

# The Messenger

Monthly Newsletter of  
Hillcrest United Methodist Church

January 2021

From Pastor Kerry

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus..." Hebrews 12:1-2

If anything has been revealed to us during 2020, it is that we are surrounded by amazing people who are gifted by God to do amazing things in our community. Public servants work day in and day out as they face the trouble in the world and work their hardest to battle evil. We are grateful for the doctors, nurses, police, EMS, fire fighters, hospital personnel, social workers, and agencies whose mission is to help people get through the effects of the pandemic. There are a lot of good people in the world.

The year is closing; 2021 is beginning. Happy New Year. I pray that we will indeed, as it says in Hebrews, be able to lay aside every weight that keeps us from fully living into our own call as Christians. The trouble of 2020 does not need to define 2021. The truth is the pandemic is not going to be over just because it is a New Year. The effects of it will be lasting for a while. People will be losing their homes, people will be unemployed, people will be stressed, those public servants will be dealing with the memories for the rest of their life. We have people within our congregation whose lives will never be the same due to 2020. But this trouble is not the end; it is but a step along the way.

How will the church arise in 2021 to stand in the gaps? How will the church arise in 2021 to show that it is more than a social club with an insurance policy for eternal life? How will we show that we are still in the race? These are the abiding questions that I hope you will ponder as we enter this new year. It is time for revival—but revival begins in you and me. Happy New Year.

*Pastor Kerry*

### **Pastor Kerry Vacation and Education Leave**

Pastor Kerry will be on vacation from December 31 through January 8. He will be with us for the January 10 worship, then on an approved educational leave January 11 through February 8.

The congregation may remember that the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) and Ministry Council approved a similar leave in early 2020. COVID interrupted that plan in many ways, so this is a new opportunity for Pastor Kerry to complete more of the work to his full licensing as an elder in the church.

Charles Mwale, Hillcrest's ministerial candidate, will be handling the preaching assignments for three of the Sundays Pastor Kerry will be absent. The remaining ones are being arranged. Pastor Heidi Clear, a familiar person to Hillcresters, will be available for pastoral needs.

Please wish well, support, and appreciate the efforts of all staff and volunteers who keep Hillcrest functioning as a representative of Christ in our community.

Anyone with questions or concerns is welcome to call me, Janice Dean, SPRC chair, at 574-210-1594.

### **Mark Gledhill Leaving**

As announced in the December 13 worship service, our excellent pianist, Mark Gledhill, has resigned. His last time with Hillcrest is the December 27 service.

Any notes of appreciation may be sent to his address as listed in the directory or left at the church off to be passed on. No farewell ceremonies, another COVID effect.

Mark's talent has blessed us and we wish him well.

Music for the foreseeable future will be provided by the current worship team musicians.

### **Thanks!**

The Staff Parish Relations Committee was heartened by the warm response of the congregation to provide a Christmas gift for each of the paid staff of Hillcrest, not including HCCM teachers. Their Christmas remembrance was provided by the HCCM budget and a special observance planned by Tracy Donati.

Special appreciation to Diane Lewandowski, Sharon McSorley, and Marilyn Anson for the staff gift implementation.

"We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude." – Cynthia Ozick

Dear Congregation,

The occasion of the Christmas bonuses you graciously shared with us was a reminder of something that deserves our gratitude—YOU! This crazy year of Covid has kept us from seeing you all much, but it doesn't mean we haven't thought of you often. Your support for us and the ministry we do, expressed in phone calls, cards, prayers, and Christmas bonuses, has been such an encouragement during these challenging times.

Thanks for sharing with us and being such a wonderful congregation!

In Christ,

Lori Loucks and Julie Lininger

### *Shout Out*



The staff of Hillcrest Community Childcare Ministry would like to give a Shout Out to Tracy Donati and the Hillcrest Congregation for the Christmas Goodie Bags. We appreciated the gifts and the reminder that you support what we are doing.

*Thank you!!*

"Hem your blessings with thankfulness  
so they don't unravel." – Unknown



We would like to say a big THANK YOU to Maria Purciarele for making children's and adult masks for us to use here. She has kept us well-supplied, and we are so grateful!

Again, we're asking that the general public ages 65 and over stay out of the building while the children are here, per guidelines given to us by the Family and Social Services Agency. Thank you for your patience and cooperation with this matter.

Please continue to pray for wisdom, health, and strength for us.

—Lori Loucks, Director

## January's Mission of the Month

### Ribbon of Hope

Ribbon of Hope is affiliated with Elkhart General Hospital and committed to serving adult cancer patients at any stage of the disease. All services are non-medical and offered free of charge as an expression of the caregiver's relationship with God. Since each patient or caregiver has a unique set of needs, attention is personalized. Ribbon of Hope's goal is that No One Stands Alone in their battle with cancer.

Services offered are:

- \*Personal attention
- \*Monthly encouragement notes
- \*Phone calls
- \*Hospital visits
- \*Occasional household assistance
- \*Transportation to medical appointments
- \*Faithful prayers and spiritual encouragement
- \*Bereavement care
- \*Cancer resource information

Your support of Ribbon of Hope makes a difference in God's Kingdom. All contributions through time, talent, finances, and prayer touch lives and bring people closer to God.

All loose change and any designated monies during January will go to Ribbon of Hope.

Thank You,  
The Missions Committee

### Live in the Light

Often we want to be able to see into the future. We say, "How will next year be for me? Where will I be five or 10 years from now?" There are no answers to these questions. Mostly we have just enough light to see the next step — what we have to do in the coming hour or the following day.

The art of living is to enjoy what we can see and not complain about what remains in the dark. When we are able to take the next step with the trust that we will have enough light for the step that follows, we can walk through life with joy and be surprised at how far we go. Let's rejoice in the little light we carry and not ask for the great beam that would take all our shadows away.

—Henri Nouwen, *Bread for the Journey*

### January Birthdays

1 Sharon McSorley	25 Helen Fillio
Ginny Peters	Sheri Korovesis
11 Jasmine Devore	27 Jerry Rowe
15 Clifford Whisler	Sean Fernandes
24 Margaret Grieb	28 Heidi Clear
25 Marilyn Anson	30 Gari Lewandowski

### No January Anniversaries

Please let the office know if your special day was missed.



### Scoutmaster Minute

by Ronn Foster

Last month I talked about looking for the positive in every situation, and to focus on what makes one happy.

This being January I wanted to start the year off with "New Beginnings." All of us, no matter where we are, or where we came from, have the power to change. The world is full of examples of others who have said "enough is enough." These people go on to make major changes in their lives and achieve great things. Part of the way they can do this is through the process of forgiving themselves for shortcomings in the past. They simply do not hold on to the past.

Isn't God like this? We are forgiven of our sins so that we may grow. Hebrews 10:17 reminds us, "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more." We simply cannot grow if we are focused on the ways of our past.

What area of your life are you looking to change? Where are you looking for a "New Beginning?" I am not sure what it is for others, but I know it starts with forgetting the past, and focusing on the future.

As for me, the opportunity for New Beginnings makes me happy.

## HILLCREST WOMEN'S MINISTRY

### Circle of Friends Stamping Ministry

Our group has not been meeting due to Covid. We are hoping to get back to card making maybe in late in January if we can do so safely. We are praying for a safe and healthy 2021 for all of us.

Thank you for your support this past year. Happy New Year from all of us to all of you.

—Marilynn Anson

### Hillcrest Women's Book Club

4th Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

Diane Lewandowski, Leader

We are taking a break for the holidays, but we'll "see" you in a few months!

### The Mat Makers

(Sleeping mats for the homeless made from plastic bags.)

Mat Makers donated its 45th sleeping mat to Guidance Ministries in December! We send our thanks to all of the Hillcrest members who have contributed.

You may already realize that we accept clean used plastic bags in any condition:

All wadded up and stuffed into a bag. . .

Or flattened in stacks. . .

Or with handles snipped off and bottom seams cut off, neatly or roughly. . .

Or cut neatly into 2-1/2" strips. . .

Or as 2-1/2" strips, looped together and wound loosely into balls ready to be crocheted into mats.

We owe special thanks to the person who donated a stack of trimmed and flattened bags this month. Each bag was clipped neatly very close to the bottom seam so that none of the bag was wasted.

If you're staying home during the pandemic and can't drop off or pick up supplies at the church, just call or email me and someone will stop by. We promise to keep our distance and wear masks.

Few of us can truly imagine what it would be like to sleep on the bare ground under a bridge (or on the floor in a gymnasium in the winter). Let us all remember in our prayers the homeless people who gratefully accept our mats.

Martha Sims

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**L.I.F.T. (Ladies In Fellowship Together)**

1st Tuesday of each month – 9:00 a.m.

Perkins Restaurant (107 N. Pointe Blvd., Elkhart)

Since COVID-19 doesn't seem to be going away anytime soon, we will not be having breakfasts at Perkins until at least Spring. At that time we will reassess the situation. —Gloria Griffith

**Numbering Our Days**

To fix what they call a disorganized date-tracking system, professors Steve Hanke and Dick Henry have developed a “permanent calendar.” On it, January 1 is always a Monday, so holidays and birthdays occur on the same day every year. The 364-day calendar eliminates leap years, time zones, Halloween and every Friday the 13th. Instead of leap days, “every five or six years, we’ll have an extra week at the end [of December] when you can party,” says Henry.

Because the permanent calendar is predictable, it reportedly would save money and time. Yet despite almost two decades of work, the idea hasn’t taken off.

However we track our lives, we do well to remember this prayer: “Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. ... Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom” (Psalm 90:1, 12 NIV).



Today the Magi gaze in deep wonder at what they see: heaven on earth, earth in heaven, humanity in God, God in humanity, one whom the whole universe cannot contain now enclosed in a tiny body. As they look ... their symbolic gifts bear witness: incense for God, gold for a king, myrrh for one who is to die. —Peter Chrysologus (5th century)

“Resolution One: I will live for God. Resolution Two: If no one else does, I still will.”

—Jonathan Edwards

“Our hope is not in the new year, but in the One who makes all things new.”

—Unknown

“What a wonderful thought it is that some of the best days of our lives haven't even happened yet.”

—Anne Frank

## Hillcrest United Methodist Church

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### STAFF

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Finance Chair:

*Charles Mwale*

Ministry Council Chair:

*Diane Lewandowski*

Staff Parish Chair:

*Janice Dean*

Trustee Chair:

*Ryan Wireman*

Hillcrest Community Childcare Ministry:

*Lori Loucks, Director*

574-266-7427

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### WEEKLY SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:30 a.m. Traditional Worship

10:30 a.m. HeBrew Café fellowship

11:00 a.m. Adult Studies

12:00 p.m. El Refugio Church

### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: *January 15*

### *Looking Ahead:*

#### Trustees

Monday, January 11, 7:00 p.m.

#### Ministry Council

Monday, January 18, 5:00 p.m.

#### Brentwood Service

Weekly on Sundays at 1:00 p.m.

If we must cancel a church service, our closing information will be listed on our Facebook page (Hillcrest UMC—Elkhart Indiana), our website at [www.hillcrestelkhart.com](http://www.hillcrestelkhart.com), WNDU Channel 16, and their website, [www.wndu.com](http://www.wndu.com), and WSBT Channel 22, and their website, [www.wsbt.com](http://www.wsbt.com).

