**Hillside UMC Sermon Prep Sheet**

***Pastor Chris Neikirk***

**Date: Sunday, October 16, 2016**

**Sermon Title: What’s Next, Hillside?**

**Mission Impossible**

**Scripture: Numbers 13:1-2, 13:25-14:4** *(New International Version)*

1 The Lord said to Moses, 2“Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders.”

25At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land. 26They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. 27They gave Moses this account: “We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. 28But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. 29The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan.” 30Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.” 31But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” 32And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, “The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. 33We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.”

1 That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. 2All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness! 3Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” 4And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”

**Acts 1:1-11** *(New International Version)*

1In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” 6Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” 9After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. 10They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

**Call to Worship: (8:30 only) – Based on Psalm 48**

Leader: Great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise, in the city of our God, his holy mountain.

**People: Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love. Like your name, O God, your praise reaches to the ends of the earth; your right hand is filled with righteousness.**

Leader: Mount Zion rejoices, the villages of Judah are glad because of your judgments. Walk about Zion, go around her, count her towers, consider well her ramparts, view her citadels, that you may tell of them to the next generation.

**People: For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end.**

**Basic Theme: *What’s next, Hillside? This is the question we find ourselves asking. We must look back and understand where we have been, while at the same time look forward and try to discern where we are going? Where is God leading? Will we follow? Following will not be without price. Following will require an investment of our time, our energy, and our monetary resources.***

**Sermon Snapshot (Key Points): Sometimes, the path that lies ahead seems overwhelming to the point that we become immobile – all we can do is stand and stare. Sometimes, the mission we are called to seems impossible… and without the help and blessing of God, it may be. Our natural instincts may even be to retreat in fear. But, if God has brought us to it, God will lead us through it!**

**So What? What’s next, Hillside? Who were we? Who are we now? Who does God intend for us to become in the future? Where is God leading? Will you follow? Will you commit to supporting the mission and ministry of Hillside with your time, energy and monetary resources?**