

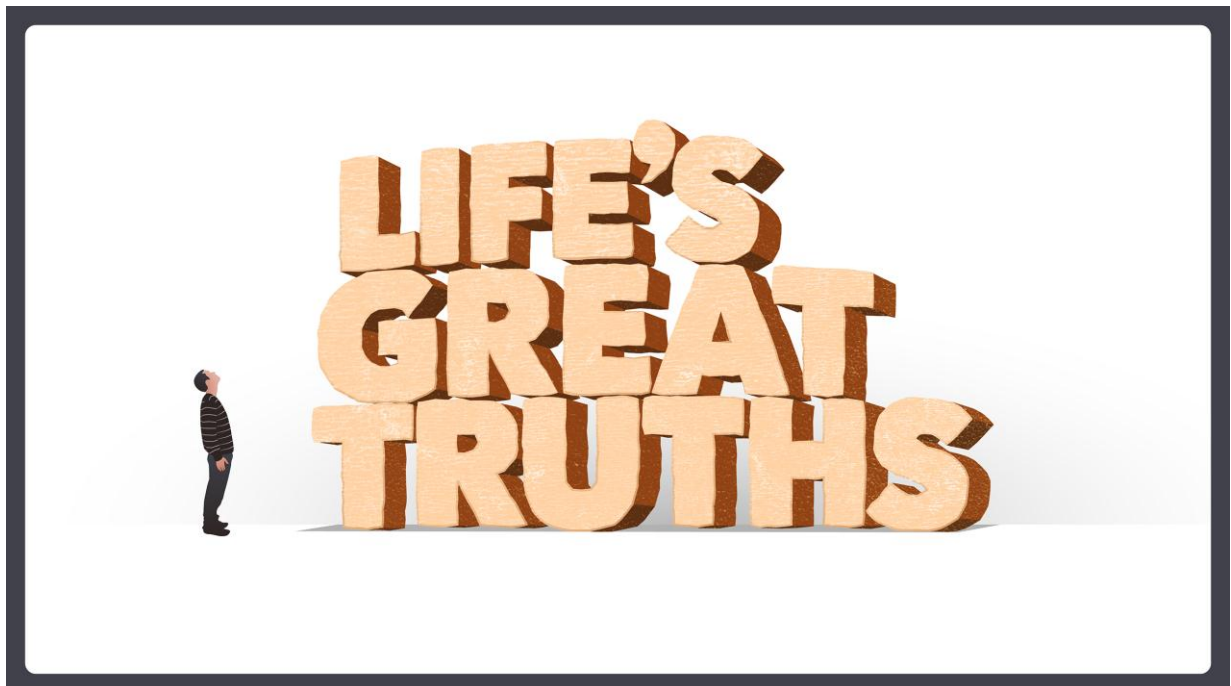
# Hillcrest CHURCH

Today's Gathering  
March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

View from the Hill  
Tarina Stroh

Singing

Gary Rakebrandt, Norma Dalen, Kelsey Moser, & Jesse VanderWeide



Life is Hard  
Pastor Brian Stroh

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.siouxfallschurch.com](http://www.siouxfallschurch.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 3-4, you will discover connecting and serving opportunities as well as information regarding Children's and Student's Ministries.

On pages 5-6, 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 March 29th. Baptism is available for any person that has accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. If you are interested in baptism, contact Pastor Doug or Pastor Brian.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday at the Pizza Ranch

Today is the first Sunday of the month. You are all invited to lunch at the 41<sup>st</sup> Street Pizza Ranch following the 10:30 service. This is an informal event, so simply show up and enjoy lunch with other Hillcresters. There is no need to RSVP and each person/family will be responsible for the cost of their own meals.

## Men's Event

Hillcrest guys are invited to the Men's March Madness Event Thursday, March 26th from 6-9 PM. Activities include basketball in the gym, a bean bag tournament throughout the facility, March Madness tournament games displayed throughout the facility, awesome food, and door prizes. Cost is \$5/\$10 for dads who bring their son(s). Sign up at the Welcome Center, mark the back of your Connection Card, or contact Brian Stroh if you are interested in attending.

Also, guys who are interested in being part of Hillcrest's March Madness 'office' pool should let Brian know by Sunday, March 15th.

## Hillcrest Camping Trip

**LAST DAY!** This year, our annual camping trip at Newton Hills State Park will be held June 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, the weekend after VBS. On Saturday evening, June 6<sup>th</sup>, we will also have a picnic for everyone, even if you are not camping. Sign up at the Welcome Center by March 1st to reserve your spot!

## Parents Night Out

The 180 Chicago mission team is offering a babysitting night on March 20th from 6pm-8:30pm. We will have a movie and snacks in one room, and games and activities in another. Cost is \$5 per kid, additional donations are welcome. Proceeds will go towards the cost of the 180 Chicago Mission Trip. Please sign up at the Welcome Center, mark the back of your connection card, or contact Meriah if you are interested.

## Adoption Celebration

Join us On Sunday March 15th from 2pm-4pm for an informal open-house event, celebrating Zach and Kay Perry's adoption of Lee and Phil and Erica Bell's adoption of Maelynn! Gifts are not necessary. If you would like to bring a gift, the Perrys and Bells have indicated that gift cards to Target would be very helpful. Cake and punch will be served.

## Serve

### March Mission Focus – Children's Home Society

CHS cares for more than 2,000 children each year, providing a continuum of services primarily related to child abuse and domestic violence. Programs include emergency shelter, residential treatment, education, adoption and foster care, forensic interview & examination centers, and prevention services. The common thread of CHS programs is "a second chance"--to help children work through the trauma that has adversely affected their lives; facilitate the healing of mind, body and spirit; and work toward their successful transition into a healthy family setting.

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, Hillcrest will be providing a pizza party for the kids at Children's Home Society. We need 5 adult volunteers to arrive at CHS at 4:30pm to help serve food. Please sign up at the Welcome Center if you are interested in this opportunity.

Throughout the month of March, we will be taking donations for the Children's Home Society. Starting next week, you can find a copy of their Wish List on the Outreach Bulletin Board next to the Welcome Center. Please drop off items by March 29<sup>th</sup>.

### Donate from your smart phone!

Hillcrest Church offers a mobile version of our online giving page to make it easy for you to give anytime from your smart phone. Simply scan the image you see here using your phone's Quick Response (QR) code reader!



## 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  
Tree House: 3 year olds  
Dog House: 4 year olds  
Club House: K-5<sup>th</sup> Grade

## Children's Ministry Volunteer Appreciation & VBS Training

Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup>, after 2<sup>nd</sup> service, we will have our Annual Teacher Thank You Lunch for everyone who helps in Children's Ministry and anyone who plans to help with VBS this year. We will feed you, train you and thank you for being a part of this Ministry. We will also preview this June's VBS theme and have a sign-up ready for those who can help. Child care will be provided but we must have a proper head count for this event so please sign-up in the back foyer.

## Student Ministry

### 180 Sunday Classes

Middle School and High School students are invited to meet in the Youth Room during the 10:30am service. Students will then break into small groups.

### 180 Wednesday Nights

Middle School students meet from 6-7:30pm and High School students meet from 7:30-9pm. Includes lesson, small group time, snack, and games!

### 180 Events

On March 28<sup>th</sup> from 2pm-4:30pm, 180 students will meet in the Youth Room for a 2 hour session of painting much like our Women's Chocolate & Canvas experience. Cost is \$15, supplies are provided. Please sign up at the Welcome Center, mark your connection card, or contact Meriah, if you are interested in attending.

<https://adashofeverythingg.wordpress.com/2013/11/17/dandelion-canvas/>

# Message Notes:

Title: Life is Hard

Scripture: Matthew 13:24-30; Luke 17:33

# Monday

Subject: LIFE IS HARD

Scripture: Luke 17:33

## Commentary:

When we spend our lives trying to avoid all the difficulties and problems that may come our way we may think we are being wise when we are actually living in fear and distrust. Jesus never said life would be easy: we can try to do everything right and still have things turn out wrong. We can make good choices, but others' bad choices will still affect us. So the counterintuitive statement of Jesus' -that to preserve our life we must lose it- actually means we must "let go" in order to truly live.

Trying to keep it all together and make our lives "picture perfect" often leads to failure and despair in the end.

## Questions for further thought:

1. Do you take one day at a time or try to control events in your life?
2. Is your image of a good life getting in the way of following Jesus' teachings?

## Challenge:

Concentrate on what is actually happening each day and on those people you meet who may need your friendship. Relationships with God and others should be first priority.

# Tuesday

Subject: THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Scripture: Luke 17:20-25

## Commentary:

The Jews in Jesus' time were looking forward to a time when the kingdom – the rule of God on earth – would show itself in their land. Jesus said it would not come visibly, but rather it would be "hidden" within people until He returned at the end of the age. He thus in effect declared that humanity could not bring God's reign on earth in the form of a political theocracy but rather we were to continue to spread the gospel throughout the earth and remain faithful in the way we lived our lives in spite of worldwide opposition. This statement was unacceptable to the leaders in His time and also quite opposite of many religious and political leaders' goals since then to the present day. We prepare for His return by living as He taught us to do, not by setting up our "kingdom".

## Questions for further thought:

1. Does Jesus live in you and work through you as you go about your daily responsibilities and interact with others?
2. Are you ready for His return?

## Challenge:

Be aware of His Spirit's presence each day through prayer, meditation, and Bible study.



# Wednesday

Subject: THE HARVEST OF THE EARTH

Scripture: Matt. 13: 24-30 & Rev. 14:14-19

## Commentary:

In Matthew Jesus speaks of the tares (weeds) and the wheat that grew up together in the kingdom. It would be wonderful if all who called themselves Christian actually belonged to him, but unfortunately that is not the case. We may wish there were a way to rid Christianity of those who are not true to His Spirit; indeed wars have been fought, so-called heretics burned, and others imprisoned in attempts to keep churches pure, but in doing so those who did the cleansing often may have become agents of the enemy who is fighting against Christ and His followers. We are to wait for Jesus' harvest in the end that will truly discern and separate the wheat from the tares. And in the meantime we should concentrate on doing good to those we work with for we are all on a journey that may include many pitfalls and detours, so we should pray for others and hope for their eventual arrival at the desired destination.

## Questions for further thought:

1. Does believing the correct theology guarantee anyone's salvation?
2. Should we refuse to work with groups who believe differently than we do?
3. How should we act towards those who claim to be Christians but act in disgraceful ways?

## Challenge:

God looks in the heart: let us not judge individuals but observe the outcome of their actions—whether they bring harm or help to others.

# Thursday

Subject: THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

Scripture: Luke 12:49-53; 14:25-27; 17:26-27

## Commentary:

Jesus warned His followers that it would not be easy to be true to him. It could cost us our family relationships, our homes, our careers, our lives. We may still have these things, but we must be able to part with whatever may keep us from being true to Christ and following him. And we are not to become so wrapped up in the pleasures of life that we forget our first Love. Some have deliberately given up natural human desires or comfortable lives in the attempt to live more perfect lives, but if it is not done in love for a greater good, self-denial can also become a form of self-justification that profits no one. Truly, the constant balance of enjoying and using this world's many gifts and also being able to part with these things requires guidance from the Spirit.

## Questions for further thought:

1. Could you stand for Christ if your life or liberty were threatened?
2. Do you pray for those who are persecuted for their faith?
3. Do you support and encourage those in your family who are trying to follow Christ?

## Challenge:

Name something you could give away or give up that would further the kingdom of God within you or others.

# Friday

Subject: USE GOD'S GIFTS

Scripture: Luke 19: 11-27

## Commentary:

This parable is about how God's final kingdom will come on earth. Jesus, the "prince of noble birth" - Son of God, is going away "to a distant country" - Heaven, to be appointed king. After that He will return and reward those servants - His disciples - He entrusted to care for His estate. There are also other subjects who do not want him to be their king - these are those enemies who desired to kill him. But He does become king in spite of their efforts, and after some time returns. The servants who have done well and increased the gifts He gave them will be given more responsibility, honor, and rewards. The servant who hides his gifts and is afraid to use them will have them taken away and receive no reward. And those who reject Him will be destroyed and have no part in his kingdom.

## Questions for further thought:

1. What gifts have you been given as one of Jesus' disciples to use for the benefit of His kingdom?
2. Why do you suppose money is given as the example of a gift?
3. How do you suppose those who do not want Jesus to rule on earth treat His servants?

## Challenge:

Use whatever gifts you have to spread His kingdom while there is still time.

# Saturday

(Looking to Sunday)

Message Series: Life's Great Truths  
Message Title: You are Not That Important  
Scripture: Luke 9:25  
Speaker: Doug Bartel

What do these passages say to you?

**For those going deeper:**

This week's memory verse

*Psalm 71:20 (NLT) You have allowed me to suffer much hardship, but you will restore me to life again and lift me up from the depths of the earth.*

## 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.

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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



**Doug Bartel**  
Lead Pastor  
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**Jennifer Simons**  
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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**

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**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.
- Participate in 180 Babysitting Night Chicago Trip Fundraiser on March 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Attend Men's March Madness Event on March 26<sup>th</sup>.
- Attend 180 Students Chocolate & Canvas event on March 28<sup>th</sup>.

Additional Comments:

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

605-371-0546

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

### Connection Card

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

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
- 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.*

(web site, newspaper, radio, name of person who invited you, etc.)

**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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