



# HILLCREST COVENANT CHURCH



# ANNUAL REPORT



2023 - 2024



## Welcome to the 2023-2024 Annual Report!

It is good and helpful to look back and celebrate what God has been doing at Hillcrest. As we take time to remember, we can then engage in the hope of looking forward to what He will be doing in this next ministry year. Our vision, **PURSuing NEW LIFE TOGETHER IN JESUS**, continues to guide us as we embrace new life and help others discover it as well. **How have you experienced this new life over the past year?**



The 2023-2024 ministry year centered around the theme of **Welcoming Everyone**, one of the movements of our vision. We focused on creating space and belonging for all people and all generations. It began last fall as we discussed how to BLESS others (**B**egin with prayer, **L**isten with care, **E**at together, **S**erve together, and **S**hare our story of faith). We wrote down the names of those we wanted to welcome into faith and prayed for God to move. Mid-year we engaged in a 6-week conversation about a Biblical approach to human sexuality, which stretched and challenged us to grow in our capacity to welcome everyone. Throughout the 52 Sundays of the year, we heard many stories of how God is moving in the lives of His people.

As we move into this new year, our focus shifts to the final movement of our vision: **Love All**. To help us grow in our ability to love all, we will spend the year reading through the Gospel of John, the “Disciple of Love.” I’m also excited about the launch of our **Kingdom Catalyst Grants**, which will allow us to invest 25% of the proceeds from the Birch House sale into new and existing community outreach initiatives. These small grants will expand our ability to love all people.

Please, join me in praying for God to do something new at Hillcrest. I am hungry to see new life and transformed lives in our community. I would love to hear your story of transformation - feel free to reach out to me so we can connect. Pursuing with you...





As Chair of the Hillcrest Governing Board, I am excited to be part of how God is using our church to advance His Kingdom. The church worldwide, in all its forms, empowered by His Spirit, is the one and only plan to bring God's Kingdom to a world that

desperately needs the love of Christ.

Change and uncertainty, accelerated by Covid, are causing many churches to evolve how they think about ministry and how to effectively steward their resources. We are excited to see what God might do in this season with Hillcrest. Please join us as we pray for discernment about how Hillcrest can live into our part of fulfilling God's plan.

Some of the changes that you have probably experienced personally are revitalized young adult, student and kids' programs. It's been exciting to see all the new faces in the halls who are calling Hillcrest home and pursuing new life in Jesus with us. Additionally, we successfully closed on the sale of the Birch House this year and are about ready to launch programs and provide grants that will bless our community in new ways. Thanks to many who have participated in ongoing vision discussions, we have developed the following themes to guide us:

*Hillcrest Mobilized* – we have become a church of believers who use our diverse passions, experiences, and God-given talents in our local community to show God's love.

*Hillcrest Integrated* – we have become a connective tissue uniting the broader local church and local ministries to advance God's Kingdom.

*Hillcrest's Impact* – those we serve, and those who serve along with us, have experienced the power of Christ's love in powerful and practical ways.

*Hillcrest Emboldened* – we have regained faith in the efficacy of our church and the broader church in bringing God's Kingdom to earth.

The Birch House proceeds will be managed from two funds: a new ministry start-up fund to help launch a few new programs, and a smaller grant fund to meet specific needs of our ministry partners.

What hasn't changed is our passion for Missions. We have held to our commitment to use 20% of our core budget to support Missions, 80% of which goes directly to support our missionary partners. Our Advent Conspiracy program continued to invest additional Kingdom dollars, this year to build yurts to support Covenant Youth of Alaska. We also sent teams to both Alaska and Bethel Mission in Nicaragua (last year's Advent Conspiracy recipient) to learn how they are both multiplying our gifts to bless children.

Thanks for being part of our expression of Christ's church. We ask for your continued support as we "keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood." Acts 20:28





This past year, Hillcrest Kids was all about helping kids and families connect and pursue new life in Jesus. Our Kids' Serve Team members lead the way, creating a space where faith came alive for kids from birth through 5th grade. In Nursery and PreK, little ones experienced God's love through interactive play and hands-on Bible stories, while our elementary kids engaged in teaching and small groups that helped them explore their faith and build connections.

Beyond our regular Sunday morning experiences, our team created opportunities for families to grow together spiritually. The third grade Bible Blessing gave every child a Bible and resources to help them dive deeper into God's Word. Nativity Festivity brought families together to kick off the Advent season with joy and meaning. The annual Easter Egg Scramble connected us with our community and invited them to discover Jesus at our Easter services. And in June, Kidjam helped kids understand what it means to follow Jesus and share that love with others. Each of these moments helped our kids and families grow in their faith and experience the new life in Jesus.



“  
*The best Kidjam ever!! The girls had a blast. What a privilege and an incredible gift to our family this year. Also, it was the best summer program I have ever seen! The girls are bummed that it ended. I think we have some new families interested in attending church with us in the fall, thanks to you! Heather Vega*  
”





# STUDENTS

Students on Sunday Morning: 40  
Midweek Student Attendance: 65

JASON HEPPNER



Student Ministries desires to create safe and healthy spaces for students to connect with Christ, trusted-loving Christ-centered adults, and friends. We want to create opportunities for our students and families to have shared experiences where they get to serve, lead, and contribute in our community and world. Our middle school students retreated away at Winter Weekend to learn how we can live out Romans 12:9-13 in our homes, school, sports teams, etc. Additionally, our high school students and families partnered with Bethel Ministries in Rivas, Nicaragua to help lead vacation Bible school, to teach English, to build relationships with those pastoring and shepherding young people and families to follow in the way of Christ, to help build a facility that will train, equip, and educate kids and families to gain skills to provide for their families and impact their communities. It is truly an honor and privilege that we get to walk and follow in the way of Jesus alongside students and families!



“  
*Students have grown in their faith by being open about who and where they are in their life and faith journeys. They better understand who God is, are willing to ask difficult questions, and be in community. Student Ministries emphasized people's stories and testimonies, helping students grow in their faith. Will S.*  
”





# COMMUNITY LIFE

Number of Adults Involved in Group Life: 320

NATE SEVERSON

Small groups played a crucial role in fostering spiritual growth and community, with over 300 participants gathering in homes and at the church for Bible studies, discussions, and service projects. The goal of each small group is to be intentional in growing deeper in our love for Jesus (Up), growing closer in our relationships with each other (In) and growing outward in our love for those around us (Out). Hillcrest groups meet during the fall, winter, and spring.

Community Life Ministries also organized various events throughout the year, creating opportunities for men, women, and married couples to deepen their faith and relationships. From indoor putt-putt tournaments to women's gatherings at Meadowbrook Park and couples' nights out, these

events helped strengthen bonds within the church. Hillcrest continues its commitment to fostering true community with each other and an authentic, growing relationship to Jesus.

“  
*I am so fortunate to be in my small group, who have become a chosen family. Each and every one of them has a unique gift that I greatly admire. We have grown and learned together. I look forward to our meetings, being part of a community. I love them all so much and the journey we have set on together. Michelle Homan*  
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“

*Being part of the Good Neighbor Team has opened my eyes to people “outside my bubble.” I am touched by the courage and persistence of these new friends. This is certainly what Jesus would do and I want to love others the way he loves and cares for me every single day. Joanne Ersing*

”

This spring, Hillcresters joined local partner Mission Adelante’s new initiative to help resettle refugees through the formation of Good Neighbor Teams. These teams work together with Mission Adelante to provide practical and relational support to families new to the U.S. Before families arrive GNT members work behind the scenes to collect items to furnish, set up and clean apartments. Once families arrive, team members build relationships with families by assisting with appointments, grocery trips, and simply being a friend.

During Lent we invited our community to participate in the Welcome Home Resource Drive to support newly arrived refugees. Our congregation, preschool families, and a local Girl Scout troop, collected items to furnish apartments, and assemble hygiene and cleaning product kits. The Adelante Thrift team helped to sort donations and organize items for refugees and community members



to shop for other essential items. Because of your generosity, two families from Afghanistan, and one from Colombia have comfortable beds to sleep in, pots and pans to cook with and many other household items. It has been a joy to serve together this year to “Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God” (Romans 15:7).





Hillcrest Preschool is a nurturing haven where 53 young hearts discover the joy of learning and the love of Jesus. With a dedicated team of 12, we cultivate a vibrant community that extends beyond the classroom. From lively block parties to enlightening parenting workshops, we foster growth in every aspect of a child's life. Our connecting events, such as trunk-or-treat and a Christmas concert, create cherished memories while instilling Christian values. At Hillcrest, we believe in planting seeds of faith alongside curiosity, empowering children to blossom.





# MISSIONS

Individuals Served in Nicaragua: 64  
Individuals Served in Alaska: 16  
HCC Supported Ministry Partners: 35

JACKIE SHAVER

Our missions focus at Hillcrest has helped many pursue new life by partnering with missionaries nationally and internationally. These partners are on the front lines spreading the love and good news of Jesus Christ while meeting both the spiritual and practical needs of people groups to which they minister. Hillcrest provides financial support to over 35 ministry partners. Additionally, a missions prayer team covers all our partners in prayer each week, a missions care team focuses on support and care, a local outreach team engages with area partners, and a short-term missions team provides opportunities to experience God's amazing work firsthand. All this work has helped countless people all over the world pursue new life in Jesus.

## *Domestic and Global Mission Trips*

This past year, our commitment to domestic and global missions continued to shine brightly. We sent two teams to Nicaragua (31 individuals in July of 2023 and 33 individuals in March of 2024) to serve with our mission partner Merge Ministries. On June 16 Hillcresters journeyed to Alaska to serve with CYAK (Covenant Youth of Alaska), while five others traveled to France last month to support our Young Life partnership with Andrew Sweeney. Each inter-generational mission trip exemplified our church's heart to serve alongside our mission partners and point people to Jesus.



“Hillcrest has not only been our most generous supporter, but also our most dependable and faithful one. You have been solid, trustworthy partners in ministry, enabling us in return to be dependable and faithful servants, serving those who serve.  
*Hellen Guldner, Abigail Ministries (Missionary Counseling and Support)*”





This ministry has truly been a step closer to the Father. As worshippers, we have learned to trust each other more as we show up each Sunday on time, prepared and excited to lead our church into God's holy presence through music. This team has grown in its creative and technical skills. We have pursued Christ deeper as individuals in our personal time. The worship team has helped Hillcrest attendees pursue new life by leading with examples. We very clearly and distinctly resemble a part of His body that is fully motivated to lay down our life for their Savior. The humility and boldness to step into God's throne room are obvious among each worship team member, through each opportunity they are given to lead on a Sunday morning. Our church is consistently served with intention and care by the individuals who make up the worship team at Hillcrest.

We have to meet people where they are to collectively move as one and gain strength together as God builds up his ministry through music.





Since a group of volunteers was started to care for the landscaping around Hillcrest, there was no longer a need for a large clean-up day in the fall or spring.

This group is now called “The Green Team.” It is headed up by Brian Basel and Doug and Paula Anderson. There are 16 members on the team who meet on agreed-upon Saturday mornings as well as other times to care for the green spaces.

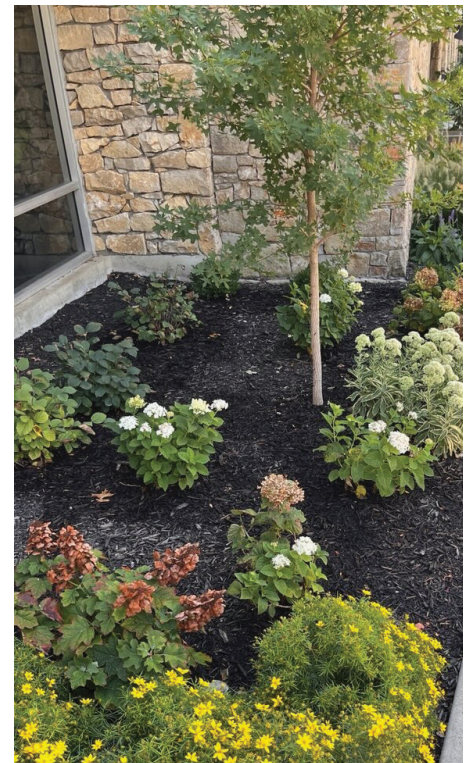
This spring, they relandscaped the front entrance of Hillcrest, according to a plan developed by Karen Eichenberger. All trees on campus were trimmed, working with an arborist.

There was a request from the staff to create another area in the church for fellowship, like the library. As a result, room 203 was repurposed from a classroom to a fellowship area. Many thanks to Lisa Kurtz and Joe Maggio for helping transform this space. This room is to be used by students and various other groups throughout the week.

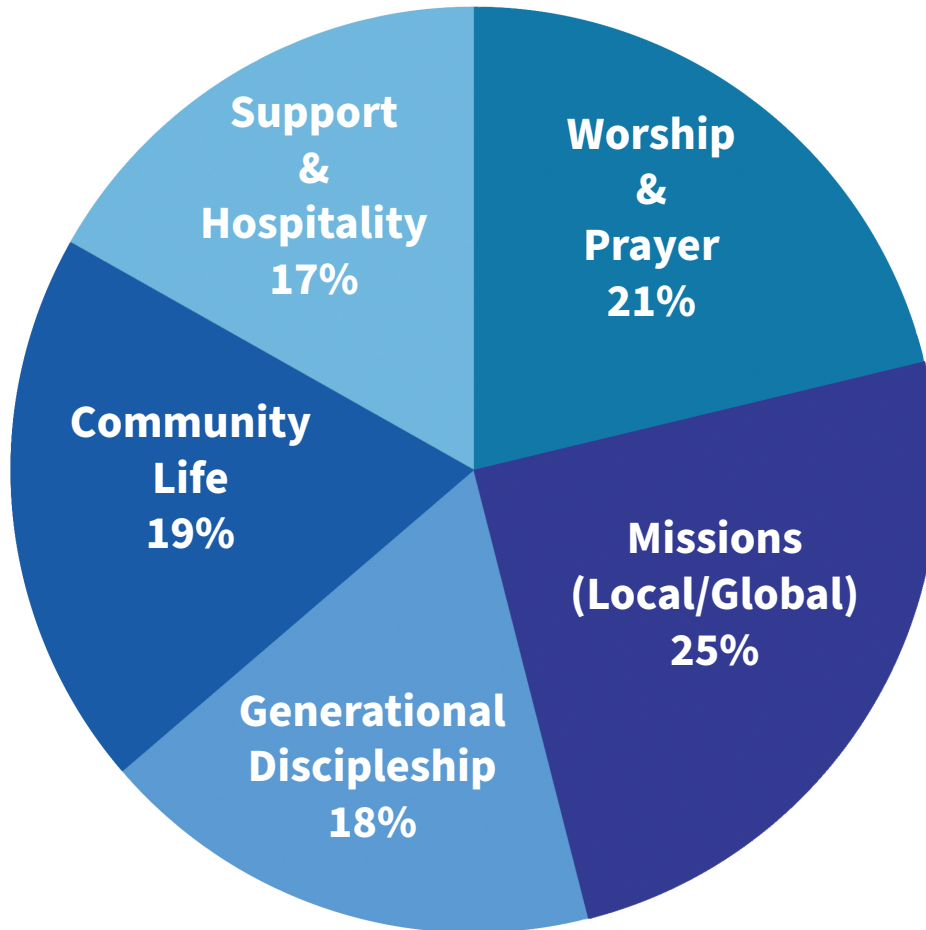
Hillcrest has some people who are available to paint and do various handyman jobs needed around the church. Please let the Property Team know if you would like to add your abilities or interests to the team.



- Property Improvements**
- Parking lot repairs - seal coat and striping.
  - Commercial kitchen freezer.
  - Replaced hail damaged roofs for church building and Student Center.
  - Water leak repairs.
  - Front door landscaping.



**From July 2023 to June 2024 Hillcrest Invested in These Core Ministry Areas**



**Total Given in 2023-2024 - \$1,466,000  
by 223 individuals and families**

**Missions (Local/Global)**  
Missions Giving, Prayer/Outreach, and Staff

**Community Life**  
Groups, Events, Staff, and Building/Grounds

**Generational Discipleship**  
Children, Students, Staff, and Internships

**Support & Hospitality**  
Operating Expense, Custodial, and Staff

**Worship & Prayer**  
Sunday Services, Media, IT, and Staff



**Statement of Financial Position 2023-2024**

	<u>6/30/23</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
General Fund	\$ 83,966
Capital Reserve	87,144
Missions	86,896
Benevolence	45,829
Savings	180,556
Birch House Proceeds	384,655
<b>Cash &amp; Cash Equivalents</b>	<u>869,046</u>
<b>Investments</b>	<b>254,332</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>4,373,847</b>
<b>Other Assets</b>	-
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 5,497,225</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	
Current Liabilities	\$ -
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	-
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	
Fund Balance	4,954,058
Ministry Fund Balance - Restricted	263,385
Ministry Fund Balance - Unrestricted	243,615
Capital Expenditure Reserve	87,144
Net Deficit	(50,977)
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>5,497,225</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 5,497,225</b>



## Statement of Activities 2023-2024

	<b>Actual</b> <b><u>6/30/23</u></b>	<i>Budget</i> <i><u>2023-2024</u></i>
<b>Income</b>		
Giving	\$1,465,841	\$ 1,650,000
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,465,841</b>	<b>1,650,000</b>
<b>Ministry &amp; Operating Expenses</b>		
Personnel Expense	879,568	884,748
Properties	164,208	164,000
Operating Expense	117,725	108,000
Ministry Programs	136,559	114,130
IT & Media	44,683	49,122
Missions	334,191	330,000
Capital Expense & Operating Reserve	-	-
<b>Total Ministry &amp; Operating Expense</b>	<b>1,676,934</b>	<b>1,650,000</b>
<b>Operating Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>(211,093)</b>	-
<b>Other Income / (Expense)^</b>	160,116	-
<b>Net Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ (50,977)</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

^ Non-operating budget ministry items that fluctuate annually (i.e. Missions, Preschool, Benevolence, etc.)





## Hillcrest Covenant Church - Budget Comparison

	<b>Budget 2023-2024</b>	<b>Budget 2022-2023</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Giving	\$ 1,650,000	\$ 1,600,000
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,650,000</b>	<b>1,600,000</b>
<b>Ministry &amp; Operating Expenses</b>		
Personnel Expense	884,748	864,000
Properties	164,000	160,000
Operating Expense	108,000	96,000
Ministry Programs	114,130	112,000
IT & Media	49,122	48,000
Missions	330,000	320,000
<b>Total Ministry &amp; Operating Expense</b>	<b>\$ 1,650,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,600,000</b>





## Hillcrest Governance Board

Tom Shaver, Chair  
Nate Powell, Lead Pastor  
Jimmy Tompkins, Treasurer  
Laura McConwell, Secretary  
Karen Eichenberger  
Scarlet Johnson  
Doug Liljegren  
Tracy Fogel  
Brian Basel

## Births

Calista Cleo May Lawson: October 22, 2023  
Asher Jonathan Ersing: November 21, 2023

## Deaths

Rachel Westfall: September 1, 2023  
Wilma Benson: September 25, 2023  
Lucy Tippin: October 12, 2023  
Dori Born: November 14, 2023  
Jack Sladkey: January 6, 2024  
Nancy Chumley: March 23, 2024  
Barbara Martin: May 27, 2024  
Jack Routh: June 8, 2024  
Nancy Petersen: June 30, 2024

## Baptisms/Decisions for Jesus - 10

*Easter 2024*  
Maisy Rawson  
Mike Bettis  
Dan Smith  
Lisa Kurtz  
Gregg Jackson  
Archer McCoy  
Jackie Shaver  
*June 2, 2024*  
Harry Linder  
Chris Largent  
Grace O'Donnell

## New Members - 15

*November 26, 2023*  
Dave Fick  
Tory Tabory  
Reed and Elizabeth Knutson  
*June 9, 2024*  
Elisabeth D'Agostino  
Ashley Grace and Camerin White  
Tad and Shelly Geiman  
Adrian and Tori Berkley  
Aaron and Jamie Johnson  
Jim and Kathy DeMunck





**Annual Celebration | September 8, 2024**  
“Pursuing new life together in Jesus”

**Call to Worship / Opening Songs**

**Stories of Welcome**

Don Philgreen  
Tre' Mutava, Walker Jackson, Eli Gossenaure  
Tad and Shelly Geiman  
Mika Tunberg  
Lindsey Garcia  
Joanne Ersing / Michael Gossenaure

**Message | One & Only, 1 New Birth (Yearlong Study of John)**  
Nate Powell

**Call to Action**

Tom Shaver (Board Chair)  
Sending



# 2023-2024 STAFF

HILLCREST



Nate Powell  
Lead Pastor



Nate Severson  
Community Life Pastor



Jason Heppner  
Student Ministries Pastor



Clarissa Haggard  
Student/Special Events  
Coordinator



Tre' Mutava  
Worship Director



Kimberly Gingrich  
Children's Pastor



Jessica Fick  
Outreach Pastor



Barry St. John  
Facilities & IT Manager



Julie Cook  
Communications Director



Natalie Moultrie  
Support Group Coordinator



Gretchen Gordon  
Weekday Preschool Director



Allie Vaughan  
Sunday Preschool Director



Meg Luchies  
Business Office Manager



Harriet Gabel  
Children's Ministry Coordinator



Jill Jones  
Missions/Operations Assistant