



Hilltop *Highlights*

August 2021



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I've Been Meaning to Ask...

How easy is it for us to get derailed by our own preconceived notions? The world is proliferated with signs, symbols, and imagery. The idiom: "a picture paints a thousand words" has merit but what if the picture painted isn't the full picture. We see signs or flags on lawns, vehicles, or buildings that may have a different meaning than what we perceive. The intent of the sign or symbol may be different from the interpretation depending on the lens through which we see. Similarly, we may get only partial impressions of people without understanding the true layers or nuances of their personalities, experiences, or perspectives.

In 1 Corinthians 13:12, Paul teaches, "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known." (NRSV).

Presently, we may not see ourselves as clearly as we will, let alone our neighbors. We do not know what we do not know across a spectrum of topics and concerns in the world. Rather than jumping to conclusions while 'we see in a mirror dimly', we must take the opportunity to dig deeper and engage differently for compassionate understanding. If we will do the work of striving for truth and listening deeply for clarity (even if we disagree), time will surely come when we will fully and clearly know and understand as we have been known and understood by God. That's fantastically thorough knowing and understanding! We can start with a simple inquiry.

In August, we will engage a sermon series entitled, "I've been meaning to ask..."--a series for curiosity, courage, and connection. Along with sermons, there will be supporting resources for interactions beyond Sunday and beyond August. It is my hope to stir hearts and minds toward courageous conversations that expand understanding, encourage openness, and that deepen our connections with God and one another. The phrase, "I've been meaning to ask," expresses interest and willingness to listen. It makes way for active hospitality, healing, help, and hope that expresses the heart of Christ. It is an opening to draw our individual and collective circles wider. It is an opportunity to not only invite more people to the table but to listen for their unique voices in the dialog and receive their stories.

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MOTHER'S MORNING OUT



Becky Elliston
MMO Director
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"All knowledge is connected to all other knowledge. The fun is in making the connections."
-Arthur Aufderheide

Children are some of the most inquisitive people you can be around. They are very eager to learn and have a powerful desire to understand the world around them. They don't hesitate to ask questions and will continue to do so until you give them an answer that satisfies their curiosity. You can see a light turn on in their minds when they come to understand a new thing! This is one of the many reasons that I love working with the MMO program.

"A mind that opens to a new idea never returns to it's original size."
-Albert Einstein

Hilltop – An inclusive community of hospitality, healing, help, and hope, leading hearts to Christ

(Continued from page 1)

As our friends at *A Sanctified Art* put it, "We hope this series helps us disrupt assumptions, cultivate curiosity, foster listening, and, God willing, find deeper connections to one another."

I hope you will join me in an active quest of curiosity, courage, and connection. While you will hear me say, "I've been meaning to ask...", I look forward to re-

Silly me, while I am happy to answer the questions of others, I don't always have the courage to ask questions about something that I don't understand. There are many times that I have pretended to know what is going on. When it comes to computers, music and creating budgets, I frequently fake it until I make it. 🙋🏻 🙋🏻 🙋🏻 🙋🏻

In doing so, I lose the opportunity to gain true knowledge and connect with the abundance of "teachers" that God places in my life. I should learn from the example of the MMO students that it is good to ask questions and there is fun in making the connections when we are brave enough to let our curiosity win.

Are you curious about the MMO program? Are you courageous enough to make some connections with Hilltop's surrounding community by joining our team? We still need teachers for the Fall classes. Please contact Becky at 801-571-5777 ext 206 or b.elliston@msn.com

sponding to your heartfelt questions as we grow together and grow with God. May the Holy Spirit guide us into deeper understanding and connection, and may the world know we belong to Christ by our words and deeds- by our agape love. To God be the glory!

FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP

By Betty Long, Finance Chair

As difficult as it is to discuss money in a church, it is the Finance Committee's responsibility to keep the congregation informed of income received and expenditures paid. Figures are often misleading, as church income never arrives in fifty-two equal installments. Both income and expenses vary throughout the year. At this time, Hilltop's year-to-date giving is positive, and we give thanks for abundant giving.

What does the Finance Committee ask of you? We ask only that you prayerfully consider Hilltop's needs, review your own giving, and act accordingly. Ultimately, this is a matter between you and the Lord. Your giving allows Hilltop to share the Gospel, make Disciples, and support those in our communities, near and far.

The Finance Committee thanks you for your time, talent and monetary donations. Hilltop UMC is so fortunate to have your support.

	Monthly	Year-to Date
Report Period	July 1-25, 2021	Jan1-Jul 25, 2021
Income Received	\$29,817	\$267,649
Expenses	(\$32,298)	(\$258,494)
Balance	(\$2,481)	\$9,155

Thank You, Grace!

A huge thank-you to Grace Acosta who donated living room furniture for a much needed upgrade at Hilltop House. Thank you as well to the volunteers who made this happen: Claudia Bilbao, Doug Orr, Tony, Matt and Blake Gentilcore. It was a team effort.

What a difference!



MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRY



Roberta Shimensky
Music Director
801.571-5777

I've Been Meaning to Ask...How Can We Keep From Singing?

I am curious about what lies deep inside people.

Making music is all about communicating. Yes, there are things to master like pitch, rhythm, dynamics, tone, blend, diction, word stress, shaping a phrase, etc. But it all boils down to communication.

Music is not a piece of paper with little black dots all over it. Rather, music is an impossible-to-define feeling. Music exists only in time; when it is done, it is done, and can never be reproduced in the same way.

In the words of John Coltrane: *My music is the spiritual expression of what I am - my faith, my knowledge, my being ... When you begin to see the possibilities of music, your desire to do something really good for people, to help humanity free itself from its hangups ... I want to speak to their souls.*

Music communicates emotion. It is said that music communicates that which words cannot; it goes in the ear and straight to the heart. If two choirs sing the exact same piece and one choir is technically perfect but devoid of emotion, and the other choir may have a few technical mistakes but is singing from the soul, which choir will be judged to be better? Which choir will have actually communicated, touched hearts?

Music is meant not to portray emotion, but to *evoke* emotion, and there is a big difference between the two. One focuses the self inward and the other focuses the self outward, to others. Music is an incredible force and a great uniter.

To sing from the soul, a singer must become totally vulnerable and be willing to lay bare his/her soul. This can be uncomfortable and difficult for some, requiring courage and trust. But it is a level of music-making that, once discovered, opens a whole new world of beauty and intimacy with our fellow human beings.

Connecting with others in this way is deeply rewarding, developing community, and knowing that we actually can effect change in transformative ways.

My life goes on in endless song

*Above earth's lamentations,
I hear the real, though far-off hymn
That hails a new creation.*

*Through all the tumult and the strife
I hear its music ringing,
It sounds an echo in my soul.
How can I keep from singing?*

*No storm can shake my inmost calm,
While to that rock I'm clinging.
Since love is lord of heaven and earth
How can I keep from singing?*

MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRY

Children's Music Kick-Off September 9-30

We welcome the return of the Hilltop Children's Music Program this fall!

Join us for a fun, four-week session where children will get to know new friends as they sing, drum, play, and create together.

Thursdays: September 9, 16, 23, 30

5:30-6:45pm

Hilltop House Lawn (just west of the church building)

Ages 5-12

Cost per participant: \$20

[Registration on the Children's Music Page of the Hilltop website.](#)

This special kick-off session will introduce the music and themes of "CALLED" - the children's musical we will produce and perform as part of Creative Arts Week in

Summer 2022. What does it mean to be called by God? "CALLED" affirms that God has placed something beautiful in everyone and is calling us to share it with the world.

Through composer Mark Burrows' honest, humorous storytelling and memorable musical numbers, kids will discover their unique gifts as they learn that "doing what's right isn't always easy... but it's always, always right."

We ALL will feel empowered to live lives worthy of the calling we have received.

Light snack provided.

Youth Mentors (ages 13-18) are invited to participate. Use the registration link above to volunteer.

Children's Choir Rehearsals Begin October 14, 2021

Following the four-week kickoff in September, weekly rehearsals will resume for the Children's Music Program. There is no fee to participate, and children in grades K-5 are welcome!

Rehearsals for HCMP begin October 14 and are held each Thursday evening from 6:00-6:45pm in the Children's Music Room. The music notes will lead you there!

The HCMP participates in worship roughly once per month, ending our season on Mother's Day. Contact Katie Houts with questions: katie.houts@gmail.com



MISSIONS

A Mission from Home

By Bob Scarborough, SPRC Chair

Last year, Cheryl Gentle and Shirley Primeau asked the Montoya-Scarborough family to consider being in mission (as a sponsor) to Tomasa Natividad Morales Saquic, a junior in high school in Guatemala, Central America. Hilltop and our Missions Team have been providing a scholarship to Tomasa for several years now and so we said yes.

Through letter writing and sharing of pictures we introduced Tomasa to the Montoya-Scarborough's, that's correct, all of us—Maria Scarborough Montoya, Mike, Talia Scarborough, Gabriella, Autumn Scarborough, and Ann and me.... Whoops, almost forgot Johnny the black lab!

This mission from our home only requires a family write 2-3 letters a year and the church's commitment to an annual scholarship pledge for each current school year.

Pura Vida is the non-profit organization in Colorado that our church and many organizations across the country interact with and they make it all possible. So easy, as they do the language translations and it's all on line in an easy to use portal. All letters and pictures are simply uploaded prior to the due dates required in making this commitment as a sponsor.

Tomasa is in her 2nd year of studies to become a preschool bilingual teacher. During 2020 and 2021 she has been doing a combination of at home and in school learning. She says on-line is a little compli-

cated because at times it is too slow and affects her work. She is a hard worker and has made a commitment to finish well this year with good grades.



Several of our family members have been to Guatemala and spent time in her beautiful country seeing Guatemala City, Antigua, and a highland village in Totonicapán. Ann and our sister-in-law Jacque traveled there during their country's civil war to finalize the adoption of Maria. Then, after her high school graduation Maria and dad (Bob) spent nearly 4 weeks working on a short term mission with Habitat for Humanity International helping Guatemalan's prep and build homes outside the small mountain village of Totonicapán (Toto).

When we asked Tomasa what some of her interests and goals, she said; I like to study, sing, and read and to see a variety of films. Her big goal someday is to see our mountains and our snow!

Remember, all things are possible and blessed when we are in mission to serve others with our time, talents and treasure. In Cheryl's Sunday, July 25th message about her "Passion for Missions", think about the list of opportunities that we at Hilltop have to serve! This is just one example of being on a "mission from home".

STAFF PARISH RELATIONS

By Bob Scarborough, SPRC Chair

I've Been Meaning to Ask... In our Pastor's Musings this month, Rev. Lynn considers this and more in her opening paragraph, a lot to ponder and to question!

"How easy is it for us to get derailed by our own preconceived notions? The world is proliferated with signs, symbols, and imagery. The idiom: "a picture paints a thousand words" has merit but what if the picture painted isn't the full picture. We see signs or flags on lawns, vehicles, or buildings that may have a different meaning than what we perceive. The intent of the sign or symbol may be different from the interpretation depending on the lens through which we see. Similarly, we may get only partial impressions of people without understanding the true layers or nuances of their personalities, experiences, or perspectives."

Perceptions are our reality and we often want to have the last word before truly understanding the other person's point of view and he/she gets an opportunity to explain their feelings and notions.

Earlier this week, I posted on Linked In an article on Leadership. Three things to consider, as we work together in our commitment to be in service and mission to all our communities' needs at Hilltop UMC (and beyond, of course) and to become "True Servant Leaders" in listening to what God is calling us to do and to be.

We do not need to be right; we just need to be clear when we communicate.

We do not need to have the last word in any discussion, debate, or dialogue.

We know longer have to try to show that it was our idea. We are able to empower other people to own the idea or action(s).

I think #2 is the hardest one for me. When I really, really use my effective listening skills with another person, I try very hard to understand his or her point of view and notion that is underlying the nuances or feelings of why they feel the way they do. It seems to me that when I ask open ended questions that help me to understand and to build a better relationship with the person. (Think, I've been meaning to ask.....).

As we all know, God empowers us to do and be servants and leaders. This empowerment "packs our parachute or backpack" with all the tools we need, when we need them. Use your curiosity and courage when asked the question, where do you want to serve? I can think of mentors and people who I have learned from and continue to learn from. Can you? Now think about God, those people and mentors as a force that you can use to do anything you/we put our minds to do. We become unstoppable when God is at the cornerstone of our hearts, minds, and actions.



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Hilltop

Highlights

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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

August Birthdays

Jon Hines	August 1
Susan Kovach	August 1
Pat Christensen.....	August 2
Jenny Hochhalter	August 5
Kristine Jordan	August 5
Roberta Cleland.....	August 6
Susannah Milner	August 18
Roberta Shimensky	August 19
Marty Whitney	August 19
Debra Cantrell	August 29
Lynn Miller Jackson.....	August 29
Heather Layman.....	August 29
Emma Robison	August 29
Finn Owen.....	August 26
Karen Moser	August 27

