

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

June 2025



Photo by Bill Caufield

Pastor Brett asks for bids on a silver certificate at OGHs Auction.

OGHS Giving Tops \$7,900

Once again, the members and friends of HPC have responded generously to the annual One Great Hour of Sharing appeal, topping last year's total by more than \$1,000.

The OGHs Auction held May 3 in the sanctuary raised \$2,265, and monetary donations as of May 11 totaled \$5,640, for a grand total of \$7,905. All the money goes to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), where it is split three ways to fund disaster relief, self-development and hunger programs.

Last year's auction raised \$2,178 and donations brought in \$4,660, for a grand total in 2024 of \$6,838.

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PASTOR'S CORNER

Life Is Not Lived on A Screen

In the final days of the school year, our kids are bringing home all kinds of papers: stacks of workbooks, writing journals, and final announcements. Among the reams paper was a guide for limiting screen time over the summer break. It had suggestions about putting time limits on using devices and how parents could redirect their children to other activities like reading or, if you can believe it, going outside.

I appreciated the guide in a way. It is so easy to get swept up in the life of screens. Developers of different apps and programs actually consult with game theorist on the best way to hook users on their products. They use the same physiological tricks as slot machines to capture folks' time and attention. There is a real risk that if we are not

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UPDATE

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

June 1 – Clock dedication – 11:30 a.m.
June 2 – Presbyterian Women – 1 p.m.
June 4 – PW Book Club – 10 a.m.
June 8 – Pentecost
June 8 – Strawberry Social – after service
June 12 – Mission and Outreach – 9:30 a.m.
June 15 – Father's Day
June 15 – Church Picnic in park – 10:30 a.m.
June 16 – Juneteenth
June 18 – Choir practice – 6:30 p.m.
June 22 – Session – 6:30 p.m.

Food Pantry Donations

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

Worship Attendance

The average in-person worship attendance for four Sundays in April and May was 57. Services had an average of 101 live and archived Facebook views.

Weekly Giving

Tithes and offerings through April totaled \$63,233, or an average of \$3,720 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 April 30, per capita contributions totaled \$1,357.

Newsletter Deadline

The next newsletter will be a combined July-August issue. The deadline is Monday, **June 16**.

Deacons' Care List

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



Date of Church Picnic Changed to June 15

The date of the church picnic has been changed to Sunday, **June 15**, which is Father's Day. It had been scheduled for June 1, but the Mission and Outreach Committee rescheduled the date after it learned that Pastor Brett would be on vacation on June 1.

The picnic will be in the pavilion at Portstown Park on Penn Street. The day will start with the 10:30 a.m. Sunday worship service in the pavilion, followed by the picnic. There will be no service in the sanctuary on that day.

Hamburgers and hot dogs, buns, condiments and drinks will be provided by the Mission and Outreach Committee. Bring your best picnic food to share, along with your own place settings.



June 8 Is the Day For Strawberry Social

The deacons will be dishing up all sorts of strawberry treats on Sunday, **June 8**, and you're invited. The deacons' annual Strawberry Social will take place in the Memorial Family Room after the Sunday worship service.

Besides lot of strawberries, there will be cake and ice cream plus chocolate dip.

Strawberries aren't your thing? There also will be cheese and crackers, nuts and pretzels, along with coffee, tea and lemonade.

Adjustments Made To Restored Clock

A year after they reinstalled a refurbished town clock at HPC, Rick and Linda Balzer returned to Huntingdon to make adjustments to the clock, which in recent months has not been functioning properly and sometimes has experienced outages.

The Balzers worked for five hours on May 5 to get the clock back on track and to give Gary Shaffer, a borough maintenance employee, a refresher on the ins and outs of the clock's mechanical works.

Balzer Family Clock Works, headquartered in Freeport, Maine, was hired by the borough to restore the clock. Housed in the HPC bell tower since 1872, the clock is owned and maintained by the borough. The borough used Community Development Block Grant funds to pay for most of the restoration work.

The current mechanical works were installed after a 1910 fire ruined the original mechanism. As part of the clock's restoration, the mechanical works were returned to their original condition and moved from the tower to the church's north vestibule. Enclosed in glass, the works can now be viewed at ground level.

A dedication ceremony for the restored clock is planned after the Sunday service on **June 1**.



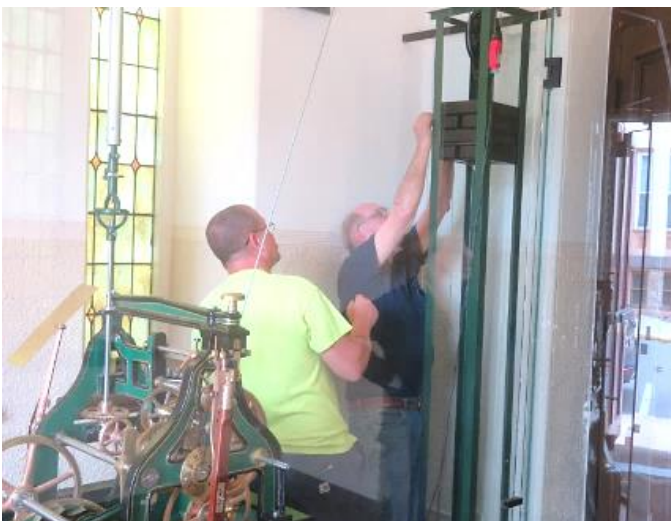
2024 File Photo

Clock tower as seen in winter from Flagpole Hill.

Project Wins State Award

The restoration of the Huntingdon town clock housed in the HPC steeple recently received the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office's Community Initiative Award. The clock restoration was one of two projects statewide honored by the office for work completed in 2024.

According to the office, Huntingdon Borough, Huntingdon Presbyterian Church, Huntingdon Landmarks and the Huntingdon County Planning Department were recognized for their successful collaboration to restore and reinterpret the borough clock.



Photos by Bill Caufield

The borough's Mike Shaffer, left, assists Rick Balzer, right, with the clock's pulleys and weights.

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OGHS Generosity

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On a per capita basis, HPC has consistently been among the top congregations in the PC(USA) in its support for OGHS, raising more than \$67,000 over the past 10 years. Since 2016, the auction alone has raised more than \$26,000, including 2022 when the auction was canceled because of the pandemic.

This year's auction featured more than 70 offerings, ranging from jewelry and collectibles to food. Lots of food. Nearly half of the winning bids went to food items – pierogies, soup, bread, buns, blueberries, maple syrup, eggs and more.

Pastor Brett was the main auctioneer this year, spelled by Paul Post. Max Byers assisted the auctioneers, positioning for the sanctuary cameras the items up for bid.

The auction was organized by the Mission and Outreach Committee with the help of secretary Sylvia Byers. The deacons offered light refreshments in the rear of the sanctuary. The committee provided OGHS Minutes for Mission during Sunday services leading up to the auction.

For more than 70 years, One Great Hour of Sharing has provided Presbyterians a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, the programs provide people with safety, sustenance and hope.



Photos by Bill Caufield

Annette Lloyd and Phil Thompson check the numbers. They were tellers, keeping track of winning bids and collecting the money afterward.



Above, Pastor Brett and Paul Post ask for bids on a lighted birdhouse. Below, Karen Fleming peruses auction fare prior to the bidding.



Paul Post takes a turn as an auctioneer, encouraging bids on a set of books.

PW PIPE DREAM

Tariffs Could Impact Costs of Bags of Love

Presbyterian Women's Pipe Dreams run on a three-month schedule. Two of the Pipe Dreams proved so popular they were made permanent: Bags of Love and the Standing Stone Elementary School Backpack Program; the other two are always new.

Because Bags of Love ended 2024, it will be running in the July, August and September block, with the Backpack Program covering the last three months of 2025.

At the May PW monthly meeting, we discussed how the tariffs might negatively impact PW's purchasing power for the items in the Bags of Love, since virtually all the contents of the bags are **not** made in the U.S.A.

Bags of Love go to the convenient care unit of Penn Highlands Huntingdon to help parents and staff calm, comfort and entertain sick children as they wait for treatment.

What PW raises for each Pipe Dream is what we have to spend. Our church family is kind and generous. Please make the pipes ring loudly with quarters in July, August and September for Bags of Love. Each Pipe Dream addresses local needs in Huntingdon County. Thank you for giving.

Library Donations Are Due

Presbyterian Women's current Pipe Dream enters its final month in June. Please remember to drop quarters in the pipes for the Mount Union Community Library.

If anyone wishes to drop cash or a check in one of the offering plates, please put it in an envelope marked PW Pipe Dream (if a check, please make it out to Presbyterian Women). PW never turns down a donation, and we are most grateful for the continued generosity of our church family. Thank you. Hooray for quarters!



Synod's Central Region To Hold Gathering

On June 6 and 7, the Presbyterian Women of the Central Region of the Synod of the Trinity is holding a regional gathering titled "Treasured" at the Penn Stater in State College. The Central Region covers Carlisle, Huntingdon and Northumberland presbyteries.

At the PW April monthly meeting, a motion was approved to pay for up to 10 women to attend this gathering as commuters.

The dates worked out for five to attend: Alice Griswold, Deb Hetrick, Susan Lang, Anita Nwaobilo and Nan Stewart. Registration and payment were sent to meet the May 1 final registration date. All are looking forward to this opportunity to gather with women of faith across three local presbyteries of central Pennsylvania.

PW NOTES

Monthly Meeting on June 2: Presbyterian Women will hold its regular monthly meeting at 1 p.m. on Monday, **June 2**, in the Memorial Family Room. Following the meeting, there will be a Bags of Love Workshop. PW does not meet in July and August. It will pick up on Monday, **September 8**; the first Monday of September is Labor Day, so PW will skip to the 8th.

Prayer Chain: 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.

PW Book Club Lists

Summer Reading Picks

Presbyterian Women's Book Club has suggestions for summer reading. Here's the lineup of books we will be discussing:

- **June 4** – **Because of Winn-Dixie** by Kate DiCamillo
- **July 2** – **Allie and Bea** by Catherine Ryan Hyde
- **August 6** – **Switchboard Soldiers** by Jennifer Chiaverini

Here are a few tidbits about the first two books.

Kate DiCamillo's first novel was awarded a Newbery Honor in 2001. This short novel, which is truly for all ages, is about a scruffy dog, 10-year-old Opal, friendship, and the South. Two highlights from the story: "Mostly he looked like a big piece of old brown carpet that had been left out in the rain." and "I could understand the way Winn-Dixie felt. Getting left behind probably made his heart feel empty." Join PW Book Club on June 4 to discuss **Because of Winn-Dixie**.

In July, the book club returns to the writing of the very first author who kicked off the PW Book Club, Catherine Ryan Hyde. In **Allie and Bea**, Hyde uses humor and heart to take the reader on a fast-paced journey of an unlikely pair. Bea's husband has died; 15-year-old Allie runs away from a group home. Friendship, family, trust and faith in humanity combine to create an uplifting novel. "A woman loses everything in a scam and sets out on a journey to reclaim what's rightfully hers, forming an unlikely family along the way." (Amazon) "Hyde delivers a fast-paced, touching, and humorous journey of an unlikely pair who never knew they needed each other..." (Booklist)

Switchboard Soldiers will be previewed in the July-August issue of **Clock Tower Tidings**. These three novels comprise Book Club's summer reading list. We look forward to meeting readers on the first Wednesday of each month at 10 a.m. in the former HPC choir room (a location change) to talk books, books and books!



Some of the baby bottles in rear of sanctuary.

Baby Bottles Mark Center's 40th Year

This year's Baby Bottle Boomerang drive marks the 40th anniversary of Crossroads Pregnancy Center, which benefits from the cash and coins placed in specially designated baby bottles.

Contributions are to be returned on Father's Day, Sunday, **June 15**. The drive started with Crossroads-provided baby bottles on Mother's Day, May 11. This year's goal is \$103,000.

Founded in 1985, Crossroads operates five locations in Huntingdon, Mifflin, Blair and Juniata counties, including one on Washington Street in Huntingdon. Its administrative office is in Mount Union.

The center provides Christ-centered counseling and educational services on abortion alternatives, pregnancy, post-abortion healing, and parenting. All services are free and confidential. The programs are based on biblical principles for healthy relationships and problem solving. The center does not receive state or federal funding.

Camping Scholarships Available

Huntingdon Presbyterian Church is offering full scholarships for young people to attend Krislund Summer Camp. For information on age-appropriate camping experiences, see Krislund.org. For information on the scholarships, call the church office. You don't have to be a HPC member or related to one to receive a scholarship.

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.

Presbytery to Meet in Tyrone: Huntingdon Presbytery's lone evening meeting of 2025 will be at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, **June 24**, at the Tyrone Presbyterian Church. The offering will go to Tyrone Volunteer Church Meals, a ministry of Tyrone Presbyterian Church.

Pentecost Offering Is June 8: The annual Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Pentecost Offering will be received on Sunday, **June 8**. The offering supports ministries for children, youth and young adults. Forty percent of the offering stays with HPC to initiate or support programs for young people in the Huntingdon community. Pentecost offerings can be placed in the plates in the rear of the sanctuary. The offering is one of four annual special offerings of the PC(USA).

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 help is much needed and greatly appreciated. Thanks to Steve Miller, Judy Post and Sylvia Byers for being liturgists on recent Sundays.

Thanks for the Musical Help: Thanks to Kay Rossman, Xiang Su and Ivan Yumagulov for sharing their musical talent at recent services.

Summer Office Hours: The church office will be open from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Monday-Friday until September. Regular hours of 9 a.m. to noon will resume after Labor Day.



Photo by Bill Caufield

Honoring Women: Long-stemmed carnations were given to the women at the worship service on Sunday, May 11, Mother's Day. If you would like to contribute flower arrangements – either fresh or artificial – for a future Sunday worship service, please contact the church office.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The session approved the following during its monthly meeting on May 18 held in person and via Zoom:

- The pastor's request for vacation for July 7-14
- Changing Communion from July 13 to July 20 due to the pastor's vacation
- Scheduling the next session meeting for Sunday, June 22

Newsletter Design Updated

The **Clock Tower Tidings** newsletter has been given its first typographical update in nearly 10 years. The content remains the same but the typefaces, including the nameplate, are new. Not only does the newsletter have a crisper look, but the front page design in particular is more flexible and able to accommodate larger photos.

The newsletter is sent by email to members and friends of HPC. Printed copies are also available in the rear of the sanctuary. If you would like a printed copy sent to you by first-class mail, please tell the office.

Pastor's Corner

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intentional about our habits, we will naturally slide into hours upon hours of screen stupor. Guides like the one the school sent can remind us of that danger.

But I also found the guide to be a little ironic. Technology is very pervasive in schools. I occasionally hear stories from our kids about what they did on their tablets during the day. Sometimes I get the impression they have more screen time at school than at home.

The potential impacts of technology are not just a concern for the last couple of generations. There is an old story about Socrates lamenting over the technology of written language and how it diminished our memory. Why bother to remember something if you can just write it down? If young people are glued to their phones, then it is fair to say many older folks are glued to cable news. My grandparents watched a certain cable news channel so much that its symbol was burned into a corner of the screen!

Technology has done truly marvelous things to improve our material circumstances. We truly live in an age of wonders our ancestors could scarcely imagine. But sometimes we forget that every new technology comes with a price, with unintended consequences. Cell phones, the internet and social media have given us a remarkable ability to connect and share with others around the world. But our local connections have often suffered as our “communities” become more detached from where we actually live. We have more access to information than we can fathom. But all the conflicting noise has pushed creators toward greater sensationalism in order to attract an audience. And that sensationalism has deepened our anxiety and divisions.

Science can enable us to produce new technology. But science cannot tell us how we should or ought to use new technology. Questions about ethics and morality are the province of philosophy and theology. As our

technological capacity has increased rapidly over the years, even so much in my lifetime, have we also grown in our ability to wrestle with its consequences? We've drifted into a world of smart phones and cable news. But have we stopped to consider their impact and what the healthy limits might be?

The Christian faith is incarnational at its core. The Creation and Ruler of the universe entered His creation and became one of us in Jesus Christ. He talked to people, face to face. He touched people providing healing and hope. Jesus continues to have a physical, resurrected body in heaven.

If all of that is true, then our physical existence is more than just an accident. Our bodies are more than the “warehouse” of our souls or minds. Our bodies have been redeemed by Christ and will be made perfect and new at the end of all things. And our face-to-face interactions with each other affirm our common humanity and even point to our eternal future. Christians can say life is not lived on a screen. And, more importantly, we have a powerful foundation on which to make that claim in a compelling way.

Technology, like all things in our world, is ultimately a gift from God. And like every gift it can be misused. The Christian faith gives us powerful resources to develop this needed wisdom and, just as importantly, it gives us powerful motivations to live into that wisdom. And we are called to share this wisdom with a world struggling for guidance. One of the best ways we can share it is by living into it.

It is my hope that all of us can live wisely this summer. If you're experiencing anxiety and disconnection, put aside the screens for a while and live an incarnate life again. Talk to a real person. Be present in God's creation. Engage in embodied community (going to worship is a great way to do this).

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Brett D. Hoover

“Be still, and know that I am God.”

– Psalm 46:10

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Worship with us this Sunday in-person or on our Facebook page. Everyone is welcome!