

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

November 2026

PASTOR'S CORNER

'What Ifs' Point To a Deeper Longing

Sometimes when I'm contentedly tucking into the star of the Thanksgiving table, the turkey, a little historical tidbit comes to mind. The turkey was once seriously considered to become the national animal of the United States. "Seriously" might be overstating the case. Benjamin Franklin argued strongly in favor of the turkey to represent our young nation. He had his reasons, and they were as hilarious and arbitrary as you might imagine.

But what if Mr. Franklin had gotten his way? It's difficult to imagine every monument, coin or government seal that today bears the bald eagle instead proudly displaying a turkey. I can't decide if having the turkey as the symbol of our nation would make Thanksgiving dinner more or less patriotic. Perhaps we should be grateful that Mr. Franklin was overruled, allowing us to avoid this dilemma.

This isn't the only "what if" that occupies my
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Organists Cecily DeMarco and Aaron Patterson.

HPC to Join Progressive Church Organ Concert

Huntingdon Presbyterian Church will be the fourth and final stop on a progressive concert tour of historic downtown church organs on Saturday, **November 7**.

The performers, Aaron Patterson and Cecily DeMarco, will present a varied program of sacred, secular and patriotic music selected to show off the four instruments' capabilities. It will be a return to HPC for Aaron. He presented a concert on the HPC pipe organ in memory of Marian Sue McElwee, HPC's organist emerita, in December 2024.

The progressive concert is sponsored by the four participating churches as well as Huntingdon Landmarks and the Huntingdon County Arts Council. It will begin after the Huntingdon Veterans' Parade at 12:30 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church and proceed to First Baptist

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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 person and also via Zoom.

Dates to Remember

November 1 – Daylight Saving Time ends
November 2 – Presbyterian Women – 1 p.m.
November 3 – Election Day; Deacons – 7 p.m.
November 4 – PW Book Club – 10 a.m.
November 7 – Four-church organ concert
November 11 – Veterans Day
November 12 – M&O Committee – 9:30 a.m.
November 15 – Session – 6:30 p.m.
November 22 – Hanging of the Greens
November 22 – Thanksgiving service at St. James
November 26-27 – Thanksgiving; office closed
November 28 – Salvation Army bell-ringing
November 29 – Election of officers

Food Pantry Donations

The Huntingdon Food Pantry is requesting **hand soap** for November.

Worship Attendance

The average in-person Sunday worship attendance over four Sundays in September and October was 42. Sunday services had an average of 59 live and archived Facebook views.

Weekly Giving

Tithes and offerings through September totaled \$155,621.86, or an average of \$3,990 a week. Primary Fund giving for 2026 is budgeted at \$190,000, or an average of \$3,654 a week.

Per Capita Contributions

The 2026 per capita assessment is \$41 per member, for a total of \$5,289. As of September 30, per capita contributions totaled \$1,481.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the next newsletter is Monday, **November 16.**

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.



2024 File Photo

Aaron Patterson at HPC concert two years ago.

Organ Concert

Continued from Page One

Church, the Abbey Reformed Church and culminate at HPC. The performers will offer about 25 minutes of music at each church, then allow concertgoers sufficient time to walk to the next church. The HPC deacons will offer a light reception following the final performance. HPC's Mission and Outreach Committee is helping to coordinate the event.

Tickets cost \$25 each and are available from the Arts Council at 313 12th Street between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, or by calling 814-643-6220 or visiting <http://www.huntingdoncountyarts.com/shop>. Seating is limited, so tickets may not be available at the door on the day of the concert.

Huntingdon Presbyterian Church has a 1922 organ made by Hook and Hastings of Boston. St. John's and the First Baptist each have organs from manufacturer A.B. Felgemaker of Erie, Pa. The instruments are from 1911 and 1903, respectively. The Abbey Church has a 1929 M.P. Moller organ built in Hagerstown, Maryland.

Both Aaron and Cecily have trained on the organ at the Juilliard School in New York. Aaron earned a master's degree in organ performance from Juilliard and is now organist and music associate at the First Presbyterian Church of Jackson, Miss. Cecily is still a Juilliard student in the Artist Diploma program. She is currently the organ scholar at Hitchcock Presbyterian Church in Scarsdale, N.Y.

FROM THE DEACONS

Our monthly meeting was held on Tuesday, October 6 at 7 p.m. The following items were discussed:

- A progressive organ recital is being held on Saturday, **November 7**. The recital begins at the Episcopal church at 12:30 p.m. Our church will be the final stop around 3:30 p.m. The deacons made plans for light refreshments to follow. More information about the recital is available in the church office.
- The deacons have arranged a Salvation Army bell-ringing date for HPC. Our date is Saturday, **November 28**, from noon until 6 p.m. at Ace Hardware on William Penn Highway in Smithfield. A sign-up sheet will be available on the information board in the church sanctuary. This year, the national headquarters of the Salvation Army is asking all volunteers to sign a waiver. This will be hanging by the sign-up sheet. Please be sure to fill out both. The waiver sign-up will be good for three years.
- The deacons provided a fall snack basket for the Dyslexia Center as a gift from our congregation.
- We approved the purchase of glow sticks to be passed out during Trunk or Treat.
- At our November meeting, we will plan for our Christmas activities. These activities will include snacks for "hanging of the greens," our annual cookie swap/coffee social, a card shower for our church friends who are unable to attend our services, and several community outreach gifts.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

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

- A special called congregational meeting on November 29 to elect officers for 2027
- Bob Barclay and Paul Post as designated signers on a credit-card application
- The next regularly scheduled session meeting will be on November 15



2025 File Photo

John Brockett places a wreath on the sanctuary wall during last year's Hanging of the Greens.

Hanging of the Greens To Usher in Christmas

By the end of November, it will begin to look a lot like Christmas at HPC.

The Hanging of the Greens has been scheduled for after the worship service on Sunday, **November 22**. The sanctuary will be decked out with traditional Christmas decorations, the centerpiece of which will be the large Brown-Heine memorial Christmas tree.

Traditionally, the greens are hung prior to the start of Advent, which this year begins on Sunday, **November 29**.

All are encouraged to help place the Christmas decorations, which include the tree Chrismons, wreaths, candles and more. The deacons will provide snacks to those hanging the greens. The event is being organized by the Mission and Outreach Committee.

Another Christmas tradition will take place on Saturday, **November 28**, when volunteers from HPC will ring the Salvation Army bell at the donations kettle located at Ace Hardware in Smithfield. Shifts will be from noon to 6 p.m. A sign-up sheet and more information including waiver forms are located at the information board in the back of the sanctuary. The HPC bell ringing is organized by the deacons.

Election of Officers Scheduled for Nov. 29

A special congregational meeting has been called following the Sunday worship service on **November 29** to elect church officers for 2027.

A slate of elders, deacons and other officers will be presented by the Nominating Committee. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor. Elders and deacons elected for three-year terms will comprise the Class of 2029.

The Nominating Committee is co-chaired by Elders Betsy Mason and David Taylor. Members of the committee elected by the congregation are Deb Hetrick, Zack Byers and Ann Dunlavy and the deacons representative is Pam Thompson.

It's Not Too Late to Pay Per Capita for 2026

If you have not yet paid your 2026 per capita assessment of \$41 per member, please prayerfully consider doing so. The \$41 is unchanged from last year.

The per capita assessment is split three ways by Huntingdon Presbytery – the presbytery keeps \$27.34 and sends \$2.40 to the Synod of the Trinity and \$11.26 to the General Assembly. Per capita funding represents a significant source of revenue for all three bodies.

Huntingdon Presbyterian Church's 2026 per capita assessment is \$5,289, based on a membership of 129 at the end of 2024. As of the end of September, \$1,481 had been received in per capita donations. Any shortfall will be made up with HPC funds that otherwise could be used for other purposes.

The front of your 2026 box of envelopes contains a blue "Per Capita" envelope, or you may place a check in an offering plate or drop it off at the office. Please write "Per capita" in the check's memo field.



Photos by Bill Caufield

Autumn Abundance: Deacon John Brockett, above, helps Melissa Hoover select autumn-themed goodies at the deacons' fall social. Below, Janet and Bob Rudy choose their snacks. A number of people stopped by the Memorial Family Room, bottom photo, after the worship service on September 27 for the annual event.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

PW's Angel Tree Project Deserves Your Support

The holiday season is upon us – Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's – yikes! And Presbyterian Women focuses on its annual Huntingdon House project supporting our community's domestic-abuse shelter. PW's co-chairs are Heather Beckwith and Barbara Williams.

Beginning Sunday, **November 22**, the 2026 Angel Tree Project will conclude Sunday, **December 13**, giving three full weeks for monetary donations.

If donating cash, please put the money in an envelope marked "Presbyterian Women – Angel Tree Project" and drop it in an offering plate. If giving by check, please make the check out to Presbyterian Women, with Angel Tree in the memo line, and drop it in an offering plate. Financial Secretary Sharon Caufield will pass along these donations to Presbyterian Women, which will write one check to Huntingdon House. As in the past, no donations are ever late. A second check will be written to Huntingdon House for any late monetary gifts.

Our church family has given generously over the years to Huntingdon House through the Angel Tree Project.

Last year, PW gave the bare Angel Trees located in the rear of the sanctuary a new purpose – "Give an Angel!" Place on the trees your extra angel ornament(s) from home or ones you make or you buy at a dollar stores; they will be appropriately tagged and given to the Huntingdon House clients with words of Christmas joy to take with them when they safely relocate away from Huntingdon.

Please give to Huntingdon House through the Angel Tree Project from **November 22** through **December 13**!

Club's November Book Is 'The Correspondent'

Virginia Evans' *The Correspondent* will be discussed at Presbyterian Women's Book Club on Wednesday, **November 4**, at 10 a.m. in the former choir room.

"Imagine, the letters one has sent out into the world, the letters received back in turn, are like the pieces of a magnificent puzzle. ... Isn't there something wonderful in that, to think that a story of one's life is preserved in some way, that this very letter may one day mean something, even if it is a very small thing, to someone?" (from the cover fly-leaf). Margot Livesey, *New York Times* bestselling author, commented "What a lovely novel. I fell in love with the eloquent, stubborn Sybil, such a wonderful character."

December's book club selection is *The Tales of a Paperboy: A Christmas Story* by Andrew J. Muir. Fourteen-year-old Daniel Morgan moves from Texas to Utah after his mother's death to live with his grandparents while his father looks for a job in another state. "... Daniel reluctantly starts his first job as a paperboy" and learns lessons about family and responsibility. ... "But will he find the spirit of Christmas he longs for?" Please join PW's Book Club at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, **December 2**, in the former choir room. Happy Reading!

PW NOTES

Pipe Dream Update: There is no Pipe Dream for the months of October, November and December. A big "thank you" to our generous church family for giving \$358.65 to 2026's third Pipe Dream, supporting Bags of Love.

Quarterly Meeting: The next quarterly meeting of Presbyterian Women will be held at 1 p.m. in the Memorial Family Room on Monday, **November 2**.

Prayer Chain: To join or make a request of the PW Prayer Chain, please contact Deb Hetrick at 814-643-5424 (home) or 814-644-1653 (cell).

Pastor's Corner

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mind at Thanksgiving. Our family has been blessed to have some stability with our Thanksgiving traditions.

Melissa's parents have hosted in the same house they've lived in since before Melissa was born. But my family of origin has been moving around across the country for the last 25 or so years. We haven't all been together for Thanksgiving since I was in high school. Sometimes that leads me to think "what if." What if everyone had stayed together? What if the seats around the table were all filled with the folks who should be there? What if we were closer in the very sense of that term?

The big end-of-year holidays are fertile ground for "what ifs." They are the moments that resonate with so much joy and great memories. And when they change, even in the slightest ways, those changes are felt. That sense of loss can fill the "what ifs" with a bit of melancholic longing, a pining for what has been but cannot be again.

There are two directions that longing can take us. One is bitterness. What we've lost takes center stage and all joy is pushed out by resentment. The other path is not so easy to articulate. It's seeing in the feeling of a loss pointing to some other joy that's yet to be satisfied, that the things we miss are really just shadows of the greater things for which we really long.

That yearning for the Thanksgiving of my childhood is really my desire for a home that I can never lose. That sadness for the folks who aren't there is really my hope for love that can never be parted. If this longing has a way to be fulfilled, then bitterness of the past is replaced by anticipatory joy for the future, for a time when the temporary sense of gain and loss will give way to eternal satisfaction.

In Christ, all these longings find their fulfillment. In him, we have an eternal home that nothing in this world can endanger or take away from us. In

him, we have life and love that can never be ended by the sting of death. In him, we have a promised joy that not only makes our present yearnings bearable but fills them with purpose and hope.

And, most important for the season of Thanksgiving, we have the motivation to be thankful even when we feel our loss. We can be thankful not only for the joy that was experienced but also for how that joy will be fully and eternally satisfied.

This Thanksgiving don't let the "what ifs" fill your heart with hopeless pining. Instead, see those musings for what they are. They are expressions of true and deeper longings that Jesus promises to fill completely and eternally. Let that promise fill you with joy and gratitude.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Brett D. Hoover

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.

Presbytery Newsletter Available

If you would like to receive by email the weekly electronic newsletter of Huntingdon Presbytery, **Presbytery Connections**, please email SusanPresbytery@gmail.com or call the presbytery at 814-682-7289 extension 0. **Connections** is usually emailed each Wednesday.

The 6 Great Ends of the Church

According to the **Book of Order** of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Great Ends of the Church are:

- The proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind
- The shelter, nurture and spiritual fellowship of the children of God
- The maintenance of divine worship
- The preservation of the truth
- The promotion of social righteousness
- The exhibition of the kingdom of heaven to the world

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.

Fall Mission Project: The Mission and Outreach Committee's fall mission project will benefit local fire companies. Donations will be collected until Sunday, **November 22**. The committee unanimously agreed to donate \$500 from its budget for the project.

November Lord's Supper: The sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be observed at the Sunday worship service on **November 29**, the first Sunday of Advent.

Guest Musicians: Thanks to Kay Rossman and Kathy Myers for filling in for church musician Keith Sutton on recent Sundays.

Deacons' mail call: Join the deacons in continuing HPC's card outreach. The card box in the back of the sanctuary contains many different types of greeting cards. Please use these cards to send wishes, sympathies, thanks, or thoughts to anyone in our church family at any time. A directory with addresses can be found at the front of the box. Place your completed cards in the basket and the deacons will add postage and mail your cards.

Fall Back: Daylight Saving Time ends at 2 a.m. on Sunday, **November 1**. Be sure to set your clocks back one hour, or you'll be very early for church on All Saints' Day.

Save the Dates: Here are two December events you won't want to miss. The Advent luncheon will be Sunday, **December 6**, following the morning's worship service. The Festival of Song will be at 7 p.m., Saturday, **December 12**.

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Photos by Bill Caufield



Color of Fall: Both the inside and the outside of the church display the rich color palate of autumn.

Group Study Focuses on Psalms

The Sunday morning Digging Deeper group has begun a study that focuses on the Psalms. The study group is open to all adults and youth who are interested in digging deeper into their faith and the Bible.

The group meets at 9:30 a.m. most Sundays both in person or by Zoom. Let the office know if you wish to attend the study by Zoom. A link will be sent each Sunday to your email address.

Forum Thanksgiving Service

The annual Huntingdon Area Forum of Churches' community Thanksgiving service will be held at St. James Lutheran Church at 3 p.m. on Sunday, **November 22**.

The Rev. Cindy Lattimer, a pastor of the Stone Church of the Brethren, will bring the message. Offering donations will go to the Forum's Emergency Utility Fund.

Huntingdon Presbyterian Church

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