

CLOCK TOWER TIDINGS



Our mission is to share
God's word and the Good
News that Jesus loves us.

Huntingdon Presbyterian Church
Huntingdon, PA 16652
Founded 1789

September 2025



Photo by Bill Caufield

A youngster pans for gems at National Night Out. Jodie Shoemaker at right holds rock charts that were given to the 'prospectors.'

PASTOR'S CORNER

The Answer to 'Why Am I Here?'

“Why am I here?” That’s a question we can ask in a variety of contexts. It could be a form of exasperation, something I’ve often asked myself at awkward social gatherings. It could be a more contemplative question as in “how did I get here,” or “where do I really come from?” But lately, I’ve most often heard it as a question of value. “Why am I here” might as well be a stand-in for the question “why do I matter,” or “what am I here for?”

It’s a question we have a hard time answering because many of the answers we might come up with aren’t very sustainable. We could point to our work and the contributions we make to others, but there eventually comes a time when the work ends or we are no longer able to do it. We could point to family, if we are blessed to have them, but

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‘Night Out’ Provides Outreach Opportunity

Hundreds of people converged on the HPC parking lot the evening of August 1 for kids games, free food and prayer during the borough’s annual National Night Out in downtown Huntingdon.

The games loosely followed the theme of “Minecraft,” a popular video game. In addition to corn hole, there was a table that invited youngsters to pan for gems and a “cave crawl.” Free popcorn and snow cones proved to be a hit with both adults and children.

HPC’s National Night Out activities were especially designed to appeal to children. Nearby on Fifth Street a foam generator was a magnet for kids.

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UPDATE

Sunday Schedule

Worship is at 10:30 a.m. in the sanctuary. 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

September 1 – Labor Day; office closed
September 2 – 9 a.m.-noon office hours resume
September 2 – Deacons – 7 p.m.
September 3 – PW Book Club – 10 a.m.
September 8 – PW meeting – 1 p.m.
September 11 – Hometown Hearts meal
September 12 – Game Night – 7 p.m.
September 18 – Mission and Outreach – 9:30 a.m.
September 20 – Presbytery meeting

Food Pantry Donations

The Huntingdon Food Pantry is requesting **cereal** for September. Donations can be dropped off near the lift or in the south vestibule.

Worship Attendance

The average in-person Sunday worship attendance over the summer was 42. Services had an average of 92 live and archived Facebook views.

Weekly Giving

Tithes and offerings through July totaled \$100,398, or an average of \$3,347 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 July 31, per capita contributions totaled \$1,439.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the October newsletter is Monday, **September 15**.

Deacons' Care List

If you or someone you know would like to be put on the deacons' Care List, please tell a deacon or call the church office at 814-643-1302.

Please Pay Your 2025 Per Capita Assessment

All members are urged if able to pay their per capita assessment of \$41 for 2025.

The per capita is split among Huntingdon Presbytery, the Synod of the Trinity and the General Assembly. It provides most of the funding for the work of those bodies.

HPC's total per capita assessment for 2025 is \$5,535, which is based on membership of 135 as of December 31, 2023. As of the end of July, members contributed \$1,439 in per capita giving, leaving more than \$4,000 yet to be met.

In 2024, \$1,940.72 was donated out of a total assessment of \$5,572. The difference was covered with other church funds. Because HPC is part of a connectional denomination, it is important that we meet our per capita obligation each year.

The front of your 2025 box of offering envelopes contains a blue "Per Capita Apportionment" envelope, or you may place a check in an offering plate in the sanctuary or drop it off at the office. Please write "Per capita" in the check's note field.

Thanks to all who already have paid their per capita for 2025.

Scholarships for Three Campers

Three youngsters took advantage of HPC scholarships to spend a week at Krislund Camp and Retreat Center this summer. Scholarships were open to Huntingdon area residents. Money came from funds set aside for the former Blair Park chapel, which HPC no longer oversees.

IN MEMORIAM

The following member died recently:

Dr. John M. Cook, June 25, 2025

He will be greatly missed.
Please remember his family in your prayers.

Resurfacing, New Lines Refresh Parking Lot

Worshippers arriving for the service on Sunday, July 27, were greeted by a resurfaced and re-lined parking lot. It was the first time in several decades that the parking lot was refreshed.

The parking lot was emptied of cars and chained off as K&K Resurfacing began prep work on the site on Wednesday, July 23. K&K followed on Thursday with the resurfacing and on Friday by painting the parking spaces with yellow lines. In addition, two spaces near the front entrance were set aside for handicapped parking and designated with blue paint.

The work eliminated the confusion about handicapped paint designations near the rear door, which were placed on the asphalt when a ramp was installed. The ramp was taken out, replaced by a ramp to the front door of the church, but the handicapped symbols remained.

The parking lot also expanded by one more space, thanks to the removal of a storage shed near the rear door. The lot now has 29 places for regular parking plus the two handicapped spots.

The session approved in June spending \$2,500 to repair the cracks, clean and seal coat the parking lot. The cost of adding the parking-space lines to the newly resealed lot was made as a donation to HPC by K&K.



Photos by Bill Caufield

A K&K worker sweeps the lot prior to resealing. The sign says the parking lot will be closed beginning July 23.



The newly relined parking lot includes fresh directional arrows, above. Blue paint marks the handicapped-parking spots, below.



The K&K tanker that provided the sealcoating is parked in the HPC lot.

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Zach Byers gives tips at the cave crawl.

National Night Out

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The Mission and Outreach Committee coordinated the church's participation in the event, which ran from 5 to 8 p.m. The committee thanks the 14 volunteers who helped with the food, fun and games at one of HPC's major community outreach efforts.

New this year was a tent where Pastor Brett prayed with about 20 people who desired prayer and a white Prayer Board where folks wrote the names of those needing prayer. Pastor Brett also gave out small plastic Jesus figurines to those who stopped by. The Prayer Board was highlighted in the Prayers of the People section of Sunday worship on August 3. It will remain in the sanctuary and will be updated.

The weather cooperated, with temperatures in the 70s and partly sunny skies. Unlike two years ago, there was no rain to disrupt the festivities.

In addition to the free snacks handed out by HPC, a Kaleena's food truck sold chicken and other dishes to those who wanted something more substantial.

The borough's police department sponsored Huntingdon's National Night Out to strengthen connections between residents and local public safety agencies. Washington Street between Fifth and Eighth streets showcased area law enforcement, fire and EMS personnel, as well as emergency vehicles and equipment. Community agencies and groups also participated.



Photos by Bill Caufield

Pastor Brett offers a prayer at the prayer tent.



Kathy Criswell, right, watches a corn hole player.



Karen Fleming, left, helps at the free snack table.



Miniature plastic Jesus figurines were available at the prayer tent.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Letting Our 'Bling' Give Light to the World

On June 6 and 7, three PW members – Alice Griswold, Anita Nwaobilo and Deb Hetrick (with Don Hetrick as driver) – attended the Synod of the Trinity's Presbyterian Women Central Region gathering at the Penn Stater in State College.

The retreat was titled "Treasured." It included a Bible study and some very interesting synod mission projects along with singing and some crafting. The Bible study used different scriptures to show how we are "chosen by the Lord to be a people for His treasured possession."

We spent both days discussing shiny jewelry that is called "bling" and how that jewelry looks like diamonds. We then talked about what has to happen for a diamond to be formed, and that there are times when our lives go through the same things. Just as diamonds can't shine in the darkness, we must carry Christ's light and shine in those places that sometimes seem to be the darkest. We ended by saying that we can be like the shiny gems and let our "bling" light the world around us.

We also learned about PW of the Synod's mission project called Peace Promise, which supports and assists survivors who have escaped from sex trafficking.

These women, as they feel able, work at making and selling soap and candles to financially support the mission and to help them feel that there are actually people in the world who care about them and they can trust.

When the next retreat is held, I hope that more of you will be able to attend. It is wonderful to meet Presbyterian Women from other parts of the state and learn about them and with them.

– Deb Hetrick

PW Book Club Turns To Autumn Selections

Where has the summer gone? The PW Book Club September selection, **A Man Called Ove** by Fredrik Backman, will be discussed on Wednesday, **September 3**, at 10 a.m. in the former choir room; this book, recommended by James Kann, was made into a movie starring Tom Hanks.

The story centers on a young family of four who moves next door to an old "curmudgeon" who is not the least bit happy when his mailbox is flattened! But as everyone who loves books knows, there's more to the story of these new neighbors.

Book Club's October selection of **Small Great Things** by Jodi Picoult introduces Ruth Jefferson, a labor and delivery nurse with 20-plus years of experience, who is removed from caring for a newborn and reassigned to another baby. The hospital has complied with the wishes of the parents who are white supremacists. Ruth is African American. The next day Ruth is alone in the nursery when that white baby goes into cardiac distress.

What should she do? Obey orders or do what she's trained to do – save the patient? Picoult tackles race, privilege, justice and compassion -- and, as in life, the novel has no easy answers. "**Small Great Things** is a remarkable achievement from a writer at the top of her game." (Amazon)

Please join this PW Book Club discussion on Wednesday, **October 1**, at 10 a.m. in the former choir room.

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.

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It's Back to School, So Backpacks Are the Focus

With the Bags of Love Pipe Dream finishing September 30, Presbyterian Women will end 2025 with the October, November and December Pipe Dream benefitting the Standing Stone Elementary School Backpack Program.

Aligning this popular Pipe Dream with back-to-school and fall-sports excitement makes sense and, hopefully, reminds everyone that while quarters fit the pipes, all donations are welcome.

PW is very grateful for the generosity and caring of our church family – thank you!

PW NOTES

Regular Meetings Resume: Presbyterian Women resumes its regular meeting schedule at 1 p.m. on Monday, **September 8**, in the Memorial Family Room. The schedule for the rest of 2025 is: **October 6, November 3, and December 1.**

September Pipe Dream: It's the last month for the Pipe Dream benefitting Bags of Love. Quarters, quarters, quarters make a nice ring as they fall into the pipes! PW is grateful for the continued support of its Pipe Dreams. The Bags of Love Pipe Dream covered July, August and September.

Book Club Dates: PW Book Club meets at 10 a.m. the first Wednesday of the month in the former choir room. Please mark the remaining 2025 dates: **September 3, October 1, November 5, and December 3.**

2026 General Assembly Theme

The General Assembly planning team has announced the theme of next summer's 227th General Assembly, which will take place online and at the Baird Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from **June 22** through **July 2**. The theme is "Persevering Toward Wholeness."



Photos by Bill Caufield



Fun and Games: The first Game Night featured Disney's Apple to Apple card game, above, and a kid-friendly Monopoly board game, at left. Next Game Night is 7 p.m. on Friday, September 12. All are welcome.

Next Hometown Hearts Shift Is on September 11

The volunteer team from HPC is responsible for preparing the free Hometown Hearts meal on Thursday, **September 11**, at St. James Lutheran Church. The hot meals are much appreciated and anticipated by the diners, who number about 200 each week.

Since the Covid pandemic, the meals are takeout only. Each team of workers includes the prep crew and a servers / clean-up crew.

HPC is always looking for more volunteers to help with its shifts. Because a growing number of area churches and civic organization take turns preparing the meals, HPC's participation is only five or six times a year. Hometown Hearts is an outgrowth of the former soup kitchen located for many years at HPC.

To join HPC's team, call Artamarie Barclay at (814) 599-0872 or Sylvia in the church office.

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

Liturgists Still Needed: If you are interested in sharing your gifts in Sunday worship as a liturgist, please contact the church office or add your name to the list on the Information Station located at the back of the sanctuary. Several Sunday services in August went without liturgists because of lack of volunteers. Your help is much needed and greatly appreciated. Thanks to Amanda Hetrick, Anita Nwaobilo, Ann Dunlavy and Steve Miller for serving as liturgists on Sundays in June, July and August.

Thanks for the Musical Help: Thanks to Sarah Peachey, Joann Weber, Anita Nwaobilo, Kay Rossman, Keith Sutton and Kathy Myers for sharing their musical talent at recent services. We welcome back from summer break church musician Ivan Yumagulov.

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

Bags for Kids Available: Activity bags are available at the back of the sanctuary. Each bag has items to keep kids entertained. Enjoy the bag while you're at the worship service and please return it so it can be replenished.

Presbytery Meeting: Huntingdon Presbytery will hold its next stated meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, **September 20**, at Lewistown Presbyterian Church. The offering will go to Krislund Camp and Retreat Center. Worship leader will be the Rev. Ernie Walls.



Facebook Image

Guest Preacher: The Rev. Stephanie Weaver brought the message for the Sunday worship service on July 13.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The session approved the following during its monthly meeting on August 17 held in person and via Zoom:

- Upcoming fall congregational events:
 - Game night on September 12
 - New members' class on September 14
 - Holy Smokes food fellowship
 - Supporting Presbyterian Disaster Assistance with a hygiene-kit mission project
- Removal of the kitchen stove griddle due to the expense of insurance-mandated upgrades
- Moving regularly scheduled session meetings to the third Sunday of the month; the next session meeting will be September 21

KRISLUND NOTES

Cabins for Penn State Games: Krislund Camp and Retreat Center has 20 cabins available for individual rental for home Penn State football games this fall. To book these cabins or other facilities at Krislund, contact Charity at 814-422-8878 or at registration@krislund.org.

Krislund Golf Tourney: Krislund Camp and Retreat Center is holding its third annual golf tournament on Friday, **September 5**, at Nittany Country Club in Centre County.

Pastor's Corner

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kids (or even grandkids) grow up and seem to need us less and less. It seems that no matter where we stake our claim of value, it can become unstable or insufficient to quiet those voices within us that press us to our core: “Why do we matter? What are we supposed to do?”

I've heard these questions from people in every life circumstance you could imagine. With schools fully back in session, my mind is drawn to every young person who asked me questions like this as they've considered their future. I've heard it from middle-aged folks (including myself) who wonder about the value or impact of their contributions. I've heard it from many older folks wondering where to find purpose now after the big life tasks seem to be done.

Contemplating these questions is essentially the point of the Book of Ecclesiastes. The author, known as the Teacher, searches for some kind of lasting meaning or significance through all the fading glories of life. His conclusion is shocking. There is nothing. At least nothing in this life. Our only true hope is in something that transcends everything in the world that can disappoint. That something is actually someone: God.

But honestly, I might prefer the clarity of the first question in the Westminster Shorter Catechism. If you're not familiar with catechisms, they are a question-and-answer-style tool to help teach the faith, especially for children. The first question goes like this: “What is the chief end of man?” This is another way of asking the question with which we've been wrestling. Why am I here and what am I here for? The answer: “Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”

This answer continues to astound me every time I read it. The highest goal we were created to achieve isn't economic activity. We aren't here to produce and add value to what is produced. The highest goal we were created to achieve isn't usefulness. Our value isn't determined merely by the tangible contributions we make to others. Instead, our purpose is found when we glorify

and enjoy God. That's why we're here. That's what makes us matter.

This is such a challenging perspective for most of us to embrace. We are so used to the idea that we are only valuable if we measurably contribute. The more we do, the more valuable we feel. And when the value of our contributions comes into question for whatever reason, we feel worse than diminished. We feel worthless.

But the Christian perspective frees us from this treadmill of striving and self-doubt. Our value isn't determined by what we achieve. Our worth isn't measured on the basis of what we produce. Instead, we fully live into our purpose when we glorify and enjoy God. Every prayer we pray, every praise we lift, every worship service, every extension of self-giving love no matter the scale, everything that testifies to God's goodness and grace, love and might, justice and mercy, that's where we can find lasting contentment and peace.

No matter your capacity or life circumstance, you can glorify and enjoy God. You can live into the purpose for which you were created. If we need a duty to live into in order to feel content, in order to rest confident in the truth that we matter, let it be that. Glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Brett D. Hoover

“Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”
- 1 Corinthians 10:11b



Facebook Image

Birthday Surprise: The choir surprised Pastor Brett on his 38th birthday on Sunday, August 10, with a cake wheeled in by Sylvia Byers.