

Clock Tower Tidings

Huntingdon Presbyterian Church PC(USA)

April 2025



PASTOR'S CORNER

Easter Turns Disbelief Into Joy and More

One of my favorite episodes of the TV show *The Office* features everyone going to a Hindu festival called Diwali. The socially awkward manager Michael Scott is convinced that Diwali is basically the Hindu version of Halloween. So he shows up in a costume and convinces his date to do the same thing. Of course, no one else is dressed in a Halloween costume and embarrassment ensues.

The whole scene works on a comedic level because it points something deeper we all know. Every holiday or celebration has a certain character or vibe. And if we don't know what that character is, we can miss the point of the celebration and maybe even give unintentional offense.

When we think about Easter, what's the character or vibe of our celebration? Joy is probably the first thing that came into your mind. Everything from the light colors to the discovery of hidden treats and, most especially, the confirmation of all Jesus said about the grace and love of God through his resurrection, all of it directs us to joy. But is Easter that simple? Is joy the only response to which we are called?

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Photo by Bill Caufield

Pastor Brett imposes ashes at the community Ash Wednesday service at St. James Lutheran Church.

Explore Holy Week Worship Opportunities

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, **April 13**, and culminates with Easter on Sunday, **April 20**. In between there will be a Maundy Thursday service the evening of **April 17** and the Huntingdon Area Forum of Churches' cross walk on Good Friday, **April 18**.

Everyone is invited to participate in these worship opportunities in person, or online via Facebook for the Sunday services.

The sanctuary will be ablaze with color for Easter Sunday, featuring HPC's traditional butterfly decorations, and flower arrangements donated in honor or memory of loved ones. Easter commemorates the day Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to his disciples. Easter is a celebration of faith, hope and new life.

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Sunday Schedule

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

Dates to Remember

April 1 – Deacons – 7 p.m.
April 2, 9 – PW Lenten Bible Study – 10 a.m.
April 6 – Session – 6:30 p.m.
April 7 – Presbyterian Women – 1 p.m.
April 12 – Harry Potter Party – 2-4 p.m.
April 13 – Palm Sunday
April 17 – Maundy Thursday service – 6 p.m.
April 18 – Forum Good Friday cross walk
April 20 – Easter
April 26 – Mayfest in downtown Huntingdon

Food Pantry Donations

The Huntingdon Food Pantry is requesting **tomato soup** for April. Donations can be dropped off at the office or in the basket in the first-floor hallway near the lift.

Worship Attendance

The average in-person worship attendance for four Sundays in February and March was 37. Services had an average of 102 live and archived Facebook views.

Weekly Giving

Tithes and offerings through February totaled \$27,584, or an average of \$3,448 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 February 28, per capita contributions totaled \$1,061.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for May's issue is Tuesday, **April 15**.



Photo by Bill Caufield

A cross at St. James Lutheran Church is shrouded in black on Ash Wednesday.

Holy Week

(Continued from First Page)

Palm Sunday, which starts Holy Week, will include the distribution of palms, recalling Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and special music by Wopsonnock Winds.

Maundy Thursday will be marked by a Tenebrae communion service in Fellowship Hall. The service will begin with a simple meal at 6 p.m. "Maundy" comes from the Latin word for commandment. According to the Gospel of John, Jesus at the Last Supper said, "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."

The Forum of Churches will hold its live Good Friday cross-walk procession beginning at noon at the Abbey Reformed Church. During stops at seven downtown churches, the walk will feature meditations on the Seven Last Words of Jesus on the cross. The stop at HPC will mark Jesus' sixth words – "It is finished."

Holy Week follows Lent, which began this year with a community Ash Wednesday service at St. James Lutheran Church on March 5. Pastor Brett preached the Ash Wednesday sermon, Ashes were imposed on those in attendance.

In addition, Presbyterian Women is offering a Bible study each Wednesday of Lent.

Partition and Marker Cap Work on Clock

The mechanical works for the town clock are now enclosed behind a glass partition, while outside the church a new marker explains the clock's historical significance. With these finishing touches, work associated with the restored clock appears to be complete.

Workers installed the partition in late February. It allows the entrance at Fifth and Mifflin streets to be used once more while letting people see the clock's intricate inner workings for the first time.

The vestibule had been blocked off as a safety measure since last May, awaiting the arrival of the partition, which includes a door in the glass to allow for cleaning and maintenance of the clock works.

As part of the restoration of the historic town clock in the church's bell tower, the clock's mechanical works were moved down to the north vestibule. The works previously had been housed in the steeple.

The blue marker with gold-color lettering outside the north vestibule was installed in early March by borough workers. It tells of the history of the four-faced clock, which since 1872 has been owned and maintained by Huntingdon Borough.

The clock went through several iterations until 2015, when it stopped working.

The current clock is a restored version of the 1910 Seth Thomas timepiece that was installed after a fire destroyed the original clock. The borough decided on a restoration of the clock, including new faces and weight-driven mechanics. Restoration was completed last year by Balzer Family Clock Works.

The borough is still working out details of the new clock's operation, including how to ensure the clock keeps the correct time.



Photos by Bill Caufield

The newly installed glass partition shows workings of the clock. The orange installation markings have since been removed.



The tower clock historic marker outside HPC.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The session approved the following during its monthly meeting on March 9 held in person and via Zoom:

- Replacement of current Meeting Owl for Zoom meetings
- Baptisms of Alexander John Carpenter, son of Hannah Thompson, and of Wyatt Gage Peters, son of Abigail Goodman
- Harry Potter event rescheduled to April 12
- Repair /replacement by Shane Peachey of the security system in the side (parking lot) door
- Tenebrae service on Maundy Thursday
- Next session meeting on Sunday, April 6



Pipe Dream to Benefit Mount Union Library

The second PW Pipe Dream of 2025, running April, May and June, benefits the Mount Union Community Library, a totally volunteer operation serving readers in the Mount Union area.

Several years ago, the Huntingdon County Commissioners restructured the county library system for cost-saving reasons; Mount Union lost services. Volunteers rallied around their library and saved it in a limited way.

Services and volunteers are coordinated through the Friends of the Library. The contact person is Pat Yagecic. Hours are Tuesdays, 12-6 p.m. and Thursdays, 12-4 p.m. The library has a Facebook page.

Space is offered to the community for meetings. Library needs include volunteers, children's books and monetary donations. The Mount Union High School's Future Business Leaders of America offers a monthly children's program, which is a positive for not only the children but also the high school students. Head Start offered a three-year program that included a crate of books and a quilt from the Redbud Quilt Guild.

Presbyterian Women is very excited about this upcoming Pipe Dream. Quarters, quarters, quarters – help the pipes "sing" into spring! The generosity of the congregation is truly appreciated.

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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.

Final Sessions in April For Lenten Bible Study

The last two dates for the 2025 PW Lenten Bible Study are Wednesday, **April 2**, and Wednesday, **April 9**, at 10 a.m. in the Memorial Family Room. Those attending Bible study have found *Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation* by Patricia K. Tull has been a biblical, enlightening and historical look at very relevant topics important to us today in the 21st century.

Anita Nwaobilo presents the Old and the New Testaments' messages from our Lord on caring for each other and for His creation. All are welcome even though the end of Bible study is just around the corner; the beginning chapters promise the "bounty" of the ending chapters. PW Book Club does not meet during the months of Lenten Bible Study.



Book Club Returns May 7 With 'The Agitators'

Mark your calendars – Wednesday, **May 7**, is the day Presbyterian Women's Book Club returns.

What's on tap? A book by Dorothy Wickenden titled *The Agitators: Three Friends Who Fought for Abolition and Women's Rights*. The book delves into the friendship and the work of Harriet Tubman, Martha Coffin Wright and Frances A. Seward.

The Agitators opens in the 1820s and ends after the Civil War, which is seen through the eyes of the book's three protagonists.

"Through richly detailed letters from the time and exhaustive research, Wickenden traces the second American revolution these women fought to bring about, the toll it took on their families, and its lasting effects on the country. Riveting and profoundly relevant to our time..." (Amazon).



Phil Thompson unwraps his prize. Below, diners take part in the potluck lunch.



Photos by Bill Caufield

Max Byers reads his lines as Sylvia Byers listens.

March Potluck Serves A Tasty Murder Mystery

At many potlucks, the question of whodunit revolves around who brought what food. At the March 16 potluck, the question was: who killed Elizabeth Killingsworth?

Diners were asked to decide who committed the “Murder at Killingsworth Farms,” a murder mystery confection spun by Sylvia Byers with the help of six members of the congregation who played the six suspects.

The cast included Pastor Brett, Melissa Hoover, Zach Byers, Max Byers, Sue Lang and Amanda Hetrick, each of whose characters had a story to tell and clues to give. At several points in the skit, members of the audience were encouraged to ask questions of the suspects. The audience then voted on whodunit.

Only one diner guessed the guilty party. Phil Thompson voted for Norman D’Edly, brother-in-law of the deceased, played by Max Byers. For his sleuthing, Phil received a homemade apple pie baked by Artamarie Barclay.

The potluck was hosted by the Mission and Outreach Committee, which decked out Fellowship Hall with green and orange St. Patrick’s Day decorations.



Auction, Picnic Upcoming

Plan on attending two fun events later this spring that are sponsored by the Mission and Outreach Committee:

- The One Great Hour of Sharing auction will take place at 2 p.m. on Saturday, **May 3**, in the sanctuary. Congregation members can bring auction items to the church office from **April 1** to **April 27**.
- The annual church picnic will be held on Sunday, **June 1**, at Portstown Park.

Harry Potter Party Rescheduled for Apr. 12

The third annual Harry Potter Hogwarts Party has been rescheduled to Saturday, **April 12**. The party, from 2 to 4 p.m., was originally to be held in February, but was postponed because of inclement weather.

Volunteers are still needed to help with herding the “students” to their classes and chatting with parents and other family members. If you would like to be part of a fun afternoon, please contact Sylvia Byers in the church office.

Four 15-minute classes are planned, based on the offerings of the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, a fictional school featured in J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter books. The event is sponsored by the Mission and Outreach Committee.

Pastor’s Corner

(Continued from First Page)

The Gospel accounts of the first Easter give us a very different vibe. The first reactions were disbelief and confusion. Even ancient people understood that the dead tended to stay dead. Even Jews who believed in the resurrection would not have expected it to happen to one person before the end of history. The idea that Jesus has risen was not accepted by his closest followers until they saw and interacted with him. In some cases, that didn’t happen for days after the event.

But those initial reactions were not the lasting ones. As Jesus appeared to the disciples and spoke with them, it gradually dawned on them that this was real. Jesus was real, alive and risen from the grave.

No disciple exemplified this transformation from disbelief to faith better than Thomas. He missed Jesus’ first appearance to the other disciples and refuses to believe until he not only sees Jesus but also touches his wounds. When Jesus appears and Thomas sees him, Thomas can only manage to say, “My Lord and

my God!” Disbelief and confusion were transformed into wonder and faith. Despair and dejection became joy and hope.

Easter is a time for joy. We can certainly say that because we know the rest of the story. We know what the disciples didn’t know those first few hours of the first Easter morning. We know the empty tomb means Christ is risen. We know his body was not hidden or taken but alive and made new. We know all of what Jesus said was confirmed and that his eternal life is now shared with us through faith. All of that is certainly an occasion for joy.

To our joy let’s also add some of the other experiences of the disciples. Let’s add wonder. “He is risen,” is the Easter phrase that will be on our lips this month. It’s easy enough to say. But how often have we let the profundity of those words settle into our hearts? Jesus is risen. Death has lost its dominion. And through faith we will share in this new, eternal life. Take time to let the wonder of that rejuvenate your soul.

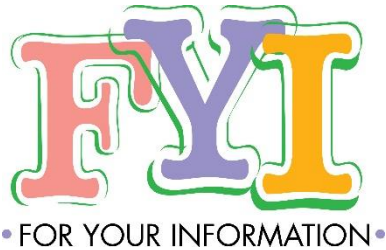
To our joy we should also add faith. Faith is the response of Thomas and all the other disciples to their experience of the risen Christ. There are plenty of celebrations where joy is the end experience, the whole point of what we’re doing. When it comes to Easter and the resurrection, joy is a side effect. It’s the consequence of believing this amazing thing. Our faith empowers our joy. Faith transforms joy from sentiment to reality because it grounds our joy in a true experience. Jesus is alive. And because he lives, we also will live.

May your Easter celebrations be filled with joy. But also take time to rest in the wonder of what God has done for you in Jesus Christ. And let that wonder inspire renewed faith.

Yours in the Joy of Our Resurrected Lord,
Rev. Brett D. Hoover

“Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.’ Thomas said to him, ‘My Lord and my God!’”

– John 20:27-28



2024 File Photo

Collection bags for cards last Christmas.

Card Shower for Easter Planned by Deacons

The deacons are planning an Easter card shower for shut-ins and people on their care and visitation list. The shower will be similar to successful card showers held at Christmas and last Easter.

There will be gift bags in the back of the sanctuary with each recipient's name attached. If you have a special memory of the recipient, consider sharing it, and even if you don't know the individual, please consider sharing a card with them.

Bags for the cards will be at the back of the church until Palm Sunday, **April 13**. The names of the recipients are: Alice Heine, Don and Pat Bachman. Pat Papp, Nancy Taylor, Dick Norris, Sue Docherty, Jane Brown, Jamie Howe, Rev. Harold Williams Jr., Jeff Schawe, Nancy Shelow and Lisa Shope

Deacons Continue Outreach

The deacons continue to send cards and make phone calls and visits to people on its Care list. If you or anyone you know would benefit from this outreach, please contact a deacon.

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.

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. In case of emergency, please call Pastor Brett at 724-331-5798.

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Sunday Liturgists Still Needed

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 Ann Dunlavy and Sue Lang for being liturgists on recent Sundays.

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Thanks for the Musical Help

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

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Contributing Flowers for Worship

If you would like to contribute flower arrangements – either fresh or artificial – for the Sunday worship service, please contact the church office.

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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.

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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. Details are available online at krislund.org

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Address Service Requested



**April
2025**



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**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.”*



Worship with HPC for Holy Week and Easter