

HICKORY UNITED EPC | MAY 2026

# THE HICKORY MESSENGER



## Pastor's Pen

BY PASTOR CLAYTON LAPOSTA

The last time I wrote one of these articles I was sitting at my desk, watching baseball, and wondering how my first Easter at Hickory United EPC would go. I think I speak on behalf of all of our staff and congregation in saying that this Easter season was an incredible blessing. Between the Holy Week services, the time spent together over food, the fun with the kids of our church, and the Living Easter, I look back and I'm amazed at how gracious God has been to us. All the planning and hard work that so many people poured into that season (and I thank each of you for committing your time and gifts) paid off as the Name above all names was exalted for so many to hear in Western, PA!

I have to admit though, in my selfishness there is a sense of relief that this season is behind us and it's tempting to want to just relax for a while. After ANOTHER week of infant baptisms, Communicant's Class, small groups, and committee meetings though, I am reminded that now is not the time to relax. In fact, I'm not sure there ever will be and that is a good thing! It is undeniable that the Spirit of God is at work in this church in such an incredible way. People are coming to hear the Gospel, children are growing in their faith, babies are being welcomed into the visible church through baptism, God is using this church for incredible things! So instead of taking this post Easter season to relax until the next big thing, I think I am going to do something different and I will challenge you to join me...let's press even further in service to our Lord! Now is not the time to take the foot off the gas but to continue striving to honor King Jesus. The Easter season reminds us that Jesus isn't just alive for a holiday but he is alive today and forever and the Spirit of the living God is alive in this church today! So take a moment to rest everyone, but don't rest long because we have a God who deserves our praise and a world that needs to know him!

## 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

### Fort Cherry Helping Hands

Donations of 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.



## NOTES OF Thanks

Dear Saints at Hickory United EPC.

Greetings in Jesus' name. We thank you for keeping the ministry going with your prayers and your financial support. Thanks for check #22666 \$1,820 and #22667 \$100. All is going well. God bless.

~ERMITHE & PIERRE

### Baptism News

Congratulations to Forrest Reynolds on his baptism during Sunday's service by Pastor Clayton, and to parents Catie and Tad Reynolds! Praise the Lord!



We pray Forrest will always know God's faithful provision, protection, grace and abundant love.

"BLESSED ARE YOUR EYES BECAUSE THEY SEE, AND YOUR EARS BECAUSE THEY HEAR." MATTHEW 13:16

## HAITI FOOD DISTRIBUTION

YOUR DONATIONS FEED HAITIAN CHILDREN

- Cash envelope or check to office OR offering plate marked "Haiti Food Distribution"

### 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.



we love a good glow up.

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united gear is here.



20% of item proceeds support Hickory United! Order online, ship direct.

volunteering fills a gap. truly serving fills the heart.

serve with us.



# MISCELLANEOUS NEWS



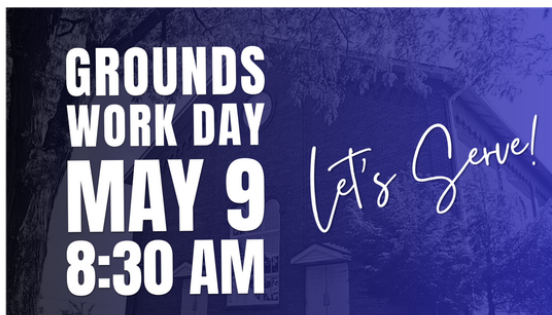
## Family Cross Creek Outing

May 1 | 4:20-6 pm | 1 County Park Rd, Avella  
Enjoy playground, Gagaball and mini zip line.  
Snacks, drinks & popsicles provided.



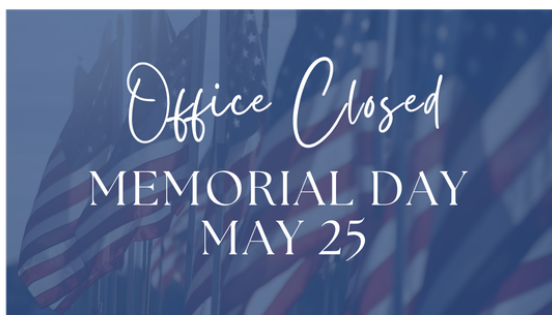
## Submit Your Mother's Day Photos!

Send family photos to be included in our  
Mother's Day collage by May 6.



## Church Building & Grounds Work Day

May 9 | 8:30 am | Hickory United Campus  
Help us beautify the church grounds. Projects  
will be outdoors.



# PANCAKE BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER MAY 17



*Buffet style breakfast in Covenant Center  
following service. Donations encouraged.*

*Proceeds benefit Christian Youth & Development Fund*

## Annual Pancake Fundraiser

Join us on May 17 after service in Covenant Center for a special pancake breakfast fundraiser held by the Discipleship Team! Unlike our usual monthly potlucks, all you need to do is come hungry and enjoy a buffet style breakfast. Monetary donations are encouraged and all proceeds benefit the Christian Youth & Development Fund which benefits our Kids and Youth ministries, providing financial assistance and support for things like scholarships, mission trips, and summer camps!

## Kids & Youth Ministry Needs You!

Praise God! The Kids & Youth ministries at Hickory United are growing, and this means more opportunities to serve! We invite anyone with a call on their heart to come alongside in service for our youngest disciples. Contact Michaela Walker at [youth@hickoryunitedpc.org](mailto:youth@hickoryunitedpc.org) or sign up to serve at events at the Welcome Area bulletin board!

## Women's Ministry Resource Center

Starting on Mother's Day, Sunday May 10, the Women's Ministry will have a resource center available for women in the church located in the library. Some things you will find are a prayer request box, information for homeschooling moms, widows, grandmothers, etc. There will also be devotionals available for any woman who may be looking for one. Have ideas for resources to include? Contact Shelley Heinlein: [svhouat@gmail.com](mailto:svhouat@gmail.com).



# KIDS MINISTRY

## HICKORY UNITED Kids

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

*This May, our Pre-K-5th graders will be studying 1 Samuel! May is a 5 Sunday month, so we get to learn from 5 stories from this Old Testament history book. Students will learn more about who God is as they see him interact with his people, and they will learn more about what it means to be faithful as they see humans obey and disobey God.*

*Come and learn from the history of God's engagement with his creation!*

**KIDS & YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL WILL NOT MEET MAY 24!**



*(Above) We had a fun filled night enjoying bounce house time, crafts, and a movie on the big wall at our Parents' Night Out event for K--5<sup>th</sup> graders on April 17.*

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

#### Kidventure Ends May 12!

Join us in May as we wrap up our Spring session of Kidventure! This May, we are teaching kids the Simple Truth, "I Am Here to Share Jesus." Kids will learn that sharing Jesus is both important and exciting! Kids will learn from stories in which followers of Jesus share the good news that the Messiah has come! And as always, keep an eye on our last session where we will enjoy ice cream sundaes!

#### End of Year Celebration!

On May 17 after service in Covenant Center we will be celebrating the end of a wonderful year of ministry at Hickory United! Sunday School and Kidventure kiddos will receive an end-of-year gift, and awards will be presented to the K-12th graders who completed our memory verse program. Instead of our traditional potluck, our 6th-12th graders will make breakfast for the congregation! Rather than bring a dish, congregants are invited to bring a donation to support our children's and youth ministries.



#### VBS ROME: Registration Starts May 3!

Calling all campers, families, volunteers! Save the Date for the best week of summer at Hickory United!

Welcome to ancient Rome where campers learn about the Apostle Paul and the underground church. Tiptoe past Roman guards to visit Paul in a secret cave to learn about God's love through Paul's eyes. At Rome, everyone gets to explore first-hand the culture of Paul's world. They'll experience the heart-breaking trials, joyous victories, and tear-filled celebrations of this unique Bible hero. God's Word comes alive as families enjoy traditional Bible-times customs, occupations, food, and even games!

Registration opens May 3 for participants and volunteers! Visit the display table in the Welcome Area, scan the QR code or visit: [vbspro.events/p/hickoryunitedvbs](https://vbspro.events/p/hickoryunitedvbs) to sign-up.



#### Joyful Noise

We have been having a blast in Joyful Noise learning our new song, "Glorious Day" in preparation for another special musical offering during Worship! Kids can join Joyful Noise children's church on Sundays during the sermon message. No previous attendance required!

# YOUTH MINISTRY

## HARVEST STUDENT MINISTRY

### SUNDAY SCHOOL SUMMARY

*This May, our 6th-12th Sunday School students will be sharpening their curiosity in a 6-week series called Ask Anything Sundays! Students can bring any question or curiosity they have; we will focus on one particular question and unpack it! Stick around after Sunday School to talk with Michaela if your question wasn't answered or if you have follow-up questions. See you there!*

HICKORY Kids  
UNITED  
P1&K-5TH GRADE

HARVEST  
STUDENT MINISTRY  
6TH - 12TH GRADE

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL MAY 24!

HARVEST  
STUDENT MINISTRY  
YOUTH GROUP

SUNDAYS | 6-8 PM  
COVENANT CENTER + YOUTH ROOM

QUESTIONS?  
CONTACT MICHAELA:  
YOUTH@HICKORYUNITEPC.ORG

## YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL 8:45 - 9:45 AM

### Harvest Youth Group

This month in Youth Group, we will wrap up the Alpha Youth video series! May will deal with questions of evil in the world, whether God still heals, and life after death. Bring your questions to Youth Group on Sundays from 6-8 pm, and invite your friends!

### Annual Lock-In

Who's hosting this month's potluck? It's our Harvest Student Ministry! Students will cap off the year with the Annual Lock-In, beginning with a Saturday night filled with good eats, games, and reflection on the past year. We will wrap up on Sunday morning by serving the congregation a pancake breakfast in place of our monthly potluck!

Rather than bringing a dish, congregants are invited to bring a donation to support our Children's and Youth ministries. Finish out the year with us May 16-17 at this overnight celebration of the work that God has done in our student ministry this year. Scan the QR to RSVP!



### 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! Can't serve the whole week? No problem! RSVP for Missions Week and let Michaela know your availability. Detailed schedule to follow as we approach July.

This is a great opportunity for all youth to contribute to something far greater than themselves, and to be the hands and feet of Christ, serving for the glory of the Lord.

Let's come together, go out into the world and partner with God in His work!



# MAY CALENDAR

ALL EVENTS, DATES & TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

## SPECIAL DATES THIS MONTH

- 5/1 Kids Ministry Family Outing | 4:30-6 pm (Cross Creek)
- 5/3 **Worship & Communion** | 10 am  
VBS Registration Opens
- 5/5 Cinco De Mayo
- 5/9 **Church Grounds Work Day** | 8:30 am
- 5/10 Mother's Day
- 5/16-5/17 Harvest Youth Lock-in | 5 pm - 12 pm
- 5/17 **Discipleship Pancake Fundraiser** | 11:15 am (CC)
- 5/24 **Pentecost Sunday**  
No Kids/Youth Sunday School
- 5/25 **Memorial Day** - Office Closed

## NEXT MONTH

- 6/7 **Worship & Communion** | 10 am
- 6/14 Flag Day  
Food & Fellowship Potluck | 11:15 am (CC)
- 6/15-19 **VBS Rome** | 9 am - 12 pm
- 6/19 Juneteenth
- 6/21 Father's Day

(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](http://hickorychurch.com/calendar)

## Staff CONTACTS:

### PASTORAL & MINISTRY

#### SENIOR PASTOR

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#### YOUTH MINISTRY DIRECTOR

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#### LAY PASTOR

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#### TREASURER

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#### ASST. TREASURER & CONSULT

Linda Carter

#### AUDIO VISUAL TECHNICIAN

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#### FACILITY ASSISTANT

Will Smith

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#### PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

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## JOIN THE PRAYER TREE:

[communications@hickoryunitedepc.org](mailto:communications@hickoryunitedepc.org)

## SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST:

[hickorychurch.com/prayer](http://hickorychurch.com/prayer)



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