

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

July-August 2025

PASTOR'S CORNER

Spiritual Reflection Is More Than Mere Nostalgia

Scattered throughout my office, you'll find many mementos from past adventures. On my desk is a small granite stone, which I may or may not have picked up in Yosemite National Park after hiking/climbing up a granite-boulder-strewn stream to the place where it was fed by a waterfall. It was one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen.

If you were to look up at the bookshelf, a large conch shell might catch your eye. I didn't buy that in a souvenir shop. I dove down and grabbed it on the sea floor during a snorkeling expedition in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

I have ministry and faith mementos too. During one of my Camp Krislund chaplaincies, I took a supporting role for a group of boys in a skit competition. They won first place and a little plastic banana-shaped trophy that says, "Top Banana." I was touched and
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Photo by Bill Caufield

A ceremonial ribbon is cut at the clock restoration dedication.

Honoring a Town Treasure



Picnic Fare: There was plenty of delicious food to sample at the church picnic. Details, Page 3.

The restored Town Clock housed in HPC's bell tower was dedicated, complete with ribbon and oversized scissors, after the Sunday worship service on June 1. Borough, county and state officials were on hand, along with members of the congregation and interested townsfolk.

Mayor Tom Yoder was emcee. He mentioned the challenges of keeping an antique timepiece such as
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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

July 2 – PW Book Club – 10 a.m.
July 4 – Independence Day; office closed
July 9 – Dyslexia Center Tye Dye Day
July 13 – Guest speaker – Stephanie Weaver
July 15 – Mission and Outreach – 9:30 a.m.
July 20 – Summer Communion
August 1 – National Night Out – 5-8 p.m.
August 6 – PW Book Club – 10 a.m.
August 17 – Session – 6:30 p.m.
September 1 – Labor Day; office closed

Food Pantry Donations

The Huntingdon Food Pantry is requesting **vegetable soup** for July and **chicken noodle soup** for August. 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 May and June was 41. Services had an average of 109 live and archived Facebook views.

Weekly Giving

Tithes and offerings through May totaled \$74,434, or an average of \$3,544 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 May 30, per capita contributions remained at \$1,357.

Newsletter Deadline

Since this is a July-August issue, the deadline for the next newsletter is Friday, **August 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.



Jenny Brockett

Medical Mission Team Plans Trip to Ghana

On July 16 HPC member Jenny Brockett will be traveling to Ghana in West Africa as part of a Ghana Medical Relief medical mission team guided by co-founder Dr. Sam Owusu.

This is Jenny's first medical mission trip to Africa, although she has been on several others in South America and Asia. She is a registered nurse and while in Ghana expects to screen patients to ensure they are directed to the right services. She is to be in Ghana 12 days.

Ghana Medical Relief is a 501(c) nonprofit humanitarian organization headquartered in State College that over the years has been delivering health care to various villages in Ghana. This year, the GMR team plans to provide free medical care to 5,000-7,000 individuals.

Services include mental health, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, general surgery, dental care, health education, and support, among other specialties. GMR partners with the national insurance agency in Ghana, so any patient who needs health insurance is able to leave with free coverage paid for by GMR the same day.

GMR's vision is to create an environment that will foster education and advancement in order to help replicate sustainable health-care models across Ghana. If you feel inclined to donate, please visit the website ghanamedicalrelief.com and click the donate link. Most importantly, please consider lifting the team up in prayer.

Church Picnic Unfazed By Gloomy Weather

Despite the cool, damp and gloomy weather, the annual church picnic attracted about 50 people to the pavilion at Portstown Park on Sunday, June 15 – better in-person attendance than at some Sunday services in the sanctuary!

Preceding the picnic, Pastor Brett conducted a worship service in the pavilion. His message centered on different historical views of the Trinity, which was appropriate given the day. Not only was it Father's Day, but it was Trinity Sunday. There was no service in the sanctuary that morning.

A tent was erected to shield the grill for hamburgers and hot dogs, but it was not needed, since the rain held off. Participants provided an assortment of side dishes and desserts to complement the hots, burgers and drinks provided by the Mission and Outreach Committee, which organized the picnic. As usual, a picnic centerpiece was the cake provided by Susan Jackson, this year in the shape of a giant hot dog.

The annual picnic has been held at various venues over the years. According to a history of the church, it began many years ago as an activity of the former New Era Bible class.



Photo by Sharon Caufield

Susan Jackson's hog-dog-shaped cake was a hit.



Photos by Bill Caufield

Pastor Brett preaches from podium in the park.



Jeff Shoemaker grills as daughter Courtney waits to deliver hamburgers and hot dogs to the picnickers, below.



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Photos by Bill Caufield

Ruth Jackson chats with Janet Rudy in the clock vestibule. A wall plaque is at right; pictures of the clock renovation work are displayed at left.

Clock Dedication

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the clock running properly.

Shelby Splain, a supervisor with the State Historic Preservation Office, presented a certificate and a time capsule recognizing the restoration project with the Preservation Office's Community Initiative Award. She noted that dozens of projects statewide were considered. The borough will determine what will go in the time capsule and how it will be displayed.



John Brockett offers a prayer

Elder John Brockett offered a prayer blessing the restored clock. He earlier preached at the Sunday worship service, pinch-hitting for Pastor Brett who was on vacation.

George Drobnock of Huntingdon Landmarks Inc. gave a brief history of the clock, noting the current mechanical works were installed after a 1910 fire destroyed the original 1872 mechanism. The Byers family provided refreshments,

including hot dogs and chips, to those attending the dedication.

Huntingdon Borough, HPC, Huntingdon Landmarks Inc. and the Huntingdon County Planning Department collaborated on the project. It was decided to restore, rather than merely repair, the clock using the Balzer Family Clock Works in Maine. The clock had stopped working in 2016.

As part of the restoration, the clock's mechanical works were moved from the bell tower to the north vestibule and enclosed in a glass case. The bell tolling the hour also was reactivated, and could be heard marking 11 a.m. during the worship service. A plaque on the vestibule wall details the clock's history. Also in the vestibule are wooden hands from the original clock.



Mayor Tom Yoder shows a clock keepsake plaque being sold by Huntingdon Landscapes. It includes a small glass piece of the old clock face.



The Byers family served free hot dogs.

PW Book Club Tackles Trust, War, Neighbors

At the June PW Book Club, regular attendees were joined by James Kann and Amanda Hetrick, both of whom contributed greatly to a lively discussion of Kate DiCamillo's **Because of Winn-Dixie**, emphasizing the appeal of this "children's" book to all age groups. They also made recommendations for future selections.

July's selection also touches all ages: Catherine Ryan Hyde's **Allie and Bea** makes the point that a family bond can be formed when people come together in friendship and trust. Bea, a woman who has lost everything, and Allie, a teenage runaway from a group home, are two such people. We hope to see you on Wednesday, **July 2**, at 10 a.m. in the former choir room.

Switchboard Soldiers by Jennifer Chiaverini is set in World War I and is book club's August choice. Upon arriving in France in June 1917, General John Pershing, commander of the U.S. Army, needed telephone operators to communicate with troops in the field. At that time, almost all well-trained America telephone operators were women – but women were not permitted to enlist, or even vote in most states.

However, Pershing got what he needed – the U.S. Army Signal Corps recruited women! Nearly 7,600 women responded. In this novel of a nearly forgotten story of WWI, the Signal Corps broke down gender barriers in the military and battled a pandemic as they helped Allied forces to victory. The women endured hardships, risked death or injury from gunfire, bombardments and the Spanish flu. Not all of them would survive. "An eye-opening and detailed novel about remarkable female soldiers...Chiaverini weaves the intersecting threads of these brave women's lives together, highlighting their deep sense of pride and duty." (Kirkus Reviews) Happy summer readers can gather Wednesday, **August 6**, at 10 a.m., in the former choir room.

Book club chose a book recommended by James

Kann for September: **A Man Called Ove** by Fredrik Backman, a novel appealing to all age groups. Ove, an angry old curmudgeon, gets new neighbors – a chatty young couple with two chatty young daughters who move in next door and flatten his mailbox. Behind the cranky exterior is a story and a sadness. "If there was an award for 'Most Charming Book of the Year,' this charming first novel by a Swedish blogger-turned-overnight-sensation would win hands down." (Booklist)

PW bets James' selection will be a good one for everyone to dive into! Join book club in the former choir room at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, **September 3**, to find out what happens to Ove and his new neighbors – unkempt cats, unexpected friendship and the ancient art of backing up a U-Haul (not for the faint of heart!). Wonder what happens in the neighborhood.

PW NOTES

New Pipe Dream: The PW Pipe Dream for July, August and September benefits Bags of Love. Please check the June issue of **Clock Tower Tidings** for a history of this "pipe dream." Future Sunday bulletins will also print reminders.

Gathering Report: An article will appear in the September issue of **Clock Tower Tidings** reporting on what happened at the Presbyterian Women of the Central Region of the Synod of the Trinity Gathering attended by Alice Griswold, Deb Hetrick and Anita Nwaobilo on June 6-7 at The Penn Stater in State College.

Next Meeting in September: Presbyterian Women will not meet in July and August; the regular monthly meeting schedule will resume on Monday, **September 8**, at 1 p.m. in the Memorial Family Room.

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.



Photos by Bill Caufield

Strawberry Sunday: Port Williams serves a scoop of ice cream to Melissa Hoover at the deacons' annual Strawberry Social held after the June 8 service. Since it was Pentecost, there was plenty of red to be seen in the Memorial Family Room – in addition to the strawberries!



POLICE • COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Prayer Tent Added For National Night Out

The HPC parking lot will be the site of community outreach on Friday, **August 1**, as the church once again takes part in Huntingdon's National Night Out. HPC's theme will be "Minecraft," a best-selling video game.

This year, something new has been added. In addition to the usual games, activities and free food, the Mission and Outreach Committee plans to erect a prayer tent. Pastor Brett will be in the tent to pray with those who would like a prayer.

In the borough, National Night Out is sponsored by the Huntingdon Police Department.

Nationwide, National Night Out is designed to promote community building and stronger relationships between residents and law enforcement. It provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.



Cones of Progress: Seven slabs in the sidewalk next to the parking lot were recently replaced to eliminate potential tripping hazards.

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. Please note: Pastor Brett will be on vacation July 7-14.

Liturgists Still Needed: If you are interested in sharing your gifts in Sunday worship as a liturgist, please contact the church office. As of this writing, liturgists were needed for August. If you can commit to only a week or two, the church office can coordinate that. Thanks to John Brockett, Anita Nwaobilo, Judy Post and Steve Miller for serving on recent Sundays.

Thanks for the Musical Help: Thanks to Keith Sutton, Joann Weber and Kay Rossman for sharing their musical talent at recent services. Musicians are needed for most of July and the beginning of August. Please contact the office.

Guest Speaker: The Rev. Stephanie Weaver will be guest speaker at the Sunday service on **July 13**. She is executive director of Huntingdon County Child and Adult Development.

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

Scheduling Pastoral Visits: If you would like a pastoral visit, please let the office know, and a visit with Pastor Brett will be scheduled.

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.



Information Station: A whiteboard near the main entrance to the sanctuary contains the latest HPC news. Viewers are welcome to add pertinent information to the board.



Sign of the Times: The notice on the office door says it all. The office is operating until after Labor Day on summer hours, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The session approved the following during its meeting on June 22 held in person and via Zoom:

- A prayer tent hosted by Pastor Brett for National Night Out in August
- Wireless, centralized fire/smoke detectors from Park Security for the church
- Sealcoating and relining the parking lot by K&K Sealcoating
- Scheduling the next session meeting for Sunday, August 17

Pastor's Corner

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honored when they wanted me to have the award. It's also on my bookshelf.

But my most prized memento is a small, wooden cross I bought at a youth retreat where the Holy Spirit called me to faith in Jesus Christ. Whenever I look at that cross, I remember that day when my faith journey began.

Scattered around every house are little reminders like the ones I've mentioned. Sometimes the memory is captured in some knickknack picked up during some adventure. Often times it's pictures lining shelves or hanging on walls that stir up the past. There are things we love to remember or don't want to forget.

There is an old spiritual discipline of meditating or thinking about how God has blessed you or has been at work in the past. When have you seen God clearly at work in your life? When has God spoken powerfully to you?

This kind of reflection can be incredibly helpful in our life of faith. When we think about what God has done in the past, it reminds us that God is with us in the present and future. The God who called us to faith in Jesus Christ, who gave us strength during difficult times, who has given us so many blessings, that God will never abandon or forsake us.

Remembering has always been a deep part of what it means to be God's people. The ancient Israelites are told time and time again to remember the God who heard their cries in Egypt and freed them from slavery. That is what the celebration of Passover is all about. It is a meal of remembrance and celebration for God's deliverance during the Exodus.

But Christians also have a special meal of remembrance. Every time we celebrate Communion, we are called to remember the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. When we break the bread and share the cup, we remember his promises of salvation by grace through faith.

When we remember what God has done for us in the past, we can remember who we are as God's dearly loved and adopted children in the present, and look with expectant hope to our life with Him in the future.

This reflection is so much deeper than sentimental nostalgia. Nostalgia is about emotional gratification for its own sake. It ends with the feeling we want it to generate, whether that's happiness for what was or sadness for what can never be again. But spiritual reflection isn't really about us. It's about God. It's about building gratitude, faith, and assurance in God's long track record of faithfulness. That's how we can use our reflection on the past faithfully.

So remember God's grace in your past. Use that memory well. Remember what God has done for you already. That reflection can help you see how God is moving in your life in the present. And it can help you eagerly anticipate what God will do in the future.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Brett D. Hoover

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."

–Hebrews 13:8

Consider a QCD in 2025

Members and friends who must take required minimum distributions from an Individual Retirement Account in 2025 are reminded that they can avoid paying federal income taxes on proceeds donated directly to the church by the custodian of their account. If you are interested in this option, known as a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), it is suggested that you consult with your tax advisor before taking your next required minimum IRA distributions.

Summer Communion on July 20

The Lord's Supper will be served during the worship service of Sunday, **July 20**. This change from Communion on the second Sunday in July is being made to accommodate Pastor Brett's vacation.