



EXPRESSIONS

CHURCH IN THE HILLS PC (USA)

A few months ago, I mentioned in a sermon that my purpose as a pastor was to help people grow closer to God. That moment felt freeing to me because I want to be faithful to God's call on my life and that confession really describes what I'm up to. I've recently started the Confirmation class, and I've rediscovered my passion to help others grow closer to God through conversation and teaching. The aspect that I rediscovered was my love of questions. Students and congregation members asking me questions provide the best focus for my ministry. Preaching can be difficult because I don't know where people are in their faith journey. If people ask questions, it gives me a sense of what they want to know and what they struggle with. Many times, people will comment, after a sermon, that they felt I was speaking directly to them. I usually invite them to come in during the week and share more with me but 99% of the time they never share more than that first comment. I'm writing this article to invite you into conversation with your pastor. I'm not the kind of pastor that organizes and runs a lot of programs. I seek out conversations about faith and try to guide people, through prayer and scripture knowledge, into a closer walk with Jesus. If you are interested in having conversations about faith, my door is always open and I would always make time for such ministry. If you are a little shy or nervous about a one-on-one conversation, please consider attending Bible Study on Tuesday mornings at 10AM. The conversations we have at Bible Study can be very helpful and enlightening. The eight to ten people who attend can testify to the impact it has had on their faith.

I will also be starting a podcast in May called, "The Mustard Seed." This podcast will be offered on YouTube and consist of video conversations about faith with Corey LeCureux and other pastors I know personally. The format will be answering questions that come from subscribers, but I'd like to begin by collecting questions from our congregation. This is where you come in. During the month of May, you can anonymously post a question on a portable bulletin board in the narthex of the sanctuary. All the questions will be addressed eventually during the podcast. This will allow you to tune in from home and remain anonymous if you choose but still engage in conversations about faith. You've heard it said that there are no dumb questions and yet most people that ask important questions usually say, "this might be a dumb question but..." Questions about faith are important and if they aren't answered, faith gets stuck. Therefore, let Jesus inspire you. "Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened" (Matthew 7:7-8 NRSVue).

Rev. David Ramage
Pastor of Church in the Hills



March 2026 Operating Income was \$30,136 and Total Expenses were \$20,542 giving a net income of \$9,598. This compares to a Net Income of \$13,725 for March 2025. After one quarter, CITH's Net Income is \$14,032.

We have a great start to 2026 financial performance which is in-line with past years. But we are now heading into our historically weak second and third quarters from a financial perspective. Thank you for your financial support year-to-date.

Per Capita Giving Update

At the end of one quarter, per capita giving is at about 33% of CITH's annual obligation to the Presbytery. The 2026 annual apportionment is \$42 per member. If you have not paid your Per Capita, please note "Per Capita" on the memo line of your checks or use the envelope found in the pew Friendship pads or on the table at the back of the church. Status of Per Capita giving will be reported again at the end of the second quarter.



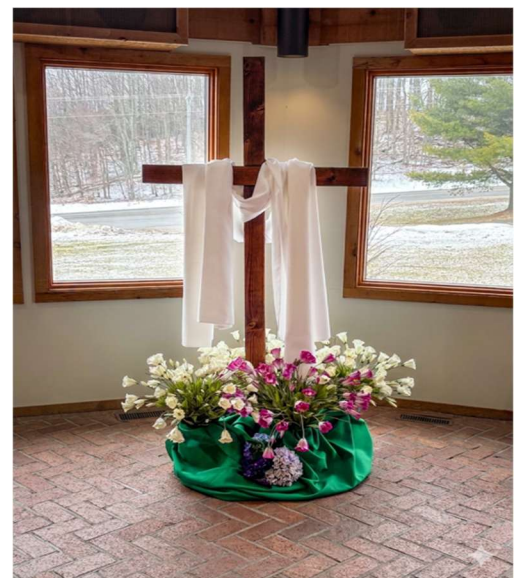
Next meeting is Monday, June 1st at 1:00 p.m. All interested individuals are encouraged to attend.

Eastertide

Eastertide in the Presbyterian tradition is a joyous, 50-day season spanning from Easter Sunday to Pentecost, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus and his continued presence. This year Church in the Hills will celebrate Eastertide through thoughtful decorations. The pulpit is draped in traditional white and Easter Lilies and other white flowers adorn the chancel area. The cross in the narthex is in full floral glory and our Easter banner is on display. We hope you will find the displays inspiring as we reflect on the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Special thanks to John Kerr for building the cross (which was also used for Slopeside Services this winter), to the Worship Committee for the cross display and to church members who donated their Easter Lilies.

If you have thoughts or suggestions, contact Betsy DeLage or anyone on the Worship Committee.



Soul sisters

SOUL SISTERS will be gathering at 12:30, Thurs., May 28 at Coyote Joe's on M-72 in Williamsburg. Come and try out the newest place in the area to open. It's getting great reviews for their menu, service and food quality. Bring a friend and plan on an afternoon in Traverse City or shopping at Meijer's. Contact Linda at bicum@torchlake.com or 231-322-2811 if you are planning to join us.



Dick and Diana Milock	06-May
Brian and Lindsay Eggers	16-May
Jim and Gail Preston	18-May

SAVE THE DATE

The Deacons invite you to our Annual Welcome Back Snowbirds Potluck Luncheon following the service on Sunday, May 17. Ham and beverages will be provided by the deacons and we ask the congregation to provide side dishes and desserts. We always look forward to this fun event where we can enjoy fellowship and good food. Hope to see you there!



Nancy Edleman	01-May
Christine Sparks	04-May
Sue Blugerman	10-May
Darrell Christie	12-May
Nancy Taddeucci	13-May
Jim Hatcher	14-May
Dick Milock	15-May
Tyler Hoyt	20-May
Carol Smith	21-May
Marian Racey	24-May
Tom Juntune	27-May
Doris DeLange	31-May

What Forgiveness Is — And Is Not

Forgiveness does not mean ignoring what has been done or putting a false label on an evil act. It means, rather, that the evil act no longer remains as a barrier to the relationship. Forgiveness is a catalyst creating the atmosphere necessary for a fresh start and a new beginning. It is the lifting of a burden or the canceling of a debt.

—Martin Luther King Jr.



Household Hazardous Waste Collection

The Antrim Conservation District's annual hazardous waste collection events will be held on:

Saturday, June 13th
Elk Rapids DPW Station
117 Lake St., Elk Rapids, MI 49629

Saturday, July 25th
Bellaire High School Parking Lot
204 W Forest Home Ave., Bellaire, MI 49615

Saturday, September 26th
Antrim County Road Commission
319 East Lincoln St., Mancelona, MI 49659

Full details will be posted in church closer to the events.

Pentecost Offering

Pentecost, celebrating the gift of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the church, arrives 50 days after Easter (June 8 this year). Each year on Pentecost Sunday, we celebrate this birthday by receiving the Pentecost Offering, which focuses on youth – *the church of the future*. 40% of the offering remains with Church in the Hills to aid youth in the area. The remainder is used by the PC(USA) for specific programs supporting child advocacy, youth ministries, and Young Adult Volunteers. Let us celebrate the fulfillment of God's promise to us through the coming of the Holy Spirit by guiding our young people toward a brighter, faith-filled future. Please put "Pentecost" in the memo of your check. Thank you for your continued generosity.

Fill a Bottle, Fill a Need

"Moms and Tots," part of the services offered by Good Samaritan in Ellsworth, is again sponsoring its fundraiser: "Baby Bottle Campaign." Our congregation has been a part of this for many years. The campaign will run from May 10 (Mother's Day) to June 21 (Father's Day). Baby bottles will be at the front of the Sanctuary to be taken home and filled with coins, dollars, and checks.

Moms and Tots is a life-affirming organization that provides help and support for families from pregnancy through young childhood. They are focused not only on material needs (clothing, bedding, diapers) but also building loving relationships with the families that they serve. They provide guidance and resources to help parents navigate the challenges of raising an infant to a young thriving child.

Our area is blessed to have the dedication that Moms and Tots provide.

Please join hands and hearts with them by generously filling bottles and bringing them back to the basket. If you are writing a check, please make it out to Moms and Tots.

Thank you so much,
Cynthia Tschudy & Your Mission Committee

MAY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	2
3 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 AM	4 DEACONS 10:00 AM	5 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 AM WORSHIP/MUSIC 3:30 PM	6 CHOIR 3:30 PM	7 MEN'S RAP 9:00 AM FINANCE 1:00 PM	8 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	9
10 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 AM MOTHER'S DAY	11	12 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 AM	13 SESSION 10:00 AM CHOIR 3:30 PM	14 MEN'S RAP 9:00 AM NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	15 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	16
17 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 AM SNOWBIRD LUNCHEON AFTER WORSHIP	18 MISSION 3:00 PM	19 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 AM	20 CHOIR 3:30 PM	21 MEN'S RAP 9:00 AM	22 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	23
24 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 AM	25 MEMORIAL DAY OFFICE CLOSED	26 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 AM	27 CHOIR 3:30 PM	28 MEN'S RAP 9:00 AM SOUL SISTERS 12:30 PM	29 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	30
31 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 AM						

CHURCH IN THE HILLS
A Presbyterian Community of
Faith and Friendship in Christ
6401 Shanty Creek Rd
PO Box 319
Bellaire, MI 49615
Phone: 231-533-6001

OFFICE E-MAIL:
office@churchinthehills.org
WEBSITE:
www.churchinthehills.org

Service of Worship: Sunday 10:00 AM
Children's Program: Sunday 10:00 AM

OFFICE STAFFED
Tue – Thu, 9 AM – 1 PM
Becky Watrous, Office Manager

Church in the Hills is a member of the
Presbytery of Mackinac
The Synod of the Covenant
The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Happy
Mother's
Day!

Rev. David Ramage revramage@gmail.com

Clerk of Session: Mary Ann Waara 231-350-0067

ELDERS

Class of 2026

Bev Dickinson	248-217-9393
John Kerr	248-770-5923
Lindsay Eggers	989-992-5514

Class of 2027

Linda Bicum	231-322-2281
Cynthia Tschudy	231-544-6167
Mary Ann Waara	231-350-0067
Veta Brooks	586-484-4626
Jim Heimbuch	216-390-4535

DEACONS

Class of 2026

Barb Antosik	602-509-2051
Pat Hallberg	231-533-6006
Janet Siekmann	513-315-8760

Class of 2027

Tammy Hickman	231-350-0090
Patty Moore	616-681-2450
Terrie Ramage	231-392-1704

Class of 2028

Robyn Dobbrastine	517-819-9916
Judy Heimbuch	440-242-7352
Sarah Juntune	231-676-3996