

September
2009



HILLTOP UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Hilltop Echoes

Thy Kingdom Pie

Stacy and I are in the habit of praying with the boy's before they go to bed and we close with the Lord's Prayer. As often as possible I sneak in beside one of them and begin the prayer "Our Father," and they finish the line, "Who art in heaven" and we go back and forth.

One particular night I started with Madden saying, "Our Father" and he responded, "who art in PIE!" For some reason when Madden gets silly he loves to say the word "pie". Well in this intimate solemn moment it caught me so off guard that I burst out laughing. Now, when you are trying to teach your children to fear the Lord, you don't want to burst out in spasms of laughter while reciting the Lord's Prayer. I tried to compose myself, holding back my desire to laugh more, and I wheezed out in a high voice, "Thy Kingdom C-c-c-ome!" Madden, now knowing I was losing it, responded "Thy will be PIE!" So through my tears and with laughter now pouring out my seams, I said, "Madden, it's not fu-fu- funny," and I continued to snort, "this is SssERiouS".

We finally made it through after I regained some composure and he tried to throw a "deliver us from ICE CREAM" in there. I went down to Stacy and said, "oh no, Madden was being silly during the Lord's Prayer and I laughed and now you know he will be doing it every night for the rest of our lives!" But, you know what? Madden gave me a gift that night. He taught me to find joy in the ritual. Now every time I recite the prayer I think of that moment of hilarious intimacy with my son and it brings great joy to the ritualistic prayer I have said so often.

As Hilltop prepares for the coming year, we gear up for our fall schedule, our regimen, or one might say our 'ritual', and after you do church over and over again you can forget to find the joy within it. You begin to do things for the sake of doing them, rather than for the real joy that lies within them.



One of Hilltop's goals for this year is to increase our Worship attendance by 10%. If worship is a mere ritual I don't think we have a shot. But if worship is a time of spontaneous moments of joy, there ain't no stopping us! If the core of our worship is "to celebrate God," as our mission statement claims, then we will have to allow the important "rituals" of our coming year to be laced with the freshness that only comes with joy.

If we go to worship seeking intimacy with our Father and not because it's routine, I believe He will surprise us with joy!

Be blessed,
Pastor Fred

Note: Hilltop worship found a 17% increase in Sunday average attendance last year. Thank you for making great strides to find the Joy that comes in celebrating God. 10% should be a breeze. Just keep praying, "thy kingdom pie."

Adult Sunday School

Our very own Dr. P. P. Philip will lead us in a 6 Week Course on the Wesleyan understanding of the "FULL MESSAGE OF SALVATION" during the 9am Sunday School Hour beginning Sept. 20th.

WALK TO EMMAUS



If you would like to have a great weekend of food, fellowship, worship, communion, and learn about the wonder of God's grace and love, then the Walk to Emmaus is for you!

Walk to Emmaus is all about helping you connect or re-connect with Jesus, and then help strengthen our local church.

Minnesota Walk to Emmaus

When: Men's Walk #87
Thurs., Sept. 24 – Sun., Sept. 27

Women's Walk #88
Thurs., Oct. 8 – Sun., Oct. 11

Where: Camp Koronis near Paynesville, MN For more information, contact Pastor Fred. Registration is required for this terrific weekend experience!

Mission Update

\$209.00 was collected at the August Missions Potluck. The money will be used to ship the donated school supplies overseas.

Twenty three Hilltoppers worked at Kids Against Hunger on Tuesday, August 18. We packaged 5,832 meals for God's starving children around the world!

On Sunday, September 6, we will serve the noon meal at Salvation Army. Please sign up in the narthex to donate food and/or help serve. It's a lot of fun!

The September potluck will be on Sunday, September 13 (a week later than usual.) The donations collected will benefit the Operation Classroom.

Home Missions: three \$50 grocery cards were given to Hilltop families in need during August.

Evangelism

The Evangelism Committee has decided for the third year in a row to participate in "Festival MSU", now renamed "The Greater Mankato Campus and Community Fair". The goal of this event is for students to enjoy food and fun while having an opportunity to learn about resources available through the MSU campus and the Mankato community. We'll be popping up lots of fresh popcorn for students as they pass by our table and inviting them to join us at Hilltop church. This years fair will be held at Myers Field House from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm on Tuesday, September 1. Anyone wanting to participate should contact Peggy Phelps at 385-0764.

3rd Annual Rummage Sale!

Our Church rummage sale will take place on Sept. 26, 2009, 8a-12N. We will need a number of people to help set up (Sept 25) and take down (Sept 26) in order for this event to happen. Please sign up at the Welcome Center.

Women of Faith Conference-October 16-17, 2009

We have tickets to this awesome conference in October. For more info go to www.womenoffaith.com or talk with Terry Berg, Shari Schroeder or Paula Peterson. If you want a ticket, contact Paula Peterson at 388-9134.

Christmas Already?? Before you know it, it will be time for the HUMC Christmas Festival. Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 5, 2009. I am looking for someone to be Festival co-chair with me this year. Please prayerfully consider helping me out with this fun event. Start your crafting and plan your baking.

We will be having an organizational meeting in September. Watch the bulletin announcements for date and time. Consider being a co-chair for one of the departments

Questions? Call Shari 245-3735 or 381-3450

Last winter, we had our first FPU class. 34 people attended the 13-week class. During that class, 72 credit cards were shredded, 23 credit card offers worth \$76,500 were declined, \$417,000 in refinancing offers were declined and our families paid off and saved \$70,576. WOW !

If you need financial peace in your life and want to learn biblically based teachings on how to handle your finances, please consider attending our next class. Depending on demand, we will be starting the next class either the 3rd week in September or the 2nd week in January.

Please help us plan our next class by filling out this survey:
 Best month to start: ___ September ___ January
 Best day of the week: ___ Monday evening , ___ Friday evening , ___ Sunday afternoon, ___ other (when?)

The classes run for 13 weeks. Each session is two hours long (one hour video followed by a one hour small group discussion). The cost is only \$100 per family unit. Scholarships are available if needed. Married couples only need one membership but are strongly encouraged to attend together. Child care will be provided. Evening classes will be 6:30 to 8:30. Weekend afternoon class would probably be 2:30 to 4:30. Suggestions welcome.

For more information, contact Bill Scherer. Home 388-1892, cell 351-0602, email abenter@hickorytech.net.

Thank you to all of our Hilltop friends for your cards, thoughts, and prayers during my sister Annette's illness. We felt your prayers surrounding us and they helped us let a loved sister go home to Jesus. Thank you and God bless each of you.
 Adela & Bill & Family

Counting the Living & Giving

Attendance-July '09 Attendance-July '08

	Su		Sa, Su
07/05	82	07/5-6	0,139
07/12	110	07/12-13	0,113
07/19	114	07/19-20	11,107
07/26	120	07/26-27	9,111

Avg. 106 Avg. 122

July 2009

July Income \$13,850.84
 YTD Income \$103,492.00

July Exp. \$11,410.21
 YTD Exp. \$108,824.47

July I vs. E \$2,440.63
 YTD I vs. E (\$5,332.47)

July 2008

July Income \$12,195.12
 YTD Income \$91,021.50

July Exp. \$15,022.31
 YTD Exp. \$96,369.14

July I vs. E (\$2,827.19)
 YTD I vs. E (\$5,347.64)

Hilltop has automatic withdrawal available for your giving convenience. Please contact Tricia Brown at 387-3877 or htopumc@hickorytech.net for further information.

We want to say a big, happy "Thank you" to all of our church family who came to our 50th Anniversary Open House. We hope you had as much fun as we did. Thank you also to you who sent cards and you who wished us a Happy Anniversary when you saw us. It was a great day for us and made us appreciate even more the many friends we have at Hilltop.

Merrill & Karen Frydendall

Fall choir rehearsals will begin on
 Wednesday, September 2, 2009, at 6:30 p.m.
 in the sanctuary.



If you enjoy singing, consider sharing your talents with Hilltop through the ministry of the choir.

New singers are always welcome.

Talk to Paulette Adams
 for more information.

Open hearts, Open minds, Open doors.
HILLTOP UNITED
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The people of the United Methodist Church

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Address Service Requested

Sunday School begins on Sept. 13th at 9:00 a.m. There are classes for all ages! Children are asked to come to the sanctuary upon arrival.



Sunday Worship will begin at 10:15 a.m. on September 13th.

The church offices will be closed on Monday, Sept. 7 in observance of Labor Day.

Gambler's Anonymous From 7 to 8 pm on Mondays Hilltop is hosting Gambler's Anonymous in the fireside room. Anyone in need of this kind of support group should contact Adam Berg at 507 990 2080 or ajoberg72_2000_2000@yahoo.com

Girls on the Run- YWCA

Hilltop is privileged to be the host site of a YWCA program called "Girls On The Run". The mission of this program is to educate and prepare girls for a lifetime of self respect and healthy living. The program serves girls in 3rd through 8th grade. The objective is to reduce the display of at-risk activities among its participants. The goal is fewer adolescent pregnancies and eating disorders, less depression and suicide attempts, as well as fewer substance abuse problems and confrontations with the juvenile justice system. Girls On The Run is a life-changing, character development program that uses running to teach values and sense of self. The program combines training for a 3 mile run with self-esteem enhancing workouts and a community service project.

The free program will take place on the church grounds each Tuesday and Thursday beginning Sept 22 from 3 to 5. Girls from 8 to 12 interested in participating should contact YWCA program director Shari Sander. 345 4629 sheri@ywcamankato.org. Older teens have the opportunity to be instructor assistants, contact Shari for more information.

Please join us Sept. 13 after worship for our Mission Potluck.
This month's focus will be Operation Classroom.