



Clock Tower Tidings

Huntingdon Presbyterian Church PC(USA)

October 2024

PASTOR'S CORNER

Extend an Invitation To 'Come and See'

It's hard to find Presbyterian churches named after saints. The overwhelming plurality and maybe even majority of Presbyterian congregations are either numbered or share the name of the town in which they reside. Our congregation fits this pattern well. We were known as the First Presbyterian Church of Huntingdon and now simply call ourselves the Huntingdon Presbyterian Church. This has led me to my well-worn joke about Presbyterians being bad at coming up with names.

There are some good reasons for a lack of saints in our church names. The Reformed Tradition has always pushed back against veneration of saints as functionally crossing the line of idolatry. We have also believed in a level understanding of human nature. Some of us might be better behaved or more virtuous than others. But we all stand before God as sinners in need of grace. On the dimension of holiness or standing before God, none of us are further ahead than anyone else. We all need Christ.

But if you happen to find a Presbyterian Church named after a saint, it can almost be guaranteed that it's St. Andrew. Why might that be?

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Facebook Image

World Communion Sunday will be observed on October 6. Above, Pastor Brett breaks the bread during HPC's summer communion on the second Sunday in July.

Peace Offering Gifts To Be Received Oct. 6

The Peace & Global Witness Offering will be received on **October 6**, World Communion Sunday.

Through the offering, PC(USA) congregations are encouraged and equipped to address the anxiety and discord that is prevalent throughout this broken and sinful world. The offering is received during the Season of Peace, which ends on World Communion Sunday.

A gift to the Peace & Global Witness Offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing conflict and injustice across the world.

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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. The Digging Deeper Sunday school is at 9:30 a.m. in the Memorial Family Room and is available via Zoom.

Dates to Remember

October 1 – Deacons – 7 p.m.
October 2 – PW Book Club – 10 a.m.
October 6 – World Communion Sunday
October 17 – Mission & Outreach – 9:30 a.m.
October 20 – Session – 6:30 p.m.
October 27 – Reformation Sunday
October 31 – Trunk or Treat – 6-8 p.m.

Food Pantry Donations

The Huntingdon Food Pantry is requesting **peanut butter** for October. Donations can be dropped off at the office or in the basket in the hallway near the lift on the last Sunday of the month.

Worship Attendance

The average in-person worship attendance for four Sundays in August and September was 41. Online services had an average of 67 live and archived Facebook views.

Weekly Giving

Tithes and offerings through August totaled \$120,602.58, or an average of \$3,547 a week. Primary fund giving for 2024 is budgeted at \$195,000, or an average of \$3,750 a week.

Per Capita Contributions

The per capita for 2024 is \$39.24 per member, for a total assessment of \$5,572. As of August 31, contributions totaled \$1,741.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for November's issue is Tuesday, **October 15**.

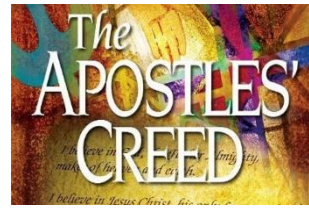
Care & Visitation List

Jeanne Speck

If you know anyone who would like to be put on this list, please call the church office at 814-643-1302.

Sermon Series Continues

Pastor Brett is continuing in October his series of sermons based on the Apostles' Creed. He began the series on September 1 with a sermon based on the first words of the creed – "I believe."



The Apostles' Creed contains the basics of the Christian faith and is a good introduction to the theology on which our faith is based. Of the 12 entries in the PC(USA)'s *Book of Confessions*, the Apostles' Creed is the shortest and probably the best known.

The sermons explore the basis of the creed and what it means to us today. Plan to join our 10:30 a.m. service each Sunday in person or online at our Facebook page.



Peace Offering

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Individual congregations are encouraged to use up to 25% of this offering for local peacemaking efforts. Presbyteries and synods retain an additional 25% for ministries of peace and reconciliation.

The remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice in cultures of violence through collaborative projects of education and Christian witness.

For example, Huntingdon Presbytery is using Peace & Global Witness Offering funds to partially underwrite a trip to Thailand this fall. Five presbytery representatives will participate on **October 5** in a celebration of 130 years of ministry for Pakh 5 Nan, a group of Thai churches that has had a partnership with this presbytery for the last 35 years.

Contributions can be made using the yellow World-wide Communion envelopes in this year's box of envelopes or the special envelopes in the rear of the sanctuary.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Clock Tower Tidings – 3

The session approved the following during its monthly meeting on September 8 held in person and via Zoom:

- Use of the church for Brooke Hoover's first birthday party on September 21
- HPC to host Community Thanksgiving service on Sunday, November 24
- Pastor's final two weeks of vacation: November 4-18
- A four-part maintenance project in areas outside the sanctuary: New windows on the first floor and some of the second floor; Double mini-splits on the second floor; LED lights throughout the first floor and also the hallway and Sunday school classroom on the second floor; and a contribution to the cost of removing a tree between HPC and the former Stone Town Tavern
- Removal of the shed in the parking lot and sale of the snowblower
- The next session meeting will be on October 20 at 6:30 p.m.



The session voted to remove the old snowblower shed from the parking lot.

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Prayer Chain Requests

Prayer chain requests for Presbyterian Women may be made by contacting Deb Hetrick at 814-643-5424 (home) or 814-644-1653 (cell). All prayer chain requests will be kept confidential. Also, please contact Deb if you would like to join the prayer chain.

Sunday School Group Has New Name, Focus

The Sunday school group meeting before the weekly service has a new name and a new focus.

After spending a year exploring the Old Testament Book of Exodus, the group is now turning its attention to the New Testament Book of Acts. When the group resumed its study on September 15 after a summer break, it also had a new name – Digging Deeper.

Largely considered the history of the early church, Acts is the sequel to the Gospel of Luke. It begins with the end of Jesus' physical ministry on earth and chronicles the beginning of Jesus' ongoing spiritual ministry. This is such a rich part of the Bible to explore to understand what the church is all about.

The Digging Deeper class is open to both youth and adults. It meets Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in the Memorial Family Room. If you wish to join the discussion by Zoom, please let the office know.

Please Consider Paying Per Capita Assessment

If you have not yet paid your 2024 per capita assessment of \$39.24 per member, please prayerfully consider doing so.

The per capita assessment is split three ways by Huntingdon Presbytery – the presbytery keeps \$27.04 and sends \$2.40 to the Synod of the Trinity and \$9.80 to the General Assembly. Per capita funding represents a significant source of revenue for all three bodies.

Huntingdon Presbyterian Church's 2024 per capita assessment is \$5,572.08, based on a membership of 142 at the end of 2022. As of mid-September, \$1,741 has been received in per capita donations. The shortfall will be made up with HPC funds that otherwise could be used for other purposes.



Book Club Selections For the Holiday Season

Presbyterian Women's Book Club is settling in to end the year with what we hope are book selections you will like.

Book Club will meet at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, **October 2**, in the Memorial Family Room to discuss our first autobiography, penned by Alex Trebek, the late host of *Jeopardy!*. The book is *The Answer Is ... Reflections on My Life*.

On Wednesday, **November 6**, the club returns to fiction with a book by Julie Shackman, *A Scottish Highland Surprise*, that combines family with a mysterious letter that leads the reader to a story behind an antique tea set.

PW likes to offer selections that complement the holiday season with easy reading as the holidays are so busy. One reader review of *Highland Surprise* shared, "Well-written with a cute and funny storyline and well-developed characters."

Lily Girl's Christmas Quilt by Ann Hazelwood is a Christmas-themed novel for Wednesday, **December 4**. Christmas is Lily Rosenthal's favorite time of year -- Christmas with family makes the holiday very special for everyone. And Green Bay, Wisconsin, guarantees a winter wonderland!

Here's a heads-up on the titles of the first two books of the new year: On Wednesday, **January 8, 2025**, we will read *The Afternoon Tea Club* by Jane Gilley; for Wednesday, **February 5, 2025**, the selection is *The Last Flight* by Julie Clark. PW Book Club does not meet during Lenten Bible Study.

Please check future newsletters for details on upcoming books in 2025. Happy Reading!

Final Month for Pipe Dream Benefitting Food Backpacks

October ends the current PW Pipe Dream Project benefitting the Standing Stone Elementary School Backpack Program. Please remember that this local mission helps students in our community who are lacking food on the weekends.

The pipes are hungry – please save those quarters to feed the pipes. However, donations of all sizes are welcome.

Presbyterian Women truly appreciates the kindness of our church family. Thank you to everyone.



File Photo by Jody Shoemaker

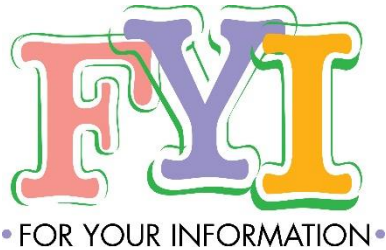
Ann Dunlavy handed out Halloween treats last year from her bat-decorated trunk.

Help with Trunk or Treat By Donating, Distributing

The Mission and Outreach Committee again invites members of the congregation to decorate trunks, come in costume, and distribute treats to Halloween trick-or-treaters in the HPC parking lot from 6 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, **October 31**.

You can also help by donating wrapped candy. Candy donations should be brought to the office by Sunday, **October 27**.

Trunk or Treat in the past has drawn several hundred trick-or-treaters, making it one of HPC's most popular community outreach activities.



Pastoral Care Available

Pastor Brett Hoover is available in the church office Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2:30 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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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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Sunday Liturgists Still Needed

Thanks to Sue Lang, Ann Dunlavy and Zach Byers for being liturgists on recent Sundays. If you are interested in sharing your gifts in Sunday worship as a liturgist, please contact Amanda Hetrick or the church office.

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Thanks for the Musical Help

Thanks to Sarah Peachey and church musician Ivan Yumagulov for sharing their musical talent on recent Sundays.

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View ‘Tea Time’ on Facebook

Pastor Brett has resumed 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 later viewing. Join Pastor Brett for the latest HPC announcements and then stay for a discussion of a topic of interest.

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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.



Photos by Artamarie Barclay

Kitchen Crew

The kitchen at St. James Lutheran Church was busy with volunteers from HPC who helped prepare a takeout meal for several hundred diners on September 12. Above, Pam Thompson dries a pan. Below, Phil Thompson and Jack VanNatta work on food preparation. HPC’s next shift in the Hometown Hearts kitchen will be November 14, and new volunteers are always welcome.



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How to Get a Paper Newsletter

Clock Tower Tidings is being sent by email to members and friends and is posted on the church website. If you would like to receive a paper copy by first-class mail and are not now receiving one, please inform the office. You may also pick up a paper copy of the newsletter in the rear of the sanctuary.

Pastor's Corner

(Continued from First Page)

American Presbyterians trace their roots to the wave of Scots-Irish immigration to the New World that took place in the early 1700s. Scotland is the “motherland” of Presbyterianism. St. Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland. The Scottish flag is St. Andrew’s cross. And even in the Old World heart of Presbyterianism, some traditions never disappear. It only makes sense that if any saint’s name is going to endure in our tradition, it would be Andrew.

Andrew was one of the original disciples and Peter’s brother. He has the somewhat rare privilege of being one of the few disciples to have a speaking role in the Gospels. In John’s Gospel, Andrew starts as a disciple of John the Baptist. After John declares that Jesus is the Lamb of God, Andrew starts awkwardly following Jesus until Jesus asks him what he wants. The first thing Andrew does after meeting Jesus is to rush and tell his brother and bring him to see Jesus.

You could say that Andrew undertook the very first act of evangelism. And he didn’t do it with any fancy speech or well-laid-out plan. He didn’t even have a full picture of who Jesus was yet. What Andrew had was a hope, a belief that this Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. In an act of humble faith, he shared this exciting news with someone he loved with nothing more than an invitation to come and see.

In 2023, an insightful book was published called *The Great Dechurching*. Its goal was to understand the folks who were leaving church and what it might take to reach them. The book is loaded with surveys and statistics. What struck me also surprised the authors. A significant portion of the “dechurched” said they would come back if a friend, spouse or family member invited them. When I read that for the first time, I immediately thought of Andrew. A simple “come and see” is all it would take to get folks to reconsider Jesus and fellowship with his body, the church.

The future of ministry in our church might just

be found in reconnecting with our heritage, reconnecting with the example of St. Andrew. How often have we extended invitations to neighbors, friends and family to come with us to a church event or worship service? Have we tried more than once?

What I love about this approach is its simplicity. Extending an invitation doesn’t require an advanced degree in theology. It just requires paying a little attention. We can invite people to attend a specific worship service or study group that we know intersects with their interests. We can even electronically share our worship services with others if we believe the message or music or prayers struck a powerful chord. Not every invitation will be accepted. But each invitation provides some space for the Spirit to work in the lives of others.

Above all, we should tap into the very thing that motivated Andrew. He wasn’t trying to get his brother to sign on to some gimmick or join a social club. He only wanted someone he loved to experience a hope that had captured his heart. He wanted others to see Jesus. Why wouldn’t we want to share that too?

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Brett D. Hoover

“The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, ‘We have found the Messiah.’ And he brought him to Jesus.”

—John 1:41-42

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Krislund Tourney Raises \$11,000

The Chip In for Krislund golf tournament generated more than \$11,000 for the presbytery-related camp and retreat center in Centre County. The tourney was held September 6 at the Nittany Country Club in Mingoville.

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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.

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Address Service Requested



**October
2024**



Clock Tower Tidings

**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.”*



Peace & Global Witness Offering on Oct. 6
Details Inside

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