



# Welcome to the Hilltop Spire

## First Presbyterian Church of Mendham, NJ

*“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being!”*

2 Corinthians 5:17

Now what? As Easter recedes and we start moving towards Pentecost, it's prudent to stop right where we are long enough to ask that question: "Now what?" As Christians, now that we are saved in Christ, now that he was crucified and raised from the dead, securing our place in eternity, where do we go from here? What is the most fitting way to live into that promise? Paul's declaration to the church in Corinth is a good place to start. "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being!" As Christ followers, renewed so recently by reliving his crucifixion and resurrection, we are called to be part of making all things new in his name. Saved and claimed by Christ forever, these weeks after Easter are the perfect time to think about what that means for us, as individuals and as a church family. And we're in good company. This is exactly what the Apostles were pondering during their own interlude between Jesus' departure and the arrival of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, providing them with the vision and power they needed to give birth to the Church and to shepherd its growth and stability. When the flames of the Spirit light us on fire in a month or so, where will we focus our power?

I believe our focus should be on taking bold and deliberate actions toward the long-term growth and financial stability of Hilltop Church, a matter we have discussed many times and have already made some progress on. Some of you may remember my first sermon at Hilltop Church. It was called, "If It Ain't Broke..." Here's a few sentences from what I said that day:

"If it ain't broke... break it! Now, I know it's not self-evident what I mean by that – so bear with me. It's not a call for chaos – or revolution. It doesn't mean tear it all down and throw the good away with the bad. It doesn't mean start over. No, it means not to ever get too satisfied. There's always room to change, always room to improve. But you've got to be willing to look under the hood. You've got to step back and look objectively – remember your mission, then use it to evaluate your habits. You've got to be open to change. That's how you get better. That's how you get stronger. 'If it ain't broke... break it!'"

Most of the initiatives and changes we've made so far are within the parameters of our existing paradigms: tweak this, fine-tune that. At the risk of using yet another cliché, it's time to start thinking further outside of the box.

On Monday, April 15, a new Hilltop Church task force will begin its work. The members of the task force are Doug Beal, Van Buchanan, Cathy Malman, Lawrence Morris, and me. Commissioned by session, the group is charged with enhancing church stability in two ways:

1. Creating new, productive, approaches to serving and engaging the community.
2. Identifying new revenue streams into the church.

My vision is for solutions coming out of the task force to be repeatable or ongoing rather than once-and-done programs. What do we need from you? I'm glad you asked! We need your input and your help. Think about those two goals and talk to a task force member about your ideas. I also ask that you be invested enough in your ideas that you're prepared to be part of their implementation. Idea generation is the easy part. We also need your energy, your time, your creativity, and your hands if we hope to be successful at restabilizing Hilltop Church.

In Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, we have received the gift of eternal life and grace. Now, in Christ, we live in a new creation. Let us roll up our collective sleeves to ensure that his Church is strong, that it fully serves the Mendham community, and that the Good News goes forth forever from our hilltop.

See You on Sunday,

*Pastor Scot*

### IN THIS ISSUE

**PAGES 2-3**  
SPRING WORSHIP  
CALENDAR  
HCNS UPDATE  
DEACONS NEWS

**PAGES 4-5**  
CHRISTIAN  
EDUCATION  
UPDATE

**PAGES 6-7**  
MISSION  
EYE ON  
STEWARDSHIP

**PAGES 8**  
UPCOMING  
EVENTS AT  
HILLTOP

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

**April 14<sup>th</sup>** Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Hilltop

**May 5<sup>th</sup>** Youth Sunday and Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Hilltop

**May 12<sup>th</sup>** Mother's Day

**June 2<sup>nd</sup>** Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Hilltop

Recognition Sunday and the Deacons Picnic!

### NEXT ISSUE:

Articles for the **Summer** Issue of the Spire are due to the church office by **June 3<sup>rd</sup>**! If possible please submit articles by email to office@hilltopchurch.org  
Call us at 973-543-4012

# HILLTOP SPRING WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup>**  
**SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**  
**(MOVED FROM APRIL 7<sup>TH</sup>)**  
*Pastor Scot to Preach*

**APRIL 21<sup>ST</sup>**  
*Pastor Scot to Preach*

**APRIL 28<sup>TH</sup>**  
**HCNS SUNDAY**  
*Pastor Scot to Preach*

**MAY 5<sup>TH</sup>**  
**SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**  
*Youth Sunday*

**MAY 12<sup>TH</sup>**  
**MOTHER'S DAY**  
*Pastor Scot to Preach*

**MAY 19<sup>TH</sup>**  
*Pastor Scot to Preach*

**MAY 26<sup>TH</sup>**  
*Pastor Scot to Preach*

**JUNE 2<sup>ND</sup>**  
**SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**  
**THE DEACON'S PICNIC AFTER WORSHIP!**

## HCNS Update

Hilltop Christian Nursery School had a wonderful start to spring and the Easter season! The three and four year old classes attended chapel and read from the children's bible to learn about the disciples, Jesus' miracles, Zacheaus, Palm Sunday and of course the story of Easter. Each class had plastic eggs stuffed by the room mothers for the children to have an egg hunt along with wonderful class Easter parties. The highlight of the week was the Easter bunny hopping into school on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday to surprise each of the classes with a special visit! We look forward to the upcoming weeks of warmer weather, getting outside to plant and enjoy the beginning of spring! We look forward to visiting Hilltop Church to sing on Sunday, April 28th for HCNS Sunday. Happy Easter!



## DEACONS NEWS

This spring, we are happy to welcome our new incoming moderator, Lisa Oberai, she is both excited and grateful to be serving in this new role for Hilltop Church.

Deacons are excited to put together our annual Church Picnic on Sunday June 2<sup>nd</sup>. We hope all will join us down the hill after worship to enjoy a delicious lunch and time for fellowship.

Please mark your calendars for Saturday June 8<sup>th</sup> where we will host our annual Church Estate and Treasure Sale in Fellowship Hall. Please look for additional details about this fun event in What's Happening. As you begin your own spring cleaning keep us in mind if there are items you would like to donate. Deacons are encouraging support from the entire congregation as there is much to do in the days leading up to the sale in the way of setting up, sorting, and organizing items.

Deacons have resumed our Lunch with Friends Ministry and we are delighted to welcome you and friends of Hilltop to enjoy a delicious homemade lunch on the second Wednesday of each month (April 10<sup>th</sup> and May 8<sup>th</sup>). This is a wonderful time to gather and enjoy some much needed fellowship! Please contact Paula Raimondo for additional details on how to get involved.

On Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup> please come for a Interchurch service and picnic at Lewis Morris Park. More details to follow.

If you or anyone you know is in need, Deacons are happy to offer their assistance with meals, Sunshine Gift Baskets, cards, and other means of support. Please contact Amy Beal for more information.

Thank you to everyone who attended the **Palm Sunday Brunch** on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. Over \$400 was collected and will be going to benefit Mendham Area Senior Housing (MASH).



## Women's Bible Study

The group will be starting a new study on I Corinthians using NT Wrights guide on April 11<sup>th</sup>. All are welcome and ok to join us anytime (no need to wait for a new study to begin). WBS meets on Thursdays at Hilltop House Library at 9:45 AM for socializing and then starts the study at 10:00. Every session ends by 11:30. For additional details please contact Amy Beal.

## Christian Education Update

Welcome Spring! This glorious season of rebirth and growth brightens our lives with fresh hope, vivid colors, and beautiful new life! We are reminded of our faithful friends and family and look to connect with those who have fallen away as well as greeting new faces in our congregation. The Christian Education committee has been busy and is looking forward to some big events this Spring!



### Sunday School

Sunday School continues for children grades K thru 4 on Sundays during worship. We will gather at the back of the sanctuary after Pastor Scot's children's message and begin our lesson together. Sunday school leaders and teen helpers are always needed and welcomed! The only requirement is a loving heart.

### Souper Bowl of Caring

Our Hilltop youth did a wonderful job collecting food and money during this year's Souper Bowl of Caring campaign. They held a bake sale after worship on Super Bowl Sunday, in addition to collecting non-perishable goods during the first part of February. They were proud to deliver 50 pounds of food and just under \$400 to the Interfaith Food Pantry Network! Keep up the good work!



### Communion Bible and Worship class

Our CBW class culminated on March 3 with a lovely brunch and presentation of bibles to 8 Hilltop children. Cathy Malman led an eager group of students through the meaning of communion, navigating the bible, and understanding how Presbyterians worship. She was assisted by the Daly family.

Congratulations to Taylor Culbertson, Brielle Daly, Emily Rose D'Urso, Caroline Fornaro, Audrey Lopez, Cecilia Nervi, Lily Peruyero, and Lucas Seugling! CBW is always a successful class full of thoughtful questions and curious insight from the children.



## Bunny Bags

The CE Committee spread some Easter cheer to the Interfaith Food Pantry Network and the children at Hilltop Christian Nursery School! Barrett Daly and Catherine Fox assembled 68 bunny bags for the IFPN and 72 bunny bags for the HCNS kids. They spent a sunny afternoon stuffing the bunny bags with chocolate eggs, lollipops, and fun toys for kids to enjoy at Easter time. The HCNS bags also included a note about the Easter services at Hilltop.



## Spring/Mother's Day Flower Sale

We are once again selling flowers! Our spring sale will happen at the end of April with flower pick up scheduled before Mother's Day! We are offering hanging plants and patio pots for sale. All money raised will be put towards our efforts in Zimbabwe. Keep an eye out for order forms and pricing information!

## Confirmation Class

May 5 is this year's Confirmation Sunday! Our 3 confirmands will join Hilltop's congregation that morning as we celebrate their dedicated instruction and learning. We are looking forward to recognizing Clay Gladhill, Will Morris, and Nate Perkins as new members of our church. We also will be celebrating our high school seniors and other children as they help lead worship that Youth Sunday morning.

## Noah's Ark Nursery

Noah's Ark is open and staffed EVERY SUNDAY for children ages 0-4 years old. Enjoy worship knowing your young ones are being well-cared for in the nursery.

## Vacation Bible School

VBS is coming to Hilltop! This is an all-church initiative, so clear your calendars for the week of June 17-21. We will need volunteers to help teach, inspire, organize and create fun for our community youth!

**Summertime Fun at Hilltop Church!**  
 June 17-21, 2024 9:00 - 12:30  
 For children entering grades 1-5  
 Register soon - Limited to the first 40!

**Vacation Bible School**

Follow this code to register now!

**SCUBA**  
 diving into friendship with god

- Music
- Skits
- Hands-on Science Experiments
- Tidal Treats Snacks
- Bible Adventures
- Reef Recreation

**Only \$75 for the whole week!**

## MISSION

### Hilltop's Mission Team Focuses on Local Food Security

Our Mission team is focused on providing food security for others. Our activities are ongoing throughout the year.

In March, a team organized by Wendy Whiting prepared and served 70 meals at the Morris County Homeless Shelter. We do that twice a year. Cathy Malman's Nourish.NJ team packs and delivers 96 breakfast bags to Morristown monthly. Also every month, Hope Swartz's team serves 40- 60 meals at Table of Hope in Morristown. We continue to collect food for the Interfaith Food Pantry through our item of the week, food drives, turkey drive, and the HALL closet in Hilltop House. Four Hilltoppers volunteer at the Food Pantry weekly, sorting and distributing food. Wendy and Mike Whiting are co-chairing the Interfaith Food Pantry Gala this year. During our Family Promise support weeks in April and October, Deb Buchanan will facilitate grocery shopping, gift cards, and meal delivery for the guests. Our Lenten campaign "pLENTy to Share" supported these programs with needed supplies. Reaching beyond our local area, the One Great Hour of Sharing, chaired by Paula Kumpf, helps support the Presbyterian Hunger Program. The Mission Committee appreciates the extra support we get from our youth, HCNS, Megan Pepper's Music on the Hill, and designated donations.



If you want to know more about these programs or be involved, please contact Mission Chair Sharon Betz or the team leaders. Thank you for supporting our activities with your time, talent, and resources.

### pLENTy to Share - Results 2024

The "pLENTy to Share" Campaign was this year's Lenten Mission project. Our Hilltop congregation and HCNS generously donated many items which the local agencies need to assist their clients.

Thank you to all of our donors. Hilltop Church makes a difference locally with donations of time, talent, money, and needed items.

Here is a summary of what the Mission Committee delivered to our mission partners.

Family Promise: toilet paper, paper towels, plastic bags, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hair care products, hand sanitizer, face masks, soap, dish detergent, household cleaners, laundry detergent, body wash, antibacterial wipes, dental floss, and garbage bags

Homeless Solutions: bed pillows, coffee, blankets, toothpaste, toothbrushes, dental floss.

Table of Hope: take- out containers, forks, and spoons

IFPN: toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, and condition

NourishNJ: water and granola bars



### One Great Hour of Sharing

Thank you for contributing to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. We raised \$820 that will go evenly to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Hunger Program and Self-Development of People.

## FAMILY PROMISE: MOTEL SHELTERING

Hilltop Church will be the support congregation for the Family Promise 2024 “Motel Sheltering Program” during the week of April 21-27. We will need volunteers to help with this important mission. We are asking for volunteers to sign up to provide ShopRite gift cards, and perhaps uber cards. Please stay tuned for more information and the link to sign up.

## CREATION CARE DAY at CAMP JOHNSONBURG (formerly known as Spring Spruce Up Day) APRIL 20, 2024 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

The weather is warming up and it is time to help Camp Johnsonburg get ready for the new season! Camp Johnsonburg is New Jersey's Presbyterian Camp just 20 miles from Mendham in Allamuchy, NJ. It is one of Hilltop Church's mission partners.

All ages are welcome and no experience is needed! Wear your sturdy boots and bring your work gloves. Lunch is delicious and included.

Potential projects include clearing trails, stick and branch clean up, building or power washing picnic tables, removing invasive plants, cleaning up fire circles, garden prep, spreading woodchips, and more.

Register at <https://www.campjburg.org> Click on Our Programs, then Programs and Events, then Creation Care Day.

## *Eye On Stewardship* From The Finance & Stewardship Area of Ministry

As Presented in the table below are the eight-month results for the fiscal year which began July 1, 2023 and results for the prior two fiscal years. We continue to see the same trends in our financial results that have been reported for the last few months. For eight months of the year, Total Income of \$276k reflected a significant decrease of \$46k from the prior period total of \$322k. However, Pledge Income of \$246k, while down \$16k from last year's total of \$262K, is not far off from the \$255k recognized for the same period two years ago. And as noted in previous reports, last year's results included the receipt of funds from a very generous bequest, which greatly boosted All Other Income. Unfortunately, we have not seen a bump-up in All Other Income, as we had planned for in our annual budget. Maintaining a robust level of Pledge Income will be critical as this is the key driver of the Church's financial health.

Turning to Expenditures, our largest expense categories are Personnel and Buildings & Grounds. Personnel Expenses were virtually flat with numbers reported a year ago, at \$205k. On the plus side, Buildings & Grounds expenses declined substantially from a year ago as we have not incurred significant expense for Church repairs. Furthermore, through February, we have not incurred major costs related to winter maintenance of our properties. Although not shown in the table, Building & Grounds expenses were \$59k for the first eight months of the fiscal year, as compared to \$90k reported a year ago. This \$31k differential in Building s & Grounds expense has been a real plus. However, this benefit has not more than offset weaker than hoped for growth in all Income categories. As a result, we posted a Net Loss of \$13k for the first eight months of this year.

As always, we are thankful for the support of our congregation. Through our gifts to Hilltop Church, we can continue to fund the work that God calls us to do both here locally as well as in the broader world community.

EIGHT MONTHS JULY - FEBRUARY	2023/24 \$(000)	2022/23 \$(000)	2021/22 \$(000)
<b>INCOME</b>			
<b>PLEDGE</b>	<b>\$246</b>	<b>\$262</b>	<b>\$255</b>
<b>ALL OTHER</b>	<b>\$30</b>	<b>\$60</b>	<b>\$25</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$276</b>	<b>\$322</b>	<b>\$280</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$289</b>	<b>\$330</b>	<b>\$243</b>
<b>NET GAIN OR LOSS</b>	<b>-\$13</b>	<b>-\$8</b>	<b>\$37</b>

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT HILLTOP

### The 2024 Hilltop Church Johann Sebastian Bach Festival



- April 14 through June 2, 2024
- All Preludes and Postludes during that period.
- Notes on the Music, including the Bach Work Number (BWV)
- Preludes, Toccatas, Fugues, Concerti, and Chorale Preludes
- Q and A Period during Fellowship following the Service
- Glossary of Musical Terms, along with those pertaining specifically to the Organ provided
  - German translations provided

James Wynne, Organist and Director of Music

### The 2024 Johann Sebastian Bach Festival

April 14, 2024  
Prelude: "Canzona in D"  
Postlude: "Prelude and Fugue in E Minor"

April 21, 2024  
Prelude: Two Bach Chorale Preludes  
1. "Nun Komm Der Heiden Heiland"  
2. "Vater Unser Himmelreich"  
Postlude: "Fugue in G Minor" (The Great)

April 28, 2024  
Prelude: "Erharm dich mein, O Herre Gott"  
Postlude: "Prelude in C Minor"

May 5, 2024  
"Prelude and Fugue in F Major" (Little)  
"Fugue in G Minor" (The Little)

May 12, 2024  
Prelude: "Gelobet seist du, Jesus Christ"  
Postlude: "Fugue in G Major" (Alla Gigua)



May 19, 2024  
"Prelude and Fugue in D Minor" (Little)  
Postlude: "Tocatta in D Minor" (Dorian)

May 26, 2024  
Prelude: "Adagio in A Minor"  
Postlude: "Concerto in G Major"

June 2, 2024  
Prelude: "Liebster Jesu, Wir Sind Hier"  
Postlude: "Fugue in C Minor"  
(from 'Passacaglia and Fugue in Cm)



## MUSIC ON *The Hill*

Writers Round featuring multiple  
local musicians

Donations support the  
Appalachia Service Project

Date  
April 13th  
Time  
7:00 PM

Hilltop House, 14 Hilltop  
Road, Mendham, NJ



The Hilltop Concert Series presents

## "Carmina Burana"



The Hilltop Oratorio Choir

The New Jersey Youth Chorus

Jocelyn Alam, Soprano Salvatore Montero, Baritone

Dr. Jack Oliva and Lucille Kincaid, Pianists

Kenneth Adessa, Daniel Giannone, Philip Gallo, Robbie See,  
and Shanna Eckervey, Percussionists

James A. Wynne, Conductor

Sunday Afternoon, April 28, 2024 - 3:00 p.m.

Hilltop Presbyterian Church: 20 Hilltop Road Mendham, NJ

Tickets: \$20 Adults/\$10 Students - A Live-Stream Option is Available