

Hilltop Highlights

November 2021



Rev. Lynn Miller Jackson
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A Life That Matters

The month of November wraps up the liturgical year. We begin with All Saints Sunday (Nov 7), remembering those who have gone before us into the next phase of eternal life joining the cloud of witnesses. We finish the liturgical year celebrating our Lord and Savior on Reign of Christ Sunday (Nov 21). This is a time to reflect on what has transpired in our lives and in the world. It is a time for thanksgiving as we have all reaped some kind of harvest in our lives—large, small or something in between. An even greater thanksgiving comes when we can wholeheartedly rejoice at the harvest(s) in our neighbors' lives. Harvest takes on different forms. It may be the harvest of peace after enduring challenges of health, safety, employment, etc., or perhaps the peace of letting go. It may be the harvest of hope in recognizing promises fulfilled such as witnessing the birth of a new generation, a new business, a new community, a solution or a revolution. It may be the harvest of embracing change and a new way of being.

In the midst of our harvest, God continues to sow seeds of promise. Our consummate Creator is always birthing something new within and among us, inviting and leading us forward. Our charge is to discern how to live through the labor pains into this newness with God *and* to grow into more significant understanding that we each live a life that matters.

The Bible is ripe with stories of ordinary people doing ordinary things that matter. If these ordinary efforts did not matter, they would not have been recorded. Matthew 25:31-40 speaks of ordinary people attending the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked and sick, the imprisoned; Mark 12:41-44 uplifts the widow who withheld nothing as she gave all she had in faith. Such simple acts without accolades are part of a life that matters as they contribute to the unfolding story of creation and the promise planted within our humanity. We all have a part as God continues to invite us to engage throughout our lives from youth to centenarian.

But we must earnestly ask, "What really matters to us?" Are we seeking to conform to this world and what is at hand or to be transformed for God's divine plan? Our mission as United Methodists is "to make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world." In order to make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world, we must be disciples "transformed by the renewing of our minds, so that we

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PASTOR'S MUSINGS

may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2).

Along our path as disciples, God seems to ask more for the incremental than the monumental from us; more of the ordinary than the extraordinary as we see in the Gospel texts noted above. Micah 6:8 drives this home stating: He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?



Flowers Matter

We all love to get flowers. It is a sign that someone cares, that we matter to them. In mid-October, the Special Care Ministry Team made some special flower deliveries - actually 40 of them! Ten members of the team (and friends) delivered harvest mums to people in our congregation who have faced a variety of challenges. We are so grateful for the willing hands and feet that provide this service each year. What a blessing!

The stories of the ordinary and words of the prophets reveal some of the keys to a life that matters-hospitality, generosity, loving kindness, doing justice, and above all walking humbly with your God. God has granted us these capacities and more. May we express our gratitude to God by being faithful every day in ordinary ways. What really matters is living a life that matters in God eyes not based upon the human gaze. May we do so and to God be the glory for the transformation to come!

November Birthdays

Carma Ewer.....	Nov 1
Tanya Kovach	Nov 1
Trinity Eddy	Nov 1
Sally Trawick.....	Nov 2
Sue Williams.....	Nov 2
Grace Acosta	Nov 3
Kathryn Coquemont	Nov 4
Noah Haight.....	Nov 5
Dennis McCormick.....	Nov 6
Mack Jones.....	Nov 11
Talia Scarborough.....	Nov 16
Jacquie Bowlin	Nov 17
Kathy Smith.....	Nov 18
Regghan Boelter.....	Nov 18
Greg Ballaine.....	Nov 20
Betty Long.....	Nov 23
Jo Brace.....	Nov 25
Sandy McCormick.....	Nov 28



MISSIONS

Do Something That Matters

By Kevin Day

I think it's only natural for all of us to want our lives to matter. As Pastor Lynn has told us, 'the Bible is full of ordinary people doing ordinary things that matter'. Truly, this should be an inspiration to us all!

Personally, I have found that supporting and participating in mission related projects is a great way to add purpose and meaning to my life and helps me feel that I am doing something that matters. Your Hilltop Missions Committee works hard to provide opportunities throughout the year for all of us to do likewise. Some of our current opportunities that we invite you to participate in are as follows:

Utah Food Bank: We are currently looking at various opportunities where we can partner with the UFB to help alleviate food insecurity in our community. One such opportunity is providing volunteers to help distribute food once a month at East Midvale Elementary School which is part of UFB's Mobile Food Pantry Program. We are trying this out on November 2nd to see if it is a good fit for us (and preliminary indications are that there is significant interest for this type of volunteer work). This program requires 6-8 volunteers on a monthly basis throughout the school year. Another volunteer opportunity available through the UFB is assisting St. James Episcopal Church with their food pantry program.

Share Your Bounty Food Drives: Starting in November, collection of non-perishable food items will resume on the first Sunday of each month. All items may be left on the table in the Narthex. All donations benefit Crossroads Urban Center and the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake.

Rescue Mission Coat Drive: Our annual Christmas drive to collect winter coats, hats, scarves, gloves and new men's underwear will take place on Saturday, December 4th from 10:00 am–1:00 pm in the Hilltop parking lot. All donations will benefit the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake.

Financial Donations to the Missions Committee or the Pastor's Fund are always welcome and will help those in need in our community and around the world. All funds received are redirected to organizations like Crossroads Urban Center, the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake, Family Promise of Salt Lake, Pura Vida, Abundant Life Center in Malawi and UMCOR, to name a few.

We hope that this list helps each of you find something that you can do that matters. If you have any questions regarding any of these opportunities, please contact the church office.

MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRY



Roberta Shimensky
Music Director
801.571-5777

Why Can't I Just Be Myself?

We all have a desire to live a life that counts for something. While some people seem determined to work negatively in the world, most of us want to have a positive impact on the world.

There are different ways we can have a positive impact: smile more, run an errand for someone, donate clothing or food, call a friend who may be lonely, etc. These are a few of some small ways that can make a difference in someone's life. These are some of the answers that may come to mind when we purposely ask ourselves "Where is there a need, and is this something I can help with?"

People can observe these concrete ways of having an impact in the world. When we join a community cause, we can have a ripple effect through positive actions. But often-times well-meaning actions can devolve into merely items to check off on a to-do list so we can feel good about having helped.

There is another, very important – profound, even – way that we unknowingly impact others. And that is by being who we are.

Simple, you say, "I'm myself every day." We all know it's not quite that simple. Exactly who are we? What motivates us?

Sometimes the greatest impact we have on others is when we are unaware that we are having an impact. What do we show to the world in "being ourselves?" Maya Angelou famously said, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Let all that you do be done in love. – 1 CORINTHIANS 16:14

Powerful impact is borne out of relationships. We may not be able to change the world, but we can impact one person's life by giving ourselves in relationship. We give because we are motivated by love, Christ's love in us. To be impactful, what we give that is most valuable must be an integral part of who we are.

The more you reaffirm who you are in Christ, the more your behavior will begin to reflect your true identity. – NEIL T. ANDERSON

MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRY

A Chancel Choir Christmas 2021

Several people have asked about our grand tradition of the annual *Community Christmas Celebration* with the Crescent Ridge Stake. The joint decision was made last August to cancel this year's program once again because of the pandemic. We are trusting that 2022 will be a more favorable time to gather as a community to celebrate together.

This year would have been a year for Crescent Ridge Stake to host the *Community Christmas Celebration* (Hilltop and the stake alternating hosting this event). On those years when the stake hosts, it has been a tradition at Hilltop that our own Chancel

Choir presents a worship experience for the season with dramatic readings and various ensembles participating.

This year's *A Chancel Choir Christmas*, "Sing Gift of Peace," will be presented Sunday, December 19, at 6:00 p.m. Preparations are underway for choir, bells, narrator, Young Adult Choir, and much more.

Mark your calendars and plan to experience this special event. We look forward to sharing and deepening the meaning of the season with all of you.



**Join the Hilltop
Gospel Choir on a
tour to England**

July 5-24, 2022

**Contact Becky Elliston
b.elliston@msn.com
for information.**



TRUSTEES

Things That Matter

By Doug Orr, Trustees Chair

The theme for November is “a life that matters”. Often, we only think of something “big” as meeting this criterion, but that’s really not the case. Many times, it’s the little things that people do that end up being what others remember as “something that matters.”

I believe that most of the time when people think of the Trustees they think of the big projects that are very visible and have obvious impact on the church. Examples from the past are the new floor in Fellowship Hall and the replacement of the folding doors between the Ada Room and Fellowship Hall. Hopefully you’ll also be noticing effort on the Audio/Visual “build out” project in the Sanctuary, and the construction of the Google Fiber Optic Hut in the vacant lot behind the Best House. These are indeed “things that matter”, no doubt, but there is a whole lot more that the Trustees are involved in managing at Hilltop.

Our bi-annual church-wide work days have many much smaller projects (gutter cleaning, outside drain cleaning, shrub trimming, general clean-up, among many others) that also matter. Our gardening group meets often (weather permitting) and works to keep our landscaping looking nice. All of these activities matter.

For the past 2 years Hilltop has been without a paid maintenance person. We’ve had a volunteer maintenance person (or 2) picking up the slack and dealing with blown lightbulbs, leaking faucets and toilets, noisy A/C units, and many other general upkeep projects over that time. This type of work matters. And there are times when a few extra hands, or a little more/different experience, would be a big help.

So if you have some extra time you could spare, some general home maintenance talent, or even more directly applicable skills (carpentry, plumbing, electrical, etc.), feel free to contact any Trustee and offer to lend a hand the next time some “XYZ” - type project or activity comes up, and you, too, can have another opportunity to live a life that matters.

Current Project Updates

The **Google Fiber Optic Hut** construction will be starting soon, if it hasn’t already. It will be primarily localized to the vacant lot, but please be aware of the potential for increased activity during daylight hours.

The **A/V Buildout** is still struggling to get started due to materials availability, but we still hope to get this done before the end of the year. Keep an eye out in the weekly email for opportunities to participate in this effort as another way to live a life that matters.

MOTHER'S MORNING OUT

Meet Our Teachers

By Becky Elliston

Debbie Mudge

Debbie has an Elementary Education degree and taught Elementary School for 9 years before having her 2 children. She is married to the Pastor at Berean Bible Church and has worked with MMO for 4 years. Our students love Ms. Debbie and a few students came to our Summer Camp just to spend time with her!



Rhonda Nelson

Rhonda loves children and also works with a preschool program at her home church, Jordan Valley Church. She has worked with MMO for 6 years and our students love her! Rhonda has 2 grown daughters and is married to a firefighter.



Eric Weber

Eric is a retired educator. During his time at SLCC, he was responsible for the oversight of the college's child care center, and was a licensed child care professional. Eric is the father of 3 and a grandfather of 4.5. He and his wife Janet have been members of Hilltop UM Church for nearly 30 years.



Becky Elliston

Becky has worked with the MMO program for 16 years. This is her first year as the active Director of MMO and is so happy to offer this program to the community. She loves watching the children learn and grow throughout the year and receives far more than she gives to this program. Becky has 2 adult daughters and 2 grandchildren. She has been attending Hilltop UM Church for 22 years.

All teachers hired at MMO have passed a background check and strive to follow Safe Sanctuary policies. Our passion is to provide a safe, positive and fun experience for our students every day.



*Becky Elliston
MMO Director
mmo@hilltopumchurch.org*



STAFF PARISH RELATIONS

Living A Life as a Servant Leader Matters

By Bob Scarborough, SPRC Chair

From pg. 380, *The Righteous Rule, A Meditation for November 15th*: “Power- like water, like fire, like crowds, like promises, walks a fine line between restoration and destruction. Given to someone who is not committed to the common good, power can be abused and weaponized, especially against those who navigate the world in the margins. We see this in dictatorships or oppressive theologies. If leveraged and shared, power can be a tool of kingdom building resistance; it can call us out of the margins and into the movements that uphold the dignity of all people. We see this in the grassroots efforts for justice and in the old spirituals of the oppressed.

In our places of power, it is important to ask ourselves what about our leadership and privilege is perpetuating self-preservation and what is bringing about hope and growth through justice. Are the words we are saying (or leaving unsaid), the decisions we are making, and the people we are supporting attuned to the common good and considerate of the marginal-

ized? Or, are they leading us down a path of fear which will inevitably leave us disconnected and alone? Power is not intrinsically bad, but it is not something to be accepted and wielded without thought or conscience. Consider who your power is prioritizing today?”

A friend of mine (a retired minister from the Minnesota Annual Conference) always reminded the Church Community and Leaders that he was serving, to be mindful of our power. He said, we are all *Serving Leaders* and called to help our community succeed in learning and growing in new ministries that stretch us in ways that God is calling. He challenged us to examine our purpose and principles--- *and bravely lead from our hearts.*-(W.L.Walther, Glendale UMC, Burnsville, MN). We are doing this in the Mountain Sky Conference and here at Hilltop UMC. When we trust in God, and have good intentions, God will guide us in the further conversation that is needed to reach consensus to further the betterment of all.

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

So that all may experience Gods’ love and grace;

So that new disciples are created;

So that all disciples are nurtured to live lives according to Gods’ will;

So that all disciples use their gifts to re-ignite a movement for God;

So that all disciples appreciate and share the abundance of life in Christ;

So that our lives reflect what God requires of us – to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with Him;

So that both locally and globally, the world is refreshed by our vision.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

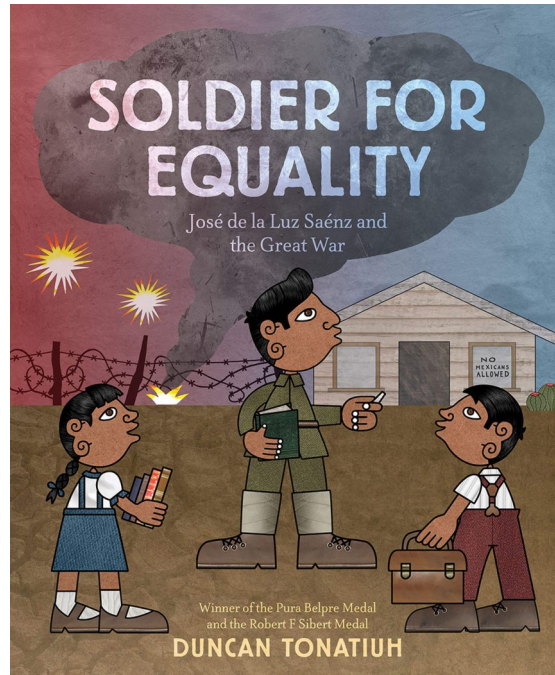
Who is My Neighbor?

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

by Karen Moser

This Month's Book: *Soldier for Equality--José de la Luz Sáenz and the Great War*, written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh Available in the Salt Lake County and Salt Lake City Library systems

This month's selection focuses on José de la Luz Sáenz, a Mexican American soldier who serves in World War I translating messages as an intelligence officer. Although José faced prejudice and harassment by peers and neighbors while growing up in Texas, he was determined to serve his community and his country. He first worked as a teacher, but then signed up to serve in the military in World War I. He was disappointed to learn that prejudice followed him even during military service. When José and other Mexican American veterans returned, they did not feel that their military contributions were fully recognized. José partnered with friends and fellow veterans to form the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), which eventually expanded its focus to promoting civil rights for all Mexican Americans. Duncan Tonatiuh's creative illustrations add visual interest, and a comprehensive author's note and timelines at the end of the story give additional historic context for readers who want to learn more.



Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. Have you ever found that one of your interests or hobbies turned out to be very useful in another situation?
2. José's family and friends called him "Luz" as a nickname. *Luz* means "light" in Spanish. How did Luz serve as a light in his community and in our country?

If you have recommendations for books to feature in future months, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Happy Reading!



LIVE A LIFE THAT MATTERS

Live a Life that Matters

Ready or not, some day it will all come to an end
There will be no more sunrises, no minutes, hours or days
All the things you collected, whether treasured or forgotten will pass to someone else
Your wealth, fame and temporal power will shrivel to irrelevance
It will not matter what you owned or what you were owed
Your grudges, resentments, frustrations, and jealousies will finally disappear
So, too, your hopes, ambitions, plans, and to-do lists will expire
The wins and losses that once seemed so important will face away
It won't matter where you came from
It won't matter whether you were beautiful or brilliant
Even your gender and skin color will be irrelevant
So what will matter?
What will matter is not what you bought, but what you built
Not what you got, but what you gave
What will matter is not your success, but your significance
What will matter is not what you learned, but what you taught
What will matter is every act of integrity, compassion, courage or sacrifice that enriched,
empowered, or encouraged others to emulate your example
What will matter is not your competence, but your character
What will matter is not how many people you knew but how many will feel a lasting loss
when you're gone.
What will matter is not your memories but the memories that live on in those who loved
you.
What will matter is how long you will be remembered and for what
Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident
It happens by choice.

THIS AND 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 Wednesday 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 to normal: **Monday through Thursday 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and Fridays 9:00 am to noon. Closed November 25 and 26th.**

Security

The door is not relocking after you unlock it so please be sure that the north door is locked and the red light is illuminated if you are the last to leave the building. There is a key card hanging by the outside door in the kitchen. But please return the key after locking the door.



SHARE YOUR BOUNTY
Sunday, Nov 7th 9am to 12pm



Share the food God has provided. Drop off in the narthex of nonperishable foods that will go to the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake and Crossroads Urban Center.

Hilltop United Methodist Church
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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
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