



HICKORY UNITED EPC | AUGUST 2026

THE HICKORY MESSENGER

Pastor's Pen

BY PASTOR CLAYTON LAPOSTA

Being that our sermon series this summer has focused so much on the writings of David and other Psalmists, I thought I would write this "Pastor's Pen" article on a story from King David's life and see if there was any practical implications for us. (Or maybe one that we have missed.)

In the early chapters of 2 Samuel, we are told the story of Israel's transition of power from the family of Saul (Saul and his son Jonathan are now dead) to the anointed king, David. This moment in history wraps up a rather challenging period for David. Saul spent the later years of his reign trying to kill David. David had to deal with the sons of Saul wanting to keep the kingdom in their name, but finally it seems like David's kingdom is going to be established. After all this, David is anointed king over all Israel, the Lord gives his enemies into his hands, and a new city with a new palace is built for David on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. So when David looks back over his life and he remembers all the things he has gone through, he is filled with thanks that God has saved his life this whole time. Think about it, to this point in David's life there has been nothing but road blocks that seemed like they would kill him before he ever had the chance to become king and yet here he is, alive and well. Only God could do that! So when you get to 2 Samuel 6, David is so full of thanks that he does something....kind of weird. He takes off all his outer clothing so he's only left with a linen ephod and he starts dancing. Dancing of all things. Imagine seeing our president dancing on the lawn of the White House in his underwear, it would be shocking, wouldn't it? It's so shocking that David's wife (who just happens to be a daughter of Saul) is so appalled that she yells at him for acting a fool! There are women around, you're the king! My daddy would never do something like that!

Now a lot of times when folks read this story what they take from this is just this act of dancing. "David is so joyful that he dances so we should dance too if we have the joy of the Lord. Don't get me wrong, my purpose here is not to tell you to not dance (this isn't Footloose) but I do think this way of viewing the story misses what David is truly modeling for us. After getting reamed out by his wife, David explains that this dance isn't because he's trying to get the attention of women, it really isn't for anyone. Instead, David is willing to risk making himself look foolish in order to praise God for what he has done. It's an act of humility. If it means praising God, David doesn't care how foolish he looks. And we know that this is what David means to get across because he tells his wife, "I will make myself more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in your eyes." David knows that he will be humbled like this over and over again because it's not about him as king but God as King! David, his reputation, his power is nothing. It's all about God and in humility, he will praise him.

If it risked you not being cool, would you still praise God? If it makes you unpopular, would you still do it? Would you risk not being the most popular person at work if it meant you lived for the Lord? If living a life that honors God meant that you had to skip a social outing that wasn't God honoring, would you do it? Would you be willing to be a voice of truth even if it's the unlikeable position? Can you sing from the top of your lungs at church to the glory of God without caring if someone else thought you were a good singer? These are just some examples but the thought I'm trying to get across is, it's easy to appear Christian when you're surrounded by a Christian community. There really is no risk of you humbling yourself like David did because we all (hopefully) want to praise God, too. Outside of the church though, are you willing to humble yourself, humble your own name or reputation in order to praise the Lord? David was. I want us to be, too.

WORSHIP:

Sundays | 10:00 am

SUNDAY SCHOOL:

Sundays | 8:45 am

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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.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Deacon's CORNER

[Food Pantry Donations](#)

We will be placing a red tub in the welcome area for donations of food items. These items are distributed to the food pantry families on the 4th Tuesday of each month. This outreach helps provide food assistance to over 150 people a month!

[Helping Hands](#)

Donations of ramen noodles, peanut butter, cereal, canned meat, fruits and vegetables, ready-to-make meals like Hamburger Helper and Mac and Cheese for the Fort Cherry Helping Hands program are collected Sundays. Financial contributions are also appreciated. Please place your items on the collection shelf in the greeting area foyer. Thank you for remembering the families in the Fort Cherry Helping Hands program.

[Special Projects](#)

Will you be traveling? If so, please pick up any unused complimentary hygiene items from your hotel or resort. These are used to make care packages for the Washington City Mission and are much appreciated. There is a box in the main entrance foyer to place your items.

[Blood Drive](#)

September 26th is the next blood drive. Donating blood can save up to three lives and provides health benefits for the donor. Regular donations are linked to lower blood pressure and reduced risk of heart disease. See you in Covenant Center!!



NOTES OF Thanks

*Dear Saints at Hickory,
Greetings. We thank the Lord for the spirit He gives you that makes you take such good care of our ministry. Thanks for check #22743 \$1820, #22744 \$100 and #22745 \$2500. Thanks for the food you sent for our parishioners. What a blessing!
Thank you!*

~ERMITHE & PIERRE

WELCOME HEIDI

This month, we were delighted to welcome our new Music Director, Heidi Clark, to the Hickory United family!

Heidi brings a wealth of experience and education to

our music ministry. She holds a Doctorate in Worship Studies from the Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies, a Master of Music from UConn, a Bachelor of Science in Music Education from Duquesne University, and is ordained with American Baptist Churches USA.

Outside of church, Heidi enjoys hobby farming, where she keeps busy gardening, along with chickens and ducks. She loves spending Sunday afternoons playing Dungeons & Dragons and is a fan of The Lord of the Rings. Her other interests include watching true crime documentaries, reading, and indoor cycling.

We are thrilled to welcome Heidi to Hickory United and look forward to the gifts and leadership she will bring to our congregation.



Help Feed Haitian Children

We are always collecting donations for our Haiti Food Distribution program. Donations supply rice and beans to Haitian children and their families.



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS



CHRISTMAS IN JULY

Thank you to everyone who generously donated toys for Christmas in July! Your kindness and generosity will bring joy and hope to children and families in our community. We are truly grateful for your willingness to share God's love in such a meaningful way. Because of your support, this outreach will make a lasting impact, and we are blessed to be part of a church family that so faithfully cares for others. Thank you for helping make this ministry a wonderful success!

WOMEN'S RETREAT



This year's Women's Retreat will be at Agape Retreat Center in Hickory PA. Come join us September 19th 8:45 am - 2:00 pm for a word from speaker Amanda Crews who will be speaking about prayer. Admission is \$10. Breakfast, lunch and snack are provided. Check in at 8:45 followed by fellowship. RSVP no later than September 6th. Money due at this time, as well. We hope to see you there!

ABOUT AMANDA CREWS

Amanda is a dynamic speaker who has spoken at small groups as well as Annual Women's Conferences, she crafts her messages using Bible encouragement to reach specific audiences.

She touches upon topics of grief, friendship, marriage, parenting, prayer, day-to-day life and walking faithfully with the Lord through life's ups and downs.

In addition to speaking, Amanda is an accomplished writer offering encouragement on her website ScantifiedByLove.com and has been published on numerous platforms including: Her View From Home, National Share Magazine and other online publications. She is also a regular contributor for Life with Christ Ministry's parenting column and Fruitful Women.

If you would like more information, contact Amanda at as.crews@yahoo.com or at ScantifiedByLove.com.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS



BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS

Screenings will take place every third Sunday of the month from 8:30 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. This is a wonderful opportunity to stay informed about your health and wellness.



FAITH NIGHT BASEBALL GAME

Join us for Faith Night with the Wild Things. Saturday, September 5th, at 7:00 PM!

We'll gather before the game for a tailgate featuring complimentary hot dogs and hamburgers, then enjoy the game together and stay for the postgame fireworks.



Tickets are \$15 each, but if you buy two, you get one free, making it a great opportunity to invite a friend.



MENS BASKETBALL & BIBLE STUDY

Men's Basketball and Devotions is starting August 5th.

Join us every other Wednesday from 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm for a pickup basketball game. Scan the QR code to sign up!



HICKORY CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

If you'd like to support our Preschool, we've created an Amazon Wish List with toys, art supplies, learning materials, and other items that help enrich daily activities. Every contribution, no matter the size, makes a meaningful difference and is greatly appreciated.



KIDS & YOUTH MINISTRY

KIDS & YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL 8:45 - 9:45 AM

KIDVENTURE

KIDS

Kidventure is back! Join us August 4th from 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm at Cross Creek Park. See you all there!
Contact Ashley Strnisa for more information.

KIDS SERVING IN WORSHIP

Ushers: Children from First and up are invited to help collect offering during services.
Candle Lighting: Children in 3rd grade and up may sign up to light the candles at church.

How to Sign Up:

Parents are asked to sign their children up by emailing Jennifer York at jennifer.york2013@gmail.com

Training will be provided for all who are interested (old and new) August 2nd right after church. This is a wonderful way for our kids to participate, learn, and grow in serving the church family in worship. We look forward to seeing their bright smiles and helping hands!



POOL PARTY

YOUTH

Join us on the first Sunday of each month for our Youth Pool Party! Enjoy an evening of swimming, hanging out with friends, and sharing dinner together. This month was moved to the 9th due to weather.

If you have any questions or would like to attend, please contact Kit Little for more information. 215-287-8888

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group is still happening EVERY week!

Join us Sunday evenings from 6:00–8:00 PM in the Covenant Center and the Youth Room for a fun night of fellowship, games, discussion, and community. Best of all—DINNER IS ON US!

YOUTH GROUP PRAYER TREE

New this month is the Harvest Youth Prayer Tree. Submit your prayer online under the youth tab, in the weekly emails or scan the QR code and let us know how we can pray for you. Whether your request feels big or small, we believe in the power of praying for one another.



THANK YOU

UIF is making a short film this summer, training middle and high schoolers in video production and discipling them. This year's short film features a girl who cannot see her reflection in the mirror until she sees herself the way her father does. We want our audience to know that God the Father loves them not because of anything they've done or will do but simply because He chooses to love them. He loves them so much that He came to die for them, taking the punishment for their sins, so that those who put their faith in Jesus' death and resurrection can have eternal life (John 3:16).

Thank you to Sherry, Ashley, Josh, Hannah, Elsie, Caleb, and Levi Strnisa, Jackie and Trevor Fawley, and Kit and J.D. Little for providing meals on set during Urban Impact Media's production week!

-Sallee Jane Little

AUGUST CALENDAR

ALL EVENTS, DATES & TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

SPECIAL DATES THIS MONTH

- 8/2 **Worship & Communion** | 10 AM
- 8/4 **Kidventure** | 5:30 PM
- 8/9 **Food & Fellowship** | 11:15 am
Youth Pool Party | 6 PM
- 8/12 **Wild Things ticket Deadline**
- 8/16 **Blood Pressure Checks** | 8:30 AM

NEXT MONTH (SEPTEMBER)

- 9/5 **Faith Night Wild Things Game** | 7 pm
- 9/6 **Worship & Communion** | 10 AM
Harvest Youth Pool Party | 6 PM
- 9/13 **Back to Hickory Sunday Picnic**
- 9/19 **Women's Retreat** | 8:45 am - 2 pm

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

CHECK ONLINE CALENDAR FOR FULL LIST OF RECURRING
WEEKLY/MONTHLY MEETINGS: hickorychurch.com/calendar

Staff CONTACTS:

PASTORAL & MINISTRY

SENIOR PASTOR

Clayton LaPosta | (724) 356-4424 (Ext. 102)

pastor@hickoryunitedepc.org

LAY PASTOR

Lou Templeton | (724) 356-7835

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Heidi Clark | (724) 356-4424

music@hickoryunitedepc.org

ADMINISTRATIVE / SUPPORT

OFFICE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Michelle Danna | (724) 356-4424

office@hickoryunitedepc.org

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Bella Blue | (724) 356-4424

communications@hickoryunitedepc.org

TREASURER

Melissa Fluharty | treasurer@hickoryunitedepc.org

ASST. TREASURER & CONSULT

Linda Carter

AUDIO VISUAL TECHNICIAN

David Sykut | david.sykut@hickoryunitedepc.org

FACILITY ASSISTANT

Will Smith

HICKORY CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

Ashley Lewis | (724) 356-7337

(724) 356-4424 (Ext. 101)

hickorypreschool@hickoryunitedepc.org



JOIN THE PRAYER TREE:

communications@hickoryunitedepc.org

SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST:

hickorychurch.com/prayer



@HICKORYCHURCH



HICKORYCHURCH.COM



724-356-4424



OFFICE@HICKORYUNITEDPC.ORG



210 MAIN STREET, HICKORY, PA.



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