



## Leaders Present 2-Year Priorities

Building on the momentum of a very successful Vision 20/20 Campaign, the pastors and leaders of boards and committees have identified eight priorities for 2021-22, calling them the Deep and Wide Initiative.

*"We want to go deeper and wider in our walk with Jesus, deeper in knowledge and obedience to God's Word, deeper in relationships with one another and deeper in commitment to sharing the Gospel with our community and the nations,"* explains Lead Pastor Mark Hinman.



**1** The Deep and Wide Initiative will be funded by designated gifts and offerings from the Hillcrest Family. The Finance Committee also plans to pursue grant opportunities. 10% of every gift will fund priority number one: **Sending out at least 1 new missionary**, and Brian and Rachel Lusky have already been selected to receive our missionary support (see article on next page).

**2** **Transitioning Hillcrest's Family Ministry** is another major "Deep and Wide" priority. Pastor Jeff plans to retire and leave our pastoral team in January, 2022. He has worked to build teamwork across our varied family ministries which include Discovery Town and nurseries, Hillcrest Christian Preschool, AWANA, MOPS, VBS, and Outbound Youth. In order to go deeper and wider, Hillcrest is hiring Ben Soffel as Director of Student and Young Adult Ministry. Additional leaders and teams will be identified and developed over the coming months to provide strong leadership of all family ministries.

**3** **Establishing young adult ministry** is a brand-new priority.

Pastor Mark explains the exciting news, "The Lord is sending more and more young adults to our church family! It's time to go deeper and wider in reaching and discipling the next generation" As of June 1, Ben Soffel will give focus to developing a thriving ministry of outreach and growth in this age group.

**4** Also a major priority is **Establishing Older Adult Ministry**. With Ben Soffel assuming youth ministry responsibilities starting in June, Pastor Jeff will give focused, pastoral leadership to reviving and developing an enriching older adult ministry. *"We will start ministries to address the unique needs of adults ranging from empty-nesters to seniors. We want them to go deeper and wider in their relationship with the Lord and others."* A survey of needs and interests is now underway. Visit [HillcrestJamestown.com](http://HillcrestJamestown.com) to offer your input.

**5** Pastor Dan will be striving over the next two years in **doubling our number of Growth Groups and restarting 5-6 adult Sunday School classes**. As the pandemic continues

to recede, new classes will be launched. Teachers are needed and those who are gifted and interested should contact Pastor Dan.

**6** *"The last year has shown us that being online is not just something we 'have to do', it's something we 'want to do',"* explains Pastor Mark. Participation in our online services by newcomers who cannot or have not attended in-person has prompted our leaders to prioritize **establishing a Hillcrest Online Campus**, with opportunities for connection and growth far beyond those available through current streaming on Facebook and YouTube.

**7** Our leaders are also prioritizing **updates to the Sanctuary/Auditorium and other areas of our facility**. Church Chairman Bruce Kidder points out that *"We are at the limits of what our electrical system can handle. The flooring and pews in the Sanctuary are also rapidly reaching the end of their useful life."* The Trustee Board will be identifying the importance and cost of the projects and will proceed as money is provided for the Deep and Wide Initiative.

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**8** Responding to frequent requests from the church family, our pastors will also be working to develop a **Counseling and Recovery Ministry Partnership** with other area churches and ministries over the next two years. Pastor Mark points to the GriefShare ministry and Hillcrest's partnership with Church of the Nazarene and Bemus Point United Methodist Church as a model. The goal is to not only address the spiritual and emotional needs in the Hillcrest Family, but to provide a path to hope and meaningful life change for those in our community as well.

Special Deep and Wide emphasis is planned during this fall's Harvest Weekend in November, but the Hillcrest Family is encouraged to pray and give generously to the Deep & Wide Initiative throughout 2021-22.

## Meet the Luskys



Our missionary family just got bigger! Brian and Rachel Lusky have been approved by the Missions Committee as Hillcrest missionaries to Japan. Brian and their two daughters Chloe (age 11) and Hannah (age 8) joined the Hillcrest Family for the recent Quarterly Gathering and shared that their family plans to move to Japan this summer saying, *"I'm incredibly humbled and excited to join the Converge International Missions staff as the Initiative Leader for the country of Japan."* He further explained, *"The Japanese are the second-largest unreached people group in the world—less than 1 percent of them are Christian and most have never been to a church, read the Bible, or have even one Christian relationship."*

As Japan Initiative Leader, Brian's role will be to raise up and coach a team of missionaries who will work with Japanese nationals. The team will be:

- Contextualizing and preaching the gospel among the Japanese
- Helping to support and equip Japanese leadership
- Pursuing multiple strategies of church planting
- Developing partnerships between Christians in Japan and churches like Hillcrest in North America

The Luskys will initially be supported by 10% of all gifts to the Deep and Wide Initiative over the next two years. The Missions Team is praying that the overall church budget will grow so they can be added to the missions budget after Deep and Wide concludes. Please pray for the Luskys and consider giving to the Deep and Wide Initiative. Prayer cards are available at the Information Station in the church lobby and you can learn more by visiting [www.converge.org/missionary/brian-lusky](http://www.converge.org/missionary/brian-lusky).



**DEEP & WIDE**  
INITIATIVE

## New Focus on Older Adults



What would it look like to really celebrate our years again – to begin shifting our focus from the fear of aging, to the rich, full lives God is calling us into as the years pass? He reminds us more than once in His Word that growing older is an honor. *"Gray hair is a glorious crown..."* Proverbs 16:31. The more years we live, the more experiences we're given to learn from, and the more wisdom and perspective we gain to see life in new and beautiful ways. Hillcrest has over 100 households with at least one adult aged 55 and older. It's time to focus on older adults! Starting this summer Pastor Jeff will hand off his responsibilities in the youth area of Family Ministries to Ben Soffel and will focus on serving Older Adults. Empty nesters can plan on



## Ben Soffel

Ben Soffel is from Bemus Point, NY and was raised in a Christian home with his 4 siblings and loving parents. He currently lives in Lakewood, NY with his wife, Abbey, and their son, Micah. Ben first accepted Jesus as his Savior at a junior high camp retreat. In high school, he was very involved in his local youth group and began leading worship regularly. He also attended Camp Mission Meadows every year and eventually worked on staff there for 5 summers. During this time, his faith experienced highs & lows as he learned what it meant to truly follow God with his life. Ben attended North Park University in Chicago, IL and graduated with a degree in Music Arts Administration. Through mentorship & discipleship opportunities during his college years, he moved from a familiarity with Christianity to a real relationship with Jesus. His camping experience is where he found a passion for working with kids in ministry. Ben is beyond excited to get to know the students & young adults at Hillcrest and to join the church in providing hope through authentic life change in Christ!

### Fast Facts on Ben

- Joins Hillcrest Pastoral Team June 1, 2021
- Devoted to Jesus and passionate about making disciples
- Married to Abbey, father to Micah
- Leaving business career to serve as new Director of Student and Young Adult Ministries
- Former summer programming director at Camp Missions Meadows
- Graduate of North Park University in Chicago
- Will deepen Outbound Youth Ministry to students in grades 6 to 12
- Will launch new Young Adult Ministry
- Will assist in future Hillcrest Online campus

## BIG Things Happen in Small Groups

Two years ago, Pastor Dan was tapped to spearhead our Growth Groups. While Growth Groups may not be a completely new ministry at Hillcrest, Pastor Dan has been providing the necessary leadership to help take groups to the next level. Several groups were launched just before COVID hit, but then had to go dormant for several months due to the pandemic. Recently five Growth Groups have started up with one more scheduled to begin soon.

One of those who has been a part of a Growth Group is Stan Collver. Pastor Dan asked Stan to share about his group. Stan explained, *“There are about a dozen of us who meet at our house on Monday evenings at 6:30. First we have a gathering time when we enjoy some refreshments together. Different people bring in a snack each week. Then we gather in our living room for a time to share prayer requests and to pray for each need. The Bible study portion usually starts at around 7 pm and we go till about 8:30. I really like our group because it lifts your spirits. It also makes everybody a little more friendly. It is affecting people’s lives. We go deeper into the Word and share all kinds of thoughts with each other.”*

Pastor Dan is encouraged by the increasing interest in Growth Groups. Recently another leader requested to start another new group. This would bring the total number to seven. One of Hillcrest’s goals in the Deep and Wide Initiative is to double the number of Growth Groups over the next two years.

adventures directed at them – things like possible game nights, picnic outings, and serving opportunities that will enrich and entertain while connecting people with God and others. A survey is available for older adults to offer your opinions on activities. You can find it online by visiting [www.hillcrestjamestown.com](http://www.hillcrestjamestown.com), at the church on the Information Station, or in your mail (soon). Please fill it out and return it to the church and show us your preference of activities. Feel free to suggest other ways that we can play and serve! Want to be involved in organizing the activities? Let Pastor Jeff know by Email ([pastorjeff@hillcrestjamestown.com](mailto:pastorjeff@hillcrestjamestown.com)) or by calling him at 483-3331.



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### AWANA Fashion Disaster

Nicole Young has embraced her new role as AWANA commander with lots of enthusiasm as shown by her creative outfit on Fashion Disaster Night. (l-r: Nicole, T&T leader Dave Childs, Cubbie clubber Landon Holleran.



### Discovery Town Egg Hunt

Joan Eppheimer's giant egg greeted Discovery Town families as they completed the Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt. Thanks to Michele Mattson and her team for putting together this fun family event.



### Vision 2020 Huge Win!

The Lord provided over \$500,000 during the Vision 20/20 Campaign to expand ministries, missions and complete many building projects, including our spacious new lobby.



### Preschool

The preschoolers learned about the fun of dyeing eggs but also learned the real meaning of Easter when Jesus died for each of them.

Everyone loved the Healthy Bones and Bodies unit, especially when they brought their favorite stuffed animal to the BooBoo Clinic at the Hillcrest Hospital!

