



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

Hillcrest Covenant Church



# LEAD PASTOR: NATE POWELL

## Looking Back to Move Forward | 2024-2025 Annual Report

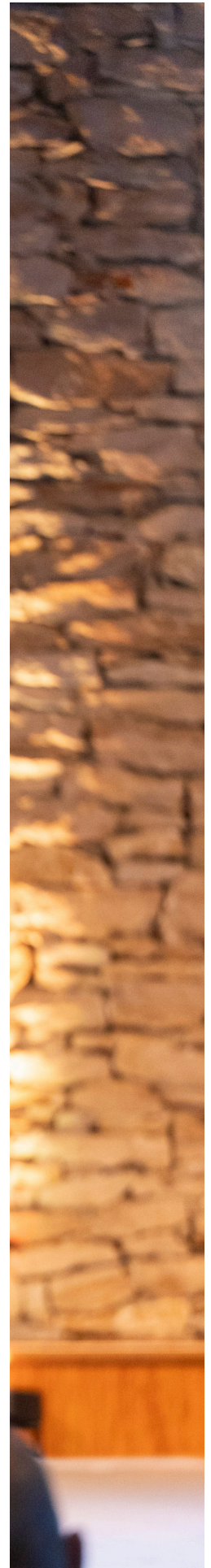
Have you ever sent out one of those family Christmas letters? Filled with pictures and highlights from the year, they help us stay connected to our friends and family from across the miles. This Annual Report is a chance to stay connected and to celebrate all that God is doing as we continue to PURSUE NEW LIFE TOGETHER IN JESUS. How have you grown this past year as you have followed Jesus, welcomed everyone, and loved all?

Our 2024-2025 ministry year focused on our desire to Love All by walking through the story of Jesus as recorded by John, the “disciple of love”. Reading through the gospel of John helped us see how Jesus met each person in unique ways and loved them. It revealed that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life and the eternal Son of God. John spends almost half his Gospel on Jesus’ final week, showing us just how important His last words and what He did on the cross are for our lives today. As John wrote in his first letter, “We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters.” (1 John 3:16, NLT)

Over the past year, Hillcrest created loving Small Group communities with over 300 adults. Sunday mornings invited us to worship Jesus with our whole hearts. A new 56 ministry for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders was launched so that they would find connection and know they are loved. Our Good Neighbor Team welcomed immigrant families into the KC area because they are loved by God. Briarwood teachers and staff experienced our loving attention. The Midwest Conference Annual Meeting was hosted at Hillcrest in April and so many helped to create a loving environment. That meeting was co-hosted by Pan y Vino, the Hispanic Covenant church that worships in the building on Sunday afternoons. In June, Pan y Vino and Hillcrest Kids Ministry co-led KidJam 2025 (summer evening kid’s camp), a first for our two congregations.

I am thankful for the Governance Board and the staff team here at Hillcrest. Over the next several pages you will read about how they have been prayerfully and carefully planning and leading people, programs, and praise so that the light of the gospel can be seen in our neighborhood. I am also thankful to you, the people of Hillcrest, and how you have invested your gifts and finances here so that new life can be found.

Join me in praying for the year ahead. Let’s ask God to do more through us than we thought He could. Let’s ask our Father to gather all His children in our midst so that more and more people can experience new life. He is ready to move if we are ready to be changed.





## CHAIRMAN: TOM SHAVER

Hillcrest family,

It's been an honor to serve as your chair these past two years. As my term ends in December, and Doug Liljegren (our current Vice Chair) takes over in January, I thought I'd share some reflections from my time on the Board.

My enthusiasm for joining the governing board was grounded in my belief that the local church is God's plan for continuing Christ's redemptive work in His creation until He comes again. It's an amazing, shocking plan: arming flawed believers with the Spirit and commanding us to rally together to reflect His love and glory to the world. We are literally called to change our world, a sobering thought when cultural affinity to the Church is at an historical low. In the face of these challenges and tighter budgets, it's exciting to share that our leaders – staff and Governing Board – genuinely believe in the transformational power of Pursuing New Life Together in Jesus.

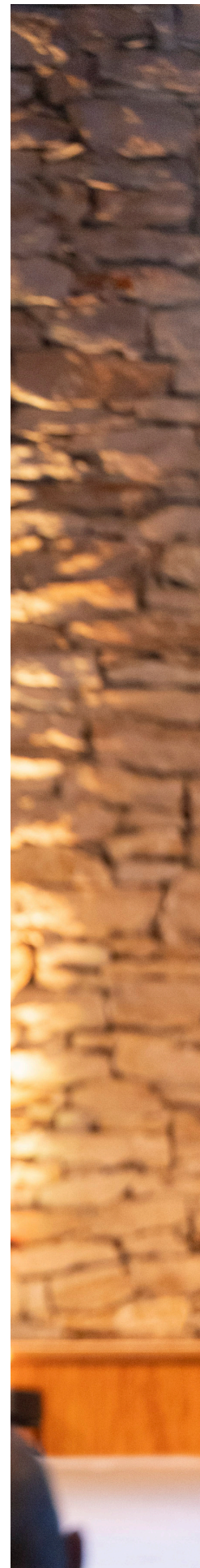
We have continued our faithful giving to Missions partners here and around the world. We are beginning to invest our Birch House proceeds in Do Good Together Grants and in mobilizing our church family to invest our passions and God-given talents in local ministry work. Our longstanding strengths of empowering Sunday morning worship and small groups continue to strengthen our faith in an amazing loving God and the Spirit's capacity to equip us to bless others.

Let's stay anchored in the message of love that dominated our study of the book of John this past school year. John is a favorite of mine, and Chapter 1 reminds us that Christ – the co-creator of the universe – entered His creation to bring light to everyone (John 1:4-5): "The Word gave life to everything created, and His life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and darkness can never extinguish it." Our belief and prayer is that Hillcrest will increasingly be a powerful reflection of that light.

Many thanks to our staff and Board. I especially want to thank Nate Powell for his humble and loving leadership, Doug Liljegren for picking up the pieces for a Chair (me) who is really bad at managing the details, Jimmy Tompkins for leading finance, and Roger Larson for years of stewarding our property and (recently) launching a new team to fill his huge shoes.

May we be blessed by blessing others,

Tom Shaver





# HILLCREST KIDS: KIMBERLY GINGRICH

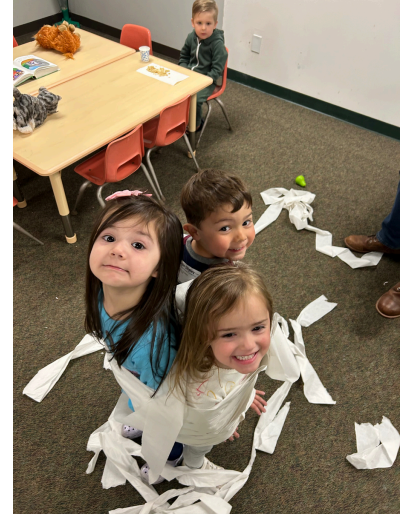
This year, Hillcrest Kids continued to be a place where kids and families could grow in faith and pursue new life in Jesus. With more than 50 serve team members, kids from birth through fourth grade had space each week to experience God's love, hear His Word, and build meaningful connections.

We started the year in August with our first Back to School Blessing Sunday and a family picnic at Meadowbrook Park. Soon after, third graders received their own Bibles during our Bible Blessing Sunday, and families enjoyed a fall day together at Ya-Ya's Alpaca Farm. In December, Nativity Festivity brought our whole church together, kids, students, and adults, for a multigenerational celebration to begin the Advent season with Scripture, carols, and s'mores around the fire.

In the spring, parents and kids joined the New Beginnings Class to talk about salvation and baptism. Families also experienced Journey to the Cross, a hands-on prayer experience during Lent that helped kids and parents reflect together on Jesus' sacrifice. The Easter Egg Scramble connected us with families from our community and gave us the chance to invite them to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus at Hillcrest on Easter Sunday.

Summer brought new momentum. KidJam had 81 kids enrolled and more than 75 leaders from both Hillcrest and Pan y Vino serving side by side. This partnership was a powerful picture of two congregations coming together to help kids learn what it means to follow Jesus and share His love. In July we launched Camp Compass, a new Wednesday day camp for first through fourth graders, where kids engaged in games, crafts, and teaching that kept the summer focus on faith and community.

From week to week, and through each special event, kids and families were reminded that Hillcrest is a place where they belong, where they can put their trust in Jesus, and where they can grow into the people God created them to be.



**"I am in the "thick" of motherhood, and I love serving where my kids are and learning with and from them." —Michelle Homan**

**"I serve because I want to be involved in the spiritual lives of my own kids and the kids of other people at Hillcrest, to share hope and to remind them they are loved."—Brooke Heppner**



# STUDENTS: JASON HEPPNER

This past year in Student Ministries at Hillcrest Covenant Church has been an incredible journey of growth, transformation, and community. We've witnessed students take meaningful steps in their faith, deepening their relationship with Jesus and learning to walk in the way of Jesus. Whether through the incredible faith-filled conversations with our 5th & 6th graders at 56 Ministries on Sunday mornings, or the continued weekly Student Ministries small groups with our amazing leaders, or partnering with Adelante Thrift, or special events with other local Covenant Churches, it has been inspiring to see students not only asking big questions but also becoming active practitioners of their faith—praying, serving, and loving others with intentionality and joy. We've been encouraged to hear and see students take steps forward in their sense of call and purpose and be launched into the next phase of their life journeys.

It's an honor and privilege to walk alongside students and families through one of the most formative phases of their lives.

Highlights of the year include unforgettable experiences at Winter Blitz with Harvest Ridge Covenant Church and seeing the KC Mavericks win, attending High School Fall Retreat at Covenant Cedars with over 300

students and leaders, having so much fun at our Middle School 24-HR Rush with over 80 students and leaders with other Midwest Conference Covenant Churches, and our Senior Getaway Weekend to Table Rock Lake, where shared experiences with worship, deep discussions, and community paved the way for deep spiritual formation. These moments created space for students to connect with God and one another in powerful ways.

We've seen students serve both within our church and out in the community, living out the gospel through acts of compassion and leadership. As a Student Ministry, we've been incredibly encouraged by the growing sense of belonging and discipleship among our students, and we're excited to see how God continues to move in and through their lives in the year ahead.

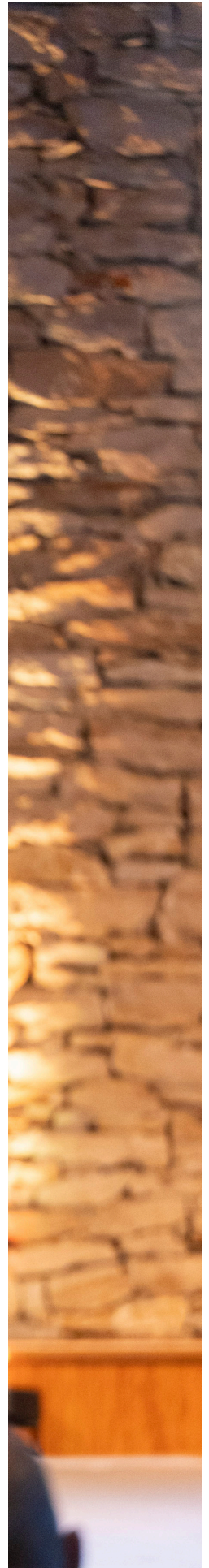




## COMMUNITY LIFE: NATE SEVERSON

This past year, we saw our vision come to life in countless ways. God showed up through the 319 people who gathered in groups to grow deeper in their faith, strengthen relationships, and serve others. We saw His hand in the smiles of our greeters and the hospitality of our coffee team, who created a place of belonging every Sunday. He moved through men's and women's events that helped Hillcresters and their friends connect in meaningful ways, and through our care teams who stood on the front lines to bring prayer, comfort, and support to those in need.

We also celebrated how God worked through our mission teams— serving in Alaska, Nicaragua, Spain, and right here in our local community. Each step of obedience and each act of service was another expression of our new life in Jesus, lived out together. As we look back, we are filled with gratitude for God's faithfulness and for the ways He has used Hillcrest to share His love. And as we look forward, we do so with hope and expectation, trusting that He will continue to lead us as we pursue new life together in Jesus.





# OUTREACH COORDINATION: NATALIE MOULTRIE

One of the ways the Hillcrest family “loves all” is demonstrated through how we reach out to and connect with our community. Reaching out can take the form of meeting needs, caring for others, having a thoughtful conversation, or supporting organizations and ministry partners. Our Outreach goal is to expand the reach of connection with our current mission partners; Mission Adelante, Briarwood Elementary and Freedom Fire as well as explore new opportunities for service so everyone at Hillcrest can find a way to reach out regardless of their time commitment. A new tool that is helping more people reach out is the “Do Good Together Grant.” Grants are awarded to people leading initiatives that foster deeper connections between Hillcrest and the community.

Meeting people where they are - whether it is engaging with parents at Village Fest or sorting clothes at Adelante Thrift - is one of our most effective ways to reach out.

The ways the Hillcrest family puts love into action to demonstrate Jesus’s love and care for the community takes teamwork and collaboration. Natalie Moultrie is spearheading the efforts in her new role as Outreach Mobilization Director. Natalie’s heart to connect and serve others through Outreach is rooted in Jesus’s command to love our neighbor as ourselves. Natalie believes how we reach out to others is an outpouring of the overflow of Jesus’s love and grace in our own lives.

*“Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.” I John 3:18*

**Do Good Together Grants:**



**“Doing outreach service has been a personal and spiritual growth experience for me. I am an introverted person whom God has empowered to touch the lives of people I did not know. I asked Him to show me what He wants me to do during this new season of life, and He continues to bring opportunities right to me! Knowing God is using me to share His love with others outside of my comfort zone, deepens my reliance on Him to do what He has called each of us to do: share His love and grace for all people He has created and forgiven. I feel like I am making a difference in people’s lives out of the abundance of Who He is.”**

**—Joanne Ersing**



# MISSIONS: NATE SEVERSON

Missions is the core of Hillcrest Covenant Church, partnering with over 30 mission partners. Missions at Hillcrest is focused in 4 main pillars: Youth Outreach/Campus Ministry, Global Missions (especially the Persecuted Church), Immigrant Care, and finally Relational Evangelism. Our missions focus has helped many pursue new life as these partners are on the front line spreading the love and good news of Jesus Christ while meeting both spiritual and practical needs. This year Hillcrest has focused our efforts on our ministry partners that are in the darkest most dangerous parts of the world, where those in countries like Mali, Iraq, Turkey and China that believe in Jesus are persecuted. Hillcrest provides financial support to over 30 ministry partners.

Additionally, each week a missions prayer team covers our partners in prayer, 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.



We celebrated God's work through mission teams serving in Alaska, Nicaragua, Nepal, Spain, France, and right here in our local community. Each step of obedience and every act of service— shared in partnership with brothers and sisters from around the world— became a powerful witness to our vision of pursuing new life together in Jesus.

**“I thank God with all my heart for you. Thank you for your prayers, your ongoing support, and your steadfast love. You have been, and continue to be, a vital part of our ministry over the past years. Thank you for choosing to be an essential part of the Youth for Christ ministry in Iraq. Your generosity and increased monthly financial support will make a big difference. It will help us bring God's Word to young people and strengthen the services we offer every day. We are witnessing God's hand at work in the lives of young people. He is touching their hearts, changing their paths, and opening doors of hope and love. We truly believe that God is still moving in this generation. He is using this ministry to shine His light and bring His Word to youth who are spiritually thirsty. We deeply need your spiritual support so we can stay strong in the challenges, continue the mission, and lead young people to know the living Christ.” —Jameel Bagdahi, YFCI Iraq**





# HILLCREST PRESCHOOL: GRETCHEN GORDON

At the heart of Prairie Village, Kansas, lies a vibrant hub of learning, growth, and community – Hillcrest Preschool. Far more than just a place for early childhood education, Hillcrest Preschool serves as a dynamic, weekday extension of Hillcrest Covenant Church's profound mission: to "follow, welcome, and love." For 59 families in our community, this mission isn't just a sentiment: it's a lived experience. Operating from September through May, Monday to Friday, from 8 AM to 3 PM, Hillcrest Preschool provides a nurturing and stimulating environment for young children. But its impact stretches well beyond the classroom walls. Recognizing that healthy children thrive in healthy families, the preschool actively offers valuable parenting resources, empowering caregivers with tools and support for their incredible journey.

What truly sets Hillcrest Preschool apart is its seamless and meaningful partnership with Hillcrest Covenant Church. This collaboration isn't just about sharing a building; it's about building a stronger community together. Through this unique bond, preschool families are invited into a wider network of support and fellowship. Throughout the year, this partnership blossoms into a calendar of cherished "connecting events" designed to bring everyone together. Imagine the joyous chaos of a community Block Party, the heartwarming melodies of a Christmas Program, or the delightful scramble of an Egg Scramble – these are just a few examples of how Hillcrest Preschool families are integrated into the rich tapestry of church life. Beyond these dedicated events, every family enrolled at the preschool is warmly invited to participate in *all* programming offered by Hillcrest Covenant Church, fostering a continuous connection and a deeper sense of belonging.



In a world that can often feel disconnected, Hillcrest Preschool stands as a beacon of genuine community. It's a place where children are encouraged to explore and learn, where parents find understanding and guidance, and where the enduring vision of "follow, welcome, and love" comes alive every single weekday. For 59 families, Hillcrest Preschool isn't just a stop on the educational journey; it's a true home away from home, deeply rooted in faith and overflowing with care.



**"Your Hillcrest Preschool has gained the trust of our family over and over again. The staff are passionate, caring, warm, welcoming, encouraging, and loving. Communication has always been very clear and timely. The facility itself is very clean and well maintained. My daughter has been waiting all summer to go back for another year. Hillcrest is the only preschool I would recommend to friends and family."**  
—Hillcrest Preschool Parent



## WORSHIP: TRE' MUTAVA

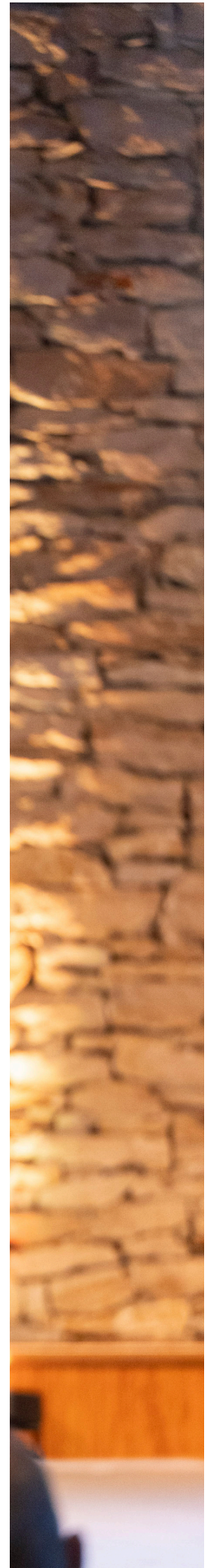
Over the past year, the worship ministry has grown even more into a hub in which its members can pursue new life together in Jesus with each other. The ministry has opened up more opportunities for us to show up for each other in love and through musical interactions and group gatherings like team devotionals. In these moments, we are able to learn more about each other and what is true about God's heart towards us. With these opportunities comes bonding and growth as a team and as individual leaders. Each person in the ministry is willing to serve in a way that doesn't directly benefit them. The group has exemplified and increased in excellence and humility.



God is creating positive moments and memories through the worship ministry at Hillcrest, and the people involved are sensitive to His plans and His agenda. The musicians are finding more ways to mesh and build on their gifts. Those interested in leadership are stepping out in faith to try new things and become an eager and expectant vessel of the Lord. The biggest physical win of the ministry this year is the establishment of the Praise Team, a small vocal ensemble comprised of Hillcrest volunteers who are new to the worship ministry, starting at age 12. This ministry has inspired others within the congregation to want to join God's holy kingdom through music and worship.

**“We are trusting in the Lord and what He has in store for us.”**

**—Mika Tunberg**





## PROPERTY: LISA KURTZ

Our Hillcrest campus is more than buildings and the grounds that surround them; it is a place that allows our Hillcrest family to meet weekly to encourage one another and to worship together following Christ; gives us space to fellowship with one another at bi-monthly potlucks and seasonal indoor and outdoor events; allowed us to open our doors to serve our Midwest Conference; and offers us opportunity to welcome our neighbors with invitations to our Block Party and space for community use.

This past year was one of using our campus to serve others. We hosted the 2025 Annual Ministry Celebration of the Midwest Conference in April, with over 200 attending over three days from our 5-state region. Using our Property Team mindset “Company is Coming”, we spent five months and many man-hours of staff and volunteer hours refreshing and repairing our building and grounds to prepare our spaces for our “company”. Lunch and dinners were prepared and served in our kitchen and Fellowship Hall, classrooms and the Library were used for workshops and hospitality; and the Sanctuary used for business meetings and worship.

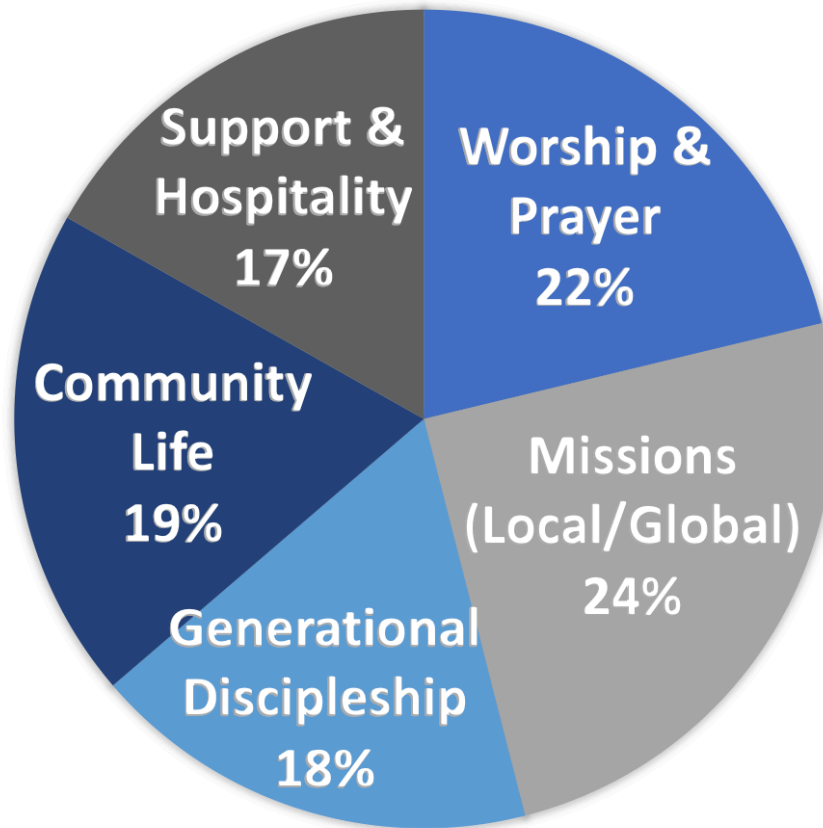
During the MWC Ministry Celebration, attendee and former Hillcrest Staff member Pastor Lee Jost echoed comments that are frequently heard when we host others: “It is just like coming home when I walk in these doors.” Hillcrest has a long reputation for hospitality and keeping “this big house” welcoming and functional, within budget, remains the focus of the Property Team.

Being able to offer the use of our beautiful building is one of the ways to serve our community. Hillcrest opened our doors for Briarwood teachers for tutoring during the summer and school year, Ecclesia Equipping Center for discipleship groups, overnight prayer and couples groups, blood drives, various prayer groups, Scouts, a fostering group, and Covenant church groups passing through Kansas City in need of overnight lodging and landing at the Student Center – and several others! The Hillcrest Property Team came under new leadership this spring as Roger Larson stepped down after 13+ years as Team Lead.



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

**FROM JULY 2024 TO JUNE 2025 HILLCREST  
INVESTED IN THESE CORE MINISTRY AREAS**



**TOTAL GIVEN IN '24-'25 | \$1,534,000  
BY 210 INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES**

**MISSIONS (LOCAL & GLOBAL):** Mission Giving (20%) Prayer/Outreach, Staff

**WORSHIP & PRAYER:** Sunday Services, Media, IT, Staff

**COMMUNITY LIFE:** Groups, Events, Staff, Building/Grounds

**GENERATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP:** Children, Students, Staff, Internships

**SUPPORT & HOSPITALITY:** Operating Expense, Custodial, Staff



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

<b>Hillcrest Covenant Church</b>		
<b>Statement of Financial Position</b>		
		<b><u>6/30/25</u></b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
General Fund	\$	123,152
Capital Reserve		46,565
Missions		61,619
Benevolence		27,468
Savings		130,664
Birch House Proceeds		364,604
<b>Cash &amp; Cash Equivalents</b>		<b>754,072</b>
<b>Investments</b>		<b>257,068</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		<b>4,373,847</b>
<b>Other Assets</b>		<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>5,384,986</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>-</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Fund Balance</b>		<b>4,848,733</b>
<b>Ministry Fund Balance - Restricted</b>		<b>266,159</b>
<b>Ministry Fund Balance - Unrestricted</b>		<b>194,062</b>
<b>Capital Expenditure Reserve</b>		<b>45,030</b>
<b>Net Revenue</b>		<b>31,002</b>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>		<b>5,384,986</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>5,384,986</b>

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## 2025-2026 Budget Comparisons by Main Categories

	2024-2205 Budget	2024-2025 Actual	2025-2026 Budget
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$1,575,000</b>	<b>\$1,534,147</b>	<b>\$1,500,000</b>
General Giving	\$1,260,000	\$1,280,995	\$1,200,000
Missions / Outreach	\$315,000	\$253,151	\$300,000
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>Personnel</b>	<b>\$868,244</b>	<b>\$818,266</b>	<b>\$790,000</b>
<b>Missions</b>	<b>\$325,125</b>	<b>\$315,544</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>
General			
<b>Building and Properties</b>	<b>\$148,000</b>	<b>\$170,621</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$99,915</b>	<b>\$97,952</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Ministry Programs</b>			
Community Life	\$26,580	\$23,895	\$25,000
Children's Ministry	\$20,026	\$17,715	\$20,000
Student Ministry	\$22,800	\$18,264	\$20,000
Special Events	\$8,000	\$7,619	\$8,000
Prayer and Outreach	\$4,500	\$2,887	\$3,000
Worship & Music	\$28,500	\$28,361	\$24,000
<b>IT and Media</b>			
Information Tech	\$33,640	\$33,514	\$10,000
Media	\$6,500	\$3,910	\$30,000
<b>Other (Capital Reserves)</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>



# RECORDS

## NEW MEMBERS

Ben and Jennifer Ersing  
Amber Clark  
Ben and Susan Kogei  
Selvan Raman and Christina Lau

## INFANT BAPTISMS

Asher Jonathon Ersing, October 13, 2024

## BAPTISMS

Steve Reynolds  
Lariah and Ezekiel Jerashen  
Evelyn and Avery Almaraz  
Thomas Day  
Kent and Ava Kerston

## DEATHS

Sharon Henderson, May 7, 2025  
Norma Castellaneta, May 8, 2025  
Claudia Roth, June 30, 2025

## GOVERNANCE BOARD

Tom Shaver, Chair  
Doug Liljegren, Vice Chair  
Nate Powell, Lead Pastor  
Laura McConwell  
Brian Basel, Secretary  
Scarlet Johnson  
Kirk Wolters, Treasurer  
Tracy Fogel



# HIGHLIGHTS

**Annual Celebration Worship Service | September 7, 2025**  
“Celebrating New Life Together”

<b>Call to Worship</b> / Songs of Worship	Tre' Mutava
<b>Welcome</b> / Stories to Celebrate KidJam 2025 56 Ministry Do Good Together Grants	Kim Gingrich Brandon Haggard Rebecca Batson Amber Clark
<b>Annual Celebration Message</b> Nicaragua Team	Nate Powell Ron Wilson Nate Severson
<b>Believer Baptisms</b> <b>Sending</b>	Jason Heppner Brian Basel





# STAFF 2024-2025



NATE POWELL  
Lead Pastor



NATE SEVERSON  
Community Life Pastor



KIMBERLY GINGRICH  
Children's Ministries Pastor



NATALIE MOULTRIE  
Outreach Mobilization Director



MEG LUCHIES  
Business Office Manager



JASON HEPPNER  
Student Ministries Pastor



GRETCHEN GORDON  
Weekday Preschool Director



JULIE COOK  
Communications Director  
& Facilities Coordinator



TRE' MUTAVA  
Worship Director



BARRY ST. JOHN  
Facilities Manager  
& IT Director



GREG BLESSEN  
Facilities  
Maintenance



CLARISSA HAGGARD  
Student & Children's  
Ministries Coordinator



ELIZABETH D'AGOSTINO  
Administrative Assistant