

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

October 2026

PASTOR'S CORNER

Build Faithfulness One Step at a Time

Just a few nights ago, the Hoovers were going through our typical bedtime process. When all the regular hygiene stuff is done, we settle down for story time (right now we're reading *Treasure Island*) followed by Bible time. We usually read from a children's story Bible. Each story is very short, well-illustrated and ends with a very brief prayer.

This children's "Bible" has its strengths and weaknesses. It gives young children the very basic concepts of the major narratives of Scripture in simple language. That's good. But I was starting to really see some of its deficiencies. Many things were left out and one or two of the interpretations of the stories presented some serious theological issues. That might be more of a me problem, but some of those issues can significantly change our understanding of God's character.

On this particular night, I decided it was time for a change. It was time for the kids to start hearing more of the story with more context. So, we

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Revised Offering Set For World Communion

This year the Presbyterian Church (USA) is receiving a new fall offering. It's actually an old offering with a new name and new ground rules.

The World Communion Offering will be received at HPC on Sunday, **October 4**. It replaces the former Peace and Global Witness Offering, but will still support racial justice, gender justice, peacemaking, global witness, and ecumenical and interfaith relations.

What's different is that all funds received will be sent to the PC(USA) and any church in the

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Photo by Bill Caufield

Benches Donated: The Huntingdon Dyslexia Center, housed at HPC, recently donated two colorful wooden benches to the church. They are in the parking lot in the space formerly occupied by a shed.

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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

October 4 – World Communion Sunday
October 6 – Deacons – 7 p.m.
October 7 – Session record review – 9:30 a.m.
October 7 – PW Book Club – 10 a.m.
October 12 – Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day
October 13 – Mission and Outreach – 9:30 a.m.
October 18 – Session – 6:30 p.m.
October 25 – Reformation Sunday
October 31 – Trunk or Treat – 6-8 p.m.
November 1 – Daylight Saving Time ends
November 1 – All Saints' Day

Food Pantry Donations

The Huntingdon Food Pantry is requesting **peanut butter** for October. 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 August and September was 41. Sunday services had an average of 66 live and archived Facebook views.

Weekly Giving

Tithes and offerings through August totaled \$145,284.86, or an average of \$4,151 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 August 31, per capita contributions totaled \$1,226. If possible, please pay your per capita.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the next newsletter is Thursday, **October 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.

World Communion

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denomination may apply for a grant to support ministries that promote the goals of the offering.

Previously, half of the offering went to national efforts at peacemaking and global witness around the world, 25% was retained by local congregations for local peace and reconciliation work and 25% went to presbyteries for similar ministries on the regional level.

Now, awards will range from \$500 to \$5,000 taken from 25% of the total World Communion Offering receipts. The awards are expected to be used within 12 months of receiving funds. Grant applications will open the Sunday before Labor Day each year and will close each December. Individual congregations, presbyteries or synods may apply.

Those who have an HPC box of envelopes may use the yellow envelope marked "World-Wide Communion" for this offering.

FROM THE DEACONS

The deacons restarted monthly meetings on Tuesday, September 1. Mainly, this was a reorganizational meeting after a summer hiatus.

- We made plans to host a fall coffee social on Sunday, September 27.
- The card box at the back of the sanctuary will continue to be available for congregational use. Please support this outreach and send a card to someone in our church family.
- As always, please reach out to a deacon with any congregational needs or concerns.

IN MEMORIAM

The following member died recently:

James R. "Jamie" Howe, September 4, 2026

He will be greatly missed.

Please remember his family in your prayers.

HPC to Host Review Of Session Records

Huntingdon Presbytery will conduct its annual review of session records at six locations this fall, including the Huntingdon Presbyterian Church. The HPC review location will cover eight congregations.

The review will begin at 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, **October 7**, at HPC and at churches in Lewistown, Altoona, Philipsburg and Clearfield. A review of records at a sixth location will occur on Tuesday, **October 13**, in Pine Grove Mills.

The review at HPC will cover the session records of these PC(USA) churches: Huntingdon, Alexandria, Mount Union, Pine Grove-Neelyton, Orbisonia, Petersburg-Bethel, Shade Gap and Upper Tuscarora.

Artamarie Barclay, the HPC clerk of session, is the coordinator for the records review at the HPC location.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The session approved the following during its meeting on September 20 held in person and via Zoom:

- Previously allocated money be sent to the Huntingdon fire department
- HPC as the site for the Festival of Song at 7 p.m. on Saturday, December 12
- Modification to HPC secretary's Monday morning schedule
- Removal of Rick Bayer and addition of Kathy Criswell as check signers
- HPC credit card to be arranged by Treasurer Beckwith
- HPC as a site on Saturday, November 7, for a progressive organ recital organized by a community group
- The next regularly scheduled session meeting will be on October 18



File Photo by Jodie Shoemaker

Judy Post costumed as Little Bo Peep at last year's Trunk or Treat event.

Parking Lot Tradition To Mark Halloween

The last day of October again will see HPC's parking lot awash in costumed characters both dispensing and receiving candy and other goodies.

Trunk or Treat, a popular community outreach event, will take place in the parking lot from 6 to 8 p.m. on Saturday, **October 31**. Community children are encouraged to stop by the parking lot on their annual Halloween rounds and check out what is being given out.

In past years, the treats were dispensed from decorated car trunks by costumed minions, pirates, sharks, M&Ms and more. If you plan on doing a trunk, please let Sylvia in the office know. Also let her know if you will need electricity.

Those wishing to donate individually wrapped candy treats can drop them off at the church office by Sunday, **October 25**.

Trunk or Treat is being organized by the Mission and Outreach Committee.

Pastor's Corner

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started reading fully from the Bible. I was surprised by how much more engagement this change created. There were lots more questions, some of which were very meaningful. We do other things as a family in addition to our evening Bible story to grow in the faith. But it was wonderful to see this aspect maturing and deepening.

Maturing in faith is a common theme in the New Testament. When I was reflecting on this change in our family's devotional life, I thought of a passage from Hebrews 5:12-14: "In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil."

There is certainly a critical edge to what the author has written. He was expecting more diligent growth in understanding the faith, or, even more basically, a greater desire to do so. They were still on milk when they should have been eating solid food. It's a stark reminder of our responsibility to discover more and more the riches of the gospel, grow closer to God, and deepen our understanding of Him.

I believe most of you reading this would have a desire to deepen and mature your faith, to grow closer with God and to strength your relationship with Him. The two things that tend to hold us back from accomplishing this would be the method and the motivation. We're not sure how to do it. And even if we understand how to do it, it's difficult to follow through.

There is also a tendency to overcomplicate this concept of spiritual growth and maturity. We get snowed under a blizzard of suggested reading and wonder when we'll find the time to start. We hear about the prayer life of the seasoned faithful while wondering how we can pray for two

minutes without getting distracted. We see lives of such dedicated service in others and wonder where they get the energy to do it all while suspecting they must have more than 24 hours available to them in a day.

But spiritual maturing doesn't need to have this kind of comparative dimension. And it doesn't need to have a complicated regime attached to it either. When we mature in a skill like reading, we don't learn the alphabet and then jump to try to read **Moby-Dick**. We take the next step in growth that is appropriate to where we are.

We start by honestly understanding where we are. What is your devotional life like now? How and how often do you read Scripture? What about your prayer life, commitment to worship, or service? Then, we take one simple step forward. If you aren't reading Scripture regularly, then start.

I would suggest one chapter a day beginning with the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). If you've been reading for a while, try including a study Bible or commentary. Don't just skip past difficult passages but dig for answers. Whatever your commitment is to worshipping in community, increase it. Attend more frequently or join us for Sunday School. Whatever your prayer life is looking like, add one more time of day to pause in intentional prayer. For example, I've recently started thanking God for my baptism whenever I shower, and I ask Him to help me strengthen my Union with Christ.

A life of faithfulness is rarely, if ever, completely developed in one dramatic event. Instead, it's usually built up by each small step we take from where we are to where God is calling us to go. Wherever you are, take that next step knowing God is right there with you as you journey along.

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.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Book Club to Discuss 13 Marple Short Stories

Agatha Christie fans, it is time! PW Book Club is ready to discuss **Miss Marple, The Complete Short Stories**. On, Wednesday, **October 7**, we will focus on the first 13 stories, which are from **The Thirteen Problems**.

“Christie's heart is in her books, speaking to us through her characters just as clearly...” as if she could “...walk into her drawing room and greet a friend.” -- Carolyn Hart, Agatha Award-winning author. We will see you at 10 a.m. in the former choir room. Happy Reading!



The November selection for the PW Book Club is the #1 New York Times bestseller **The Correspondent** by Virginia Evans. Sybil Van Antwerp, this novel's main character, has used letters throughout her life to make sense of the world and her place in it. Most mornings around 10:30, she sits down to write several letters, including one to a person to whom she writes often – yet, she never sends that letter.

Sybil has lived a fairly full life; she expects that life to go on as always. Then letters from someone in her past force her to examine a painful period of her life. She cannot move forward until she faces the letter she writes but never sends.

Author Ann Patchett says Evans, “...shows how one woman changes at a point when change had seemed impossible. That change, like this novel, turns out to be a cause for celebration.”



Looking ahead to December, the selection is **Tales of a Paperboy: A Christmas Story** by Andrew J. Mair. Remember, PW Book Club meets the first Wednesday of the month at 10 a.m. in the former choir room. All readers are welcome!

Digging Deeper Group Begins Study of Psalms

The Sunday morning Digging Deeper group has begun a new study, focusing on the Psalms.

After winding up a study of the Book of Judges, in conjunction with a summer sermon series by Pastor Brett, the group started its latest study in late September. The Book of Psalms functions as the prayer book and hymnal of the Bible and includes a number of formats and themes.

The study group is open to all adults and youth who are interested in digging deeper into their faith and the Bible. Before Judges, the group previously studied the New Testament Letter to the Hebrews.

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.

PW NOTES

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

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.

Consider a QCD in 2026

If you must take a required minimum distribution from your Individual Retirement Account in 2026, please consider making a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) to HPC. Please consult with your tax advisor or IRA custodian for details on how to make this tax-free donation.

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.

October Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper will be observed at the Sunday worship service on **October 4**. Annual World Communion contributions will be received at the service.

Guest Musicians: Thanks to Kay Rossman, Joann Weber and Sarah Peachey, who filled in for church musician Keith Sutton during his recent absence. Keith told the congregation in late August that he was looking forward to being back at the organ for the upcoming holidays.

Clock Work: 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.

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.

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.

Golfing for Krislund: The Chip in for Krislund golf tournament on September 11 at the Nittany Country Club in Centre County drew 64 golfers and raised more than \$17,000 for the camp. The money will help "Send Kids to Camp" at Krislund by reducing program costs and funding camperships for deserving youth as needed.



Photos by John Brockett

Summer Sunshine: Summer scenes in Big Valley included haymaking, above, near Milroy and a bunch of sheep – a total of 400 of them – grazing in deep grass, below.

