

# Clock Tower Tidings

Huntingdon Presbyterian Church PC(USA)

September-October 2020



*Social distancing is practiced in the pews during Sunday worship.*

Photo by Bill Caufield

## PASTOR'S CORNER

### ***Remain Committed To the 'Small Things'***

I don't think any of us could have imagined a summer quite like this one. Disruptions related to Covid are almost becoming common place now. There have been moments of heart-warming connection and moments of incredible frustration. Adapting to our circumstances has required flexibility, ingenuity and endurance.

In talking with folks, I have heard two broad descriptions of what life has been like in the past few months. For one group, the days blend together without much at all happening or changing. Isolation tends to be the dominate feeling. The other group has been in a kind of crisis management mode for months,

*(Continued on Page 4)*

## **Returning to the Pews During a Pandemic**

In-person Sunday worship resumed in the sanctuary of Huntingdon Presbyterian Church on June 28 after an absence of three months because of the coronavirus pandemic.

While the weekly services include the essentials of Reformed worship, some of the details were new. The session approved reopening the sanctuary under guidelines designed to minimize health risks.

Worshippers wore masks and sat only in designated pews – the ones with cushions – to preserve distancing. Mask and hand-sanitizer dispensers were placed at the doors and offering envelopes were dropped in plates at the rear of the church, rather than in a passed plate.

There were no greeters, ushers or liturgists,  
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## 2 – Clock Tower Tidings



### **Sunday Schedule**

Worship is at 10:30 a.m. in the sanctuary with social distancing guidelines in effect. The worship service is also broadcast live and on demand via Facebook.

### **Dates to Remember**

September 7 – Labor Day – office closed  
September 13 – Session – 6:30 p.m.  
October 4 – World Communion Sunday  
October 11 – Session – 6:30 p.m.  
October 27 – Reformation Sunday

### **Sunday Worship Attendance**

The average Sunday in-person worship attendance in July was 30. Live views on Facebook averaged 16 per week and each archived service received an average of 145 Facebook views.

### **Monthly Giving**

Tithes and offerings for the year through the end of July totaled \$99,392, or an average of \$3,313 a week. Primary fund giving for 2020 is budgeted at an average of \$3,077 a week.

### **Food Pantry Donations**

The Huntingdon Food Pantry is requesting **cereal** for September and **peanut butter** for October. Donations are received the last Sunday of the month.

### **Per Capita Contributions**

The per capita for 2020 is \$37.75 per member, for a total of \$6,153.25. As of the end of July, \$1,946.50 had been donated.



### **Care & Visitation List**

Geraldine Skipper	Audrey Cross
Vin Dandrea	Clyde Brown
Marion Dunlavy	Grace White
Elizabeth Huston	Margy Wilson

If you know anyone who would like to be put on this list, please call the church office at 643-1302.

## **Personnel Committee Seeks New Treasurer**

The HPC Personnel Committee is seeking a new treasurer after regretfully accepting the resignation of Deborah Barrette, effective August 31. Anyone interested in applying for the part-time position should contact Ann Dunlavy, committee chair, or any committee member.

The committee thanks Debbie for her excellent, professional work during the four years she has served as treasurer. She is planning to relocate outside the area.

The church treasurer position is part-time with a flexible schedule. Duties include payroll and reporting, disbursements, maintaining accurate records of accounts, and preparing financial and other reports as required.

A complete job description is available in the church office. Experience with Quickbooks is required.

## **SESSION HIGHLIGHTS**

The clerk reported at the August 9 session meeting held via Zoom that the session approved the following by email during the past month:

- Use of Fellowship Hall for sign-language classes by Jen Warsing
- Use of the rooms in the second-floor Sunday School space by Mickie Byers for tutoring after school
- Pastor Brett's vacation: August 10-17

## **IN MEMORIAM**

The following members died recently:

**Anna M. Howe**, June 26, 2020

**Silas E. Dubbel**, August 11, 2020

They will be greatly missed.

Please remember their families in your prayers.

# Returning to the Pews

*(Continued from First Page)*

and the passing of the peace consisted mostly of hand waves from the spread-out, seated worshipers. There were no bulletins; announcements and worship details were projected on the wall behind the pulpit.

Not all the worshipers were in the sanctuary. Besides the 25 to 40 folks in the pews each Sunday, another few dozen watched a live-stream broadcast on Facebook. The service was then archived on Facebook; in July services drew an average of nearly 150 total views each week.



*Hand sanitizer and masks are offered at the entrance.*

Anthony Bullett expertly provided a variety of organ and piano music, but it was all

instrumental, with no choir or singing by worshipers. The titles of the selections, but not the words, were projected on the wall. There was no children's sermon and no monthly collection during the service of food items for the Food Pantry.

Still, beginning with the call to worship and ending with the benediction, the services followed a familiar order of worship, with a Bible-based sermon as a centerpiece each Sunday.

Joys and concerns were lifted up, including ones sent as Facebook messages from those viewing the live feed at home.

The session at its August meeting did not make any further changes to the Sunday schedule, so it appears as if this combination of in-person and online attendance at Sunday worship will be the norm at HPC for the foreseeable future.



Photos by Bill Caufield

*Ruth and Jim Jackson and Jodie Shoemaker were among the masked worshipers when in-person Sunday services restarted this summer.*



*Anthony Bullett plays a piano solo during the worship service of July 26.*



*Pastor Brett aims his smartphone, which is perched on a stool, at the pulpit. A new video system has since been installed. Details, Page 6.*

#### **4 – Clock Tower Tidings**



Facebook Screen Image

*Pastor Brett led Sunday worship when it resumed for in-person attendance on June 28.*

### **Pastor's Corner**

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constantly addressing changing circumstances like a kid playing whack-a-mole. Overwhelmed is how they would describe themselves. No matter which, if any, of those attitudes you're experiencing, it can be hard to keep sight of the bigger picture or even feel firmly connected to much of anything.

It is my hope that this article helps establish the "bigger picture" of what's going on in the church while also giving each of us some guidance on where we fit in.

First, what is continuing? Most importantly, our worship is continuing. We are worshiping in person and online. New broadcasting equipment has vastly improved the quality of our online worship, so if you have had trouble in the past, check out our new set-up and join us for worship on Facebook. Meals on Wheels and Soup Kitchen are also continuing their important food ministries. Soup Kitchen is continuing to operate doing takeout meals only.

Second, what is new? We're experimenting with new ways to increase our connection while we're physically apart. The first attempt was our four-week Esther Bible Study over Zoom, an online meeting platform. We will be offering

something like this again in the fall, and we might even try combining an in-person and an online option.

We're also hosting new educational ministries. Our own Mickie Byers has started a tutoring service that will operate in our youth room. If you or someone you know would be interested, you can contact Mickie by email: [mbyers4860@gmail.com](mailto:mbyers4860@gmail.com). An American Sign Language course for beginners, taught by Jen Warsing, will be meeting in our Fellowship Hall on Tuesday nights from September 1 to October 27. The class was completely filled after just three days of advertising! Both of these services allow us to positively impact our community by meeting critical needs.

Third, what is "up in the air?" Many outreach activities we had planned for 2020 were forced to be postponed or canceled. Things like Vacation Bible School and Free Community Movie Nights just didn't happen. We also had to cancel many of our congregation's most beloved fellowship events: the One Great Hour of Sharing Auction, Strawberry Social and Summer Picnic to name a few.

It's unclear what we might be able to do in the fall or winter. As of writing this article, I have heard no official word on whether events like community parades, Trick or Treat, or the Christmas Tree lighting downtown will happen. As you might imagine, I am particularly concerned about our "Trunk or Treat" event.

The session is committed to continuing the ministries of the congregation as much as possible while following all the best practices that fit our context. I truly believe we are doing the best we can while navigating unprecedented circumstances.

How can you help? First, make an effort to stay connected. We are adapting to circumstances as they change. Sometimes those adaptations take longer than we anticipated. We are trying our best to keep lines of communication open, so please keep in touch. Watch the announcements before worship services, read the weekly update emails, or

call into the church office if you have a question.

But staying connected with the church involves more than being up to date on the latest announcements. That feeling of real connection with a community that knows and cares about you is much more difficult without those in-person things we are so accustomed to having.

Maintaining that kind of connection requires more initiative from all of us. If there is something going on in your life, share it with the elder assigned to be your “shepherd.” You can also contact me directly. Keep making that effort to stay engaged with what the church is doing: worship services, fireside chats, Bible studies, etc.

And don’t be afraid to be the person who shares encouragement and prayer. Keep sending those cards to each other. Call someone and let them know you’re thinking about them. This is a great way to stop us from focusing too much on our own troubles.

I am increasingly convinced that the future of Christian ministry will depend more and more on our commitment to what we might believe are the “small things.” After all, it is so often the case that a collection of “small things” defines and unites a community. These are things like consistent and joyful participation in worship, whether online or in person; faithfully praying for the church, its leadership and its people; connecting in fellowship even if that fellowship isn’t in person or takes the form of something like a phone call; and supporting the work of the church through faithful financial contributions.

These practices are also deeply transformative. They shape who we are individually and who we are as a community. They connect us more firmly to God and to each other. If you’re looking for something to do, there’s no more perfect place to start.

Yours in Christ,  
Rev. Brett D. Hoover



Facebook Screen Image

## ***Holiday Traditions***

*In a talk about traditions, Pastor Brett made an egg cream soda on a “fireworks-side chat” prior to the Fourth of July. The drink consists of milk, seltzer water and chocolate sauce – but no eggs or cream.*



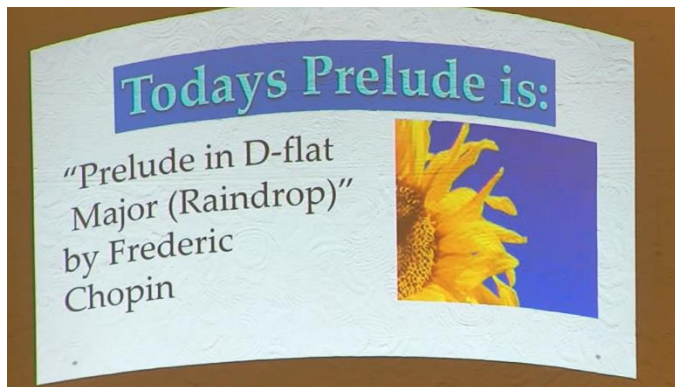
## **Presbytery Makes History With Meetings on Zoom**

**H**untingdon Presbytery conducted its scheduled April and June meetings by Zoom online video conferencing, marking the first times that stated meetings were held virtually rather than in person. The April 21 meeting was scheduled to be held at East Kish Presbyterian Church in Reedsville and the June 30 meeting was to be held at Juniata Presbyterian Church in Altoona.

Because of the need to limit indoor gatherings due to the pandemic, the presbytery decided to use Zoom so commissioners could attend from home.

Some 50 commissioners attended each meeting electronically, which is about the same number of attendees who had been coming to in-person stated meetings.

The **September 22** meeting was scheduled for McVeytown Presbyterian Church, but it appeared as of mid-August that it too would be a virtual meeting on Zoom.



*With the new camera system, slides projected on the wall can be seen clearly on Facebook. Below, the camera above the front door.*

## New Equipment Yields Crisper Images, Sound

The quality of HPC services viewed on the internet should be greatly improved following the installation of new equipment in the sanctuary.

A camera has been mounted on the wall next to the center door and it can be focused by the soundboard operator to show various parts of the sanctuary, including the pulpit, organ and messages projected on the wall. The equipment also allows sound to be picked up directly from microphones.



Before this, Sunday services were broadcast on Facebook using the pastor's smartphone. It was placed on a stool and focused only on the pulpit, picking up sound indirectly from the sanctuary loudspeakers.

The new equipment, first used during the August 16 Sunday service led by Elder John Brockett, provided crisper images and sound.

Work continued in mid-August to address problems with the church's internet connection, which cut out several times during broadcasts this summer.

## 'Moving for Krislund' Aims to Help Camp

Krislund Camp and Conference Center is holding a virtual fundraiser called "Moving for Krislund" from **September 1** through **October 15** in hopes of raising \$10,000.

You can participate by walking, running or riding a bike after securing monetary pledges for each mile you complete, or you can financially support the efforts of one of the participants by making a pledge.



*Painted rock welcomes visitors to camp.*

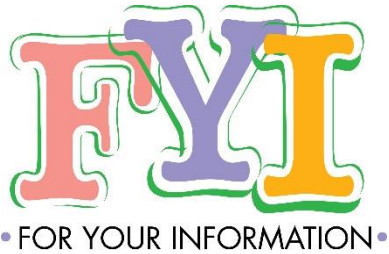
For information or to register, go to the "Moving for Krislund Fundraiser" tab at the top of the home page at [krislund.org](http://krislund.org). Krislund is a ministry of the Huntingdon, Carlisle and Northumberland presbyteries located in eastern Centre County.

While the financial situation at Krislund has necessitated curtailing staff and programs this summer, there is no lack of enthusiasm for the future among the remaining staff and volunteers. Through "Moving for Krislund," they are asking you to be a part of Krislund's future.

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### Food Available for Veterans

The Central Pennsylvania Food Bank is distributing food each month to area active military service members, veterans and their families in need. MilitaryShare gives out food the last Monday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon at War Veterans Memorial Field in Huntingdon. Pre-registration, including proof of military service, is required and income limits apply. To register, contact Reeder Swartz at 814-599-2299 or email him at [reederswartz@hotmail.com](mailto:reederswartz@hotmail.com).



## Giving Remains Strong

Thank you to members and friends who have continued to generously support Huntingdon Presbyterian Church financially through the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. As of the end of July, the amount donated to the primary fund for the year was actually running a little ahead of budget. Such an outpouring of support is much appreciated

Now that in-person worship has resumed, you may place your offerings in receptacles in the sanctuary, or you may continue to mail your offering envelopes and checks to the financial secretary at the church office, 508 Mifflin St., Huntingdon PA 16652. Please do not send checks to the financial secretary's home.

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### 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 643-1302 or email the 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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### Blair Fire Relief Fund Update

Contributions made through HPC to aid the victims of the Blair House apartment fire reached \$29,634 as of the end of July. The money was being used to pay for temporary housing for some of the 59 people displaced by the May 12 fire that severely damaged the historic apartment building on Penn Street.

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### PW Pipe Dream Aids Food Pantry

The Presbyterian Women's Pipe Dream project will benefit the Huntingdon Food

### SOUP KITCHEN TOURS OF DUTY

September 3 – St. James Lutheran Church  
**September 10 – Huntingdon Presbyterian**  
 September 17 – First Methodist Church  
 September 24 – Donation Methodist Church

October 1 – St. John's Episcopal Church  
 October 8 – Alexandria Presbyterian Church  
 October 15 – Abbey Reformed Church  
 October 22 – 12th St. United Methodist Church  
 October 29 – To be determined

Pantry until further notice. Please continue to place your quarters in the pipes located at the entrances to the sanctuary.

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### Stay Connected on Facebook Page

One of the best ways to stay informed about what's happening at HPC is by regularly viewing the church's Facebook page. HPC's Facebook programs can be seen live and are then saved for later viewing at any time. The live worship service is at 10:30 a.m. Sunday and Pastor Brett's "fireside chats" take place most Wednesdays at 2 p.m. The HPC Facebook page is at: [www.facebook.com/huntingdonpresbyterianchurch.org/](http://www.facebook.com/huntingdonpresbyterianchurch.org/)

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### Contact Office for Altar Flowers

If you would like to contribute altar flower arrangements for Sunday worship, please contact Janet Souders in the church office.

### Newsletter Deadline Is Oct. 15

This is a combined September-October newsletter, so the next newsletter will be in November. The deadline for the next issue is Thursday, **October 15**. The pandemic has curtailed many church activities and there hasn't been much for the newsletter to publicize or report on. We hope to be able to resume a monthly publication schedule soon.

**Huntingdon Presbyterian Church**

508 Mifflin Street

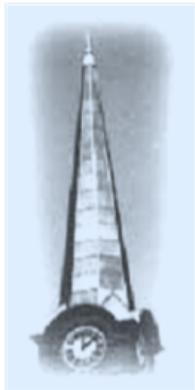
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814-643-1302

Address Service Requested



**Sept.-Oct.  
2020**



## **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.”*

**Join Us This Sunday  
In Person or Online  
Details Inside**

**Stay in Touch by Visiting HPC’s Facebook Page**