

Hillside Happenings

November &
December 2024
Newsletter



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RESCUED by Jesus

Written By Pastor Rick

In 2018, a group of 12 children and their soccer coach went cave exploring in a remote part of Thailand. Outside the cave entrance was a sign warning them of flash floods that would happen in the months of July to November, but since it was a clear June day, they went ahead. 5 Kilometers into their caving adventure, they became trapped by a flash flood caused by a storm on the **other side** of the mountain.

For 9 days, the boys drank the dirty cave water, rotated turns burning out their battery-powered headlamps, and shared 1 watch to keep time. Rescuers finally found them huddled together, cold and hungry, 3 hours from the entrance of the cave. 3 hours of flooded-cave-SCUBA-diving through pitch black waters. And these boys didn't know how to SCUBA dive.

They were trapped. And they desperately needed saving. It became apparent that something desperate needed to happen. These boys would need to be incapacitated so as to not throw off rescuers' attempts to pull them out. Someone needed to administer the right amount of medicine to knock them out for 3 hours, while also knowing how to secure SCUBA gear to an unconscious minor.

Enter our hero, Dr. Richard Harris. An Australian Anesthetist, avid SCUBA diver, and cave diving specialist, it quickly became apparent that Dr. Harris was the **ONLY** person in the world able to help with this problem. Dr. Harris had the experiential knowledge to administer, monitor, and perform emergence from anesthesia in minors while also monitoring their vitals during a cave dive. Each of the boys, aged 11 to 16 and with no diving experience, was guided out by a pair of divers in three days of intricate and high-stakes operations, with the coach being rescued last.

It's an amazing story, with a profound spiritual duality: there's only **ONE** person who is able to rescue all of mankind. His name is Jesus, and He offers a rescue unlike any other.

Consider the parallels:

1 – Like the children in the cave, we too are unable to rescue ourselves. It's not from a lack of trying, but in reality none of us can earn our way out of the Spiritual Death we are in. Paul tells us in Ephesians 2 that we are spiritually dead, and that it is all the grace of God to bring us to new life (John 3). Only Jesus, the Son of God, can offer us new life.

(Continued on Page 2)

2 – Even if the children had the ability to swim well enough to move around in the cave, the darkness of the cave truly had the team lost. Similarly, “the god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers” (2 Corinthians 4:4). But thankfully, we have a Savior who declared in Luke 19:10 that He had come to seek and save the lost. Praise God for Jesus’ ability to see through the darkness, and help us to do the same (Colossians 1:13-14).

3 – Because of his knowledge of medicine and diving, Dr. Harris was the only specialist to fit this extremely unique need. Similarly, the Christian faith is extremely unique among religions in that it teaches that good deeds do not lead to salvation nor peace with the Divine. Rather, God’s wrath is rightfully aimed at us. To follow the rescue analogy, we deserve the dark, dank cave we find ourselves in. God is right and just to leave us there. However, God’s great love and mercy moved Him to rescue us and to pour that wrath out on another. Only Jesus, truly and fully God and truly and fully Human, is able to pay the penalty for our sin for all eternity. Only Jesus can take God’s wrath and give us God’s peace.

4 – After a huge celebration of the successful rescue was held, none of those boys went back down that cave; they went home. Sometimes, when we think about the fact that Jesus saves, we forget that He rescues us from the Guilt and Shame that sin brought. We act as though we are still in that cave, stuck in our sin, without hope. But Jesus has rescued us from that situation. Jesus rescues us with the intention that we do not return to our sinful patterns (Galatians 5:1). He desires our faithful friendship and service, offering quick forgiveness from that moment onward (1 John 1:9).

We all love a good rescue story with a happy ending, but I would bet that we all could name someone still trapped in the “cave” of their sinful state. May we share the hope that we have, with gentleness and respect.

Praise God that Jesus still rescues the lost.



Praying Together

Every Wednesday Evening @ 7:00pm

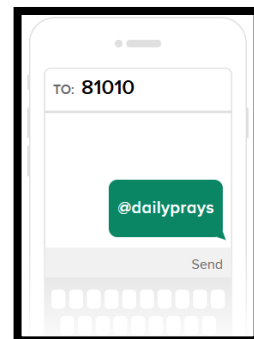
Sunday, November 10 @ 4:30pm

As we continue our Prayer Focus throughout this fall, we continue to encourage all to make **Wednesday Evenings at 7:00** a priority as one opportunity for us to pray together. We will also have our next **Special Prayer Service on Sunday, November 10 at 4:30pm.**

Fall Prayer Focus: Faithfulness, Fruitfulness, & God’s Leading for our Future

You can grab a November Prayer Calendar on the Welcome Center or you can access it digitally using the QR code above.

If you would like to receive a text reminder of the daily prayer topic, text @dailyprays to the phone number 81010 as shown here.



2024 Church Calendar

November 2024



- 11/1-11/2 Ladies' Retreat
- 11/3 Carry-In
- 11/5 Deacon's Meeting
- 11/9 Costume Workday
- 11/10 Brenner Missions Field Report during Sunday School
- **11/10 Special Prayer Service**
- 11/16 Men's Prayer Breakfast
- 11/17 Synergy Parents & Teen Sunday School
- 11/17 Worship Team Practice
- 11/24 Synergy Parents & Teen Sunday School
- *11/24 Operation Christmas Child Boxes Due*
- **11/27 Thanksgiving Service & Pie Fellowship**

December 2024

- 12/3 Deacon's Meeting
- 12/6 Synergy REVERB All-Nighter
- **12/8 Live Nativity (6:00-7:30pm)**
- 12/11 Business Meeting (2025 Nominations)
- 12/11 Word of Life Christmas Mission Project
- 12/14 Children's Christmas Program Practice

- 12/15 Secret Sister Reveal and Selection
- *12/18 Business Christmas Cookies Due*
- **12/18 Christmas Caroling (7:00pm)**
- 12/21 Children's Christmas Program Dress Rehearsal
- **12/22 Christmas Sunday**
9:00am Children's Christmas Program
10:00am AM Worship Service
6:00pm Christmas Concert of Praise
followed by light meal
- **12/24 Christmas Eve Service (7:00pm)**
- *12/25 No Mid-Week Services*
- 12/30-1/1 Skyview Young Adult Retreat

January 2025

- *1/1 No Mid-Week Services*
- 1/4 Synergy Christmas Party

June 2025

- 6/9-6/13 Vacation Bible School
Lifeway's Magnified theme



**Dates and Events are subject to change.
 See up-to-date calendar on our website and app.*

Children's Ministry

It's never to late for your kids to join us for Word of Life!



We meet Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm with age appropriate Bible Lessons, **Gopher Buddies** (*Age 3 1/2-Kindergarten*) and **Olympians** (*1st-5th Grade*). Singing, Games, and Scripture Memory are also a part of each week! If you have questions about what your child can do to work toward an Olympian medal, see Rebecca Bowlby. Here is the WOL club schedule for the remainder of 2024:

- * **Nov. 6, 13, 20 Regular WOL Club**
- * Nov. 27 *All-Church Thanksgiving Service*
- * **Dec. 4 Regular WOL Club**
- * **Dec. 11 Christmas Mission Project**
- * Dec. 18 *All-Church Christmas Caroling*
- * Dec. 25, Jan. 1 *No Wednesday Services*

Synergy Student Ministry

Wednesday Teaching Series: **November** - Book Study of Ruth

This four-lesson series is an Old Testament Book Study in the Book of Ruth. Each lesson of this series will cover one chapter of the Book of Ruth. Students will learn to trust God's bigger plan, find ways to practically love others, choose to do the right thing in the right way, and recognize Christ as the ultimate Redeemer.

- Oct. 30 Series Kick-Off
- Nov. 6 Small Groups
- Nov. 13 Synergy Shuffle: Live Worship Night
- Nov. 20 Small Groups: Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Shopping
- Nov. 27 *All-Church Thanksgiving Service*



Sunday School Teaching Series:

On November 17 and 24, we will combine all 6th-12th grade students and their parents for a two-week Sunday School class on Anxiety. We will discuss the daily thought patterns and decisions affecting this crucial aspect of our mental health. This class will be held in the Fellowship Hall.

Synergy Events:

- Dec. 6 REVERB All-Nighter
- Jan. 4 Christmas Party



REVERB 2024

Friday, December 6
Cleveland, OH

STUDENTS -

Registration is now open for Reverb! This all-nighter for Grades 6-12 includes a Lake Erie Monsters Hockey Game, Games on the Ice and a Special Speaker, and a fieldhouse with TONS of activities! Grab some flyers from the youth room and start inviting your friends! This is a gospel focused event, so we offer discounted tickets for unsaved friends! Ask Pastor Rick more about this!

Ticket costs are \$35 a student if you sign up by 11/6, then they go up to \$45 if you sign up by 11/24. Afterward, they jump to \$60/student. Sign up soon to save!

HILLSIDE -

We have the opportunity to support the Oswalds in this event by providing snack items for the leaders' lounge. There will be a sign-up sheet on the Welcome Center soon with items you can donate. See Lisa Mangun with any questions.

Young Adult Ministry

SKYVIEW'S YOUNG ADULT RETREAT
DEC. 30-JAN. 1

SKYVIEWRANCH

Skyview Ranch is hosting a Young Adult Retreat over New Years' again this year! Those that are interested in attending can register on Skyview's website.



MORE INFO AND
REGISTRATION LINK

Mon, Dec. 30 (Dinner)-Wed, Jan. 1 (Breakfast)

More info and the link to register can be found at
<https://www.skyviewranch.org/retreats-events/young-adults-retreat>

Ministry to Men



Men's Prayer Breakfast
Saturday, Nov. 16 @ 8am

The weather is getting cold, but it will be a toasty time on Saturday, November 16th at 8am at Hillside. All men are invited to a prayer breakfast at the church. See Scott Mason with any questions.

Sign up at the Welcome Center if you plan to attend.

Ladies' Ministry

Secret Sisters

November is the last month with those who have secret sisters currently. Please make sure that you have at least one more contact with your secret sister before the reveal in December.



The reveal of this year's Secret Sisters and the selection of new sisters will take place on **Sunday, Dec. 15** immediately following Worship Service. Be on the lookout for information on the Welcome Center for how you can be involved in secret sisters for the next year. See Bonnie Baughman with questions.

Poland Missions Trip 2025



Hillside has a wonderful opportunity to minister to Ukrainian refugees in Poland this coming summer. Nick and Jill Toothman have invited a small team from Hillside to come to Poland, in June of 2025, to run a VBS-style, Bible, Day “Camp” for children. The “camp” will meet for a few hours of the day, giving our group an opportunity to teach English-speaking Ukrainian students the Good News of Jesus Christ. Our group will minister alongside of the Toothman’s for a week, participating in their church service in Tczew (ta-**chev**), attending their mid-week Bible study, and engaging students at “camp”. The

trip is a ministry-focused trip with primarily Ukrainian children in mind, but during our week, we will take some time to visit Gdansk and have some other cultural experiences unique to Poland.

The Toothman’s have requested that we limit our team size to around 8 people. Each person will be responsible to pay for their airfare, lodging, and share in their portion of other associated costs such as food and transportation throughout our stay. A projected cost of the trip is not available yet, but a group that came with Toothman’s ministry partners last year paid around \$3,500 per person.

As Toothman’s work with their partners, they have specified 2 possible weeks for “camp” to occur. These weeks would put our trip dates at either **June 20-29** or **June 27-July 6**.

A number of individuals have already expressed some interest, which might make keeping our group size of 8 difficult, but **if you are interested in Bible Camp to Ukrainians in Poland, please see Pastor Kevin**. There will be some required team meetings leading up to the trip in the Spring.

Online Contact Directory

THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE PROVIDED US WITH WHAT WE NEED FOR THE ONLINE CONTACT DIRECTORY. IF YOU RECEIVED A PINK PAPER IN YOUR MAILBOX DURING OCTOBER, WE ARE STILL MISSING INFORMATION FROM YOU TO INCLUDE YOU IN THE DIRECTORY. IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHAT IS NEEDED FROM YOU, PLEASE FIND SEKA MASTERS AND SHE WOULD BE HAPPY TO HELP YOU.!

If you have already created an account in our app, you have access to the directory! You can find it under the main menu at the top of your screen. There will more information coming to your church mailbox soon as to how to access this if you don’t already have the app.

HILLSIDE APP



Holidays at Hillside



The holidays are a great time to be involved at Hillside.

There are a number of special services and ministry opportunities that focus on serving our community and that allow us to take extra time to give thanks to and worship our Savior. Mark your calendars and look for more details on all of these services, events, and outreach opportunities!



"Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He
is good! For His mercy endures
forever. Psalm 136:1



Hillside's Annual Thanksgiving Service

Wednesday, November 27th @ 7:00pm

This **unique Wednesday Evening service** allows us to reflect on God's many blessings throughout the past year. Grab a kernel of corn when you arrive and be prepared to share what you are thankful for. Come and be encouraged as we are reminded what God is doing within our church family.

Bring a pie to share and join us for a **Pie Fellowship** following the service!

Samaritan's Purse: Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes due November 24th



How to Pack Your Shoebox:

1. **Find a Shoebox:** Get a standard-size shoebox to pack for a boy or girl.
Feel free to use the pre-printed boxes in the coffee room at the church.
2. **Get your Label:** Determine whether you want to pack a box for a boy or girl and which age.
3. **Fill with Gifts:** First, select a quality “wow” toy such as a soccer ball with pump or stuffed animal then fill with other fun toys, hygiene items, and school supplies. Don't forget to also include a personal note and photo—sometimes these are the child's favorite things to receive!
4. **Pray:** Most importantly, pray for the child who will receive your shoebox gift. Include a personal note and photo to delight the heart of the child if you would like.
5. **Donate \$10 per Shoebox:** A donation of \$10 is critical to cover shipping and other project costs. Give online through Follow Your Box and discover the destination of your shoebox or send a check in the postage-paid envelope provided on the brochure.
6. **Drop off:** Place your shoebox at Hillside in the coffee room by Sunday, November 24th.

Do NOT include: candy; toothpaste; gum; used or damaged items; scary or war-related items; seeds; food; drink mixes; liquids or lotions; medications or vitamins; breakable items or glass containers; aerosol cans.

**Information received from Samaritan's Purse.*

If you would prefer to give money toward a shoebox, you can place funds in a designated envelope on the Welcome Center and place in offering box by Nov. 17.

Rittman Christmas Baskets

Each year, we provide food and presents for a handful of families in Rittman. There will be a sign-up sheet to donate food, as well as gift tags to sponsor a child by providing them with a Christmas gift. The tag includes the age and gender of the child, as well as some of their interests. More information will be available in early December!



Rittman Business Christmas Cookies

Each year, we also put together cookie platters that are taken to Rittman schools and other local businesses. There will be a sign-up sheet for those who would like to donate homemade Christmas cookies for this outreach.

Pastor Love Offering

Each December, we provide our church with the opportunity to bless our pastors with a financial gift. You will find “Love Offering” envelopes available after Thanksgiving. All offering placed in these envelopes will go directly to our pastors. Please note that this gift does not credit your yearly giving.



Live Nativity

December 8, 2024

6:00-7:30 PM

Hillside will host our **Live Nativity on Sunday, December 8th**. There will be a presentation every 20 minutes with narration of the Christmas Story, music, animals, & refreshments. This is a great opportunity to share the gospel with our neighbors and community. Please invite others and be in prayer for this event.

Opportunities to get involved:

We will need individuals for Mary & Joseph, shepherds, the angel choir, narrators, and helping inside to greet visitors & serve refreshments. Watch for sign-up sheets soon!



Christmas Caroling

Wednesday, Dec. 18
7:00 PM

Meet at the church at 7:00 PM to receive a song list and be split into caroling groups. We will then travel to sing Christmas carols, pointing others to the gift of Jesus' this Christmas season. If you know of someone in the Rittman area that would appreciate caroling, please let PK know!

Special Music: Christmas

If you would like to participate in a special music for the Christmas Concert of Praise the evening of December 22nd, please reach out to Pastor Kevin.



Kids' Sunday School Children's Program



Our Christmas play practices are well underway! We are learning our motions and music and look forward to our program which will take place Sunday, December 22nd during the 9:00am Sunday School hour. Please make sure you are listening to the song playlist and learning your speaking lines at home! Here are our upcoming Rehearsal times:

Sunday Rehearsals:

- November 3, 10, 17, 24 9:40-Kid's Church Dismissal (approx. 10:25am)
- December 1, 8, 15 9:40-10am

Saturday Rehearsals:

- December 14 9:00a-11:00a
- December 21 9:00a-12:00p *Dress Rehearsal followed by Pizza Party at 12. (2's & 3's should join us to practice at 11:30)*

Christmas Sunday December 22nd



Join us on December 22nd for a day full of worshipping our Savior, Jesus Christ, as we remember the gift of life that can only be found through Him.

- 9:00 AM Kids' Christmas Program
- 10:00 AM Worship Service
- 6:00 PM Christmas Concert of Praise
followed by a light meal

Invitations will be available with information on all of our Christmas services. Please take this opportunity to invite family, friends, neighbors, or co-workers to Hillside this Christmas.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

7:00 PM

Take time on Christmas Eve to join together for our Candlelight Service. With the auditorium lit by candles, music and a devotional are shared to draw our hearts to worship. This service concludes with a congregational song, each person holding a candle, to remember the special night when Jesus humbled himself and took on flesh to be our Savior.

