



# HOIDAY HILLS UMC NEWSLINK

March 2018



## Pastor's Message:

**March is the time for LENT:** To begin again! That ultimately is the aim of our lent journey. We do not undergo that process of self-examination and identification of those things that separate us from God and one another as merely an intellectual exercise. There is a purpose to it - with God's help, to fix what is broken, then to start fresh. The good news is that to begin again is a story that is repeated from the day of ancient Israel on up to tomorrow's newspaper.

For example: A young girl grows up on a cherry orchard just above Traverse City, Michigan. Her parents, a bit old-fashioned, tend to overreact to her nose ring, the music she listens to, and the length of her skirts. They ground her a few times, and she seethes inside. "I hate you!" she screams at her father when he knocks on the door of her room after an argument, and that night she acts on a plan she has mentally rehearsed scores of times. She runs away.

She has visited Detroit only once before, on a bus trip with her church youth group to watch the Tigers play. Because newspapers in Traverse City report in lurid detail the gangs, drugs, and violence in downtown Detroit, she concludes that is probably the last place her parents will look for her.

Her second day there she meets a man who drives the biggest car she has ever seen. He offers her a ride, buys her lunch, and arranges a place for her to stay. He gives her some pills that make her feel better than she has ever felt before. She was right all along, she decides: Her parents were keeping her from all the fun.

The good life continues for a month, two months, and a year. The man with the big car -- she calls him "Boss" - teaches her a few things that men like. Since she is underage, men pay a premium for her. She lives in a penthouse and orders room service whenever she wants. Occasionally she thinks about the folks back home, but their lives now seem so boring that she can hardly believe she grew up there. She has a brief scare when she sees her picture printed on the back of a milk carton with the headline, "Have you seen this child?" But by now she has blond hair, and with all the makeup and body-piercing jewelry she wears, nobody would mistake her for a child. Besides, most of her friends are runaways, and nobody squeals in Detroit.

After a year, the first signs of illness appear, and it amazes her how fast the boss turns mean, and before she knows it she is out on the street without a penny to her name. She still turns a couple of tricks a night, but they do not pay much, and all the money goes to support her drug habit these days anyway. When winter blows in she finds herself sleeping on metal grates outside the big department stores. "Sleeping" is the wrong word -- a teenage girl at night in downtown Detroit can never relax her guard. Dark bands circle her eyes. Her cough worsens.

One night, as she lies awake listening for footsteps, all of a sudden everything about her life looks different. She no longer feels like a woman of the world. She feels like a little girl, lost in a cold and frightening city. She begins to whimper. Her pockets are empty and she is hungry. She needs a fix. She pulls her legs tight underneath her and shivers under the newspapers she has piled atop her coat. Something jolts her memory and a single image fills her mind: of May in Traverse City, when a million cherry trees bloom at once, with her golden retriever dashing through the rows and rows of blossoms in chase of a tennis ball.

God, why did I leave? She asks herself, and pain stabs at her heart like a knife. My dog eats better than I do anymore. She is sobbing now, and she knows in a flash that more than anything else in the world she wants to go home.

Three straight phone calls, three straight connections to the answering machine! She hangs up without leaving a message the first two times, but the third time she says, "Dad, Mom, it's me. I was wondering about maybe coming home. I'm catching a bus up your way, and it'll get there about midnight tomorrow. If you're not there, well, I guess I'll just stay on the bus until it hits Canada."

It takes about seven hours for a bus to make all the stops between Detroit and Traverse City, and during that time she realizes the flaws in her plan. What if her parents are out of town and miss the message? Shouldn't she have waited another day or so until she could talk to them? Even if they are home, they probably wrote her off as dead long ago. She should have given them some time to overcome the shock.

Her thoughts bounce back and forth between those worries and the speech she is preparing for her father. "Dad, I'm sorry. I know I was wrong. It's not your fault, it's all mine. Dad, can you forgive me?" She says the words over and over, her throat tightening even as she rehearses them. She hasn't apologized to anyone in years.

When the bus finally rolls into the station, its air brakes hissing in protest, the driver announces in a crackly voice over the microphone, "Fifteen minutes, and folks. That's all we have here." Fifteen minutes to decide her life. She checks herself in a compact mirror, smooths her hair, and licks the lipstick off her teeth. She looks at the tobacco stains on her fingertips and wonders if her parents will notice---if they are there.

She walks into the terminal not knowing what to expect, and not one of the thousand scenes that have played out in her mind prepare her for what she sees. There, in the concrete-walls-and-plastic-chairs bus terminal in Traverse City, Michigan, stands a group of 40 family members -- brothers and sisters and great-aunts and uncles and cousins and a grandmother and great-grandmother to boot. They are all wearing ridiculous-looking party hats and blowing noisemakers, and taped across the entire wall of the terminal is a computer-generated banner that reads "Welcome Home!"

Out of the crowd of well-wishers breaks her dad. She looks through tears and begins the memorized speech, "Dad, I'm sorry. I know..."

He interrupts her. "Hush, child. No time for that. No time for apologies. You'll be late for the party. A banquet is waiting for you at home."

To begin again. It is possible, and that is good news indeed. "Rejoice...and again I say Rejoice."

Amen!

**Pastor Dan**



## HOLIDAY HILLS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ACTS OF WORSHIP FOR HOLY WEEK 2018

### **Palm/Passion Sunday (March 25)**

- **Sunday School 9:30am**
- **Worship service 10:50 am**
- **Lent Service/Dinner at Holiday Hills UMC 5:00 pm**

### **Monday of Holy Week (March 26)**

- **6:00-7:00 pm. The church will be open for prayer. Come and spend as much time as you want for prayer. Pastor Dan will be present for any consultation.**

### **Tuesday of Holy Week (March 27)**

- **6:00-8:00 pm. A Movie showing of "JOSHUA" "Joshua" tells the story of a possible second coming of Christ to a small U.S. town.**

### **Wednesday of Holy Week (March 28)**

- **8:00-8:30 am. PRAYER GROUP**
- **6:00-7:00 pm. A Worship service of for HEALING and Wholeness with Anointing & Laying on Hands.**

### **Thursday (Maundy) (March 29)**

- **6:00-7:00 pm. A Worship Service of "MAUNDY" –The Passion of Jesus Christ will be proclaimed.**

### **Friday (Good) of Holy Week (March 30)**

- **6:00-7:00 pm. A Worship Service of GOOD FRIDAY**

### **Holy Saturday (March 31)**

**ALL PRAY:** "Merciful and ever living God, Creator of heaven and earth, the crucified body of your Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy day. Grant that we may await with him the dawning of the third day and rise in newness of life, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen"

### **EASTER Sunday (APRIL 1)**

- **7:00 am Community Sunrise Service @ Lacey's Marine**
- **9:00 am Free Breakfast at the Church by UMM**
- **9:30 am Easter Egg Hunt for the children.**
- **10:50 am Worship Service**





# Holiday Hills U M C Newslink

## March 2018



The widows Valentines Dinner was prepared by our UMM, donated by Dick Hearget in memory of Dottie Vaughan



Shirley Johnson



Carol Eads

Our new members



**Happy Birthday!**

- Becky Bailey ..... 3/03
- Linda Varnadore..... 3/09
- Mark Johnson.....3/10
- Shirley Johnson.....3/13
- Lily Stevens.....3/19
- Kathryn Roach.....3/23
- Clay Yeager.....3/28
- George Destiny.....3/29

### **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY.**

- H.T & Catherine Graddy..... 3/15
- Larry & Teresa Hugdens..... 3/17



# HOIDAY HILLS UMC NEWSLINK

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
<b>4</b> 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship Communion 5 pm Lenten Service Clinton	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 2 pm Prayer group 3 pm Choir Practice	<b>7</b> 8 am prayer group 10 am UMW 5 pm CLASS 6 pm Bible Study	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> UMW Sunday 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship Potluck 5 pm Lenten Service Shirley	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 2 pm Prayer group 3 pm Choir Practice	<b>14</b> 8 am prayer group 10-4 pm Quilters 5 pm CLASS 6 pm Bible Study	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 8 am UMM Breakfast
<b>18</b> 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 5 pm Lenten Service Damascus	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 2 pm Prayer group 3 pm Choir Practice	<b>21</b> 8 am prayer group 5 pm CLASS 6 pm Bible Study	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 5 pm Lenten Service Holiday Hills	<b>26</b> 5 pm Emmaus Reunion 6-7 Open for prayer	<b>27</b> 2 pm Prayer group 3 pm Choir Practice 6-8 pm Movie Joshua	<b>28</b> 8 am prayer group 10-4 pm Quilters 5 pm CLASS 6-7 Healing Service	<b>29</b> 6-7 pm Worship service "Maundy"	<b>30</b> 6-7 pm Good Friday Service	<b>31</b> Holy Saturday