



HICKORY UNITED EPC | JULY 2026

THE HICKORY MESSENGER



Pastor's Pen

BY PASTOR CLAYTON LAPOSTA

One of the great joys that I have experienced in ministry is leading our weekly Men's Bible Study here at Hickory. We're a fairly small group, maybe 6 men, and we meet here at the church every Thursday at 6PM. (I may or may not be mentioning this while the small group sign ups are happening.) The beauty of a small group like this is that I'm able to spend quality time talking and praying with dear, godly men opposed to the short greetings that we have on Sunday mornings. I have been blessed by the input, wisdom, and friendship from these brothers. So my first thought is to encourage you to sign up for one (or more) small groups because you can have this same wonderful experience. We are blessed with a variety of groups being offered this Summer and I'm certain there is one for you!

The bulk of my Pastor's Pen article comes from a very recent lesson from this Bible Study. Last week we finished our months long study in the book of 1 Corinthians. After many chapters focused on church unity, sexual purity, and calls for godly men and husbands to be the leaders God intends them to be, Paul wraps up the book with an incredible chapter devoted to the doctrine of the Resurrection. For Paul (and by extension, us) the Resurrection is a vital moment that seals the work of Christ. Without the Resurrection, there is no hope for a future beyond the grave, Jesus is no more than an ordinary man who dies like the rest, we are still in our sins, our faith is in vain, the Apostles are liars, and we are to be pitied for anchoring ourselves to a sinking ship. BUT, if the Resurrection is true (which it is) then we not only have help in this life, but we look to a future far more glorious than Paul could even imagine. Knowing what it is to come, Paul ends chapter 15 with these words, "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

This idea that our labor is not in vain was such a great way to end our study with this group of men. Sometimes it is tiring to live a godly life that pleases our Lord. Sometimes it feels like it doesn't matter, especially when just living for ourselves leads to the greatest "success." Sometimes the opposition to godliness from a world that doesn't know God is so great that we just want to give in. There are a million things within ourselves and from the world that asks us, "is this really worth it? Wouldn't it be better if we just did things another way? If we ease up, is it really that big of a deal?" Friends, take heart. If you labor for the Lord, live for him, give your life to serving him whether in your marriage, school, sports, work, whatever, you will not labor in vain. The rewards of this life will not last. But there will come a day when the work we have done through our faith in Christ will be made known. We aren't working for something that we might receive in the short life we have but we labor for an everlasting treasure made ours in the Resurrection.

So I leave with you the same words we spoke to each other at Bible Study, press on. Keep living for the Lord. Your labor will not be in vain.

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

Communion Sunday – July 5th

Donations of 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 when Communion is served. Financial contributions are also appreciated. Thank you for giving generously to this program. 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.

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 100 families per month!

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. These items are much appreciated. There is a box in the main entrance foyer to place your items.



NOTES OF Thanks

Dear Saints at Hickory, thank you for your goodness. You are too good to us. Thank you for helping us to continue to serve the people in Lacroix Haiti. Thank you for check #22725 \$100 and #22724 \$1820. Thanks for your prayers. They are needed. God bless.

~ERMITHE & PIERRE

Baptism

We joyfully celebrate the baptism of Caroline Jean Zatta, who was welcomed into God's family this month through Baptism. We give thanks for this special milestone in her faith journey and pray that Caroline will continue to grow in God's love and grace. May the Lord richly bless Caroline and her family as they nurture her in faith.



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

VBS ROME 2026

What a fantastic week we had at VBS Rome! Throughout the week, the children learned about Paul and the underground church while experiencing what life might have been like in biblical times. They explored a cave, petted goats, practiced chariot racing, and learned about the lives of children in Haiti, along with many other engaging activities.

We were thrilled to welcome more than 110 children this year. It was a week filled with learning, laughter, faith, and unforgettable memories.

A special thank you goes out to our incredible volunteers who gave their time, energy, and talents to make this week such a success. From planning and decorating to teaching, leading activities, and caring for the children, your dedication made all the difference. We truly could not have done it without you!



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS



Christmas in July

Christmas in July starts July 5th. Bring a unwrapped gift for kids ages 0-21. No clothing, video games or used items please! Place items under the Sanctuary tree by July 26!

For older kids, we are looking for speakers, Stanley cups (or similar), complex lego kits, beauty/nail/lotion kits, and blankets and pillows for boys and girls.



Blood Pressure Checks

Blood pressure checks will begin this month. 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.

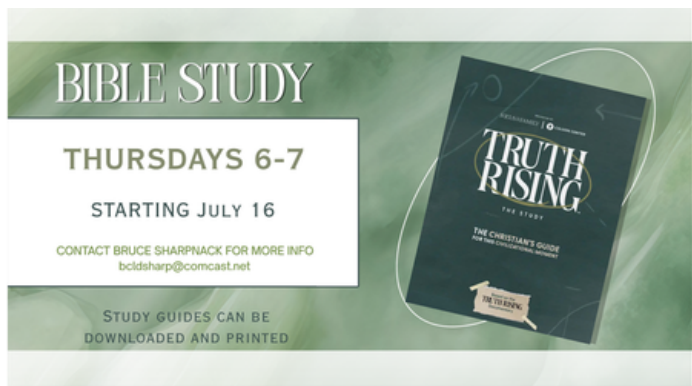


Women's Retreat

This year's Women's Retreat will be at Agape Retreat Center in Hickory PA. Come join us September 19th 8:45-2:00 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!

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Summer Bible Studies



Truth Rising: The Study is a four-part video Bible study from the Colson Center designed to help Christians navigate modern cultural shifts. It pairs worldview teaching with inspiring stories of courageous believers. The curriculum focuses on four foundational pillars: Hope, Truth, Identity, and Calling.

Join us for this 8-week study Thursdays @6 pm starting July 16th.



The study explores how God—the Vinedresser—carefully cultivates our lives, pruning away difficulties to help us produce meaningful fruit and flourish in an abundant, joyful life.

Join us Wednesdays @10 am starting July 1st



Men's Bible Studies at Hickory United

Grow in your faith and connect with other men through one of our weekly Bible studies.

Thursday Evenings | 6:00 PM

Study the book of 2 Corinthians.

Friday Mornings | 5:30 AM (Starting July 10th)

Study the book of Judges. Breakfast is provided.

PURITAN
READING GROUP
Facilitated by Pastor Clayton



Meets Sundays after Worship

The Puritan Reading Group is essentially a book club reading some of the most wonderful theological works of the 16th and 17th centuries. Group members will read assigned readings each week before we meet and then we will come together to discuss big ideas, questions, and how these timeless truths impact us as Christians in the 21st century.

Meets Sunday after Worship in the Parlor.

KIDS & YOUTH MINISTRY

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

HICKORY KIDS CAMP

KIDS

New This Year — Hickory Christian Kids Camp!

Hickory Christian Preschool is excited to announce their brand-new Kids Camp running June 30 - July 30 for children ages 4 - 12! Camp will be held every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, with kids exploring a new and exciting theme each

week through fun activities, learning experiences, games, and more.

Families can register by the week or for the full month, making it easy to fit summer schedules. Spots are limited to just 60 campers, so don't wait!

Registration is now open. Scan the QR code or go to our website under the "Summer Camp" tab.



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!



YOUTH

SERVE DURING MISSIONS WEEK!

Save the Date for our Summer Local Missions Week! Rather than serving out of town, which is typical for youth group summer trips, we will be serving locally at Hickory United EPC's mission partners.

Students will spend each day learning from and working with a new mission partner, experiencing firsthand each organization's mission in regards to service, and help advance mission efforts by actively participating in the organization's work.

Join us for a week full of giving back to our communities, serving the "least of these," and loving our neighbors as Jesus commanded. Scan the QR code to RSVP!



POOL PARTY

Join us on the first week of each month for our Youth Pool Party! Enjoy an evening of swimming, hanging out with friends, and sharing dinner together.

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



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!

Want to stay in the loop? Sign up for our Flocknote to receive weekly email updates, text reminders, and information about everything happening in youth group.



Text HICKORYUNITED to 84576 to join.

JUNE CALENDAR

ALL EVENTS, DATES & TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

SPECIAL DATES THIS MONTH

- 7/3 **Office Closed**
- 7/4 **Independence Day**
- 7/5 **Worship & Communion** | 10 AM
Youth Pool Party | 6 PM
- 7/7 **Kidventure** | 5:30 PM
- 7/12 **Food & Fellowship** | 11:15 AM
- 7/19 **Blood Pressure Checks** | 8:30 AM
- 7/26 **Christmas in July**

NEXT MONTH

- 8/2 **Worship & Communion** | 10 AM
Harvest Youth Pool Party | 6 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

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JOIN THE PRAYER TREE:

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SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST:

hickorychurch.com/prayer



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TEXT 'HICKORYUNITED' TO 84576 & JOIN THE MAILING LIST!