

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

April 2026

PASTOR'S CORNER

Making Use of Post-Easter Time

What does our "after-Easter" look like? That may seem like a weird question, but every holiday tends to have a kind of rhythm to it. There's a time of preparation followed by the actual celebration and concluding with a kind of wistful cleanup.

This is very easy to track with Christmas. We decorate, wrap and cook/bake. Christmas finally comes. Then we throw away the wrapping paper and, eventually, take down the tree and lights. When that happens, there's usually a touch of longing for all the good we've experienced to linger just a bit longer into the bleakness of winter. It's a nice, complete cycle each step of which carries a certain significance.

But what about Easter? How well does it fit this cycle? There is certainly a buildup or anticipation. Lent is basically a commemorative march to the cross and the empty tomb behind it.

SEE PAGE 6

Survey Says:
Pastor Brett
emcees 'Family
Feud' game
after the
potluck
on March 22.
Details, Page 5.

Photo by Bill Caufield



2025 File Photo

Joyous Easter To Cap Busy Holy Week

You are invited to take part in 2026 Holy Week activities at HPC, culminating in the joyous flower-filled Easter Sunday service on **April 5** that commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Holy Week began on March 29 with Palm Sunday and includes services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. On Holy Saturday, the HPC sanctuary will be decked out with butterfly decorations in preparation for Easter.

The Maundy Thursday service at 6 p.m. on **April 2** in Fellowship Hall features

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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 also via Zoom.

Dates to Remember

April 2 – Maundy Thursday – 6 p.m.
April 3 – Good Friday cross walk
April 4 – Sanctuary decoration – 10 a.m.
April 5 – Easter
April 6 – PW quarterly meeting – 1 p.m.
April 7 – Deacons – 7 p.m.
April 15 – Choir practice – 6:30 p.m.
April 23 – Hometown Hearts meal
April 25 – Huntingdon Mayfest
April 26 – Deacons' social
May 2 – OGHS Auction

Food Pantry Donations

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

Worship Attendance

The average in-person Sunday worship attendance over four Sundays in February and March was 35. Sunday services had an average of 48 live and archived Facebook views.

Weekly Giving

Tithes and offerings through February totaled \$40,973, or an average of \$5,122 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 the end of February, per capita contributions totaled \$633. If possible, please pay your per capita.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the next newsletter is Wednesday, **April 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.



2025 File Photo

Jim Jackson affixes a butterfly decoration to the rear sanctuary wall last year.

Joyous Easter

Continued from Page One

a meager meal followed by a Tenebrae communion service. All are invited to this moving serving of the Lord's Supper. "Maundy" comes from the Latin word for "commandment."

The Huntingdon Area Forum of Churches will hold its Good Friday cross-walk procession beginning at noon on **April 3** at the Abbey Reformed Church. During stops at seven downtown churches, the walk will offer meditations on the Seven Last Words of Jesus on the cross. The stop at HPC will mark Jesus' sixth words – "It is finished."

On Saturday, **April 4**, volunteers will meet at 10 a.m. in what has become a HPC tradition to adorn the sanctuary with a kaleidoscope of butterfly decorations. Easter flowers are also due in the sanctuary at that time.

Thanks to the butterflies and flower arrangements donated in honor or memory of loved ones, the sanctuary will be ablaze with color for the 10:30 a.m. Easter service on **April 5**. As with all Sunday services, the Easter service will be available for viewing on Facebook.

There will also be on **April 5** a community Easter sunrise service at Juniata College's Peace Chapel off Warm Springs Avenue sponsored by the Forum of Churches.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Next PW Pipe Dream Benefits ‘Bags of Love’

The second 2026 PW Pipe Dream Project begins this month and benefits the always popular “Bags of Love” given by Presbyterian Women to the convenient care unit of Penn Highlands Huntingdon.

It is hoped that the bags' contents will help parents and staff to calm, comfort and entertain sick and fussy children as they wait for treatment. The “Bags of Love” project covers April, May and June. Donated money will go to age-appropriate items for the bags, divided by three age groups: 0-2, 3-6 and 7-10.

Money raised for the first Pipe Dream of the year went to the Huntingdon Area Forum of Churches' Emergency Utility Fund.

Book Club Returns on May 6

Mark your calendars for the return of the PW Book Club on Wednesday, **May 6**. The novel to be read is Marie Benedict's **The Only Woman in the Room**, historical fiction based on actress and inventor Hedy Lamarr.

The book club meets at 10 a.m. in the former choir room.

PW NOTES

PW Meeting: The next quarterly meeting of Presbyterian Women will be held at 1 p.m. in the Memorial Family Room on Monday, **April 6**.

Prayer Chain: Men as well as women can join the Presbyterian Women's Prayer Chain. Just contact Deb Hetrick at 814-643-5424 (home) or 814-644-1653 (cell). If you have a request for the Prayer Chain, Deb's contact info is the same. All prayer chain requests will be kept confidential unless directed otherwise. The Prayer Chain is an integral part of what women of faith do.



2025 File Photo

Auction-goers view items up for bid prior to the start of last year's OGHS auction.

April 24 Is Deadline For Auction Items

Now is the time to gather items to be donated to the One Great Hour of Sharing Auction to be held in the sanctuary on Saturday, **May 2**.

The deadline for dropping off auction items in the office is Friday, **April 24**. This year's auction is emphasizing homemade and homegrown crafts and food items.

In 2025, the auction raised \$2,265 for the One Great Hour of Sharing appeal. Coupled with monetary donations of more than \$5,600, last year's contributions totaled more than \$7,900. 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.

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

This year's auctioneers will be Pastor Brett, Paul Post and Zach Byers. Cashiers will be Phil Thompson and Annette Lloyd. The deacons will provide snacks for auction-goers. The auction is organized by the Mission and Outreach Committee, which will provide OGHS Minutes for Mission on Sundays prior to the auction.

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Photo by Bill Caufield

Deacon Jodie Shoemaker gives a Minute for Mission for Ghana Bibles on March 8.

Ghana Bible Project Draws Strong Support

The first mission project of 2026 has garnered strong support from members and friends of HPC.

As of mid-March, the project surpassed its goal of raising \$1,500 to buy Bibles for a Presbyterian church in the West African nation of Ghana. The deadline for giving was March 29, with a final total to be announced in April.

At a cost of \$10 apiece for Bibles, the goal of \$1,500 would enable the purchase of about 150 Bibles in both English and Twi, the most widely spoken native language in Ghana.

The mission project was a joint venture of the Mission and Outreach Committee and the deacons. Minutes for Mission explaining the project were given at Sunday services during February and March.

Choir to Sing on April 19

The HPC Choir is scheduled to sing at the Sunday, **April 19**, service. Choir practice will be Wednesday, **April 15**, at 6:30 p.m. Whether or not you have ever sung in a choir, you are encouraged to avail yourself of this opportunity to make a joyful noise to the Lord.

HPC Crew to Provide Hearts Meal on Apr. 23

Volunteers from HPC are scheduled to serve the Hometown Hearts weekly community meal on Thursday, **April 23**, at St. James Lutheran Church, Sixth and Mifflin streets.

HPC team members have a great time in fellowship, and the crew welcomes new volunteers. Desserts are always needed, as are helping hands. Each team of workers includes a prep crew and a servers/cleanup crew.

To join the team, please call John Brockett or Sylvia in the church office. If you can provide a dessert, please notify Jane Brown. HPC is scheduled to provide the meal just twice more in 2026 – on **June 18** and **July 9**.

Hometown Hearts provides a free takeout meal each Thursday at St. James Lutheran Church. It is the successor to the Soup Kitchen, which for years was housed at HPC.



Photo by Bill Caufield

Lenten Message: Anita Nwaobilo pinch-hit for Pastor Brett at the worship service on March 8.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The highlights from the March-April session meeting on March 29 will appear in the May newsletter.

FROM THE DEACONS

The deacons held our monthly meeting on March 10. At this meeting, we discussed the following:

- Our Bible drive for Ghana will end Sunday, March 29.
- Sunday, March 29, will be the last day to add Easter cards to the gift bags found at the back of the church. The deacons will deliver the bags and an Easter flower during the week prior to Easter.
- The deacons will prepare and deliver a basket of Easter goodies to the Dyslexia Center from the congregation.
- Tentative plans were made to host a coffee social following worship on **April 26** and to host our traditional strawberry social on **June 7**. Stay tuned for more information.



Facebook Images

Communion Each Month: Clerk of Session Artamarie Barclay serves the Lord's Supper on February 22. The session has voted to increase the frequency of communion to once a month. Below, elders receive the consecrated elements from Pastor Brett.



Photos by Bill Caufield

Artamarie Barclay, left, and Jenny Brockett react after rushing to ring the game bell on the stool.

Potluck Features Food, 'Family Feud' Game

The spring potluck after the March 22 Sunday service featured family-favorite food and an Easter-themed game of "Family Feud."

The meal in Fellowship Hall was organized by the Misson and Outreach Committee. HPC members and friends were encouraged to bring their favorite childhood dishes or their family favorites. Dishes ranged from sloppy joes and beans to grilled peanut butter sandwiches. There were lots of desserts, too.

The "Family Feud" game was hosted by Pastor Brett and divided the diners into two teams – the Carrot-tops and the Cottontails. The teams had to guess the most frequently given answers to questions posed during "Family Feud" surveys on Easter-related themes. Assisting Pastor Brett were Sylvia and Max Byers. For those keeping score at home, the Cottontails surged from behind in the final round to edge the Carrot-tops.



Deb Hetrick samples some of the dishes at the potluck luncheon

Pastor's Corner

Continued from Page One

Holy Week commemorates the final days of Jesus' life and concludes with the celebration of the Resurrection.

What I've seen in myself and so many others is a tendency to leave it there. There are not too many wistful longings for the Easter season to last just a little longer. Perhaps we're ready to rush into the fullness of spring or the more relaxed joy of summer. But Easter just tends to fade from our awareness fairly quickly.

This tendency is quite odd. After all, Easter isn't even just a day. It's a season lasting from Easter Sunday until Pentecost (50 days!). And the event it commemorates is actually much more essential to the Christian faith than Christmas. Two of the four gospels don't even include a Christmas story. But each one tells the Easter story in detail. Yet even with this centrality, Easter quickly fades from our awareness.

I don't believe this in any way diminishes the deep faith experiences that so many of us feel during Easter. The worship services tend to be some of the most meaningful of the year. For some folks, it will be one of the few worship services they'll attend all year. The intensity might even cause a desire for a rest, which is why so many parishioners and pastors "take off" from worship the Sunday after Easter.

What if there was a better way to faithfully use our after-Easter time? The best thing we can probably do is continue to rest in the ordinary means of grace. The means of grace are the spiritual practices that keep us alive to and connected with God's love for us in Jesus Christ. They are the "means" or "ways" through which the Holy Spirit moves to strengthen and enrich our faith. Prayer, study, fasting, public worship in community and the sacraments are the essential "core" of the means of grace. The Easter season is an invitation to continue experiencing the new life in Christ that was proclaimed and celebrated. The best way to do so might be to keep up the means of grace we've recommitted to during

Lent. I often make this kind of appeal during Easter.

But I would also encourage you to take up another post-Easter practice: evaluation. What I mean is taking some time to do a spiritual reflection on our experience of Lent and Easter. What spiritual practices did you take up? How difficult was it to maintain and why? Did God's presence become more real to you and, if so, how? Did you have any "Aha!" moments when something clicked for you?

Celebrations have a certain virtue in themselves where joy is uniquely shared and experienced. But God desires so much more for us than just life sprinkled here and there with bits of happiness. He desires real connection and fellowship with us. It's that kind of connection that brings sustainable joy to life. Easter is a great time to reconnect to the joy we have in God, a joy that comes with a certain declaration of His love and a promise of His very life. So let's take advantage of our post-Easter opportunities to grow in that relationship.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Brett D. Hoover

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"

– Philippians 4:4



2025 File Photo

Easter Proclamation: Colorful banners share the sanctuary wall with butterfly decorations to celebrate Easter last year.

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.

Deacons' Social: The deacons are planning their next coffee social after the Sunday worship service on **April 26**. The social will be in the Memorial Family Room. All are invited to attend this fellowship event.

Thanks for Musical Help: Thanks to church musician Ivan Yumagulov and organist Keith Sutton for sharing their musical talent on recent Sundays.

Liturgists 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.

Krislund Update: Registration for summer camp at Krislund Camp and Retreat Center is now open. Go to krislund.org for details. Save the date for Krislund's annual Open House on Saturday, **May 16**. Krislund Alumni Work Week will be **May 12-17**, when alumni will help get ready for summer camp and the Open House. Work week details are also at krislund.org.

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. The office phone is 814-643-1302.

Digging Deeper: Deepen your faith by joining the Digging Deeper Bible study group meeting at 9:30 a.m. each Sunday in the Memorial Family Room and online via Zoom. Let the office know if you wish to attend the study by Zoom.



Photo by Bill Caufield

Birthday Tribute: Keith Sutton was guest organist at the Sunday worship service on March 22. He played several pieces by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), whose birthday was commemorated the day before.

Combined PC(USA) Agency Given a New Name

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Interim Unified Agency, which combined the former Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly, has a new name: Presbyterian Life and Witness. The new name comes with the tagline, "Serving God's Mission in the World."

The Unification Commission affirmed on March 19 the new name, which takes effect immediately. To avoid confusion, the Denominational Life and Witness work area was renamed Identity and Formation.

Presbytery to Meet in McVeytown

The next stated meeting of Huntingdon Presbytery will be at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, **April 25**, at the McVeytown Presbyterian Church. Everyone – pastors, certified lay preachers, commissioners and all members of churches in the presbytery – are welcome to attend the next presbytery meeting and participate in the small-group discussions led by the Visioning Team and the Committee on Presbytery Life.

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A publication of Huntingdon Presbyterian Church

APRIL 2026



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