

**Report of Closure  
Hilltop Fellowship  
Petoskey, MI**

Petoskey Mennonite Church (later renamed Hilltop Fellowship) was started as a vision of Susanna Brubacher from Maple River Mennonite Church, Brutus, MI. Many of the young people from the Brutus area were employed in Petoskey. With transportation during that time being a problem, they found it difficult to get home for church on Sunday.

The church building was built by German Lutherans in the late 1800's. The money to buy the building was furnished by the Clinton Frame Mennonite Church in 1951 and was turned over to Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Mission Board. Ivan and Lois Weaver, along with their six sons, were the first pastor couple to serve here. The important outreach at that time was Bible School and Sunday School. Two of our current members returned to our church because of their involvement in those activities.

Homer and Elizabeth Yutzy were the next couple to serve at Petoskey and were probably here the longest. Bruce and Pam Lyndaker were here next. Ora and Esther Wise from Naubinway served as interim while a pastor search was going on filled by Bill and Eleanor Shumaker. Bill worked with volunteers of the court in a type of Victim/Offender Reconciliation program and Eleanor was a hospice nurse. We had a food pantry for a number of years headed by George Palmateer.

Ward Potts, who was a part-time chaplain at Northern Michigan Hospital, served as interim with his wife Judy. During that time we began hosting a Bible study for the Nehemiah project, our local homeless shelter supported by area churches. Some of us have served as innkeepers there till the present time. Some of our previous members were formerly residents of the shelter. Jim Gerber from Maple River also was an interim until his retirement.

Dave Cadarette, whose wife is a United Methodist minister, became our pastor after going through the Journey program. During this time we had an after school program headed by Eleanor Buskirk who came with her family to the church as a young girl and is still a member. When Dave left after his wife was transferred to another city, Mike Wilson became our interim. He had often filled in for Dave during his transition. Mike spent quite a few years working with MDS before returning to Petoskey.

Through the years our numbers have declined and with sadness we have come to realize that closing is inevitable. Our final service will be on August 23, 2015, in the afternoon, where we will commemorate the ministry of the congregation. We welcome conference members to be part of this service.

Submitted by Linda Boyer, congregational leader