

# THIS WEEK

@ HILLCREST CHRISTIAN... **JANUARY 07, 2010**



## CALENDAR ITEMS JANUARY 2010

- Fri. 08** National Geographic Geography Bee  
Grades 4-8
- Sat. 09** HCS Work Day 8 A.M. - NOON
- Wed. 13** Skating and CPK Event
- Fri. 15** ACSI Spelling Bee  
HOMECOMING  
Spirit Day Pep Rally 1:30 P.M.  
Homecoming Game 4 P.M.
- Sat. 16** Homecoming Dance
- Mon. 18** Martin Luther King Holiday  
NO SCHOOL NO CHILD CARE
- Fri. 22** K-12 Teacher In-Service  
Half Day Schedule
- Mon. 25** Admissions Open House 7 P.M.
- Wed. 27** HCS Science Fair 6th-8th grades
- Thurs. 28** End of 1st Semester
- Fri. 29** Semester Break  
NO SCHOOL NO CHILD CARE



ONLINE CALENDAR: [WWW.HILLCRESTCS.ORG](http://WWW.HILLCRESTCS.ORG)



by Kathy Horan, principal

### Thinking Critically About Matters of Faith

There should be little doubt in anyone's mind that the world that we live in is unashamedly anti-Christian. Our children, unlike us, are growing up in a society where their belief in Jesus as Lord and Savior can leave them open to charges that they somehow are intellectually inferior to those who have no need to rely on anything other than science and "intellectual" reasoning. I have become increasingly certain over the past few years that the greatest tool that we as Christian parents and educators can give our youth is the ability to think critically. Not only is the ability to think and argue critically highly valued in the academic and secular world, it is also invaluable to our primary goal which is to raise our children to believe that Jesus Christ is their Lord and Savior.

"I am convinced that we can only train children to impact this world for Christ if we diligently show them how to be critical thinkers, to consistently ask them "why" or perhaps to explain the "how" as a start."

I emphasize the word "believe" because true belief does not allow us to relegate our faith to Bible class, chapel, Sunday school, youth group, or church service. It is an every minute of every day way of living, and the only way that our children will have this kind of faith is if they have critically examined the truth claims of Jesus and have found them to be true. I have heard church leaders across both the state and the country say that many of the youth in their small groups or larger youth groups struggle with living differently from the world. Many accept the idea that one can somehow coexist in two circles, real life and church. This is not what I want for Hillcrest students.

One possible way to combat secularism is to train our children to think critically about everything including their faith. Even Paul in Acts 17:11 challenges us to engage in this very exercise. The problem arises because the ability to think critically is a process that must be taught; however, it is much more difficult to do that than to teach traditional subjects in school. Most of what children learn in school is fact based i.e. something that they can learn by rote e.g. historical people, places, events; laws of science, biological classifications, elements of chemistry and physics; mathematical formulas to solve problems, math facts etc. These kinds of information answer who, what, when, where and how; critical thinking is driven more by the answer to "why" as a start.

*continued on page 4*

## SHORT SUBJECTS

### Calling All Pre-k Parents- Jan 11th

Next Monday, all pre-k parents are invited to a brief meeting in the auditorium to learn more about why you should choose Hillcrest for kindergarten. Our kindergarten teachers, Mrs. MacLaury and Mrs. Thompson will meet with you, elaborate on the kindergarten program, share with you what to expect, and answer any questions you may have. Following the presentation in the auditorium, parents who do not have younger siblings with them are invited to observe a math lesson in Mrs. Thompson's class, so that you can see how traditional Abeka math is integrated with hands on interactive learning. Unfortunately we cannot accommodate strollers and/or younger children during the lesson. Don't miss it!

### Uganda Missions Trip Meeting January 13, 4:00 P.M.

Hillcrest will once again sponsor a mission trip to the God Cares School in Uganda this year in June after school gets out for adults and students in grades 6 – 12. If you are interested in serving, learning more about what is involved, or if you have a heart for missions, please come to an informational meeting on Wednesday, January 13, at 4:00 P.M. in the auditorium.

### Special Thanks from our Faculty and Staff

The HCS faculty and staff would like to extend a huge thank you to all the parents involved in putting on the amazing staff Christmas brunch. We would like to extend a very special thank you to Melissa Dundas and Donna Rae Caccavo for all their time and effort organizing and coordinating this event.



By Stephen Allen, Head of School

### New Year and New Auditorium Upgrades Completed

Our students are in for a treat as our chapel sound and stage lighting upgrades are completed! The new audio equipment helps to project evenly distributed, high-quality sound throughout the room. It is fantastic! The stage lighting allows for features with dimming and color that in the past we have only dreamed about or had to handle with temporary/portable lighting. Also improved is the electrical infrastructure to provide adequate power for what we need to accomplish in our productions, chapels, and special events.

What does this mean for our school programs and our students and teachers? Our worship band leader, Mrs. Barbour stated, "With the addition of the audio, video, and light equipment, we are now fully equipped



for professional level concerts, movies, and musicals. These enhancements will allow us to present what we do with a new level of excellence. Music department students are excited and proud of what this means for the music program at HCS."

Mrs. Essick, our elementary chapel coordinator and music teacher stated, "The benefits of the auditorium upgrade are HUGE! The sound system will provide a much better quality sound. We now have ample number of outlets for microphones and instruments. And they all work! There are now more electric outlets on the floor to use for instruments and equipment. The monitors will provide the music to be heard by the musicians on stage. The lighting will enhance the visibility of classroom teaching and provide variation of effects for musicals. Visibility is improved. The projector in the rear makes it easily accessible. The picture is sharp. The screen is larger and impacts visibility. This can be used for teaching, chapel, or lectures that take place in the auditorium. In music classes, I can use a lap top with easy hook-up and projection. I will have availability to use tools such as Britannica on-line while teaching. I am elated to have these improvements. I can't wait to use



STEPHEN ALLEN, HEAD OF SCHOOL

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them. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!”

Thanks go to many for the completion of this project. For all who donated the funds (cost approximately \$45, 000), to Melissa Dundas for the many hours spent on the bidding and project management during the holiday break, to Anne Barbour for helping to manage the technical side of the project and casting a vision for what ought to be, to TK and Jeff of TGK AV Consultants (1338 Callens Rd., Ventura, CA 93003, 805-639-0146 and www.tgkavconsultants.com). They generously worked with our school on many levels. Tremendous thanks also goes to the electrician, Bill Doherty, President of Doherty Electric (3625 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Westlake Village, CA 91362, 805-494-4571). Both of these vendors went well out of their way to provide what was needed to finish the project. We highly recommend them.

Be watching for dates of an upcoming praise and thank you concert in the coming weeks. Attend this event, our chapels, and other programs to check out the improvements. We thank You Lord for allowing these improvements to occur. ■



*by Mrs. Gonzales, teacher*  
**Second Grade Goes to the Reagan Library**

Both the second grade classes had a wonderful visit to the Ronald Reagan Library. The Reagan Library houses many official

documents, artifacts, and memorabilia for the students to observe. The Air Force One exhibit gave details about how seven former presidents used the aircraft during their time in office. Over the years, President Reagan visited 26 countries and took an interest in all the different and unique cultures. As a result, the library started the tradition of displaying “Christmas around the World.” Of the 26 Christmas trees on display, Jesika’s favorite was from Grenada because of the many beautiful ornaments. Other highlights of the field trip included walking through a replica of the Oval Office, seeing the presidential motorcade and Marine One helicopter, and touring the grounds outside which included viewing an original piece of the Berlin Wall. The students also had a special opportunity to watch a “stone carver” carve the names of sponsors into the actual wall. Teaghan asked the craftsman, “How do you make all the letters the same depth?” The man replied, “Practice, practice, practice.” Teaghan was so amazed at his work that he asked the man for his autograph. As we finished our tour, we respectfully observed the final resting site of President Ronald Reagan. This magnificent experience gave the students a complete understanding of the life and service of President Reagan ... serving faithfully both his God and his country.

**It's Time for Homecoming!**

**Friday, January 15  
Spirit Day and Homecoming Game  
Saturday, January 16  
High School Homecoming Dance**

**Hillcrest Saints, it's time to show your school spirit! Students may wear jeans with either a blue or gold top. HCS jerseys and cheerleading uniforms are also encouraged! On Friday there will be a pep rally at 1:30, class banners on display, and most importantly, our big Homecoming Basketball Game at 4:00 P.M. at First Christian Church in Newbury Park. Bring your family and don't miss out the fun! Tickets for the dance are on sale now through ASB. Go Hillcrest!!!**

*by DonnaRae Caccavo-HCS Hospitality*

**THANK YOU!**

The theme for this year's staff Christmas Brunch was Christmas Around the World. Several parents decorated tables with a different country theme. There was India, Mexico, Panama, France, Canada, Scandinavia, Scotland, Italy and the good ol' USA. What a creative group of parents we have! A huge heartfelt thank you to all the parents who helped to make the teacher brunch another successful one.

As always our wonderful staff was blessed by the generous efforts of parents who provided delicious food from omelet fixings to scones, and french toast casserole. Donations also provided some great Bingo prizes for our competitive HCS staff - they take their Bingo very seriously. And who wouldn't when the prizes are things from iTouches to leather blazers!

What a blessing it was to work with some fantastic parents and serve our teachers and staff. We may be a small school, but we have a lot of heart! Again, thank you to everyone who contributed to bless our HCS Staff and Faculty.

**NOW THAT YOUR SHOPPING IS OVER, LOG YOUR RECEIPTS!**

Double Points for all Oaks Mall receipts logged in January, and Triple Points for the expansion stores. Receipts can be dated since September 1. Receipts can be logged at Guest Services or you can bring them to school, and we will log them for you.

**5th ANNUAL HILLCREST ICE RINK AND CPK EVENT****WHEN: Wed, January 13th****WHERE: The Lakes Ice Skating Rink 5:30-6:30 P.M.****COST: \$9 per hr; skates not included. Rentals available or bring your own.****IMPORTANT: BRING THIS FORM TO THE RINK - ONE for each person****Fifth Annual Skate at the Lakes and CPK Event Next Wednesday, January 13**

For the fifth year in a row, Hillcrest is having Winter Wonderland at the Lakes on Wednesday, January 13. Skating will take place from 5:30 – 6:30 and costs \$8.00. (Please note that this is the only skating time slot that will benefit the school.) Head over to CPK either before or after and you don't have to cook. What a great evening!!

Both the restaurant and the rink will donate a percentage back to Hillcrest, but you must have a flier for both places – one per skater for the ice rink and one per family for CPK. We have included them in this newsletter or they can be downloaded from our website. Maybe get several families together for even more fun! Mark your calendars and don't miss out!!

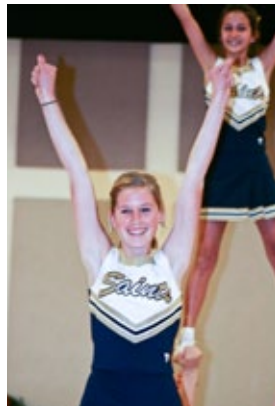
For those of you who don't want to brave the ice or who can't make the 5:30 time slot, but would still like to help Hillcrest, CPK will be donating a generous 20% back to Hillcrest for the entire day, anytime as long as you present the HCS flier, so beat the crowds and go for lunch or dinner anytime, show your flier and your support. Thank you!!

**Boys' Varsity Basketball**

Our varsity basketball team had two very hard-fought games before the Christmas break. The first game was against First Lutheran from Sylmar, a team that we had beaten ten days before at the Santa Clarita Christian tournament. It was a close game until the third quarter when First Lutheran started to pull away. They won the game; however, they had to forfeit because they used players that were not eligible according to CIF rules. Our second game was against Pilgrim, and it was a tight contest

throughout. The game came down to the last few minutes with Pilgrim winning by six points. Logan Baltau and Gio Hernandez were the top scorers and rebounders in both games with Jeongmoon Lee leading the team in assists. The Saints are now 2-4 overall and 1-2 in league play.

Come support our young Saints this Friday vs. Trinity Lutheran at First Christian Church of Newbury Park; game starts at 4:30.

*continued from page 1***Thinking Critically About Matters of Faith cont.**

I begin my honors classes telling my secondary students that it is a given that they can answer the who, what, when, and where questions, but that the focus needs to be on the why. This is often difficult for the "A" students because sometimes the right answers can only be found after sifting through what they know and choosing how to align that information to derive at "the answer". The answer is not always spelled out for them.

In contrast, when it comes to faith, do we just spell it out for them and skip through the sifting, aligning, and discovering? If we do and expect them to just believe, then we run the risk that their faith will be shallow. I am convinced that we can only train children to impact this world for Christ if we diligently show them how to be critical thinkers, to consistently ask them "why" or perhaps to explain the "how" as a start. It's never too early to start asking even though the answers at first may be simplistic. It is a process. ■