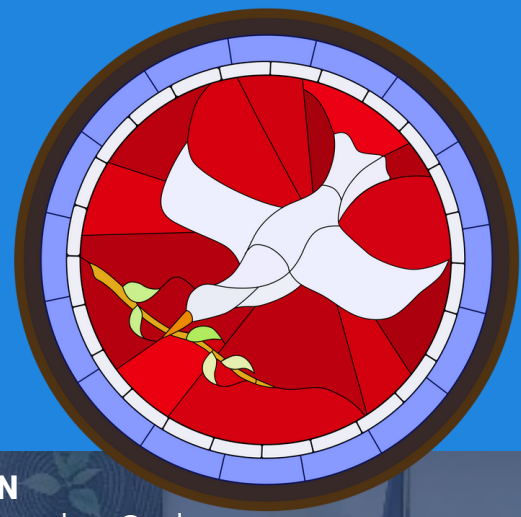


THE HICKORY MESSENGER

HICKORY UNITED EPC | OCTOBER 2023



THE VISION

Leading one another into growing relationships with Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit all for the glory of God.

THE MISSION

Reaching upward to God,
Growing inward with God,
Serving outward for God.

A Message From the Session

BY BLAKE GROVE

We are pleased to announce that Session has approved a Transitional Pastor to lead us through a process to define our next steps as a church and to find our next Senior Pastor.

Rev. Tom Jones' first day on the job will be October 9 and his first sermon will be given on October 15. That Sunday service will be followed by an informal coffee and cookie reception in the greeting area hosted by the Session to give you a chance to meet Pastor Tom.

Tom grew up in Kentucky as the Son of a Baptist pastor and served 21 years at Clarksburg Presbyterian Church and 12 years at Summit Presbyterian Church, both in Pennsylvania.

He follows a collegial style of leadership and prefers to preach the "big Idea" of the passage. At this point of Tom's ministry, he believes his goal is to go where the Lord wants him to go and focus more on helping a congregation be who God has called them to be.

Currently, Pastor Tom and his wife reside in Saxonburg, PA. where they served the Summit Presbyterian Church.

At Summit, he served as head of staff and helped oversee the main outreach ministry; "His Kids Christian School". They plan to maintain a home in Saxonburg and to be close to the Hickory community, have located an apartment in McDonald to alleviate long commutes especially in adverse winter conditions.

We are excited to welcome Pastor Tom as he leads us through our next steps as God's church in Hickory.

WELCOME RECEPTION
FOR TRANSITIONAL PASTOR

Rev. Tom Jones

OCT. 15 | FOLLOWING WORSHIP
WELCOME AREA

Worship:

Sundays | 10:00 am

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Communion News

COMMITTEE: LISA ALEXANDER & DEB REA

Our next communion will be on **Sunday, November 5 at 10:00 am**. Donations of cereal and pasta for the Fort Cherry Helping Hands program are collected on Sundays when Communion is served. Thank you for giving generously to this program. Please place items on the metal rack located in the main entrance foyer.

Food Pantry Donations

COMMITTEE: DEB REA & MARY JORDAN

Travel-size personal items (soap, deodorant, toothpaste/brush, lotions, shampoo/conditioner, hair brush/comb, etc.) are needed for City Mission's Avis Arbor Women's Shelter. Please place your donations in the designated bin located in the main entrance foyer. Thank you for supporting this outreach.

We are also collecting Toilet Paper Roll donations through October 22 for the McDonald Area Food Pantry. Drop-off is in the red bin outside the Main Office. There are roughly 70 families this initiative has the potential to support.

DONATIONS NEEDED!

FOR MCDONALD AREA FOOD PANTRY

- Toilet paper roll donations needed by October 22
- Drop-off items in the **RED BIN** outside the Office

♥ *The Deacons thank you!*



2023 Deacons Holiday Food Drive

It's time again for the Annual Food Drive to help those in need who live in our community for a Thanksgiving and Christmas meal. Beginning on Sunday, October 29-November 12, check out board in the Welcome area to see items that are needed. Bins will be located there also for your donations. Your generosity is always so overwhelming that once we take care of our families, we are able to send the rest to FC Helping Hands families! Items needed:

- Cake mix & icing
- Canned gravy
- Canned sweet potatoes/yams
- Canned vegetables
- Cranberry Sauce/Berries Pudding
- Boxed potatoes
- Bag of sugar
- Jello boxes
- Stove Top Stuffing

2023 Deacons:

Moderator - Mary Jordan

Vice Moderator - Deb Rea

Secretary - Tracey Fasnacht

Treasurer - Deb Rea

Lisa Alexander

Ken Alrutz

Tracey Fasnacht

Janet Green

Mary Jordan

Sandy Martinek

Rich Moore

Deb Rea

Bob Spencer

Dave Willkens

A Deacon's Role in the EPC:

According to Scripture, those who bear the office of Deacon should especially exhibit the spiritual qualities of the Christian and should be steady and reliable. The first duty of the Deacon is sympathy and service, and together the Board of Deacons carries out the ministry of compassion. As the law of love places certain duties upon each Christian, the Deacon is especially bound to fulfill those duties and to be an example to all.

Ref: The Ordination and Installation of Deacons Book of Government 14-1E.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

PAGE 3

Digital Ways to Give

Web



Text

"HICKORY" TO
888-364-GIVE (4483)

In App



NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE!



OCTOBER

23

Email Lynn:

communications@hickoryunitedepc.org

7TH ANNUAL Living Nativity HICKORY UNITED EPC

SAVE THE DATE!!!
DECEMBER 9 & 10

welcome

WE ARE
EXCITED TO
WELCOME
MICHELLE TO
OUR CHURCH
STAFF!



Michelle Danna

OFFICE ADMINISTRATIVE ASST.

Thank you!

PASTOR PIERRE FOR VISITING HICKORY CHURCH!



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

PAGE 4

NEXT COMMUNION:
November 5

EVERY THURS.

6:30 PM



Service Reminder: Hickory Apple Fest

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8 | WORSHIP @ 9:00 AM

2024
**CHURCH OFFICER
NOMINATION FORMS**

DUE OCTOBER 15

HICKORY CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL FUNDRAISER

RIDE FOR *Jesus*
OCTOBER 19 & 20

Volunteers Needed!



CONTACT ASHLEY LEWIS:

HICKORYPRESCHOOL@HICKORYUNITEDPC.ORG



SEASON 12! 2023-2024

UPWARD

REGISTER NOW!

REGISTRATION.UPWARD.ORG/UPW85292

AGES 4 YRS-8TH GRADE

Upward Basketball Needs Volunteers!

In addition to player registration, volunteer registration is now open! UPWARD is also looking for volunteers to fill a variety of roles: coaches, assistants, referees, Buck Stop workers, prayer warriors, etc. No prior experience necessary, we will train you! This is a great opportunity to serve the children in our community through an amazing program that promotes sharing the goodness of God.

To register as a volunteer visit:

registration.upward.org/UPW85292/volunteer

Let us pray for you today.

SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST:

HICKORYCHURCH.COM/PRAYER

OR SCAN THE QR CODE NOW



KIDS & YOUTH MINISTRY

PAGE 5

SUNDAY SCHOOL REMINDER:

There will be NO Sunday School on October 8 due to Worship at Hickory Apple Festival!

SAVE THE DATES:

- **OCT 21 & NOV 18:** Hickory Student Hangouts @ church. Details TBD.
- **NOV 4:** Service Project from 10 am - 2 pm, lunch included. Service projects will take place on church property. More details TBD!

STAY TUNED FOR THE RETURN OF KIDVENTURE IN 2024!

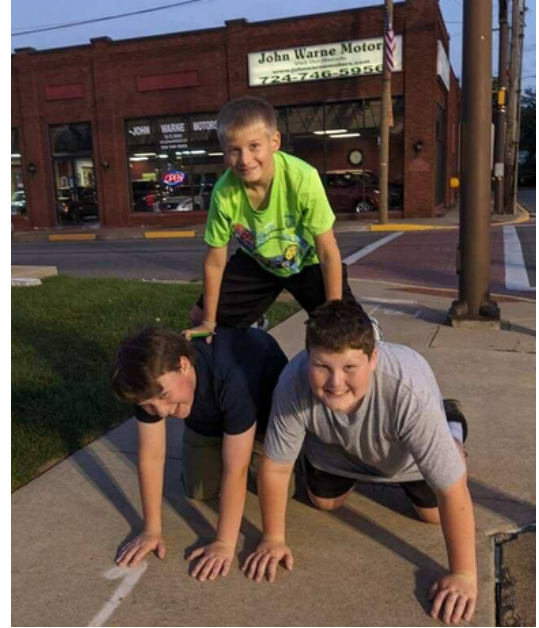
QUESTIONS?

Contact Youth Ministry Director Michaela:
youth@hickorunitedepc.org

Youth Group Kickoff Recap

Thank you to all the youth and volunteers who joined us for the Youth Group Kickoff Photo Scavenger Hunt! We had a blast in Canonsburg as teams raced to capture staged photos with town landmarks, people, and local businesses for the highest score. Congrats to winning team Seth, Ricky, and Alexander and team chaperone Jake Carter!

(L to R): Winning teammates Alexander, Ricky and Seth smile for a photo staged as a human pyramid for one of their Scavenger hunt challenges.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

October 15, middle school students will wrap up learning about how God's character is seen in the stories about the prophets Elijah and Elisha (1 & 2 Kings). October 22 we will move on to Jonah and learn about how God runs after people who run away from him.

This semester, high school students are reading New Testament letters - but not the ones we most often think of that are written by Paul! Join us in exploring letters authored by other early church leaders like James and Peter.

YOUTH GROUP // THURSDAYS 6:30-8P

Join us October 5th and 12th as we wrap up our Christ & the Church series. October 5th we will talk about what it means to be a disciple of Christ. October 12th we will talk about what it means to be the body of Christ!

WEEKS 3 & 4
CHRIST & THE CHURCH SERIES

YOUTH GROUP

THURSDAY
5TH & 12TH OCTOBER, 2023
6:30 PM-8 PM

HICKORY UNITED EPC



(Top): Wanda Carter instructs children's handbells as part of Worship Skills for our elementary students!

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD 2023

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A Simple Gift, An Eternal Message

BY SUE ALRUTZ

Operation Christmas Child is celebrating 30 years of God's faithfulness. Since 1993, over 200 million boys and girls have been delighted to receive gift-filled shoeboxes and discover how much God loves them. In addition to bringing great joy to millions of children in need, every gift has been accompanied with the Good News of Jesus Christ. Children are invited to follow-up discipleship through the Greatest Journey, a 12-lesson program designed especially for shoebox recipients. We praise God that over the last three decades, 50 million children who receive these shoebox gifts have gone on to complete The Greatest Journey discipleship program, learning more about how to follow Christ each day. In the past 14 years alone, over 17 million children have made decisions for Christ Jesus and have come to know him personally as their Lord and Savior.

Hickory United Evangelical Presbyterian Church has a rich history with the Operation Christmas Child Ministry. 2023 marks our 26th year as a partner with this special project through the Samaritan's Purse. Thank you and God bless you for your support over the years. Since 1997, our church family at Hickory has packed and sent over 4,000 shoeboxes. What is really inside each shoebox gift that you prepare? Not just toys and other small gifts, but love, hope, joy, and an opportunity to share the gospel message with hurting children and their families around the globe. Last year in 2022, we collected 175 shoebox gifts here at our church. A total of 20,634 shoeboxes were collected from churches and organizations in our area and delivered to one of 5 locations here in Washington County. From there, the shoeboxes made their way to either Baltimore MD or Charlotte NC to be processed and finally shipped around the world. 9,303,130 shoeboxes were collected from the USA alone and the Worldwide total collection was 10,599,907 shoeboxes last year. Praise the Lord!

We have OCC cardboard shoeboxes available in our greeting area which are provided at no cost. We will also have OCC plastic shoeboxes available for \$3 each, starting in mid Oct. To reserve your plastic shoe box, please contact Sue Alrutz at 412-576-5773 or at suealrutz@gmail.com. If you prefer to use your own box, whether cardboard or plastic, please be sure that it is a standard shoebox size. If you wrap your box, please wrap the lid and box separately. If you are unable to pack a box this year, please consider making a monetary donation to Operation Christmas Child. These donations assist with *The Greatest Journey* booklets and Bibles which are printed in every language.

Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Dedication Sunday is November 13th. We prayerfully look forward to another successful and blessed year of giving, bringing the good news and love of Jesus into lives of millions of children. Please specifically ask God to prepare the way for the shoebox gifts to travel literally to the ends of the Earth, and to open the hearts of children and their families to receive the Gospel in the coming year. If you have any questions, please contact Sue Alrutz at 412-576-5773.

OCC PRO TIP: RIGHT NOW, THERE ARE STILL MANY BARGAINS ON SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND OTHER ITEMS THAT ARE USEFUL FOR PACKING A SHOE BOX!



**OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD
SHOEBOX MINISTRY: SAVE THE DATE!**

**SUNDAY
NOV. 12**

- **FREE** Cardboard shoe boxes available in the Greeting Area.
- Plastic shoe boxes available for \$2.50/box. Contact Sue to Reserve.

**QUESTIONS?
CONTACT SUE ALRUTZ: 412-576-5773**



GIFT SUGGESTIONS:



School Supplies: crayons, markers, pens, pencils; sharpeners, stamps; ink pad sets, writing pads/paper, solar calculator, coloring or picture books, etc.

Toys: small cars, dolls, stuffed animals, balls, kazoos, harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, small etch a sketch, toys that light up or make music with extra batteries, slinky, etc.

Hygiene Items: toothbrush and holder, mild bar soap and plastic soap dish with a cover, comb, brush, washcloth, etc.

Other: T-shirt, socks, ball caps, sunglasses, hair clips, inexpensive jewelry or watch, flashlights with extra batteries, soccer ball with pump, etc.



NO: toothpaste, candy, gum, used/damaged items, war related items i.e. toy guns, knives or military figures, chocolate, seeds, fruit roll-ups, drink mixes (powdered or liquid), lotions, medications, vitamins, glass items, aerosols, or any liquids.

HICKORY COMMUNITY BLESSING BOX

**TO ENSURE THE
BLESSING THE REMAINS
STOCKED YEAR ROUND,
WE ARE ACCEPTING
DONATIONS OF THE
FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

- **Non-perishable foods:** rice, ready to eat canned goods, boxed mac & cheese, trail mix, crackers, granola bars
- **Beverages:** Bottled water, instant coffee, cocoa, cider or Emergen-C packets
- **Personal items:** toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, dry shampoo, conditioner, bath soap, menstrual supplies, band-aids, fragrance free sunscreen, chapstick, hair brush, and hair elastics
- **Home goods:** single roll toilet paper, dish soap, and wipes..even job postings!

Community Blessing Box Opens 24/7 on Church Grounds

BY LYNN VANNASDALE

Folks may have noticed an addition to the Church campus recently. A bright, white, wooden boxed cabinet is the newest permanent fixture on the grounds, located between the flag pole and the entrance to Covenant Center gym. A placard above the box's door reads, "Take what you need, Give what you can, above all, be blessed."

This is the motto of the Hickory Community Blessing Box, a project initiative spearheaded by Girl Scout Troop 28883 members Kaitlyn Kaniuff and Christina Jones. The completion of the project fulfills requirements for them to achieve one of the highest awards in Girl Scouting - The Silver Award. To obtain the award, Girl Scouts must identify an issue they are passionate about, determine how it affects their individual community and then choose a project that will lead to a lasting change. The planning, development, implementation and completion of the project is also up to the Girl Scouts.

After their project proposal was presented to the Session of Elders and approved, Church Elder Fred Rasel assisted the Girl Scouts with construction and installation of their plan. The box is now fully operational and open to the public. To continue the sustainability of the blessing box, donations are being accepted for various items. Items can be dropped off in the donation box in the Main Entrance Foyer during Church Office operating hours: M-F 9a-3p or on Sundays before or after 10:00 am Worship Service.

If you or someone you know is food insecure or in need of basic necessities, please feel free to utilize this resource and spread the word amongst the Hickory Community.



(Top L): Kaitlyn Kaniuff works on the finishing touches as Elder Fred Rasel supervises. (Top R): Christina Jones works on the base frame for the Blessing Box while Rasel holds it secure. (Bottom L): Kaitlyn & Christina proudly pose next to their completed Silver Award Blessing Box Project wearing their Girl Scout troop attire with Elder Fred Rasel. (Bottom R): Kaitlyn & Christina break ground together for the new Blessing Box site.

OCTOBER CALENDAR

ALL EVENTS, DATES & TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

SPECIAL DATES THIS MONTH

10/8	Worship @ Apple Fest 9:00 am No Sunday School	10/19	Preschool Ride 4 Jesus Fundraiser (CC)
10/9	Indigenous Peoples' Day Pastor Tom's First Day Tim V Small Group Begins 6:30 pm (CR)	10/20	Preschool Ride 4 Jesus Fundraiser (CC)
10/15	Pastor Tom's First Sunday (<i>Light Reception following Service in Welcome Area</i>) Officer Nomination Forms Due	10/21	Upward 1st year Player Evaluations 9:00 am (CC)
		10/30	Preschool Fall Parties
		10/31	Preschool Fall Parties 2024 Pledge Cards Due
		11/5	Communion

RECURRING WEEKLY MEETINGS/CLASSES/GATHERINGS

SUNDAYS

- Sunday School - All Ages | 8:45 am (Various Locations)
- Worship Services | 10:00 am (S)

MONDAYS

- Fit Club | 8:00 am (CC)
- Tim V Small Group | 6:30 pm (CR)
- Volleyball | 7:00 pm (CC)

TUESDAYS

- Staff Meeting (Every Other Week) | 10:00 am (Parlor)
- Boy Scout Meeting | 7:00 pm (CC)

WEDNESDAYS

- Fit Club | 8:00 am (CC)
- Moms in Prayer Small Group | 10:00 am (P)
- Praise Band Practice | 7:00 pm (S)
- Cub Scouts | 7:00 pm | (CC)

THURSDAY

- Youth Group 6-12 Grade | 6:30 pm (CC/L)
- Competitive Volleyball | 7:00 pm (CC)

FRIDAYS

- Fit Club | 8:00 am (CC)

RECURRING MONTHLY MEETINGS/GATHERINGS

- Building & Property Meeting | 7:00 pm (P) | Every 2nd Wednesday
- Discipleship Team Meeting | 6:30 pm (LB) | (P) - Every 2nd Monday
- Deacons Meeting | 6:30 pm (P) | Every 4th Monday
- Hospitality Ministry Team Meeting | *Monthly meetings are fluid, check online church calendar*
- Outreach Committee Meeting | 6:30 pm (P) | Every 2nd Tuesday
- Prayer Shawl Ministry | 12:00 pm (CC) | Every 1st Wednesday
- Preschool Team Meeting | 12:30 pm (FH) | Every 2nd Tuesday
- Security Team Meeting | (P) Every 1st Wednesday
- Session Meeting | 6:30 pm (P) | Every 3rd Wednesday
- Stewardship Meeting | 6:30 pm (P) | Every 1st Monday **after** 1st Wednesday of the month
- Women's Cancer Survivors Group Meeting | 12:00 pm (CC) | Last Wednesday of the month
- Women's Ministry Meeting | 11:15 pm (P) | *Monthly meetings are fluid, check the online church calendar*

(CC) Covenant Center (CR) Choir Room (FH) Fellowship Hall (L) Loft (LB) Library (P) Parlor (S) Sanctuary



HICKORY UNITED EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Pastoral & Ministry

Transitional Pastor, Rev. Tom Jones | pastor@hickoryunitedepc.org

Music Ministry Director, Tim VanNasdale | tim.vannasdale@hickoryunitedepc.org

Youth Ministry Director, Michaela Walker | youth@hickoryunitedepc.org

Lay Pastor, Lou Templeton | (724) 356-7835

Administrative / Support

Office Administrative Assistant, Michelle Danna | office@hickoryunitedepc.org

Communications Coordinator, Lynn VanNasdale | communications@hickoryunitedepc.org

Co-Treasurer, Linda Carter | linda.carter@hickoryunitedepc.org

Co-Treasurer, Melissa Fluharty | melissa.fluharty@hickoryunitedepc.org

Audio Visual Technician, David Sykut | david.sykut@hickoryunitedepc.org

Hickory Christian Preschool

Preschool Director, Ashley Lewis | (724) 356-7337 | hickorypreschool@hickoryunitedepc.org

Facilities

Sexton, Eugene Short | (724) 356-4424 | sexton@hickoryunitedepc.org

Facility Assistant, Will Smith | (724) 356-4424

Prayer Tree

Join the Prayer Tree Weekly E-List: contact communications@hickoryunitedepc.org

LET'S GET LINKED!



scan



GET THE
APP!



SHARE
SOCIAL!

text

HICKORYUNITED
TO 84576



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hickorychurch.com



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210 Main St., Hickory, PA.
15340

contact