



**Hopkins &
South Monterey**
United Methodist Churches

**February/March
2021**

THE VOICE

I cannot believe I have been with you for six months already! And what a six months it has been. We have been journeying together during the craziest year in remembered history. Despite a lot of disappointments and hardships and conflict brought on by the pandemic and politics, we have made it into a new year, 2021. Thanks be to God!

Even better than just surviving, we have continued in ministry in creative ways. I cannot say thank you enough for how much I have appreciated the amount of grace, flexibility, and commitment you all have shown as we figured out what ministry in 2020 could look like.

Despite restrictions, we have done a lot this year. We worshiped outside all summer and got to use Common Ground like never before. While we were there, we enjoyed getting to worship together with both Hopkins and South Monterey. Worship was a bit more casual and the weather kept us on our toes, but how wonderful it was to see each other and be together after so many months apart. I saw God in your smiles and greetings during appreciated fellowship time.

When the cold rolled in unannounced, we decided to start worshiping inside. It meant blocking off pews and keeping a bit more distanced while inside, but how comforting it was to be back in a traditional worship space. Even though it was technically against Covid rules, I saw God when you all couldn't help but mingle around the room chatting with each other or checking in with each other before or after service. Your love for your church family is so big and overflowing.

Alas the second wave that was predicted came around and we had to make a quick transition back to Zoom worship, just after Halloween through January! One of the busiest times in the church year with multiple

church holidays, from All Saints Day to Advent and Christmas to Epiphany, and all of it had to be celebrated without gathering in our buildings. We remembered those that are a part of our faith story that have gone before us, spent an evening recognizing the tough feelings that come with the holidays, and we lit Advent candles together. We missed spending those special days in person, but God's presence found us wherever we were. The Spirit moved and we tried something new for Christmas! We did the Live Nativity in the Downtown park and it was a hit. I saw God at work in our creativity as we tried new things and may have started some new traditions!

That brings us to today. Things are still pretty topsy-turvy. But now, hope does not feel so fruitless, the vaccine has brought a light at the end of the tunnel. We know that all restrictions are to get us through the home stretch. I am seeing God in the grace and flexibility you all show as we figure out how to worship safely and well in this season of the pandemic.

That said, we have some things coming up! Please continue reading for sections on our current *Worship Plan*, *Lent*, *Ash Wednesday*, and a new *Lenten Book Study*. Despite a lot not getting to happen, we do still have some things happening and I look forward to sharing them with all of you.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Kelsey

Chat or meet with Pastor Kelsey!

Office Hours: Tues-Thurs 11am-6pm

By Appointment when possible or for other times.

Phone (Calls or Texts): 248-613-0366

February Worship Plan

On Jan. 11th our Ad Board discussed where we will be holding worship going forward. Following the wisdom from other churches, we thought it best that we decide on a threshold of current COVID status on whether or not we should be in-person. We decided our threshold would be if restaurants are open in Michigan and if Allegan County stats are in line with the state averages.

At present, the state is hoping to open restaurants Feb 1st. To be sure the cases/risk level remains on track, we decided to follow that timeline, we are **hoping to be in person starting Jan 31st. Previous restrictions back in place** (listed below). **We hope to Zoom the service live from the Hopkins Sanctuary for those who cannot join us in person.** Zoom link remains the same.

Our Worship Guidelines are as follows:

1. Masks are required. If you forget yours at home, we will give one to you.
2. Follow the markings on the pews for which are open and which are closed to maintain social distancing while sitting.
3. Please social distance while entering and exiting as well.
4. Fellowship/Mingling preferred outside.
5. No singing. We will continue pre-recording music like we have been for Zoom so you can hear the words too.
6. Hand Sanitizer on your way in and out! We have plenty available.
7. Only use the hymnals/pew Bibles if you are sitting in your "usual spot" so we are not passing those around. (Books do not sanitize well.)

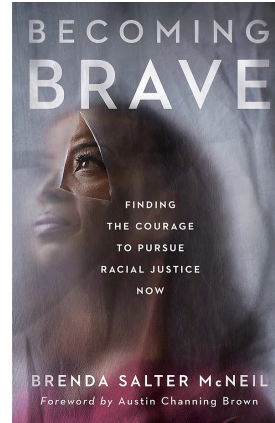
Ash Wednesday

As we are back to worshipping in-person, we will be having Ash Wednesday together in-person, barring no change in current COVID restrictions. Exactly what the service can look like is still being figured out, but we will be gathering at **7pm on Feb 17** to observe Ash Wednesday together at Hopkins UMC. The service will also be Zoomed live.

If you do not feel comfortable coming or cannot come in person, please let Pastor Kelsey or Mitzi know and they will make sure you get ashes at home so you can still take part in that tradition as part of the service.

Lenten Book Study

In response to the greater cultural awakening around the pervasiveness of racism and the need for churches to be a part of rooting it out, Pastor Kelsey will be hosting a book study during the 6 weeks of Lent that focuses on what racial justice means as part of our faith. This kind of study will be a way for us to live into the true intent of Black History Month (Feb) and pair that with the church season of Lent, which is all about focusing on the internal things in us, as individuals and as a community, that keep us from God and living how God wants us to live.



The study will be based on the book "Becoming Brave: Finding the Courage to Pursue Racial Justice Now" by Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil.

Book Summary: McNeil calls us out of passivity and into action. Looking through the lens of the biblical narrative of Esther, McNeil challenges us to be everyday activists who become courageous enough to break the silence and work together

with others to repair broken systems of injustice.

This is how her website describes the work:

"Reconciliation is not true reconciliation without justice! Brenda Salter McNeil has come to this conviction as she has led the church in pursuing reconciliation efforts over the past three decades. McNeil calls the church to repair the old reconciliation paradigm by moving beyond individual racism to address systemic injustice, both historical and present. It's time for the church to go beyond individual reconciliation and "heart change" and to boldly mature in its response to racial division. ... McNeil challenges Christian reconcilers to recognize the particular pain in our world so they can work together to repair what is broken while maintaining a deep hope in God's ongoing work for justice. This book provides education and prophetic inspiration for every person who wants to take reconciliation seriously. Becoming Brave offers a distinctly Christian framework for addressing systemic injustice."

Our study of the book will begin the first full week of Lent, first meeting on Sun. Feb 21, after church. Another meeting time can happen for those who can't make Sunday. Sign up by Feb 10. Find a sign-up slip on the last page of the newsletter. You can send that back to us or use the sign-up in the E-News. We will order books for the group, hopefully for \$16 (sale persisting), \$20 max. An E-book is less.

Obituaries

Jerry Daniel



Born: July 9, 1938
Died: February 4, 2020
Beloved husband of Reva Daniel, one of our retired pastors, hard worker in a variety of jobs, father to three children and grandfather many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Remembered in this community for his faithful support of Reva as she pastored and played piano with our churches.

Marjorie Dawn Guppy



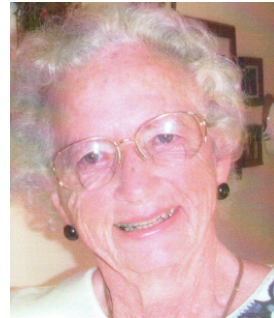
Born: July 10, 1936
Died: November 29, 2020
Beloved Matriarch of her big loving family. With 7 children, she loved many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She only attended Hopkins UMC for a short time, but the connection has lived on much longer as so many of her family have long been a part of our church family. Her memory lives on in the loving family she raised and in the many crocheting and knitting projects she gifted to them, as well as many beloved recipes.

Mary Lou Ewing



Born: September 14th, 1923
Died: September 1st, 2020
Long time beloved member of South Monterey UMC, remembered Hopkins community member for her 20 years at Weick's Department Store, and a lover of crocheting and quilting. Her memory lives on in many genetic, married, and chosen family members.

Rose Haas



Born: May 25, 1925
Died: December 18, 2020
Long time member of South Monterey UMC, mother to five beloved children, and lover of learning new things and adventure. Her memory lives on in her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We loved worshiping with her on Zoom for much of 2020.

New Lives Bringing Hope in 2020

Presley Lewis



Born: March 29
Parents: Andy & Alaina Lewis
Siblings: Camryn, Drew, and Ruby

Delilah Brinkhuis



Born: July 13
Parents: Kristine & Matthew Brinkhuis
Siblings: Karrie & Violet Martinez

Jack Goodenough



Born: August 4
Parents: Justin & Kristan Goodenough
Siblings: Wade
Special Uncle: Brandon Goodenough

Willow Mack



Born: March 26
Parents: Kinian & Nicole Mack
Sibling: Nora



Aurora Horton



Born: November 29
Parents: Jaron & Joyce Horton

FOOD PANTRY UPDATES

Thank you, thank you, thank you for all your help during this pandemic. From the very beginning it was our decision not to close our doors to those who needed us more than ever. Moving distribution to prepared sacks and delivering them to the vehicles has made it much safer for our volunteers, no clients are in the building.

At Thanksgiving and Christmas we were able to provide holiday meals for 43 and 46 families respectfully, and stocking stuffers for all the children. We have continued to pick up new families, for the month of December we served food to 52 different families, 198 people. We have been able to increase our giving to include extra cereal for school aged children and medication from Perrigo's. The continuous giving that comes in each week has made it possible for us to not have to purchase as much as we did a year ago.

As we look to the end of this pandemic we are excited for the future of a new food pantry building. With the dream of a building for just the food pantry a donation to make this happen was given. The Hopkins Community Food Pantry will remain affiliated with the Hopkins United Methodist Church, to be located ten feet from Bud's Barn.

Construction will begin in March, there will still be things we can use help on after the structure is up, we will keep you posted.

There is an African saying that says "it takes a village to raise a child", but it also takes a community to feed the hungry in it. We wouldn't have been able to serve the Hopkins School District for the last 12 ½ years without your prayers and support. Thank you!

Peanut Butter Drive

January 24th thru February 28th

Make a financial donation at:

www.alleganfoundation.org

OR

Mail one to: ACCF 112 Locust St.
Allegan, MI 49010

You are also welcome to bring your donation of peanut butter to Hopkins United Methodist Church.

A Special Thank You

2020...Wow, where do I even begin. I know many people look at me and think about how awful the year must have been and in many ways it was. When I stop to think about the cascade of events from my initial fall, to Bill's heart failure, COVID, infection, removal and replacement of the hardware, Bill's broken shoulder and the long road to walking again I wonder how the heck we survived it. But as we turned the corner to 2021 I found myself reflecting on the good that has come out of probably one of the hardest times of my life.

I have always considered myself a patient person but there are now new depths to that patience that will serve me well as I continue to move forward. One of the most difficult things was learning to not only accept help that was offered but to ask for it as well.....not an easy task for someone used to doing anything she put her mind to! And my faith has deepened as I began to rely on God's strength when mine was gone. Mitzi Crowe has given me a devotional each year for the past 4-5 years and for some reason, the 2020 one seemed to speak directly to me each day. Everything seemed to be about taking life a step at a time and letting God lead my feet on this path (talk about appropriate!!!). The daily readings were an anchor for me, something I looked forward to and could hold on to when I was having a bad day. Mitzi, that is a book I will keep and treasure as I made many notes and wrote my thoughts on its pages.

But the greatest gift of 2020 was my church family. The outpouring of love and support was overwhelming, and I will never be able to thank you enough. I can't list everything and everyone (because my memory is not what it used to be) but some examples include all the cards and letters, plants (one is still alive!), gifts (Alys, I managed to wear out BOTH of those slipper socks), visits, books, meals (Bob and Judy Beck and Vern and Judy Kraft, I have some weight to lose now), rides when I couldn't drive, clearing of snow (I think Mitzi shoveled our wall and countless other examples of God's love coming through people. I am sure I have missed many but just know that I could not have survived without all of you and will always be grateful for our little church and the wonderful people who are a part of it.

Mary Howard

ACCENTUATING THE POSITIVE

Thank you for sunrises and sunsets that remind us there can be beauty and peace in every day.

A big thank you to Vern Kraft for fixing the parsonage porch, installing the new door bell at HUM Hall and all the other things you do without mention.

Thanks to Mike for all of the care and worry over the finances. You're doing a great job!

We love to hear our own music on Sunday morning. Pastor Kelsey and Brennen are great at leading the songs. - Alys, Merle & Mandi

We are thankful for vaccines and the brilliant scientists who create them.

Thank you for the generous love offering at Christmas. What an amazing surprise. Love to you all, Mitzi

Dear Pastor Kelsey and caring parishioners, Your gifts were a positive for me each day. I enjoyed each one and the love and caring with the gift. The 4th gift, live violets, were a special message to me. My mother was known as the "Violet Lady". Friends and neighbors would bring her their sickly plants and mom would always make them flourish. Hopefully I've got some of her talent. Thank you again for your thoughtfulness! Sincerely, from my heart. Lynn Francis

*Thanks to Earl Collier for making sure that Common Ground was mowed, the porta potty was repaired and the roof was replaced. It was absolutely the perfect location for Evan and Maria's August wedding. We appreciate all you did.
Mitzi & Geoff*

Thanks to our faithful givers, even when we're not in person.

Praise God for healing for Mitchell PUNCHES!!

Prayers for continued healing for Mary & Bill Howard.

Kelsey - Thank you for being the special, amazing and hard-working preacher that you are. We appreciate all you have done and continue to do to prepare and present worship, all the while keeping everyone's safety in mind. We are thankful for you!

Thank you for all of the Christmas goodies. They were fun surprises. I appreciate it. Dee

Hi Everyone! I miss going to church and fellowship! Can't wait to get my vaccines. Thank you for my surprise 12 days of Christmas. That put a smile on my face. Hugs, Debbie

Thank you for all of the first responders and front line workers who have continued to work through the pandemic. We continue to pray for you.

Thank you, Mitzi, for the work you do behind the scenes. Your creative ideas are a benefit to all of us. You are like the energizer bunny with all your ideas!!

Thank you, Pastor Kelsey, for adapting to the current environment. It certainly isn't the way any of us would want to start a new job but you have been fantastic. Your sermons are "spot-on" and we appreciate your caring nature. The Edgells

Thank you to the Hopkins gentleman who offered up his old tablet for free. Because of his act of kindness, Margaret is able to see worship service on Sundays.

To all the elves who transformed my mornings from dread to anticipation for 12 days, thank you. The joy was multiplied as I messaged a picture of each day's gift to a few family and friends who looked forward, with me, with excitement for each day's surprise to be revealed. May God bless each one - especially Emmie (your picture hangs on my art door.) Reva

Thanks to the trustees who persisted until the parsonage was repaired and squirrel free.

Thank you to Alys for organizing the drive by and/or drop in birthday events. It's been a safe and fun way to stay in touch with people.

Thank you to Roxie and Dana for their faithfulness to the music program at South Monterey. While they have both "moved on", we will be forever grateful for the time and music they shared.

Thank you to Amanda DeVries for taking over the custodial role for Hopkins UMC. We appreciate your willingness to clean the church and HUM Hall, especially during this crazy time.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Christmas love offering to me and Brennen! It was a nice surprise. I so appreciate all of your support and affirmations. It has made this year so much better! ~Pastor Kelsey

Worship Volunteers

In anticipation of being back in our buildings, we are preparing for participation from church folks. For now, South Monterey will deal with this on a weekly basis. Listed below is a schedule for Hopkins UMC.

January 31

Greeters: Bob & Judy Beck
Liturgist: Judy Beck
Audio/Visual: Merle & Mandi
Acolytes: Holly & Lilly DeVries

February

Greeters: Bob & Judy Beck
Audio/Visual: Merle & Mandi Edgell

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February 7

Liturgist: Mary Howard
Acolytes: Holly & Lilly DeVries

February 14

Liturgist: Bert Tew
Acolytes: Camryn & Drew Lewis

February 21

Liturgist: Vern Kraft
Acolytes: Camryn & Drew Lewis

February 28

Liturgist: Mitzi Crowe
Acolytes: Karrie & Violet Martinez

March

Greeters: Ken & Mary Herrema
Audio/Visual: Dawn & Amelia Green

March 7

Liturgist: Mandi Edgell
Acolytes: Karrie & Violet Martinez

March 14

Liturgist: Sandy Ringler
Acolytes: Holly & Lilly DeVries

March 21

Liturgist: Judy Beck
Acolytes: Holly & Lilly DeVries

March 28

Liturgist: Mary Howard
Acolytes: Camryn & Drew Lewis

April

Greeters: Bill & Mary Howard
Audio/Visual: Mary Howard

April 4 Easter Sunday

Liturgist: Vern Kraft
Acolytes: Camryn & Drew Lewis

* If you are not already on this list but you are interested in participating in worship, please contact Alys Edgell. She will be sure you are included in the next list of Worship Volunteers.

DING DONG

Pastor Kelsey spends a lot of time in the church office, however, the front door is usually locked. If you are ever in the village and want to stop by and talk to her, she would welcome your visit. With that in mind, we now have a doorbell!!! You will find the button attached to the right side of the Hall doors. If the door is locked, push the button. If Pastor is in her office, she will come greet you.

Lenten Book Study Sign-Up

Name: _____

Does Sunday after church work for you?
(Circle one) YES or NO

Are you willing/able to meet in person?
(Circle one) YES or NO

If no to either, list your availability:

Should we order you a book? (circle) YES or NO

Would you like a link to the e-book? YES or NO

Any Questions or concerns?