



HILLCREST ~ NEWS ~

A Gathering Place for Faith and Action in the Community
www.hillcrestucc.org

APRIL 2016

Nature Family Time Have Fun

First of all, Happy Easter! As I write, Easter is still to come; as you read this, it has already happened. Or better, it is still happening. We celebrate the “Easter season” for 50 days, until Pentecost and we celebrate Easter all year long. Easter joy defines us.

Kerstin and I get *California Parklands* magazine. On page 14 of the current issue are pictured the 2015 Summer Youth Art Contest Winners. Included among them is what looks like a crayon drawing from one of the youngest contestants. It’s of a happy family in a beautiful natural setting of varied landscapes and trees and shrubs with a mountain range and a beautiful sunlit sky in the background. Above it all stands the title—or, explanation—or, invitation: “Nature Family Time Have Fun.” Whatever it is, I like it. And I like how the whole thing ties into who we are at Hillcrest and how we celebrate ourselves and God’s creation.

April 24 is Earth Sunday. On Earth Sunday over the past several years we have celebrated God’s creation in many wonderful ways. This year is no exception! BUT it’s different. This year we will not be doing an animal blessing on Earth Sunday—which is NOT to say that we won’t have an animal blessing at Hillcrest this year. We will. Our animal blessing will be on Sunday October 9th, which corresponds to the time that Christians have traditionally remembered St. Francis and his (and God’s) care for, and relationship with, the animals.

On Earth Sunday this year, we will have a wonderful worship service; we’ll put up our “The Earth is the Lord’s” banner; and we’ll celebrate and remember God’s and our relationship with all of creation. And then, we’ll have a potluck brunch in the Fellowship Hall. And then we (as many of us as can and want to) will go off for a hike and scavenger hunt in one of our local, regional parks. Christian Ed is sponsoring and facilitating all of this AND all of our Hillcrest family are welcome! God’s family, God’s children (!), come in all ages, shape, and size.

You know, we sing it every Christmas. But, it could just as well be sung at Easter. And it could certainly be sung on Earth Sunday: “And heaven and nature sing; and heaven and nature sing; and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.”

And so, sisters and brothers, I think that that budding young artist whose work is pictured in *California Parklands* magazine could just as well have been depicting Hillcrest. Because in so many ways, and in so many deep and core ways, that’s what we at Hillcrest are all about: “Nature Family Time Have Fun.” Come to think of it, that’s a pretty good title for, or explanation of, or invitation to what we do and who we are!

Blessings,

Rev. Fred



2 Hillcrest Congregational Church NEWS April 2016

Hillcrest's 35th Annual Jim Smith Memorial Steak Dinner

Note your calendar on **Saturday evening, June 4th**, for the **35th Annual Jim Smith Memorial Steak Dinner** at Hillcrest. The time is 5:30 p.m. for punch; dinner is served at 6:00 p.m. The cost is \$30 again this year with ages 5 – 12 still at \$10. Norm's much-loved grilled tri-tips return (or, if you prefer, huge marinated mushrooms) and each dinner will include a complimentary raffle ticket.

The traditional **menu** is grilled tri-tip steak or grilled portabella mushroom (no chicken – sorry!) plus corn on the cob, green salad, watermelon, French bread, a special dessert and coffee/tea/punch to drink along with wine glasses to rent for additional beverage options. With Norm supervising the barbeque and experienced volunteers in the kitchen, the food will be delicious as usual. (If you have attended in prior years, you know that's true.)

The **entertainment** is Hillcrest's famous **raffle** plus the **live auction** (including the coveted reserved parking space). As usual, all profits from the dinner, raffle and auction go to the special fundraising line in our annual church budget. Last year we raised almost \$4,800 and everyone had lots of fun!

Each year we have great **raffle prizes** that church members solicit from merchants or donate themselves. These prizes include gift baskets of all types, dinners (home cooked or restaurant gift certificates), store gift certificates, etc. Again this year donations can be made for two **special auction items**: the Grand Chocolate Basket (donate anything chocolate - boxed, in bars, as syrup, etc.) and the Wine Cellar Sampler (donate a bottle or two). **Live auction items**, in addition to the reserved parking space, will be chocolate, wine and weekends or more at church member's vacation homes. If you wish to contribute a prize or auction item, please drop it off at the reservation table, in the church office or call Jim Flagstead, Hillcrest's Financial Secretary at 689-8260. Please put your name, phone number and value on your donation so we can thank you and provide a receipt for a tax deduction. You do not need to be present to win raffle prizes so watch for sales of raffle tickets following worship services beginning May 22nd.

Of course **volunteers** are needed to help with set up, check-in, raffle ticket sales, food service, clean up and other miscellaneous stuff. Watch for signup sheets on Sundays beginning May 8th.

Dinner reservations are essential! You can make a reservation any Sunday after church services beginning May 8th, by calling the church office (689-8260) or e-mailing hillcrestucc@att.net . **Deadline for reservations is Sunday, May 29th. Please tell us whether you want STEAK or MUSHROOM when you make your reservation.**

Everyone is welcome. Call the church office if you will need child care. Please join us for great food and warm fellowship and lots of fun. Also please make this a successful fund raiser by donating items to the raffle and /or auction and buying additional raffle tickets if you are able to do so. All profits support church programs. Any questions about this event will be cheerfully answered by Norm Grube (939-4783) on behalf of Hillcrest's Board of Trustees.



THANK YOU

You have read in the last couple of church bulletins that the Hillcrest Food Pantry received a \$1000 grant from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America Foundation. That is good news and money gratefully received. The awarding of this grant was helped a great deal by Rev. Fred, reaching out to his contacts and securing letters of recommendation about the Outreach Ministry from two Lutheran Bishops. **But, the main reason Outreach received this grant and a few years ago \$5,000 from the Safeway Foundation was:**

BECAUSE OF YOU

You, who bring food to the church on the first Sunday of the month; **You**, who volunteer to serve those in need; **You**, who donate money to the Food Pantry through the collection plate and on line; **You** who shop and order the food that is bought; **You** who come from other churches and the community to work in the Food Pantry; **You**, who organize food drives and **You** and those before **You** who have supported this Outreach Ministry of Food, Clothing and Layettes for almost 60 years.

Without **You**, there is no us.

Thank you,
Bill Cunningham
Outreach Ministry Coordinator



Dad wants to die in the house we all grew up in. The children know it is impossible, and I've been asked to tell him. What do you suggest?

Mom is having more trouble driving at night. They want me to tell her she should stop driving. What shall I say?

Eldering Ministries Library has a new resource: *How To Say It To Seniors*, in which a respected expert in geriatric psychology helps us remove communication blocks elders must manage. You may borrow it for a week or so. Just talk to Rev. Ray or someone in the church office.



No more surveys, *Please!*

Spare me! Every time I boot up my computer, I'm asked what I thought of my last phone call with Bank of America, Apple computers, AT&T, or a half-dozen other web destinations. Excuse my impatience with questions about communication skills, whether I was well served, and whether this or that business treated me with respect.

On the chance someone's job may be on the line, I tend to be generous.

Only the Gallup Poll Panel, and Civil Liberties Union are welcome because I always learn from their questions, and how they ask. I haven't a clue as to how/why I ended up in their bucket!

On third thought (or is it the 4th?) there must be something to learn from this barrage: When was the last time I surveyed my congregation as to how they felt about my last sermon? Was their intelligence respected? How many strangled participles did they count? Did they nod off, or remain alert? Was the recent Holy Gossip good enough to cause anyone to invite a friend to church? Why not

Why have I never asked? Perhaps I'm worried about what I might learn? For sure, I know a handshake on the way out of the Sanctuary does not rise to the level of a useable evaluation. Do we want to know? Dare we ask?

Evaluation instruments get complicated and highfalutin. I've come to value simpler ones learned long ago:

What do you want more of?

What do you want less of?

Those two questions give us more than enough to ponder.

Anyone willing to answer them? Please limit your response to three pages!

Ray



Springtime greetings from Upper Campus! We hope you had a rejuvenating and meaningful Lenten season, and that Springtime is proving to be a time of renewed spirits and energy. Please join us for some Family fun this month!

We roll out Spring with Family Pizza and Movie night coming up on Friday, April 15th at 6pm in Fellowship Hall. Bring a sleeping bag, favorite blanky, pillows, etc. and get cozy with snacks, pizza and the movie "Inside Out". If you are interested in helping out with this event in any way (time, talents or donations), please contact the office for more information :)

Earth Day is coming!! Please join us for a potluck and family hike/scavenger hunt on Sunday, April 24th (Earth Sunday), following the 10:30 worship service. Please bring a dish to share and comfortable clothes and shoes, as we will caravan from Hillcrest, after the potluck, for a Family Hike on the George Miller Trail in Martinez California. **ALL are welcome to attend.** If hiking is not your forte, join us for the potluck and fellowship in Fellowship Hall at 11:30!!

We hope to see your shining faces at our family fun events!!

Blessings,
Christian Education

UPDATE FROM THE GIFTS AND MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

Did You Know?? We have a new refrigerator for our kitchen thanks to relatives and friends of Barbara Lee and Bob Jackson who have donated to Hillcrest Church Gifts and Memorials in their memory. We are hopeful that we will have a new freezer to match soon.

The Gifts and Memorials Committee at Hillcrest receives donations and provides appropriate gifts to the church in honor or in memory of our members. The committee meets about every four months and we are always looking for fitting ideas or suggestions, which can be passed along to the committee through the church office.

A NOTE FROM THE MODERATOR

There are many opportunities to volunteer to serve Hillcrest in important positions coming your way.

Janet Klein is moving and that means we need a person to step up into the Moderator line as **2nd Assistant Moderator**.

Due to personal reasons, Harold Rhee will be stepping down as **Scribe** after the May meeting of Council.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. We need people to step up and take on active roles on all of the Church boards and standing committees.

Please contact me at richardlynnbeal@gmail.com or any member of council to volunteer.

Dick Beal



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday -Friday **9 a.m.-12 noon;**
1 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

(Closed for lunch 12-1 p.m.)

The office is now closed at noon on Wednesdays.

Church Office Phone (925) 689-8260

Website: www.hillcrestuucc.org

Food Room Hours:

Mon., Wed., Fri. 9 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
(925) 686-3663

No appointment needed. I.D. required.

Clothing Room Hours:

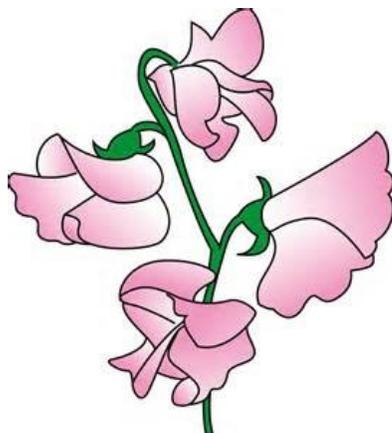
Mon., Wed. & Fri. 9:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
(no appointment needed)

Jim Flagstead's Hours:

Financial Secretary
Mon. & Thurs. 9:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.

Mending for the Layette Project

Occasionally we receive donated items that need light mending. Please call Barbara Cotton, 925-932-0366, if you can help her out.





IN THE HILLCREST SPOTLIGHT



CONCERNS

Carol Albright
Ryan Anderson
David Asdourian
Jim Barton
Web Beadle
Lynne Beller
Brooke Bettis
Mitsuka Bude
Bob Cameron
Debra Cass
Kylie Chen
Cara Clark
Richard Commins
Phyllis Conley
Rich Daugherty
John Duley
Rollin Forbes
Wendy Welles Franklin
Maggie Friend
Ann Gannon
Elizabeth Gellately
Dan Gobba
Nancy Hammill
Grant Hawkes
Linda Hernandez
Robert Hess
Bill Hippe
Brian Husler
Debbie Johnston
Laurie Keating
Jessica Kelly
John Kelly
Soonhee Kim
Charley Lamb
Shirley Malcolm
Roland Mittica
Ron Morisawa
Jerri Murphy
Terri Myers
Lindsay Noeth
Lyle Palmer
Bill Pantaleo
Rey Peck
Alice Peek
Gene Pierson
Lois Ransome

Helen Reeks
Jackie Rich
Arlene Riedel
Pat Rogers
Alix Sahlin
Kate Sheller
Lynn Silva
Dana Sparks
Patrick Swanson
Liz Thomashefsky-Adams
Marjorie Tovey
Clinton Tubbs
Martha Vivrette
Richard Wagner
Ron Watkins
John Weaver
All military personnel & families

We remember friends and members in residential and continual care:

Linda Auzenne
Frank Como
Paula Fritz
Doris Offenbach
Mary Rinehart
Bettie Ryan
Jan Smiley
Mercia Stewart

HOSPITALIZED

Peggy Barron

HOME FROM THE HOSPITAL

Victoria Lucido
Cecille Stoddard

CONGRATULATIONS!

Steven Boomer, Master Chief, is retiring from the Navy Seabees on March 11th after 30 years. Steven is the son of Gladys Boomer.

A ceremony will be held in Gulfport, Mississippi and the whole family will attend.

THANK YOU

Dear Hillcrest Friends:

Thank you all for so many good wishes on my 23rd real birthday. Although I'm now 92 real years old, I have had a lot of wonderful celebrations and thank you all so much.

A great big thank you to the children and teachers for the beautiful big card which they presented to me.

The wonderful Prayer Group gave cards and ice cream cones. Also, my neighbors celebrated with cake and ice cream, and a friend brought a picnic lunch.

My heart is full of thanks to all. It's enough to last another FOUR years.

Thank you so much to all of you dear people.

Love,
Gladys Finster

Dear all who participated in making Jim's service memorable and beautiful,

Thank you so very much! You were all ~ Kathy, Sue, Mary Ann, Barbara, Janet, Carol John, Shannon, Dick, Shelby, Sue, Tim, Luke and Rev. Fred ~ so wonderful to help our family and friends say good-bye and celebrate Jim. (I hope I didn't miss anyone!)

We were so pleased with the service. I'm so sorry I wasn't able to personally speak with each of you.

We will always remember, with great pride, Jim's celebration of life.

With heartfelt thanks and warmest regards,
Cheryl Barber and family

Hillcrest Congregational Church *NEWS*
United Church of Christ
404 Gregory Lane
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

MAILED: March 30, 2016



8 Hillcrest Congregational Church NEWS April 2016

Hillcrest Book Club

Our April book is "Secret Daughter" by Shilpi Somaya Gowda. This novel explores powerfully and poignantly the emotional terrain of motherhood, loss, identity, love through the experience of two families—one Indian—one American, and the child that binds them together.

The selection for May is "The Nightingale" by Kristin Hannah, a novel set in France in 1939 during World War II. It is a story of two sisters, one in Paris and one in the countryside, separated by years and experience, by ideals and circumstances, each embarking on her own path toward survival and freedom in German occupied France. This novel is an homage to the extraordinary courage and endurance of French women during the war.

Book Club selections are posted on the Bulletin Boards in the Office and Fellowship Hall. Our meetings are the second Sunday of the month, in Room 16, after the church service. You are welcome to drop in on our always lively discussion.

APRIL 10 "SECRET DAUGHTER"

MAY 8 "THE NIGHTINGALE"



Hillcrest Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
404 Gregory Lane Pleasant Hill, CA 94523
Phone: 925-689-8260
Website: www.hillcrestucc.org
Senior Minister: Rev. Dr. Fred Weidmann
Eldering Ministries: Rev. Dr. Ray Welles
Youth Ministries: Mya Ewing
Children's Ministries: Charlie Guitron
Nursery Coordinator: Shelby Pickett

Worship Service:

9:30 Education Hour

10:30 a.m. Worship and Church School
Childcare available beginning at 9:30 a.m..

Deadline for the next **NEWS** is **Sunday, April 10, 2016 at NOON.**

Please e-mail all articles to:
hillcrestucc@att.net or put them in the news folder in the "News" office box — include the source of the article and your phone number.