

Hilltop *Highlights*

February 2021



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Seeing Things Differently

“For now, we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” (KJV)

“Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.” (NLT)

The scripture above is 1 Corinthians 13:12 from two different translations. One is more poetic, while the other is more prose. Both are prophetic; yet some would say perplexing. So it is with our worldviews.

Though we may be looking at the same thing, every person perceives the world and their life through a particular lens. Our worldview influences how we interpret personal and public events; how we use our resources—time, talent, and treasures; how we value ourselves and our neighbors—known and unknown; and so much more.

The truth is that we see things imperfectly. We have blind spots to some blatant realities as well as to some deeply layered conditions within and around us. We may even have blind spots to the purpose of our experiences to date.

God is always revealing, but we are not always seeing/perceiving. Furthermore, there are some things we do not want to see or know because acknowledging conditions will convict us to act or change. Here’s the reality. We will not move to knowing completely unless we are willing to see things differently with God.

Through our faith in Jesus Christ and presence of the Holy Spirit, we have the sacred privilege of expanding our perspectives and gaining unlimited

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PASTOR'S MUSINGS

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insights and understanding of ourselves, our neighbors, and the world. We have the opportunity to get to know God as we are known by God.

Our walk with God enables us to see things differently - to engage different personalities and perspectives, to embrace differences without defensiveness, to acknowledge and address rather than avoid the conditions encountered in the world. Our walk with God births the new attitude and aptitude, an inward change and higher consciousness that impacts our outward engagements with the world. God enables us to become and affect the change we wish to see; to acknowledge and address problems within and among us to which we have been blind.

This month, we transition from the season of Epiphany to the season of Lent, which begins February 17th on Ash Wednesday. The arhythmic mid-week start sets the Lenten journey apart. It is not a time for casual observation, but a time to rend your heart toward God. It requires commitment beginning on Ash Wednesday and extending to the resurrection celebra-

tion and beyond. Lent is a purposeful time of reflection and preparation, of repentance and confession, and of renewal and revelation. It is time to put our spiritual house in order by walking closer with God.

Many people choose to give up something like coffee sweets or television as a discipline during lent. Instead of giving up something, consider taking up something this year like a prayer practice daily Bible reading or devotional time, a group or individual Bible study. How about seeking and sharing with others or journaling about God sightings in the world? How might we impact the world by considering a different lens on historic and current times, recognizing the gifts of different people and backgrounds, and really embracing the uncommon views of Christ?

God is actively with us, revealing new things within us and surrounding us. In this season of Lent, commit to seeing things differently with God so we may impact the world differently. And to God be the glory!

THIS & THAT

Weekly E-Notes

Are you receiving e-mails from the church office every week? These are brief notes on what is happening at Hilltop in the next week. They are usually sent on Thursday and include Sunday's scripture readings and a link to the latest newsletter.

If you're not getting them, please send an e-mail to office@hilltopumchurch.org and ask to be added to the distribution list.

Office Hours

Office hours have resumed mostly to normal: **Monday through Thursday 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and Fridays 9:00 am to noon.** The doors will remain locked, but you can ring the bell to be let in. Leigh Anne no longer has the church phone forwarded to her cell, so if you need her outside of office hours, call her at 801-953-3450, but only for emergencies. Thank you.

District Meetings

All clergy and laity of the Utah/Western Colorado District are invited to a monthly gathering with Superintendent Elizabeth McVicker on the 4th Tuesdays at 2:30 pm.

The Link for the meetings are: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94059988601>
pwd=dElaVTRibEdqMHhly05GT3BnQjVtdz09

Meeting ID: 940 5998 8601

Passcode: 732358

February Birthdays

Ryder Bolds	Feb 4
Zimmer Bolds.....	Feb 4
Carmen Gooch	Feb 4
Bryan Hendrickson.....	Feb 5
Mary Tiedeman.....	Feb 6
Charlie Bonsall	Feb 9
Donna Garbrecht.....	Feb 10
Barry Welliver	Feb 10
Caitlin Collins.....	Feb 14
Doug Orr	Feb 16
Leigh Anne Duff	Feb 20
George Hills.....	Feb 20
Marty Ferraro	Feb 22
Jackson Kovach	Feb 23
Zoe Watts	Feb 23
Bob Brace.....	Feb 24
Elsa Robison	Feb 26
Diane Altemus.....	Feb 27
Tom Shaw	Feb 28



MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRY



Roberta Shimensky
Music Director
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A Lesson from Mr. Rogers

At a recent professional development day at school, our faculty engaged in a drawing exercise. We were instructed to choose a nearby object within the reach of natural light. Then, instead of drawing the form of the actual object, the activity leader challenged us to see the negative space around (or in) the object - and draw that. Now, I am not a person who draws for fun; this kind of art-making usually frustrates me. But I was pleasantly surprised! This exercise challenged me to see my chosen object - a lantern on my desk - with different eyes, from a different perspective, and with renewed focus.

One never knows what might cause a shift in our perspective. Throughout my childhood, I loved watching Mister Rogers' Neighborhood. The simple songs, the puppets, and the visitors helped me make sense of the world. Mister Rogers' calming, happy rituals resulted in a calm, happy young Katie. I reflected on his work and looked to his good example last spring as classes and programs and interactions moved online. Mister Rogers was one of the first to show us meaningful content shared through a screen, and I definitely needed a shift in perspective as I approached the months ahead of teaching and leading children online. As I watched familiar episodes, I felt that same calm and happiness I remember feeling as a child. Mister Rogers was still helping me make sense of the world. He assured me that I was creative and worthy of love. He reminded me there is goodness to be seen, if only our eyes are open.

The Music & Arts program at Hilltop continues to seek new ways and renew our focus to engage all ages. If we look just at the image of the pandemic - an empty church building or an empty choir room - it's easy to feel scared, worried, or frustrated. But what if - just like the drawing exercise - we challenged ourselves to see the space around or in our current situation? What is possible in ministry despite the limitations of our predicament? What opportunities lie beyond our walls?

One such possibility launched two weeks ago. In lieu of weekly choir rehearsals, the Hilltop Children's Music program dreamed up an exciting new initiative called *Kidspeak* - a short weekly video based on the worship theme of the week. We call it a little "worship booster" - a fun way to experience God's message for us through simple songs, puppets, and visitors... guiding children and families in the rituals of worship: Gathering, Word, Prayer, Sending. Each episode assures the viewer of God's love and presence, reminding all ages that they are God's good creation, worthy of love and kindness.

Kidspeak extends Hilltop's mission far beyond the walls of our church building. With the click of a button, you can share a video with a neighbor, a friend, a grandchild. Through these videos, we are reminded of the good in the world - and the Good News that we have to share. That's a wonderful perspective to hold in 2021, isn't it?

MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRY

An Evening of Connecting In an Entertaining Way

Sunday, February 28, LIVE at 6:00 p.m. Connect with Music & Arts via Zoom for our Annual Fundraising Concert 2021. With a mix of live and pre-recorded, a look back and looking forward, ensembles and solos, Music & Arts will present a lively online production that showcases the breadth of our ministry. So plan to hop online to join us and give your support to enable Music & Arts to continue to offer support to Hilltop's worship, and grow in outreach. Keep an eye on Hilltop Happenings for more details, and how to join in the fun.

Preparing to Say Godspeed

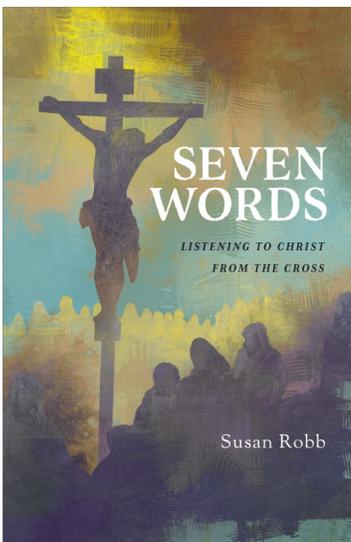
We are all familiar with quotes about change being inevitable, but that doesn't mean we have to like it! We are very sorry to have to announce that Al Rocek will be retiring in April. Al and Kirsten have plans to move to Texas after retirement.



Lenten Lunch Bible study

2pm on Wednesdays during Lent.

Seven Words: Listening to Christ from the Cross by Susan Robb; a six-week study of Jesus' words on the cross and their meaning for us today.



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

Children's Books for Discussion of Race and Inequality at Home

by Karen Moser

I don't know about you, but it has been a long time since I've been to a salon for a haircut. I'm just getting by cautiously trimming the ends of my hair from time to time. I wouldn't exactly say my haircut is great right now. The members of our household willing to let Joel cut their hair with clippers (Joel, Heidi, and Clark to date) are faring much better. When we read this month's book, it was a real joy to live vicariously through the main character's weekly (*weekly*, can you imagine such a thing anymore?) trip to the barbershop for a fresh cut. The sights and sounds, the neighbors he meets, and the invincible feeling he has when his new style is complete were so fun to experience through his eyes!

This Month's Book: Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut, written by Derrick Barnes, illustrated by Gordon C. James

Available in the Salt Lake County and Salt Lake City Library systems

Summary: This slice of life story shows a pre-teen Black boy (unnamed in the story) going to the barbershop for his weekly haircut. He clearly looks forward to this event each week and loves his barber. The experience of being cared for and tended to comes through in the detailed sensory description of the barbershop experience. The pride the boy takes in his appearance and in himself as a person is a major focus of the story. Who can't relate to feeling your best when you look your best? This

excerpt from the author's note sums up the feel of the story best: "Deep down inside, they [Black boys] wish that everyone could see what they see: a real life, breathing, compassionate, thoughtful, brilliant, limitless soul that matters--that desperately matters. We've always mattered."

Bonus: This author/illustrator team created another picture book called *I Am Every Good Thing*. It is also fantastic and will leave any kid who reads it feeling better about him/her/themselves and the special gifts they bring to the world.

What Do The Kids Think?

Heidi- "I liked hearing about this boy and what he thinks about getting a haircut."

Clark- "I think it was good because he liked getting his haircut every week."

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. Who deserves to be cared for? Who deserves to spend time making themselves look their best?
2. What makes you feel like you matter and gives you pride in yourself? How can you help others feel proud of themselves, too?

If you have recommendations for books to feature in future months, please e-mail me at moserka@gmail.com.

Happy Reading!

MISSIONS

Funding for Missions Committee Giving

Are you aware that in addition to holding food and clothing drives and organizing volunteer events, your Missions Committee allocates funds to various organizations both locally and internationally? For example, in 2020 we provided financial gifts to Crossroads Urban Center, the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake, the Abundant Life Center in Malawi, sponsored a school in Zimbabwe, provided scholarship funding for a student in Guatemala, and provided monies for the Hilltop COVID Cares Fund and Pastor's Fund.

The Missions Committee does not receive any money from the church's general budget to do this. Therefore, we must rely entirely on special gifts, Christmas Eve donations, Poinsettia and Easter Lily sales, our Chili Cookoff fundraiser and the Smith's Inspiring Donations program to fund these donations. Because we weren't able to hold the Chili Cookoff in 2020 and because Christmas Eve donations were far below normal, we had to significantly scale back our giving last year. However, we are very grateful for all of the support that we did receive.

We would also like to thank everyone who has linked their Smith's Fresh Values card to the Inspiring Donations program. This program allowed us to increase our giving in 2020 by almost \$700! If you have not linked your card to this program yet, we encourage you to do so. This can be done online at: smithsfoodanddrug.com/



community/smiths-inspiring-donations. Please indicate that donations are for "Hilltop United Methodist Church" or "DU283". You will need to create a digital account and have a Fresh Values card to do this online. Or, if it's easier, you can do this at the Customer Service desk at your local store. With this program, 0.5% of all of your purchases will come back to your Missions Committee to continue our work in the community and around the world!

Thank you Hilltop for hearing and living out Jesus' message to feed the hungry and clothe the poor. Hilltop members generously donated to the Mission Committee sponsored Drive-Thru Clothing and Food Collection in December. Hats, gloves, scarves, blankets, underwear and coats were donated to the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake. There were an especially large number of coats and with your help many people are a little warmer this winter. Food and monetary donations were divided between Crossroads Urban Center and the Rescue Mission. Many thanks to all who assisted with this drive and all those who donated.

Hilltop United Methodist Church
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Published monthly by:
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985 East 10600 South
Sandy, Utah 84094
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www.HilltopUMChurch.org

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

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