

Covenant Life Link

H I L L C R E S T C O V E N A N T C H U R C H

4 P ' S O F M E M B E R S H I P

Participation. Place. Prayer. Provision. When we become members of Hillcrest Covenant Church, these are the things we all agree to; participation in worship, a place in the ministry, prayer for each other, and provision for all God wants us to accomplish. In the next few months, I want to look at each of these things, beginning with Participation.

Worship is one of the essential, identifying elements of any church. We are a worshipping community before we are anything else. In fact, the biblically stated purpose of humankind is just that: to worship God. From Genesis through the Psalms and on to Revelation, the bible is a book about living a life of worship. This means everything we do, from work to play to rest to relationships, is done as worship.

One important part of that life of worship is our weekly corporate worship service. It is here that

we gather together to bring our voices, our prayers, our thoughts, all of who we are, together for worship. And as members of Hillcrest Covenant Church, we have agreed to make that time of

it? We miss them and wish they were there, for everyone adds something to the mix of relationships, conversation, and time together. It is that way on Sunday morning. When we are not there for worship, worship is different.

The Apostle Paul says in the book of Hebrews, *“let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”* When

you are in worship, you are encouraging others in ways you may not even recognize. So let’s recommit ourselves to participation in our corporate worship every time we can, and in this way, we can be more the Hillcrest family that God wants us to be.

worship a priority in our lives. Of course there will be times when we are sick, or away, and on those times our individual worship will have to do. But whenever we are able, it is important that we are participating in our corporate worship service.

Do you know what it’s like when your whole family is together for a holiday but there is one person who cannot make



HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS NEWSLETTER

- Trustee Report pg. 2-3
- Message from The Chair pg. 5
- Music and Worship Update pg. 7
- Author Spotlight pg. 8
- Calendar pg. 10

TRUSTEE REPORT

General Fund Revenue:

2011 General Fund Revenue was \$301,000. This amount is (a) 95% of the 2011 budget, (b) \$17,000 less than budgeted for 2011, and (c) \$12,000 above general fund receipts for 2010. The 2012 budget assumes an increase in giving of \$7,000 in the coming year.



General Fund Disbursements:

2011 General Fund Disbursements were \$307,000. This amount is (a) 97% of the 2011 budget, (b) \$11,000 less than budgeted for 2011, and (c) \$40,000 more than spent for general fund purposes in 2010. 2011 disbursements are essentially flat with the 2012 budget.



A LOOK *at the* BUDGET

Budget shortfalls were primarily in outreach spending, staff expense (due to a change in the administrative assistant and a non-paid leave for musical personnel), and Christian formation spending. Building expenses exceeded budget largely due to inclusion of 2010 expense which was paid in 2011 due to timing of when bills were received.

Cash Flow:

2011 cash flow was a negative \$6,000, as compared to a positive \$22,000 cash flow in 2010. The 2011 shortfall was funded with proceeds from sale of a certificate of deposit.

Account Balances:

General Fund: \$62,000 in checkbook and certificate balances

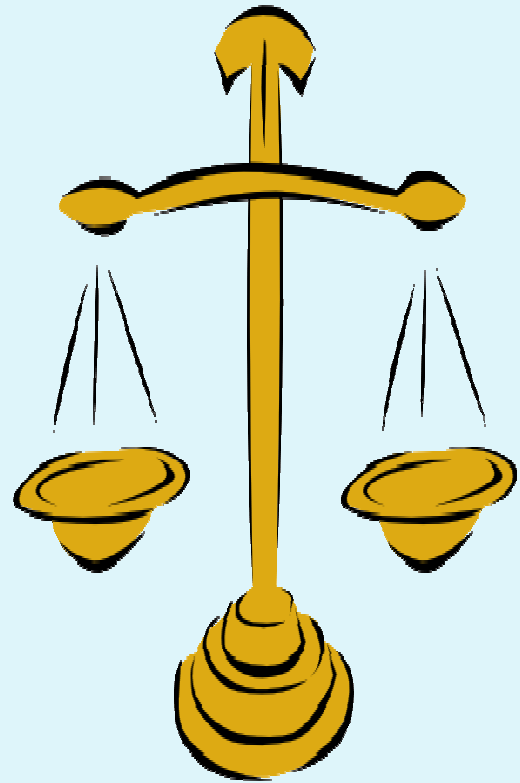
Memorial Funds \$48,000 in designated and undesignated funds

Sinking Fund: \$28,000 in checkbook and certificate balances

CHIC: \$12,000 held in either general fund or designated certificate

Mission Fund: \$7,000

Mercy Fund: \$4,000



The above amounts have been rounded for this summary.

Complete financials will be e-mailed to all members for whom the Church has e-mail addresses at the end of January. For those members who would prefer a hard copy, they will be available in the Church office at the end of January.

Thanks to Ann Carrel (Treasurer) and Susan Kauffman (Financial Secretary) for their work and devotion to the financial matters of the Church during 2011.

Questions for the Trustees regarding the 2011 financials should be sent to bruce@dekalbgroup.org

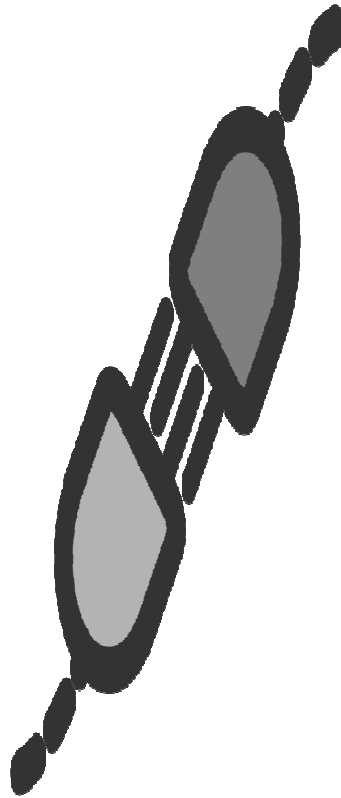
Bruce Bickner, Mort Carrel, Bob Donaldson, Jessie Flippin, Ron Grimm, John Guio and Ed Peterson.

CONNECTION

How does the word “connection” work? We the deacons invited the church to a meeting to help form a ‘visitation church’. We wanted all interested to come and brainstorm about what visiting each other in our church could look like. One suggestion (if you want to know who just ask as we can share that information) would be to use the word connection as it **has** a different connotation than visitation.

The questions we posed are:

1. What is the purpose(s) of HCC visitation?
2. How do we decide who needs a visit?
 - a. What characteristics do you think should be considered to decide who needs a visit?
3. How do we get the whole congregation:
 - a. aware of and
 - b. hopefully, supportive and/or
 - c. Involved?



4. What range do we want to aim for, using “everyone visiting someone resulting in everyone being visited” to “relying on pastoral staff” to do it all?

5. What kind of meeting is next step? If you are interested in being an active part, what kind of guidance/training would be most helpful?

If you would like to share your ideas on these questions, please don’t hesitate to let a deacon know. We will be taking the next step in forming a team to start connecting. This team won’t have to attend any meetings but stay connected over internet or phone. Please let us know if you would be interested in participating. There are many ways to do this process which can help us be a more connected church so please brainstorm with us and come join the movement.

(Deacons Report)

Sunday, February 8th

Everyone is invited to come watch the Super Bowl game here at the church. This is a great opportunity to bring your friends to a fun event! We will meet in the Anderson Room at 5:00 p.m., the game starts at 5:30 p.m. Bring a comfy chair and a snack to share, pop will be provided. Mark Rasmussen will also be making his famous chili for everyone to enjoy! This event is sponsored by the Outreach Committee. If you have any questions, please call Herb Kuryliw at 815-758-4709.



Message From The Chair

The Executive Committee has spent the last couple of meetings exploring who we are as a congregation. Have you ever wondered how our congregation breaks down by age group? Our primary age group is the 40 to 50 and the second largest age group is the 50 to 60 group. Our congregation is aging. We are missing young families and young adults. We as a congregation need to determine how we purposefully begin to become younger or do we stay where we are. The committee believes that we must begin to intentionally become a younger congregation to continue to evolve and grow. As we explore what this means we will be reaching out to the congregation in multiple ways.

Our first way will be through our Town Hall Meetings. We are putting together the topics for the meeting. Please watch for more information on the dates, location and topic for the meetings. We look forward to hear from all of you.

Each of our boards have been very busy this last year and will be providing update via the newsletter on their progress year today on the Long Range Plan objectives. Some of the objectives will be close to being complete so of the boards are prioritizing and developing their plan. Please feel free reach to any of the board to learn more about their objectives.

We are very fortunate to have a generous congregation. Although we did not make our budget for 2011 we still increase our giving by 12% over 2010. Not only did we increase the giving more of us share our blessings over 2010. Please watch a year end update from the Trustees and Stewardship boards.

Please always feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. If you have read the newsletter let me know. If you think there are ways to better communicate with our congregation please send me a note with the ways you think would help.

Your brother in Christ,
Robert Ferguson



Christian Formation (CF)

We continue to look ahead to capture the vision that God has for us here at Hillcrest. Starting this new year we will be evaluating how Sunday School and mid week programs are running. With that said, we will be looking at our long range plan in terms of adding a second Sunday School class for the adults and developing intergenerational discipleship opportunities. If you have any ideas pertaining to these goals please contact one of us on CF. We had Sunday School classes for the adults (and in some cases for the high schoolers, as well) regarding giving and evangelism this school year. Currently the CF board is reading the book Evangelism Without Additives and then discussing the book at our monthly meetings. As far as the congregation's involvement in the discipleship ministries under CF we are still working on obtaining data to see if we have reached our 80% participation goal! If you have any ideas or thoughts relating to the discipleship of our family for the future just talk to one of us CF team leaders --- We'd love to hear from you! :-)

Heather Larson

CF Chair



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Please feel welcome and free to come to the Adult Class even if you have not seen the entire video series. The discussions are based on the video shown that day, so there is no falling behind, or catching up to be concerned about. Join us!

| DATE | TOPIC |
|-------------|---|
| January 22 | New Video Series , Week #1: "The Next Christians," by Gabe Lyons |
| January 29 | Speaker: Gary Sander, Missionary, Columbia |
| February 5 | Week #2: Video Series—"The Next Christians" |
| February 12 | Week #3: Video Series—"The Next Christians" |
| February 19 | Week #4: Video Series—"The Next Christians" |
| February 26 | Week #5: Video Series—"The Next Christians" |
| March 4 | Week #6: Video Series—"The Next Christians" |
| March 11 | New Video Series , Week #1: "Just Walk Cross the Room," by Bill Hybels |
| March 18 | Week #2: Video Series—"Just Walk Across the Room" |
| March 25 | Week #3: Video Series—"Just Walk Across the Room" |
| April 1 | Week #4: Video Series—"Just Walk Across the Room" |
| April 8 | Easter Sunday, no Sunday School |
| April 15 | New Video Series, Week #1: "Muslims, Christians and Jesus," by Carl Medearis |
| April 22 | Week #2: Video Series—"Muslims, Christians, and Jesus" |
| April 29 | Week #3: Video Series—"Muslims, Christians, and Jesus" |
| May 6 | Week #4: Video Series—"Muslims, Christians, and Jesus" |
| May 13 | New Discussion from book <i>Evangelism without Additives</i> |

MUSIC AND WORSHIP
LONG RANGE PLAN UPDATE

The Music and Worship Board has been moving forward with the following two Long Range Plan objectives.

1. Establish a Second Worship Service. The Music and Worship Board has begun discussions of many of the considerations around this objective. We feel that providing a second worship service will really increase the ministry opportunities and possibilities of our church. The focus thus far has been around the format of the service, the roles that will need to be filled, and the best time to hold the service. The congregation will be given the opportunity to provide input on this topic as this will be one of the discussion points at the Town Hall Meetings coming up in March. We hope to come out of those meetings with a clear sense of direction for this objective.

2. Increased Use of Audio, Video, and Internet Technology. Some major steps have been taken related to this objective. A new sanctuary computer and upgraded software were purchased last year. This has given us increased capabilities in presenting, creating, and editing audio and video materials. You may have noticed the richer visuals that are now being used during our services. And, thanks to the members of the A/V team, a "proof of concept" for providing audio on the web site of entire worship services has been completed. Work will continue to streamline and manage the process of delivering that content on a regular basis to the web site going forward. Also, a new audio monitor was just added outside of the sanctuary doors to allow anyone who needs to leave the sanctuary to still be able to listen to the service.



- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 2 - Ed Peterson | 19 - Stephanie Born |
| 2 - Joseph Geidel | 25 - Diane Kevin |
| 3 - Sherri Larson | 26 - Daniel Peterson (Missionary son) |
| 8 - Andrew Hallgren | 28 - Mark Rasmussen |
| 8 - Mike Martin | |
| 9 - Gary Larson | |
| 11 - Amber Gunderson | |
| 14 - Jennie Pianovski | |
| 16 - Aaron Holly | |

*H
a
p
p
y

A
n
n
i
v
e
r
s
a
r
y*



- 2- Bob & Dianne Donaldson
- 11-Ron & Belinda Grimm
- 29-Jim & Cheri Auman

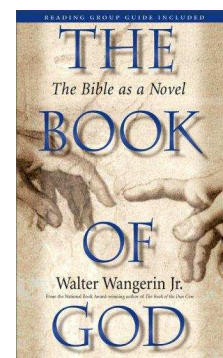
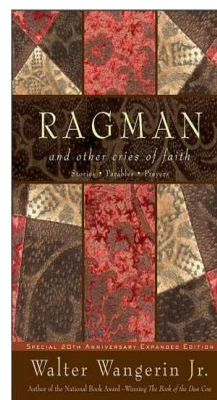
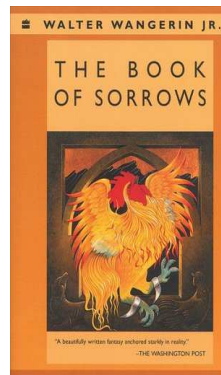
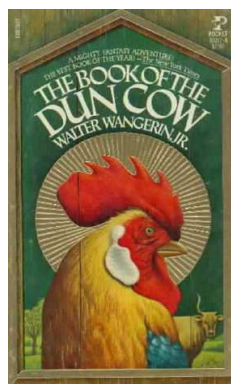
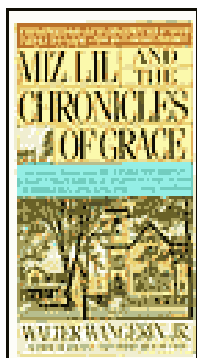
AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT

If you're ever looking for a new book to read, our library is a great place to find it. Every year, we add new titles to the collection of Christian writings that are available to everyone at Hillcrest. Kathy Aichele does a great job of keeping it up to date and organized and is always open to suggestions for new books you'd like to see added to the list.

Recently, we added many of the works of Walter Wangerin Jr., one of my all time favorite authors. Unlike many Christian best-sellers of our day, Wangerin is not the pastor of a mega church, a church plant or a new emerging trend-following church. Wangerin was a pastor of a small inner-city church which never reached national (or even local?) fame but was faithful in following Christ. Wangerin is just an average, down-to-earth Christian with the soul of a poet. And it is this down-to-earth writing that appeals so greatly to me.

Wangerin has refused to stay within a single genre in this writing. Like allegorical fiction like Animal Farm? Then read his The Book of the Dun Cow and its sequel The Book of Sorrows. Like 1st century historical fiction? Then try his Book of God which retells the Old Testament story in its own culture and social setting, or Jesus or Paul which do the same. Like short stories and essays about the Christian life? Try The Ragman and Other Cries of Faith, Miz Lil and the Chronicles of Grace or any of a number of others. And if you'd rather have a topical study, he has done them on marriage, parenting, grieving and the Passion narratives. And these don't mention his numerous bible studies, children's books, and other writings.

As we continue to grow in our Discipleship as one of the five engines of the church, I highly recommend Walter Wangerin Jr.'s books. In them, we can hear the voice of Jesus calling us to an every-day faithfulness, something that too often gets lost in our culture's focus on fame, trends, and "the next big thing". Wangerin is none of those things, but he is inspiring in ways that many others aren't.



A W A N A

The AWANA program for children has been very active this year. Attendance has been consistently about 35 children every Wednesday. In November, we made cards for Pine Acres residents. At our Christmas celebration night the TNT group (ages 3rd, 4th and 5th grade) read the Bible telling of Christ's birth, while the Sparks group (ages Kdg through 2nd grade) acted out the story. It was great to have all those costumes in the back closet! Ross Knoll taught us how to sign the Christmas carol, Silent Night. On January 18 we had a "Flight Night" with pilot Pat Kevin, who led devotions and also was able to answer lots of questions the children had. We entered our "aircraft" through a cardboard scanner, sat in rows of 3 and had snacks brought to us by our own flight attendants. Upcoming events will be a pizza and p.j. night, a movie and popcorn night and a birthday celebration night.



Each week the children are learning and memorizing Bible verses to tell their leaders and they are working very hard to get through their books. They seem to enjoy game time and also the variety of

snacks. A big thank you to the volunteers who offered to supply snacks. We collect an offering every week, which will be sent to Feed My Starving Children. And finally, we will not meet February 22, Ash Wednesday, March 28 because of spring break or on April 4 Holy week.

It is wonderful to see the group worshipping and praising God during our worship time every week.

They really get into the songs that Pastor Steve leads. Please continue to keep the AWANA program in your prayers, both for the children's hearts to be drawn closer to God and for the leaders wisdom, insight and endurance. Thank you for your continued support.

Linda Wahlstrom, Director

Stewardship Report

The Stewardship committee is tackling the subject of generosity. What does a generous church look like? There was an article recently which had the story of John Wesley and his attitude towards generosity. He was raised in poor family and even saw his father, who was a minister, taken away to debtors prison. He decided he was going to teach at Oxford instead of serving at a parish because he didn't want to have to worry about money. After a day of shopping, he noticed a poor worker and reached into his pocket to help and discovered it was empty. He had some nice amenities in his room, but nothing to help a person in need. His heart was heavy. When he made his first 30 pounds, he gave away 2 pounds. When he made 60 pounds, he gave away 32 pounds. He decided he could live on 28 pounds and would give the rest away. He earned over 30 million dollars in his career, but died with virtually nothing. God had changed his heart from worrying about being poor to depending on Him for everything.

If we are to be a generous church we need not look at our wallets, but check our hearts.

The Winnetka Covenant Church is hosting a Generosity Summit on February 10th and 11th if anyone is interested in attending.



February 2012

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| <p>5:30 AM <u>Sunday School</u></p> <p>10:45 AM <u>Worship</u></p> <p>12:30 PM <u>Shift</u></p> <p>5:00 PM <u>All Church</u></p> | | <p>7:30 PM <u>High School Hang Time</u></p> <p>6:30 PM <u>Deacon Meeting</u></p> | <p>1 <u>Midwinter</u></p> <p>6:30 PM <u>AWANA</u></p> <p>6:30 PM <u>X4J</u></p> <p>8:15 PM <u>Choir Practice</u></p> | <p>2 <u>Midwinter</u></p> <p>2:30 PM <u>Middle School Hang Time</u></p> <p>7:00 PM <u>Missions Meeting</u></p> <p>7:30 PM <u>Vitality Team</u></p> | <p>3 <u>Midwinter</u></p> | <p>4 <u>7:30 AM</u> <u>Men's Breakfast and Bible Study</u></p> <p>3:00 PM <u>X4J Super Bowl Subs & Game Night</u></p> |
| <p>5 <u>9:30 AM</u> <u>Sunday School</u></p> <p>10:45 AM <u>Worship</u></p> <p>12:30 PM <u>Shift</u></p> <p>6:30 PM <u>High School</u></p> | <p>6</p> | <p>7 <u>2:30 PM</u> <u>High School Hang Time</u></p> <p>6:30 PM <u>Deacon Meeting</u></p> | <p>8 <u>6:30 PM</u> <u>AWANA</u></p> <p>6:30 PM <u>X4J</u></p> | <p>9 <u>9:30 PM</u> <u>Middle School Hang Time</u></p> <p>6:30 PM <u>Christian Formation</u></p> <p>7:00 PM <u>Outreach</u></p> | <p>10</p> | <p>11 <u>7:30 AM</u> <u>Men's Breakfast and Bible Study</u></p> |
| <p>12 <u>9:30 AM</u> <u>Sunday School</u></p> <p>10:45 AM <u>Worship</u></p> <p>12:30 PM <u>Shift</u></p> <p>6:30 PM <u>High School</u></p> | <p>13 <u>7:00 PM</u> <u>Stewardship Meeting</u></p> | <p>14 <u>Valentines Day</u></p> <p>2:30 PM <u>High School Hang Time</u></p> | <p>15 <u>6:30 PM</u> <u>AWANA</u></p> <p>6:30 PM <u>X4J</u></p> | <p>16 <u>2:30 PM</u> <u>Middle School Hang Time</u></p> <p>7:00 PM <u>Executive Committee Meeting</u></p> | <p>17 <u>High School</u></p> <p>Deep Freeze</p> <p>8:00 PM <u>X4J Lock In</u></p> | <p>18 <u>High School</u> Deep Freeze</p> <p>7:30 AM <u>Men's Breakfast and Bible Study</u></p> |
| <p>19 <u>High School</u> Deep Freeze</p> <p>Newsletter Finishline</p> <p>9:30 AM <u>Sunday School</u></p> <p>10:45 AM <u>Worship</u></p> | <p>20 <u>Presidents Day</u></p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> | <p>21 <u>2:30 PM</u> <u>High School Hang Time</u></p> <p>7:00 PM <u>Trustees Meeting</u></p> | <p>22 <u>6:30 PM</u> <u>Ash Wednesday Service</u></p> | <p>23 <u>2:30 PM</u> <u>Middle School Hang Time</u></p> <p>7:00 PM <u>Music & Worship Meeting</u></p> | <p>24</p> | <p>25 <u>7:30 AM</u> <u>Men's Breakfast and Bible Study</u></p> |
| <p>26 <u>First Day Of Lent</u></p> <p>9:30 AM <u>Sunday School</u></p> <p>10:45 AM <u>Worship</u></p> <p>12:30 PM <u>Shift</u></p> <p>6:30 PM <u>High School Youth Group</u></p> | <p>27</p> | <p>28 <u>2:30 PM</u> <u>High School Hang Time</u></p> | <p>29 <u>6:30 PM</u> <u>AWANA</u></p> <p>6:30 PM <u>X4J</u></p> <p>8:15 PM <u>Choir Practice</u></p> | | | |

Pastor: Steve Larson

Associate Pastor: Jen Zerby

Minister of Music: Victoria Young

Administrative Assistant: Jasmin Corbin

Church Office Hours: 2pm-6pm

Phone: 815-756-5508

Fax: 815-756-5546

E-mail: hillcrestcov@comcast.net

Website: www.hillcovch.org

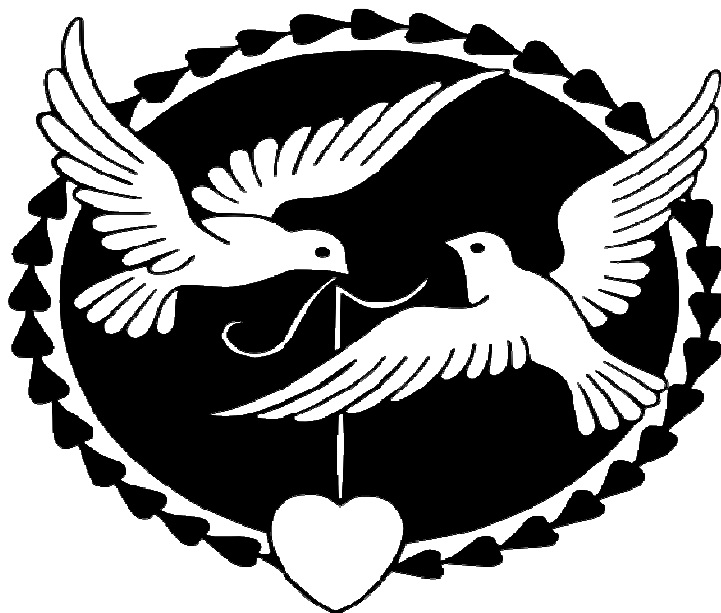
Hillcrest Covenant Church

1515 N. First St.

DeKalb, IL 60115



HillcrestCovenant
C H U R C H



We're on the Web!

www.hillcrestcovenantdekalb.org