

# Clock Tower Tidings

Huntingdon Presbyterian Church PC(USA)

March 2025



## PASTOR'S CORNER

### *To Understand Jesus, Start with Holy Week*

A movie came out a few years ago about the life of Jesus called *The Young Messiah*. Full disclosure: I have not seen the movie. But based on the trailers and the title, it's not difficult to guess what the movie is about. It's an imagining of what Jesus was like as a child and the struggles of his family.

This is a topic that has captured Christian imagination for some time. In the gospels, there is a big gap in the life story of Jesus. Two of the four gospels tell us about Jesus' birth. One gospel (Luke) gives us a story about Jesus giving his parents the slip to stay in the temple when he was 12. Some of those stories are pretty thrilling and will no doubt be featured in the movie. In Matthew, the whole family is forced to flee to Egypt in order to escape King Herod's murderous decree. They actually lived in Egypt for several years. That's exciting stuff!

The "gap years" have been so intriguing that sources outside of the New Testament attempted to fill it. One story from the Gospel of Thomas actually describes a young Jesus making mud figures of birds and then bringing them to life.

There seems to be this desire in the past and  
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Photo by Bill Caufield

### *Back in the Pulpit*

*The Rev. Harold G. Williams Jr., HPC's pastor emeritus, preached at the service of February 16 – his 90th birthday. Details, Page 3.*



## Community Service Set for Ash Wednesday

A community Ash Wednesday service will begin the 2025 Lenten season at 7 p.m. on **March 5** at St. James Lutheran Church, Sixth and Mifflin streets.

HPC's Pastor Brett Hoover will bring the message and ashes will be imposed. HPC was the site of last year's Ash Wednesday service.

Ash Wednesday begins the 40-day period of Lent (not including Sundays) culminating in the commemoration of the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It's a time to remember Jesus' suffering and sacrifice, and to prepare to celebrate his resurrection on

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### **Sunday Schedule**

Worship is at 10:30 a.m. The service is streamed live on Facebook and on demand. Sunday school is at 9:30 a.m. in the Memorial Family Room and is also available via Zoom.

### **Dates to Remember**

March 3 – Presbyterian Women – 1 p.m.  
March 4 – Deacons – 7 p.m.  
March 5 – Ash Wednesday  
March 9 – Daylight saving time returns  
March 9 – First Sunday in Lent; communion  
March 9 – Session – 6:30 p.m.  
March 13 – Hometown Hearts meal  
March 16 – Potluck after service  
March 22 – Presbytery meets at HPC – 9:30 a.m.

### **Food Pantry Donations**

The Huntingdon Food Pantry is requesting **kidney beans** for March. Donations can be dropped off at the office or in the hallway near the lift.

### **Worship Attendance**

The average in-person worship attendance for four Sundays in January and February was 29. Services had an average of 109 live and archived Facebook views.

### **Weekly Giving**

Tithes and offerings through January totaled \$13,142, or an average of \$3,285 a week. Primary fund giving for 2025 is budgeted at \$195,000, or an average of \$3,750 a week.

### **Per Capita Contributions**

The 2025 per capita is \$41 per member, for a total assessment of \$5,535. As of January 31, per capita contributions totaled \$756.

### **Newsletter Deadline**

The April issue deadline is Saturday, **March 15**.

### **Care & Visitation List**

The deacons are currently reviewing the care list. If you or someone you know would like to be put on this list, please tell a deacon or call the church office at 814-643-1302.

## **Murder Mystery Theme For March 16 Potluck**

The traditional March potluck meal sponsored by the Mission and Outreach Committee will take place this year with a plot twist.

The meal after the Sunday worship service on **March 16** will have a murder mystery theme and whoever uncovers “whodunit” will get a prize.

To find out who will be “murdered” and to unravel the clues, plan on attending the potluck. Drinks and place settings will be provided.

Please drop off your food downstairs in Fellowship Hall before the service. If necessary, the food can be refrigerated or kept warm in the oven.



## **Ash Wednesday**

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Easter Sunday. Lent can include fasting, prayer, study and self-reflection in preparation for Easter.

Easter is on **April 20** this year, which is fairly close to April 25, the last day for the observance of Easter in the Western church. The earliest Easter can be is March 22.

Among the Lenten activities planned at HPC is the Presbyterian Women’s weekly Lenten Bible Study, which begins on March 5. Details are on Page 4.

### **IN MEMORIAM**

The following members died recently:

**Jeanne S. Speck**, January 16, 2025  
**Stephen V. Heine**, February 16, 2025

They will be greatly missed.  
Please remember their families  
in your prayers.

## Elders Assigned to Session Committees

Committee assignments were approved at the February session meeting. The following are the 2025 committee assignments of session members:

- Christian Education: Bill Caufield, chair
- Finance and Stewardship: Bob Barclay and Phil Thompson, co-chairs
- Mission and Outreach: Kathy Criswell, chair, with Annette Lloyd and Ann Dunlavy
- Personnel: Betsy Mason and David Taylor, co-chairs
- Property: Paul Post, chair; Bob Barclay
- Worship: Ann Dunlavy and Pam Kyper, co-chairs; Judy Post volunteered from congregation
- Nominating: Ann Dunlavy and Betsy Mason, co-chairs
- Deacons' Liaison: Pam Kyper
- Forum of Churches Liaison: Pastor Brett

As noted above, committees also include members who are not on the session. The congregation elects non-session members to the Personnel and Nominating committees, but the other committees also welcome your help.

If you are interested in serving on a committee, please see the chair of that committee.

### SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

*The session approved the following during its monthly meeting on February 16 held in person and via Zoom:*

- 2025 session committee assignments
- Use of the Memorial Family Room for the advisory meeting of the Community Care Behavioral Health organization on May 21
- Authorization for the Mission and Outreach Committee to organize a concert this spring
- Participation of HPC with another church for a joint Ash Wednesday service on March 5



Photo by Bill Caufield

*Pastor Williams greets well-wishers after the February 16 worship service.*

## Pastor Emeritus Leads Service on 90th Birthday

The congregation's pastor emeritus, the Rev. Harold G. Williams Jr., marked his 90th birthday by preaching the sermon at the February 16 Sunday service.

Pastor Willy and his wife Joan served HPC from 1973 to 1992. After retiring from a call in New Hampshire, Willy and Joan returned to Huntingdon and settled at Westminster Woods, where Willy served as chaplain for many years. Joan died last year.

The title of Pastor Willy's sermon was "What Our Christian Faith Is All About," with readings from the Gospel of John and the Second Letter to the Corinthians.

Before giving the benediction, Pastor Willy acknowledged family members who couldn't be present in the sanctuary because of inclement weather but who were watching the service on Facebook.

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### Clocks Change on March 9

Daylight saving time returns on Sunday, **March 9**. Turn your clocks ahead one hour to mark the end of four months of standard time – and to avoid being late for church.



## PW Lenten Bible Study To Begin on March 5

Presbyterian Women's Lenten Bible Study is about to begin. It will meet at 10 a.m. in the Memorial Family Room every Wednesday starting Ash Wednesday, **March 5**, and ending Wednesday, **April 9**.

This year's study is titled *Let Justice Roll Down; God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation* by Patricia K. Tull. Anita Nwaobilo will lead PW's Bible study. Booklets cost \$10 each and are available in the church office (see Sylvia Byers) and from Susan Lang. All are welcome.

Remember, PW Book Club does not meet during Lenten Bible Study. It returns **May 7**.

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## Last Month for Donations To Current Pipe Dream

March is the last month to support the needs and the activities of the Huntingdon County Child and Development Corporation (HCCADC) through the first PW Pipe Dream of 2025.

Please remember to drop your quarters into the pipes (one in the sanctuary; one outside the Memorial Family Room) The donations each Sunday do add up. PW is truly grateful for our church family's generous donations to each Pipe Dream. Thank you.

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## Making Prayer Chain Requests

If you have a request for the Presbyterian Women's Prayer Chain, please contact Deb Hetrick at 814-643-5424 (home) or 814-644-1653 (cell). All prayer chain requests will be kept confidential. If you would like to join the prayer chain, also please contact Deb.

## Presbytery to Conduct Stated Meeting at HPC

Commissioners representing many of the 39 congregations in Huntingdon Presbytery will gather at HPC on Saturday morning, **March 22**, for one of the presbytery's five stated meetings in 2025.

The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. and will include a worship service. The deacons will provide a light breakfast for the commissioners

The offering taken at the worship service will go to the One Great Hour of Sharing.

The last presbytery meeting held at HPC was an evening meeting on September 28, 2021. That meeting was the first in-person meeting held since the Covid-19 pandemic broke out in early 2020. Since then, commissioners have participated in stated presbytery meetings both in-person and via Zoom.

## Terms of Call Approved

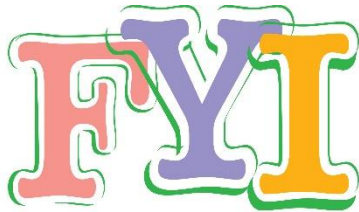
The congregation approved the pastor's terms of call for 2025 at the annual meeting on January 26. Bob Barclay, chair of the Finance and Stewardship Committee, explained that changes made to the housing allowance and family medical insurance will benefit Pastor Hoover and his family as well as the church.

Pastor Hoover received a 1 percent salary increase, which when combined with the changes results in a take-home pay increase of about 6 percent.

Packets containing annual committee reports and the 2025 budget were available at the meeting.

## PW Meeting on March 3

Presbyterian Women will hold its next monthly meeting at 1 p.m. on Monday, **March 3**, in the Memorial Family Room. The April meeting will be Monday, **April 7**. All women who are members and friends of HPC are invited to attend.



• FOR YOUR INFORMATION •

**Pastoral Care Available**

Pastor Brett Hoover is available in the church office Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for pastoral care and calls. If you need pastoral care, please call the office at 814-643-1302 or you may email the church office at [huntpc1789@gmail.com](mailto:huntpc1789@gmail.com). In case of emergency, please call Pastor Brett at 724-331-5798.

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**Harry Potter Party Postponed**

The Harry Potter Hogwarts Party planned for February 8 was canceled due to inclement weather. A new date for the party has not yet been determined. When a new date is chosen, it will be announced by the Mission and Outreach Committee.

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**Share Your Gifts as a Liturgist**

If you are interested in sharing your gifts in Sunday worship as a liturgist, please contact the church office. If you can commit to only a week or two, the church office can coordinate that. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Thanks to Sylvia Byers, Ann Dunlavy and Sue Lang for being liturgists on recent Sundays.

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**Thanks for the Musical Help**

Thanks to Joann Weber and church musician Ivan Yumagulov for sharing their musical talent at recent services.

**Hometown Hearts Meal Crew**

It's HPC's turn to prepare the Hometown Hearts meal at St. James Lutheran Church on Thursday, **March 13**. A number of area churches and civic organizations send crews to prepare a free takeout meal that so many in the community look forward to receiving each week. For more information on joining the HPC crew, please call Artamarie Barclay at 814-599-0872.



**Fresh Flowers**

*If you would like to contribute flowers for the Sunday worship service, please contact the church office. The flowers above were given February 16 in loving memory of all past and present HPC members and friends.*

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**Camp Registration Now Open**

Registration is now open for both residential camp and day camp this summer at Krislund Camp and Conference Center in Centre County. Krislund is an outreach mission of Huntingdon Presbytery. Details are available online at [kruslund.org](http://kruslund.org)

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**Consider Making a QCD in 2025**

If you must take a required minimum distribution from your Individual Retirement Account in 2025, please consider making a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) to HPC. Please consult with your tax advisor or IRA custodian for details on how to make this tax-free donation.

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**Sunday Study Focuses on Acts**

The Digging Deeper study group for adults and youths is currently discussing the Book of Acts. Feel free to join the study at any time. Sunday school meets at 9:30 a.m. in the Memorial Family Room in-person and by Zoom. If you would like to participate by Zoom, please notify the church office to receive the online link.

## **Pastor's Corner**

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the present to know about Jesus' childhood. Some people even ask personal questions. Did Jesus refuse to take naps or throw temper tantrums? Did he have really close friendships? Was he scared about the big events going on around him or was he ever confused about who he was?

Why are we so fascinated by those questions? Some might just be curious. Others might want a more complete or even human picture of who Jesus was, and that doesn't surprise me. We are surrounded by this idea that childhood is the most important formative period of life. So naturally, many people are drawn to stories of Jesus' childhood as a way to more fully understand him.

But is looking to Jesus' childhood really the best way to understand him? I do not dispute the notion that childhood experiences can have a deep impact on us. But the people who knew Jesus best, the disciples, didn't look to his childhood for understanding. They looked at the end of his life. You will find this captured in all the gospels. Jesus will do something or say something and the disciples have no clue what's going. But then a little note will be thrown in saying the disciples finally understood after the Resurrection.

If we want to know who Jesus really was, then we should start with the events of Holy Week. Jesus understood all of his life and ministry as a journey to the cross and empty tomb because it is in those moments that we truly and fully see the love and grace of God. We see a God so committed to justice that a reckoning had to take place for our wrong-doings. But we also see a God so committed to love that He let that reckoning fall on Himself.

During the season of Lent, we follow Jesus as he turned his face toward Jerusalem and began the final stage of his earthly ministry. It was that part of his ministry when all his words about grace, love and forgiveness found their

ultimate expression in action.

As life rolls along with all its accompanying busyness and hardships, it's so easy for a gradual feeling of disconnection to grow in our relationship with God. It is also easy to let commonly held ideas about Jesus crowd out the truth of who he was and what he taught. Lent is the perfect season in which to heal these tendencies by journeying with Jesus toward those events that fully revealed who he was. I hope we all can join together in that rediscovery of the extravagant love and grace of God in Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ,  
Rev. Brett D. Hoover

*"At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him."*

– John 12:16

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### **View 'Tea Time' on Facebook**

Be sure to join Pastor Brett for his weekly chats on the HPC Facebook page. *Tea Time with Pastor Brett* airs live most Thursday afternoons at 2 p.m. and is archived on Facebook for viewing at your convenience. Get the latest HPC announcements and then stay for a discussion of a topic of interest.

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### **Scheduling Pastoral Visits**

If you would like a pastoral visit, please let the office know, and a visit with Pastor Brett will be scheduled. The office phone is 814-643-1302.

## **FROM THE DEACONS**

During the deacons' February meeting, plans were made to provide a light breakfast for the **March 22** Huntingdon Presbytery meeting being held at our church.

The deacons will continue to make phone calls, send cards and visit people on our Care list. If you know of anyone who would benefit from this outreach, please contact a deacon.



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Address Service Requested



**March  
2025**



## **Clock Tower Tidings**

**Huntingdon Presbyterian Church**  
**Serving God and Community Since 1789**

*“Our mission is to share God’s word  
and the Good News that Jesus loves us.”*



**Daylight Saving Time Returns March 9**

**Make HPC Part of Your Lenten Journey**