



## Today's Gathering

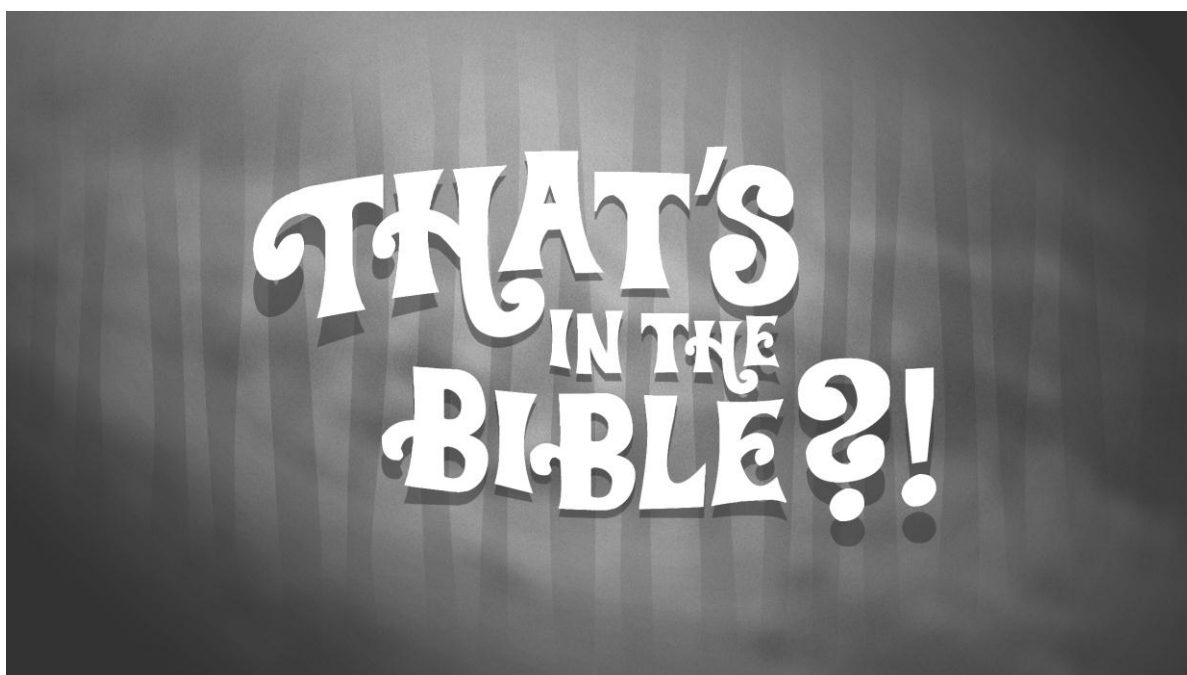
August 10th, 2014

## View from the Hill

Meriah VanderWeide

## Singing

Cindy Cummins, Deb Otis, and Jesse VanderWeide



## Is It Just Me, or Is Today Really Dragging?

Burke Perry

## For the Kids

From 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM

*Parents can go to the Children's Welcome Center to find out about our Sunday morning options and check their children in. The Children's Welcome Center is located on the east side of the main foyer.*

*See page 5 of the bulletin for more information about opportunities for Children and Students.*

# Welcome to Hillcrest

## New to Hillcrest?

If you are new to Hillcrest, we'd like to say "Welcome!" We're glad you're here this morning. Please stop by the Welcome Center, following the worship service to meet one of our pastors and receive a **free gift**.

## Ready to Take the Next Step?

Hillcrest provides many opportunities to get involved with others in the church and the community. If you would like to find out more about classes, Bible studies, and small groups that are offered, stop by the Welcome Center, check out the Ministries section on our web site at [www.sioxfordchurch.com](http://www.sioxfordchurch.com), or call the church office at 371-0546.

## Our Weekly Bulletin and Devotional

Hillcrest provides this weekly bulletin/devotional to help you connect, serve others and study the Bible throughout the week.

On pages 3-5, you will discover connecting and serving opportunities as well as information regarding Children's and Student's Ministries.

On page 6, you have a place to take notes from the message. Also on page 6 is a memory verse, selected each week by Hillcrest leaders.

On pages 7-12, you will find a short devotional for each day. You will read a new text, some commentary and consider some questions to further your growth, as well as a challenge to help you take what you have studied and start to live it!

On page 13, you will find a Prayer Page, where you can keep track of your daily prayers. On page 14, you will find staff contact info.

Our prayer is that God will speak to you as you study His Word and as a result, it will impact the people in your life.

Want information on even more events happening at Hillcrest? Sign up for our weekly e-mail by marking your connection card and turning it in. Don't forget to include your e-mail address!

# Connect

## Baptism

Our next baptism service will be on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Christ asked all of his followers to be baptized, in fact the Apostle Paul said, "Why wait? Get up and be baptized." Baptism is available for any person that has accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. If you are interested in baptism, contact Pastor Brian to reserve a spot.

## Hillcrest Picnic and Bean Bag Tournament

Hillcrest invites everyone to a picnic and bean bag tournament on Sunday, August 24<sup>th</sup> at Laurel Oaks Park, following services. The cost is \$2 per person with a family max of \$10. Sign up at the Welcome Center to RSVP for the picnic. Mark on the sign up if you plan to participate in the bean bag tournament (if you have a partner you want to play with, make sure to sign them up as well). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Brian.

## 180 Thunder Road Family Night

On Wednesday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, everyone is invited to meet at Thunder Road at 6:30pm to play mini golf, ride go karts, play laser tag or water wars. 4 tickets are \$14. Invite your friends!

## Small Groups

Hillcrest offers a variety of small groups for many schedules and phases of life. Some groups meet throughout the summer, and many run with the school year calendar. In the coming weeks, we will have lots of information about new groups starting up or re-starting, including a new Sunday morning class for adults. Hillcrest encourages everyone to get involved and get connected. Here are just a couple examples:

- ❖ Serving and Connecting - This group meets every Wednesday from 6pm-7:30pm. They serve the community two Wednesdays a month, do something fun one Wednesday a month, and learn/discuss something one Wednesday a month. Children are welcome. They will kick-off with supper on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Contact Brian Stroh if you are interested.
- ❖ Grandma's Group - Deena Perry is going to be starting a Bible Study in September for grandmothers. The book they will be using first is "The Love Language of Children". The book cost \$15, plus tax & shipping. Meetings will be held at Deena's house on Wednesdays, but the time is yet to be determined. Contact Pastor Brian TODAY if you are interested.
- ❖ Sunday Adult Class - Sundays at 10:30am, starting September 7<sup>th</sup>, we will be studying *Why I Believe* in the Adult Classroom upstairs. This 12 week DVD based curriculum will address questions about issues at the core of human existence. The cost of the book is \$7. Please sign up at the Welcome Center or contact Pastor Brian, if you are interested in participating.

## Bible Study Fellowship

BSF is an in-depth, interdenominational Bible study that helps people know God and equips them to effectively serve the Church throughout the world. Here is a list of classes offered at churches in Sioux Falls:

- Day Women's Class: Wednesday mornings @ Linwood Wesleyan; Registration is Sept. 10 and 17; Contact Nancy Olsen at [jnolsen@sio.midco.net](mailto:jnolsen@sio.midco.net)
- Evening Women's Class: Monday evenings @ Fellowship Baptist Church; Registration is Sept. 8 and 15. Contact Joni Vaughn at [jonivaughn@yahoo.com](mailto:jonivaughn@yahoo.com)
- Evening Men's Class: Monday evenings @ Abiding Savior Free Lutheran Church; Registration is Sept. 8 and 15. Contact Brad Paulson [bap4jc@sio.midco.net](mailto:bap4jc@sio.midco.net) or 605-366-9503.
- Go to [bsfinternational.org](http://bsfinternational.org) to learn more.

## Men's Ministry

- ❖ The Bean Bag Tournament at the picnic will be our last event for the Hillcrest Cup Summer tournament. Standings are posted on our web site.
- ❖ The Hillcrest Cup – *Fall/Winter Edition* will kick off with a Fantasy Football Draft on Wednesday, August 24<sup>th</sup> at 5pm in the Fireside Room. Sign up at the Welcome Center or contact Pastor Brian if you are interested in participating.

## Serve

### August Outreach Focus – Powerhouse Tutoring Center

The Powerhouse is a partnership project with Wesley United Methodist Church and continues their successful model of community relationship building and academic skill development. Powerhouse is a tutoring program that focuses on continuing academic skill development with Whittier Middle School students. Here are some ways that you can help support the Powerhouse:

- We will be doing a drive for some supplies needed for the Powerhouse. Check the bulletin board in the front foyer for a list of items needed. Items should be returned to Hillcrest by Sunday, August 17<sup>th</sup>.
- On Saturday, August 16<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 12pm, we will be having a Work Day at the Powerhouse Tutoring Center. Jobs include cleaning, organizing, and yard work. Sign up at the Welcome Center if you are interested in volunteering.
- The Powerhouse Tutoring Center can always use more volunteers to help out daily from 4pm to 5:30pm. Any amount of time that you can give is truly appreciated. Please contact Melissa Simpson at [msimpson@siouxfallchurch.com](mailto:msimpson@siouxfallchurch.com) if you are interested.

## Children's Ministry

*All children should stop at the Children's Check-In, located on the north side of the front foyer, before going to their classroom.*

### 9 AM Children's Program

Building Blocks: Infants and 1 year olds  
Bird House: 2-4 year olds

### 10:30 AM Children's Program

Building Blocks: Infants & 1 year olds  
Bird House: 2 year olds  
Dog House: 3-4 year olds  
Club House: K-5<sup>th</sup> Grade

## Move Up Sunday

Sunday, August 24<sup>th</sup> is when all of the children will move into their new classrooms (if applicable), to reflect their updated ages/grades. Teachers will be available to help the children find their new classrooms.

## Student Ministry

### 180 Sunday Classes

- ❖ This summer, during the 10:30 service, Middle School and High School students will meet together in the Youth Room upstairs to watch and discuss *The Bible* mini-series.
- ❖ Sunday, August 24<sup>th</sup> is when 6<sup>th</sup> grade and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students will move into their new groups.

### 180 Wednesday Nights

This summer, Middle School students meet from 7-8pm and High School students meet from 8-9pm.

Next Wednesday, we will be meeting at Thunder Road at 6:30pm for Family Night, instead of our regular Wednesday activities.

### 180 Events

- ❖ Wednesday, August 20<sup>th</sup> will be the Back to School Bash! Middle School (including new 6<sup>th</sup> graders) and High School students will all meet from 7-9pm at Hillcrest. There will be inflatables and our annual MS vs. HS competition!

# Message Notes:

Title: Is It Just Me, or Is Today Really Dragging?

Scripture: Joshua 10:12-14

## Notes

For those going deeper:

This week's memory verse

*John 16:33 (NLT) I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."*

# Monday

Subject: The Difficulty of Accepting Grace

Scripture: Acts 3:18-21

## Commentary:

Grace is defined as God's unmerited favor or God giving us what we don't deserve. This is a wonderful and amazing gift that God gives freely to those who repent and turn to Christ in faith, but this Amazing Grace is still difficult for two different kinds of people. First, those people who are awash with guilt. The thought is that *God is so mad at me that there is no way that He would accept me*. When God's grace is presented to them, they feel too unworthy to accept it. However, there is a second class of people that find it difficult to accept God's grace and this group may indeed be under the most sinister of Satan's illusions. These are the self-righteous people who do volunteer work, who have never been in trouble with the law, who pay their bills and the like. These hardworking folks are basically honest can very quickly spot a dozen people that are worse off than they are. The idea that they cannot contribute to their own redemption is an insult to their sense of accomplishment and, thus, God's grace is seen as utterly offensive. You've probably heard the saying "God helps those who help themselves". It is so unfortunate that so many have come to believe this, when in reality God really only helps those who cannot possibly help themselves. This is when God really shows up, when we finally come to the end of our futile attempts to help ourselves.

## Questions for further thought:

1. How difficult is it for me to accept God's amazing grace?
2. Are there any people in my life that I have a hard time seeing as being forgiven? Why?

## Challenge:

Look for opportunities to seek out a person in which you may have had differences of opinions in the past. Seek to practice grace by opening the lines of communication and to begin the healing process.

# Tuesday

Subject: A Watered-Down Gospel

Scripture: 2 Timothy 2:1-3

## Commentary:

Without question the greatest life to live is the Christian life, because God takes a life that was empty, aimless, and worst of all, headed for certain judgment and turns it around and transforms it. He forgives all our sin, removes our guilt, and literally takes residence inside us through His Holy Spirit. Most importantly, He changes our eternal address from a place called hell to a place called heaven. This all is a result of the power of the gospel proclaimed and believed. However, some have been lulled to sleep by a watered-down version of the gospel; a gospel that promises forgiveness but rarely mentions the need to repent (turn) from your sin. A gospel that promises peace but never warns of persecution. A gospel that says God wants you to be healthy and wealthy and never have problems of any consequence. But this is the gospel of the Bible. The Christian life is not a playground, but a battleground. *Not only is there a God who loves you enough to offer a provision for sin's forgiveness, but this is the same God who also wants to change you and use you for His Kingdom work now.* So how will you respond?

## Questions for further thought:

1. Do I fully understand the level of spiritual battle that is raging all around me?
2. Do I love and praise God as much during times of trial as during times of blessing? Why or why not?

## Challenge:

Be actively seeking individuals with which you could share your faith in Christ. Be ready as God provides those opportunities.



# Wednesday

Subject: Gratitude First?

Scripture: Luke 17:12-18

## Commentary:

Perhaps one of the most graphic illustrations of ingratitude in the Bible is Jesus' healing of the ten lepers in Luke 17. The lepers stood at a distance and garnered Jesus' attention as they called out in loud voices saying "Jesus, Master have mercy on us". Leprosy was a skin disease that caused a person to be deemed ceremonially defiled (symbolic of sin) and they were forced to live outside the village, separated from those that were deemed *clean*. Jesus initiated their healing, sending them to the priests where their miraculous healing could be publically certified. You would expect to see a rousing display of profound gratitude from the healed lepers. And yet gratitude escaped the attention for most (nine to be exact) of the aforementioned healed. Now some were probably excited to tell their families and some were probably in a state of shock. Some may have gone looking for Jesus sometime later, but were unable to find him. It turns out; ingratitude is not always calloused or premeditated. Sometimes it is just fourth, fifth, or tenth on a list we really never get around to following through on. However, for one of the healed lepers gratitude was his first, immediate reaction to grace. Before doing all the other trivial things, he returned to say thank you to his Rescuer. Before anything else, "Thank You, Lord!"

## Questions for further thought:

1. How often do I only think my gratitude and never express it? Why would that be?
2. It is easy to feel gratitude yet never express it. Do I believe that this is not a big deal and how could the atmosphere been different with a display of thankfulness?

## Challenge:

Meditate on God's word and think back on times in your life when an expression of gratitude may have not been your first response. Try to make thankfulness a priority going forward.

# Thursday

Subject: A Faith Worth Emulating

Scripture: Hebrews 11:1-3

## Commentary:

Faith is defined as sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. (Hebrews 11:1 NIV) These two words, sure and certain, are paramount in this definition. They describe a secure beginning and ending point. The beginning of faith believes in God's character – He is who He says. The end point believes in God's promises – He will do what He says. We demonstrate true faith when we believe that God will fulfill His promises even though we don't see any way or evidence for those promises materializing yet. Faith is easy when things are going well, but how quickly can that faith disappear when life gets hard and the chips are down. In John 4, we find an amazing example of a man of faith. John tells of a Roman military official whose son was very sick, likely at the point of death. This situation was so grave that he was begging Jesus for a miracle and Jesus did not disappoint. In fact, his words to the Roman were rather shocking, "Go, your son will live." John says "The man believed Jesus and went on his way" He left and walked home believing his son will be healed. What faith this man had, but that is not all. Here is the key. He trusted *Jesus* at His word and he acted on it. There is no magic in faith itself. The faith was only as good as the object of it. Now, that is a faith to emulate.

## Questions for further thought:

1. How would others describe my faith?
2. Do I trust in the promises God makes or do I trust in my emotions?

## Challenge:

Pray for God's will to be done in your life as you seek opportunities for Him to strengthen your faith in assurance and conviction in the person and word of Jesus.

# Friday

Subject: Self Righteousness

Scripture: Luke 11:37-52

## Commentary:

In this passage, Jesus is speaking with the Pharisees and criticizing their blatant self-righteous practices. These "experts of the law" were very adept at making themselves appear religious on the outside while having less than honorable intentions in their temple dealings. It brings to mind a story from Luke 18 when Jesus told about the two men that went to the temple to pray. One of the biggest impediments to spiritual growth is a lack of true repentance. This lack of integrity only leads to greater degradation as the sinners' heart has not truly been converted. The Pharisee modeled this very eloquently as he smugly ran down his checklist before God expecting some kind of door prize for his effort. However, the tax collector saw himself as he truly was. A sinner guilty of every kind of depravity needing a gracious savior for forgiveness of sin saying "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Which of these men went home justified? Jesus says, "The tax collector went home justified. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted." God has nothing but contempt for the self-righteous Pharisee who comes full of pride before him boasting of his own accomplishments, but He has everything to offer the one who comes humbly before the throne of grace and cries out "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

## Questions for further thought:

1. Have I ever made a kind of mental checklist with God such as I've prayed today, I've read my Bible today ect..? Did God take notice? Was He pleased?
2. OR do I say Thank you Lord for enabling me to do these things and please continue your good work in me? How is this different?

## Challenge:

Pray and meditate on this passage and ask God for humbleness of spirit as you seek His will for your life.

# Saturday

(Looking to Sunday)

Message Series: That's in the Bible?!  
Message Title: Skeleton Valley  
Scripture: Ezekiel 37  
Speaker: Pastor Brian Stroh

What do these passages say to you?

## Prayer Page:

Write down the prayer concerns and praises you want to remember throughout the week. Pray every day!

If you would like to receive the email prayer chain, check the box on the Connection Card. You can also submit prayer requests through the church web site or by calling the church office.

[illegible]

James 5:16

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

# Staff Contact Information



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# Connection Card

Please fill out, tear at perforation and place in collection plate or drop off at Welcome Center as you leave.

**PRAYER REQUESTS**      ☐ Keep confidential (Pastoral staff) or    ☐ Put on the Prayer Chain

☐ I would like to sign up for Hillcrest’s upcoming event. (Please specify.) \_\_\_\_\_

My next step today is to:

- ☐ Read and study the scriptures and devotionals, provided on pages 6-12.
- ☐ Attend Family Fun Night at Thunder Road on August 13th.
- ☐ Attend Picnic on August 24<sup>th</sup> .                      ☐ Do something on my own.
- ☐ Join a group or class.                                      ☐ Meet with a spiritual coach.
- ☐ Talk to Pastor Brian about Baptism.

Additional Comments:



4301 E. 26<sup>th</sup> St. Sioux Falls, SD 57103

605-371-0546

[www.siouxfallschurch.com](http://www.siouxfallschurch.com)

## Connection Card

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Check all that apply:

☐ 1<sup>st</sup> Visit --- How did you hear about Hilcrest? \_\_\_\_\_

☐ 2<sup>nd</sup> Visit \_\_\_\_\_  
(web site, newspaper, radio, name of person who invited you, etc.)

☐ Returning Guest

☐ Regular Attender

☐ Members

*I am interested in:*

☐ beginning a relationship with Jesus      ☐ being baptized

☐ receiving the Hilcrest Informational E-mail.

☐ joining a small group      ☐ becoming a member of Hilcrest

☐ volunteering      ☐ praying for my Hilcrest family (received via e-mail)

*One of the pastors will contact you with information on these subjects.*

**Your Age Group:**

☐ 18-24      ☐ 25-35

☐ 36-45      ☐ 46-55

☐ 56-65      ☐ over 65

☐ Single      ☐ Married

☐ Divorced

☐ Widowed

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Names & Birthdays of  
members of your  
household**

_____
_____
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_____
_____
_____