progress toward God’s beloved community. While the conditions of the world may continue to churn, the people of God need not and should not get mired in conflict and divisiveness or blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people’s trickery, or deceitful scheming (Eph 4:14). People of God are anchored and guided by Christ, our cornerstone and compass. To keep moving forward with God, we have daily building to do that requires the sustained energy of a faithful, long view--being of the same mind as Christ (Phil 2:5). Thankfully, *every day* in our God-

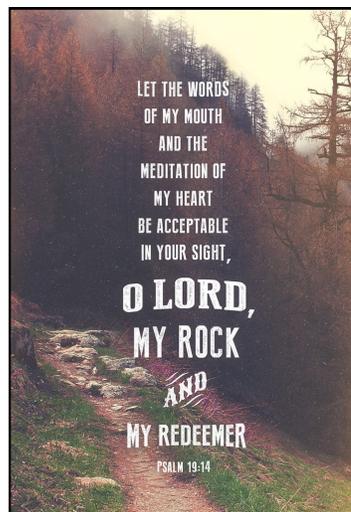
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PASTOR'S MUSINGS

(Continued from page 1)

given lives, we have opportunities to make meaningful progress toward God's beloved community through the words of our mouths and meditations of our hearts lived out in our actions. Through intentional prayers, presence, gifts, witness, and service, each of us can help make manifest beloved community. What will you do to help insure that, four years from now, we will be triumphantly living in beloved community rather than repeating the troubling cycle of conflict and division?

Practice makes permanent. Every day, I encourage you to let the words of your mouth and the meditations of your heart be acceptable (pleasing) to the Lord (Psalm 19:14). Every day, seek quality fellowship that uplifts and transforms the soul. Every day, challenge yourself to make quantitative/measurable changes in your life for the common good. Every day with thanksgiving, let us live into the 'kin-dom' of God—the beloved community--and to God be the glory!



Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study will resume meeting Monday, November 9 at 9:30 am in the North Room upstairs. We will be doing an Advent study entitled *Almost Christmas - A Wesleyan Advent Experience*. Based on John Wesley's famous sermon, "The Almost Christian", he encouraged people to follow Christ wholeheartedly. This connects our Wesleyan heritage with the traditional Advent themes of Love, Joy and Peace. If you are interested in this four-week study please contact Deb Hale at debral-hale@yahoo.com for a book and to be informed of the Covid 19 protocol for meeting at this time.

November Birthdays

- Carma Ewer Nov 1
- Tanya Kovach..... Nov 1
- Sally Trawick..... Nov 2
- Sue Williams..... Nov 2
- Kat Coquemont..... Nov 4
- Thomas Itchon..... Nov 5
- Dennis McCormick..... Nov 6
- Jacque Bowlin..... Nov 17
- Greg Ballaine Nov 20
- Janie Montoya Nov 20
- Betty Long..... Nov 23
- Jo Brace..... Nov 25
- Sandy McCormick Nov 28



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Combatting Child Homelessness

Thanks for your goods, prayers and advocacy on behalf of children who are homeless.

The Coalition of Religious Communities (CORC) found that in Utah in 2019:

- 1985 children spent at least 1 night in a homeless shelter
- 136 people in families with kids were homeless for 6 months or longer
- 239 people in families with kids were homeless 4 or more times during the past 3 years

CORC has established goals it will advocate for with government and community leaders. You can be a part. Read the whole report at www.crossroadsurbancenter.org/report.



Litany for Homeless Children

We ask for help in remembering those who feel alone and abandoned.

Soften our hearts so we can feel your love for those we have ignored.

Open our eyes so we can see them as you would have us see them.

Open our minds so that we can see that they are all Your children.

Open our ears so we can hear them crying.

Fill our hearts with love that overcomes fear and banishes complacency.

We have felt the joy that comes from serving others in big ways and small.

Most merciful God, be with us and strengthen us as we renew our commitment to be light to the world and a source of comfort to the least of these.

We especially ask for help remembering homeless children and their families and guidance in how we can best serve them as individuals and as community knit together by faith, hope and love.



Becky Elliston
MMO Director
mmo@
hilltopumchurch.org

MISSIONS

Urgent Call to Action

Cleaning Buckets Needed!

UMCOR West Depot is out of cleaning buckets, most efficient way is to donate funds to Christ UMC, they can order the supplies at best prices October 31st deadline. Send checks payable to Christ UMC in SLC with an earmark on the memo line "UMCOR Supplies". Each bucket costs \$75.

Here's How You Can Help

Christ UMC, Salt Lake City, UT, Rev. Rusty Bulter will: accept donations from any church in the Mountain Sky Conference, purchase bulk supplies, and assemble the Cleaning Buckets onsite, deliver verified buckets directly to UMCOR West.

For more information contact Jay Vestal: jayvestal@msn.com

**Note: Checks should be made out to Christ UMC (UMCOR Supplies in the memo line as well as the name of your church). Mail checks to Christ UMC, SLC, 2375 E 3300 S, Salt Lake City, UT 84109*

Share Your Bounty

As the seasons change, our successful drive thru food drive is shifting back to our indoor routine. This starts on Sunday November 1st and will continue on the 1st Sunday of the month. A table will be set up in the narthex and another one outside

Rescue Mission Drive-Thru Winter Clothing Collection

The past few years the Missions Committee has been involved in gathering winter items for the Salt Lake Rescue Mission. We are continuing this tradition with a few changes. We will be taking donations of HATS, GLOVES (new or gently used) and NEW SOCKS and UNDERWEAR. Hilltop Christian Preschool will be combining efforts with us in this cause. MEN'S items are usually the most needed, but other sizes can be contributed as well. And if you prefer, checks will also be accepted - made out to the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake.

So that we can all remain Covid safe, items will be accepted in the Hilltop parking lot on Saturday, December 5 from 10:00-1:00. Marked bins for collection will be set up near the garage of Hilltop House. The patrons of the Rescue Mission desperately need these items when the weather gets cold - the Missions Committee and the Rescue Mission greatly appreciate your donations. See you December 5! Contact Deb Hale at debralhale@yahoo.com if you have any questions.

the front door steps. Ushers will be available to bring in your donations. If you choose to write a check, please make it to Hilltop UMC, with Share your Bounty in the memo. The need is still great so please share as you are able.

MISSIONS

Family Promise Update

By Kevin Day

My original intent for writing this article was to ask for volunteers to help with our next week of hosting families in need of permanent housing. However, we were notified last week that Family Promise Salt Lake is now in crisis. Over the past few weeks, the Executive Director has been fired, and 12 of 15 members of the Board of Directors have resigned. The financial condition of the organization is very precarious, with monthly expenses outpacing income by a wide margin. As a result, all staff members were laid off last Friday.

Rev. Russell Butler at Christ United Methodist Church is leading an effort to save the organization. He has reached out to the national Family Promise organization for assistance and has contacted Tony Milner, one of the previous directors of Family Promise-SLC for guidance. They are also in the process of selling one or two of the properties owned by Family Promise (not the Day center) and are reaching out to organizations who have given grants and gifts in the past.

Rev. Butler is assuring us that although things are difficult right now, it is not the end of Family Promise. Because Hilltop has long supported this organization (both with donations and by hosting dozens of families at Hilltop House), he is asking for the following:



- Prayers - please pray that the organization will be able to get back on its feet and will once again be able to help families find permanent housing.
- Financial Gifts - these may be made directly to Family Promise or to Hilltop (indicating Family Promise on the memo line).
- Nominations for the Board – if you know of someone with relevant experience and a passion for issues in homelessness, please contact Pastor Lynn and she will forward your nomination to Rev. Butler. The most urgent need is for people with accounting, legal, real estate and fundraising skills.

Hilltop has supported this organization for almost twenty years (first through Interfaith Hospitality Network and then Family Promise). I am very proud of the work we have done while opening our doors to families in need. With your continued support, I am hopeful that we can help restore Family Promise Salt Lake to its prior stability and productivity. In the meantime, the Missions Committee will continue to provide you with updates and we'll let you know when we will need volunteers for hosting duties once again.

MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRY



Roberta Shimensky
Music Director
801.571-5777

Journey in God's Light

By Donna Garbrecht

Throughout my life, in times of sadness and in times of joy, I can always find comfort in knowing I am not alone.

I feel God's light the brightest through song. Going to church as a child, I loved watching my dad sing. The way the music moved his spirit had a deep impact on me, and he passed his love of God's music onto me.

When my father passed away, I was fortunate enough to be by his side. As I sat with him in his final days, I sang him his favorite hymns (and some Motown). When his spirit left this earth, I could feel God's light on my shoulders reminding me the music was there for me as much as it was for my father. Music helped me to find light in times of darkness, and I was able to keep the light of God in my journey through life.

Now, I am a grandmother, and singing with my granddaughter; we are more lit-

eral about God's light, as her favorite song to sing is, "This Little Light of Mine." I feel so blessed to share music with a new generation. I also feel the gratefulness of life when I sing with her, "Lord I want to be a Christian." The warmth of the Holy Spirit within is with me when I am with her in these moments.

I feel God's light in a multitude of places; sunrises and sunsets, the smell of fall air, in the eyes of loved ones, and in the everyday beauty of the mountains, but his light is warmest upon me through song. I am grateful to be a part of Hilltop's choir and hope next time you all hear your favorite hymn, his light warms your soul. Reach out to God and tell him your struggles, and ask for his light, because you are never alone. Struggles from within are not the burden, because you do not carry them alone.

Find the light of God's love.

Join Ms. Katie for Weekly Song Videos in November!

Due to the surge of COVID-19 cases in our county, the Children's Music Program will not meet in person this month. Ms. Katie is excited to continue music-making through special weekly videos for families of young children (ages 3-10). These fun, engaging

videos are 20 minutes long and include a Bible story focus, prayer, puppet friends, and - of course - lots of singing. Videos will be posted on the Hilltop Facebook page each Sunday, so all are welcome to share these videos with friends and family (far or near).

MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRY

"Joy to the World" - an Advent Journey for the Whole

Families of children ages 3-12 are warmly invited to participate in a special Advent faith-formation opportunity. "Joy to the World" is a four-part resource which helps families prepare their hearts and homes for the Christ child. Engaging activities explore Advent themes and create lasting family memories.

This resource is flexible, and families can choose or complete activities on their own schedule. Each week includes a carol singalong video with Ms. Katie, a fun Advent rhythm beat, an Advent candle experience

in your home, a nature activity, a holiday craft, and daily conversation prompts. Materials will be packed in a basket and delivered to your home on the first Sunday of Advent.

Spend this Advent season connecting, talking, singing, and creating with your family. Baskets make great gifts for grandchildren and neighbor kids, too! To reserve a "Joy to the World" basket (which includes enough materials for the whole family), [register here](#). Suggested donation of \$20 per basket.

Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser for Hilltop Gospel Choir

Don't be superstitious. Nothing will happen on Friday, November 13th that cannot happen on Saturday, November 14th... EXCEPT the Hilltop Gospel Choir Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser. Pre-order your spaghetti dinner now with or without meatballs. Cost is \$11.00 per meal due at time of order. You may Venmo @HilltopGospel-Choir or call Betty at 801-557-6126 to use a credit card.

Spaghetti is made by Frattelli's Ristorante (8600 S 1300 E). Each dinner will be pre-packaged by Frattelli's, delivered to Hilltop for you to pick up between 5:30 and 6:30 pm on Friday, November 13th.

Sit back, relax, and let Frattelli's do the cooking!



Save the Date!

Community Caroling December 6

Hilltop United Methodist Church
985 East 10600 South
Sandy, Utah 84094



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Sunday Schedule

Sunday School for All	9:00 am
Worship	9:00 am
Fellowship Time	10:00 am
Worship	10:30 am
Fellowship Time	11:30 am

Pastor Lynn Miller Jackson
Email: pastor@hilltopumchurch.org