

Covenant Life Link

DECEMBER 2007

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Advent Message from Pastor Steve

So far this fall, we've discussed the fact that when Outreach leads to Evangelism, which in turn leads to Fellowship and Discipleship, it all culminates in Worship. In order for this process to take place in people's lives, it requires our Stewardship. However, this *process* is not unique to Christianity. Change the basic message and this process would work for most major belief systems. While it is the biblical *process*, it is not the biblical *goal*. Our goal as a church is to give glory to God through Jesus Christ His Son. This is what makes Christianity unique. Now that we understand the process, we need to understand the message and this is what we will be focusing on in December.

The Advent season is a time of preparation for one of the biggest celebrations in the church - the Birth of Jesus. We will celebrate with family, friends, as a church, and as individuals. We will sing Christmas hymns and decorate the church. We will have a Smorgasbord and a Cantata, all to help us celebrate Jesus Christ, who is Immanuel ("God with us.") We will look closely at how God provides for our deepest need, how He set the plan in motion from the very beginning and how He uses average people and even outcasts to bring about His will. But most of all, through our Advent readings and candles, through our carols and cantatas, through all of our celebration, we will worship the God who sent His Son to dwell with us and teach us the Way to the Father and then become the Way to the Father upon the cross.

I encourage everyone as we enter this Advent season together to focus on Jesus rather than on shopping, trees, presents and parties. Find an Advent calendar and use it with your family. Do some Advent readings each day (we have some available on the information table in the narthex). Read through Matt. 1 & 2 and Luke 1 & 2. Or find your own way to prepare yourself for the celebration of Christmas this year. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." Happy Advent and a Merry Christmas to you.

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Church

Membership Class

Are you interested in becoming a member of Hillcrest Covenant Church? We welcome you to join us in January for our next membership class. We will meet during the Sunday school hour on Jan. 6, 13 & 20 to look at the our church & what membership means to us. If you are interested, please let Pastor Steve know by Dec. 16.

If you or a loved one would like to add a name to the 'People To Pray For:' section of the bulletin, please let Pastor Steve or the church

office know. We will then print that name for two weeks unless a longer time is specifically requested.



Advent Sermons

- Dec 2 -The Good News: God's Providence
- Dec 9 -The Good News: God's Promise
- Dec 16- Christmas Cantata "Nativity Suites"
- Dec 23-The Good News: God's Plan
- Dec 24-The Good News: God's Son



Deacon's Corner-by Ivan Jones The Greatest Christmas Gift

"This is Christmas: not the tinsel, not the giving and receiving, not even the carols, but the humble heart that receives anew the wondrous gift, the Christ." - Frank McKibben

"And what a difference between our sin and God's generous gift of forgiveness. For this one man, Adam, brought death to many through his sin. But this other man, Jesus Christ, brought forgiveness to many through God's bountiful gift. And the result of God's gracious gift is very different from the result of that one man's sin. For Adam's sin led to condem-

nation, but we have the free gift of being accepted by God, even though we are guilty of many sins. The sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over us, but all who receive God's wonderful, gracious gift of righteousness will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ." - Romans 5:15-17 (NLT)

Each year we are reminded that Christmas should not be just about giving and receiving presents. But it truly is all about gift **giving**! At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the greatest **gift** ever given, by the greatest **gift-giver** of all, our wonderful God and Father!

Missions Article - by John & Millie Kostrey

Kyrgyzstan is a country located in central Asia surrounded by Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and China. John and I arrived in the capital city of Biskek on the 24th of September and we traveled by car to the city of Tokmok where the Mercy Charitable Christian Foundation is located. The MCCF's purpose and vision is to bring the Gospel and Christian Aid to Central Asian children and their families, co-laboring whenever possible with local and foreign Christians.

As of 2005, the MCCF served over 1000 students through their schools or through the orphanages in which they live. Basic physical needs (food, clothing, shelter, health care and education) as well as spiritual needs (a chance for children to hear the Gospel, study the Bible and learn from Christian role models) are provided to each student. The motto of each school is "faith, hope, and love."

John and I became acquainted with this ministry (MCCF) through John's colleague Dr. Alfred Huyoung, who is a pediatric cardiologist practicing in Rockford, IL. Dr. Huyoung's father-in-law (Elder Chia Shan Yang) began this ministry soon after retiring. He felt called by God to bring Muslim children to faith in Christ and he began his first school in 2000 in the city of Tokmok. God is working in this region changing the lives of children. As the next generation matures into adulthood and they take their place in society, it is the hope and prayer that the testimony of the Gospel of Christ will reach all the nations (including Muslim countries). MCCF has been blessed with the goodwill and cooperation of the Kyrgyz government. They have honored Elder Yang with an Honorable Citizenship award, which is a first for a foreigner in Kyrgyzstan in the Central Asia region.

We spent 3 weeks in Tokmok (which is a sister city to Rockford, IL) and the surrounding area. MCCF is in the

process of establishing a health clinic to care for the needs of the children in this area. John was instrumental in bringing medicines and other medical equipment to help get the clinic established. Prayer is needed as they are looking for a doctor to staff the clinic as well as donations of medicines and other equipment.

I taught English as a Second Language to grades 7 – 11 for two weeks. My experience working with the children was remarkable and unforgettable. They were wonderful students and it was a joy to see God's miraculous work in their lives. Some of them acknowledge Jesus as their Savior and the joy on their faces is so precious. They come from broken homes and difficult situations but they are witnessing the change that God is able to bring about in lives that trust Him. Pray for these children as they grow in their faith.

John and I were part of a team from various churches in Rockford, IL. Prior to our departure, several women gathered to sew quilts for one of the orphanages. Approximately 70 quilts were made and brought over to the special needs orphanage (Kemin Disabled School and Home). The group worked together to clean up the home and make it more comfortable for the children as well as the staff. A new kitchen floor was installed, plumbing was repaired or updated, painting was done, the playground was repaired, a basketball hoop was set up, etc. All of this was done by a group of men and women ages 14 to 73. It was a privilege to be a part of this mission team and it's amazing to see what God can do if one is willing to say "Yes, I'll go."

Our goal was to bring help and encouragement to the people of Kyrgyzstan but as anyone who has ever gone on a mission trip will say, "They gave us so much more than we gave them."

Pray for the children of Kyrgyzstan that God will bless them and continue to work in their lives.

December Birthdays

Leslie Sander
(dau. of missionary)
Jacob Howells
Joshua Larson
Larry Schultz
Elizabeth Potts
Benjamin Woolsey
Jan Mize
Carole Minor
Sue Guio
Marla Gaertner
Kim Severson
Diane Watson
Mark Cordes
Olivia Kevin
Ryan Severson
Mary Kuryliw
Ainsley Preuter
Lynn Vogl
Don Code
Gordon Erdman

Christmas Program

The annual Smorgasbord and Christmas Program will be presented on Sunday evening, December 9th at 5:30 p.m. Our church family and guests are invited to gather in the fellowship hall to enjoy our delicious smorgasbord then join us in the sanctuary to share a memorable evening of wonderful music, meaningful readings and Christian fellowship. If you would like to share your talent (all ages welcome) at the Christmas Program, (singing, playing an instrument, reading a Christmas poem, etc.), please see Wendy Kuryliw or call her at 815-758-4709. Come join us as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Christ the Lord!

December Anniversaries

David & Amy Wessel
Gene & Sharalyn Kowitz
Ivan & Noni Jones
Brad & Linda Pietens
Don & Elizabeth Potts
John & Sue Guio
Robert & Beth Ferguson

Upcoming Events at Covenant Harbor



- **Dec 7 & 8:** Christmas Dinner concerts - 5:30 pm
- **Dec 27 & 28:** Winter Day Camp (K-8th grade)
- **Jan 18 - 20:** Sr. high Deep Freeze
- **Feb 8 - 10:** Jr. high Deep Freeze
- **Feb 15 - 17:** Jr. high Deep Freeze
- **Feb 22 - 24:** Jr./Sr. high Deep Freeze
- **Mar 30:** Maple Fest
- **Apr 12** Harbor Point Dinner in Rockford
- **May 2 - 4:** Moms & Daughters Retreat

For more information on any of these events, contact Susan Kauffman at 815-264-7905 or visit Covenant Harbor's web-site at:
www.covenantharbor.org

New Staff Member

We're excited to announce that Courtney Reeves has accepted the position of Nursery/Toddler Room lead teacher. With her background in special education and extensive child care experience, Courtney is uniquely qualified for this position. She has already begun to implement some wonderful & creative ideas for the children in her care on Sunday mornings. The next time you see her, please thank Courtney for taking on this important role at HCC. -- Christian Ed Board



Upcoming X4J Events

- Dec 7 Christmas shopping
5:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
- Dec 19 X4J Christmas party
5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Undeck the Halls!

Come help us "undeck the Halls" Saturday, January 5 from 9:00 a.m.—11:00 as we "undecorate"! Come when you can, leave when you must. All are welcome. No tools or experience required!

Items Needed !

Christmas and/or winter pictures (serious or silly) are needed for the Christmas Program. As in years past, we hope you take this opportunity to share some of your family memories through the pictures you provide. If you would like to share a few pictures of you and/or your family members with us, please contact Wendy Kuryliw (815-758-4709 or wkuryliw@x4jhcc.com), leave them in an envelope in the church office or email them to the address above. All pictures will be returned. We hope to have a lot of pictures this year so please consider submitting some of your favorites. Thank you!

Sunday School Schedule for December 2007

There will be no Sunday school or children's church for preschool through adult on Sunday, December 23 or Sunday, December 30. Regular Sunday School and Children's Church schedule will resume on January 6.



Message From The Church Chair

Dear Friends and Members of Hillcrest,

The executive committee is beginning to plan for 2008 and is very excited for the upcoming year and what God has in store for us. The committee has been discussing how to continue to support and build on the work of the 5 rockets (Praise, Share, Grow, Care, and Serve) that Pastor Larson has been sharing with us over the last 2 months. The committee has agreed to begin 2008 with the focus on the "Fellowship engine" (Care). This focus will be used through out the year in everything we do as congregation and as we plan our events and projects in our committees. This doesn't mean we forget about the other 4 engines of our church. We need to continue to work in all the areas, but we want to take this first year to focus how we can better care for one another and what that means to each of us and our individual committees. More details will be shared with you at the January 27th semi annual business meeting.

The budget committee has been working hard in the last month to put together a budget for our church. This group again has done a great job of reviewing all the different needs of our congregation and how to best utilize the financial gifts we receive. The budget will be presented for approval at a special business meeting on December 2nd immediately following the worship service.

The executive committee will be going on a retreat in late February or early March at Covenant Harbor for the day. We will be spending our time dreaming and planning for the up coming year. So take time between now and then to share some of your dreams for Hillcrest Covenant church with one of the members of the executive committee. This time will also be spent on beginning to explore what "Fellowship" (Care) means to this group and how we can carry that same fellowship out to all the members of our congregation.

As we approach this Advent season please take time to remember all the wonderful gift God has given us. Take the time to care for each other and pray and enjoy this season of "Light and Hope".

May the Lord bless you during this wonderful time of the year.

Your Brother in Christ,

Robert Ferguson

Christmas Cantata Coming On Dec. 16

Please mark your calendars!—A Christmas cantata, *Nativity Suites* by Benjamin Harlan, will be presented by our choir on Sunday, December 16, during the 10:45 a.m. worship service. *Nativity Suites* is a 35-minute cantata that combines festive carols and beautiful new Christmas songs as well as some readings. The cantata is divided into a prologue and four suites. The prologue is entitled *A Child Is Born*; Suite One is entitled *Born Is the King*; Suite Two is entitled *Child of the Manger*; Suite Three is entitled *And He Shall Come*, and Suite Four is entitled *The Light of the World*.

The cantata choir is comprised of 29 singers this year, including: Jim Auman, Rich Born, Ann Carrel, Lorna Code, Jane Dargatz, Beth Ferguson, Rob Ferguson, Jessie Flippen, Kathy Hallgren, Lori Hauck, Carol Hollingsworth, Jeanne Holly, Greg Howells, Julie Jencks, Steve Klopfenstein, Wendy Kuryliw, Heather Larson, Steve Larson, Carolyn McBride, Lucile Reynen, Don Robinson, Rick Shaff, Cara Sisler, Julie Smith, Howard Swan, Melissa Vines, Linda Wahlstrom, Dave Wessel and Loris Wiltberger.


The two readers will be Ivan Jones and Stefanie Wessel.

Please take advantage of this opportunity to invite your friends and family to come and visit Hillcrest Covenant on this special, festive occasion! It promises to be a beautiful addition to our celebration of the Christmas season.

Thanks For International Students' Thanksgiving

Hillcrest Covenant did a beautiful job supporting Network of Nations' Thanksgiving dinner on Friday, November 16, at Immanuel Lutheran Church. Thank you to the Kauffmans for donating 6 turkeys and to Sislers for donating ice. Thank you to the 3 people who roasted 3 of the turkeys, to the 15 people who made wonderful home-made mashed potatoes, sweet potato dishes, green bean casseroles, and other great side dishes, to the 14 Hillcrest members who came out to help be American hosts/friends at the dinner and help in other ways. It was a wonderful event with about 175 people attending, the majority of them international students. Thank you and blessings on everyone who helped with this!

December 2007

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 Men's Breakfast & Bible study 7:15 a.m. 9:00 am - Decorating for the Christmas season at HCC
2 1st Sunday in Advent Communion Sunday Sunday school & Choir practice 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Special Congregational Mtg 12:15 pm	3 Christian Education meeting 6:30pm	4 Grace's Girlfriends Bible study 6:30pm	5 Confirmation 6:30pm	6	7 X4J Christmas shopping 5:00pm - 10:00pm Christmas Dinners @ Covenant Harbor Bible Camp	8 Men's Breakfast & Bible study 7:15 a.m. Women's brunch @ Diane Kevin's 10 a.m. →
9 2nd Sunday in Advent Sunday school & Choir practice 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m.	10 125th Anniversay mtg	11 Grace's Girlfriends Bible study 6:30pm	12 Confirmation 6:30pm	13 Outreach mtg 7:00 pm	14	15 Men's Breakfast & Bible study 7:15 a.m.
16 3rd Sunday in Advent Sunday school & Choir practice 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Christmas Cantata 10:45 a.m.	17	18 Trustees mtg 7:00 pm	19 X4J & Confirmation Christmas party @ HCC 5:30pm - 8:00pm	20	21	22
23 4th Sunday in Advent Choir practice 9:30 Worship 10:45 a.m.	24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> Christmas Eve Service 5:30 pm	25 <i>Christmas Day</i> 	26	27 Winter Day Camp @ CHBC (K-6th graders) →	28	29
30 Choir practice 9:30 Worship 10:45 a.m.	31					

Missionaries We at Hillcrest Covenant Church Help Support

Gary & Mary Lou Sander
Apartado Aereo 55276
Medillin, Colombia
www.pactocol.org
pactosand@yahoo.com

Serving in Monterrey, Mexico
Mailing address:
P.M.B. 147
1001 S. 10th St. Suite G
McAllen, TX 78501
lisrestrepo@yahoo.com
prestrepo2002@yahoo.com

(InterVarsity Christian Fellowship)
1048 Reasor Ave.
Louisville, KY 40217
peterson97@peoplepc.com

Lisandro & Patricia Restrepo

Eric & Kristi Peterson



Sander Family Missionary Letter

November 2007

Dear Covenant Church Family,

Imagine the surprise that the Covenant Christian Church felt when they received word that they not only were going to inaugurate their newly purchased church building on November 11th, but they were going to receive more than 500 new attendees as well! Once again God has placed in the hands of the Covenant Foundation and the Covenant Christian Church a possibility for ministry that they will take in faith and not turn away.

A year ago, after more than four years of praying and looking for a new location in which to hold their services and minister to their growing congregation, which had grown from 35 to 1,000 in attendance over the past 15 years, the Covenant Christian Church in Bogota, Colombia finally was able to purchase a church building from another church. The original agreement reached was that they would give the other church, El Redil, one year to find their new location. Three weeks ago the pastor of the El Redil Church told Pastor Andres Bunch of the Covenant Christian Church that he was going to take a sabbatical and not continue pastoring the congregation of El Redil. He requested that the Covenant Christian Church re-

ceive and assimilate into their church family those of the El Redil congregation who wanted to do so and continue worshipping in the building. And so, essentially, the El Redil Church is closing down when the Covenant Christian Church takes over the building. And the Covenant Christian Church is growing by more than 500 people.

When the Covenant Foundation started its drug and alcohol rehabilitation program for men, they had a vision to begin a church. In 1992 they began weekly meetings with the families of some of the men in the program because they realized that these families needed a church to be a part of. God had given them the core group with which to work. This core group grew to the church of today that needed a larger place to meet. As well, the compassion, mercy and social justice ministry vision has continued and God has continued to place in front of this church various ways to reach out to the community. They now run a Christian school, a Women's Rehabilitation program, a television program which raises awareness of the Colombian society's need for change and the Church's role in this change, a Prison ministry, and various types of Love/Health Brigades. They have also been instrumental in starting

seven other churches.

Whatever God has placed in their path, they have taken in faith and followed God's leading in how to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the people.

So, now, God has placed another opportunity in their path. And it is one time when they really need our prayers. It is not easy to move into a new building, even if one has planned and prayed over this move for many years. Add to that the challenge of incorporating people from another congregation, people with church roles and church ministries in place, people who are accustomed to another form of church government and structure, etc. You can imagine the challenge in front of the Covenant Christian Church family and the pastoral staff. Pray with us for the Covenant Christian Church of Bogota; for divine guidance and direction, for an overflowing of God's love for one another, for strength and wisdom in the midst of a great time of transition, and that God's name be glorified in every step of the process.

"... but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed..."

John 9:3b

Love,

The Sander Family

Trustees' Report

We would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving from your Trustee Board. November continued to be a busy time for all of us. We are beginning one of the final phases of the building face lift that has taken place this year. Ken Spears Construction will be replacing the wood siding on the church beginning around December 1st, weather and material availability permitting. Other cosmetic needs of the building exterior will be addressed with this project as well. They will get as much of this project completed as possible before the weather changes and complete it sometime in the spring.

We also had our annual leaf raking project earlier this month. If you noticed the wall of leaves along First Street on Sunday, you can imagine that this was no small project. The Trustees would like to extend our sincere gratitude to everyone that showed up to help. God blessed us with a beautiful day and many hands to make the job more manageable and more enjoyable.

There have been many projects undertaken on the inside of the church as well. The multi purpose room floor was refinished earlier this month. There were also several improvements in the kitchen including the addition of a garbage disposal. Shelves were built in the storage room off of the Anderson Fellowship Hall.

Although many things have been accomplished in 2007, there is still a lot to do. Please continue to submit your suggestions and requests to us as needed. We still have quite a list remaining but appreciate your input regarding the needs of the church.

If there are any needs for the many activities planned for the church in the next month or so, please give us as much notice as possible so that those needs may be addressed.

Larry Schultz and Bruce Bickner
Trustee Co-Chairs

Music and Worship Committee Article

"Shout joyful praises to the God, all the earth! Sing about the glory of his name! Tell the world how glorious he is. Everything on earth will worship you; they will sing your praises, shouting your name in glorious songs." Psalm 66: 1-4

We are looking forward to the Christmas cantata for December 16th. The choir is practicing on Sunday afternoons and the choir loft is full!!!!!!

We have been working to update the usher responsibilities. Don Potts is the head usher and is working hard to provide this service and ministry to our church. Please take the time to thank the ushers for their service. It can be easy to take the work they do for granted each week and we need to appreciate the little things they do behind the scenes each week that both prepare the sanctuary for worship and close it down at the end of the day. There are a few items that we would like to remind you of relative to helping the ushers and our church create a welcoming experience:

- Be prepared to slide over in the pew to make room for those arriving late or visitors when the sanctuary is filling up and the ushers are seating people
- If you are able please utilize the back parking lot to leave empty spaces for visitors
- Please take all paper with you at the end of the service and replace hymnals and bibles

If you are interested in serving with the ushers please contact Don Potts. This is an important ministry. The ushers are many times the first greeters of people visiting our church for the first time.

We also want to take this opportunity to thank Noni Jones for so often providing the flowers you see on the altar each week. There are so many unseen things that many people do at our church every week and they do then out of love and devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Being able to say 'Yes'
means a willingness
to pay a price.*

Notes from the Outreach Committee

Comedy Café tickets will be available in December for the January 20 shows. We are again having an afternoon matinee with dessert, and an evening dinner show. You can purchase tickets from in the Narthex after church. This is a great way to introduce people to our church family and demonstrate that we are a fun bunch of people to fellowship with. Plan to buy a table or even two tables.

Did you know that we have been passing out an average of three **Welcome Bags** each week? People have heard about our church and are coming to check us out. AND several of our visitors have been college students. They are coming because we now have a Sunday School class for them or they are international students. Kudos to Christian Education and Network of Nations for your hard work in bringing new people to our church. So when you see unfamiliar faces, greet them, let them know you are glad to see them!!

Are you looking for a way to do good deeds, to demonstrate your love for the Lord, not just talk about it? **Love, Inc.** is coming to DeKalb and Sycamore. So, what is Love, Inc. Here is an excerpt from their website, www.loveinc.org - "The church doorstep is a frequent destination for people in need. But most churches alone cannot fully meet all the needs of every homeless family, single mom, or elderly shut-in who asks them for help. Or can they? Love In the Name of Christ enables churches in a community to pool their resources and services so that those in need are not turned away.

- Families in need receive immediate and long-term help.
- Church members use their gifts and talents through specific, manageable opportunities to serve others.
- Local churches come together, across denominational lines, modeling unity of the Body of Christ.
- Lives and communities are transformed.
- Imagine the difference churches can make by joining with other"

We are not a large church so we cannot always do everything to help people in need but we can be a part of a larger group of Christians who do care and want to share time and talents with those who come to us needing help. You will hear more about Love, Inc in the coming weeks. In the meantime, think about your talents and skills, what could you do to help?

Hillcrest Covenant Church Financial Summary

Anniversary "Theme for the Year" Contest

The Anniversary Committee is excited about the activities and events being planned for 2008 as HCC celebrates 125 years! Many opportunities will be available for everyone to be involved in this celebration year. A letter with more details and other opportunities will be sent out in mid-December.

We have extended the deadline for submitting a catchy slogan, verse, or phrase to announce our 125th anniversary until Dec. 9. Everyone is eligible to participate ~ family entries are encouraged! Entries should reflect the future of Hillcrest as well as the past. To enter the contest, submit your theme idea with your name and address to the church office. The winner will be announced in December!

Did You Know?... ~ If every person who attends an Evangelical Covenant church donated one penny per meal for the entire year, Covenant World Relief would receive more than \$1.7 million in donations to care for the "poorest of the poor."

Getting to Know.....Robert Ferguson

This month we are going to get a closer look at our church chair, Robert 'Rob' Ferguson.

Rob was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest, the great state of Washington to be exact! He grew up in a Christian home, the youngest of three children with an older brother and sister. His family moved to Anacortes, WA when Rob was 3 years old and his father opened a grocery store. Rob was too young to do much work in the grocery store, but when his father sold out and got into the hardware business, Rob became more involved in retail work. He says the toy department was his favorite section and he became occupied with the assembly of the bicycles.

We follow Rob on to high school in Anacortes where he was a member of the football team, playing center and linebacker. His extracurricular activities did not include only sports, for he was a member of the high school choir and jazz choir. Rob can be seen using that experience this year, as a member of the Christmas Cantata.

It was on to Pacific Lutheran University for college in Tacoma, WA where he was a business major in sales and marketing. He got his foot into the work world right after graduation as a life insurance salesman. He worked a couple of years traveling and selling insurance and then moved on to the retail food business. It was in 1997 that he began working for Kraft Foods, in what is referred to as the industrial ingredients area.

1990 was an important year, for this is when Rob met his future wife at a church activity at Grace Lutheran Church in Federal Way, WA. Rob and Beth were married at that same church on December 28, 1991 and will be celebrating their 16th anniversary soon!

It was a promotion with Kraft to senior regional manager that brought Rob and his family to DeKalb in the summer of 2002. This meant relocating from Washington to the Midwest with his wife, Beth, his two sons, Joe and Will, and the family yellow lab, Cleo. This relocation did bring them closer to Beth's family in Downers Grove and her family's cottage in Michigan, where they all enjoy vacationing. Rob says, "We all enjoy the water in Michigan."

Rob and Beth searched for about a year after arriving in DeKalb to find a church where they felt comfortable and one that was compatible with their beliefs. It was through an invitation to Comedy Café that they were introduced to Hillcrest Covenant Church. Rob listed friendliness as the first characteristic that attracted them to attend church here. We have Manny Diaz to thank for inviting them to the Comedy Café and this introduction to our church family. Rob and Beth attended the Inquirers Class and joined the church in May 2004.

Rob was selected to serve as Church Chair and began his term in June 2005. Rob will tell you it has been an up and down experience, but it has been a wonderful learning experience. "It has taught me a lot," Rob says, with a big smile on his face. He will tell you it is all about communications.

Rob has been able to expand his talents as a bicycle assembler and to use his interest in sound, audio visual equipment and technology in helping set up the sound system we have in the church. So if you need any help with those kiddy bikes at Christmas, give him a call! There is nothing like having an experienced assembler around!

Thanks Rob for being willing to serve.

Are you finished Christmas shopping? Did you remember to get something for Jesus? Don't rush online to order a present. God doesn't want your money or valuables. The best gift for the Lord is doing something good for another. Look around for someone who could use a hand. Serve those who need help. Gift-wrap it with love.

Welcome Jesus at Christmas time, not in the cold manger of our heart, but warm with love for one another.
- Mother Teresa

Hillcrest Covenant Church

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Email: CovChill@juno.com
Website: www.hillcovch.org

Our Staff

Pastor: Steve Larson
Minister of Music: Victoria Young
Church Secretary: Sue Lazowski
Church Office Hours: 9 am -1:00 pm
Mon. - Fri.

We're on the Web!
www.hillcovch.org



HillcrestCovenant
CHURCH

Praise
Share
Grow
Care
Serve



Dear Hillcrest family,

I was so overwhelmed as we collected the shoeboxes from the altar after the service on November 11. I had no idea what kind of response we would get this first year of participation in Operation Christmas Child.

On Monday evening my husband, Richard and I checked every shoebox to see if it had a beanie baby, a candy (of which we had plenty), and a \$7.00 check to cover the shipping and handling for each shoebox. Due to the large contribution of one of the Graces Girl-friends (not me), all of the shoe boxes were paid for. Then on Wednesday evening, Richard and I delivered 55 shoe boxes to the Evangelical Free Church, the local collection center.

I want to thank each and every one of you who participated in this mission project. If you prayed, purchased or packed, I thank you from the bottom of my heart and I hope that you were blessed by this unique gift-ing to a child in need.

Just last night while I was browsing in the hustle and bustle of a local department store, I remembered that the Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes were already on their way - it made me stop and smile!

In Christ's service,
Debbie Reingold