

HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# THE CONNECTING LINK

*Connecting together to worship and praise our God!*

**Continue your journey to  
the cross and prepare  
your heart for Easter.**



**MARCH 2021**

**Note:** As we return for in-person worship, masks and social distancing practices are required. Should the COVID-19 situation change, preventing us from worshipping in person, you will be notified. Sunday worship continues to be livestreamed on our Facebook page at Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church and is also recorded and then available for viewing on our website at [www.hickoryhillspres.org](http://www.hickoryhillspres.org) on Sundays by noon.

## WORSHIP WITH US ON SUNDAYS

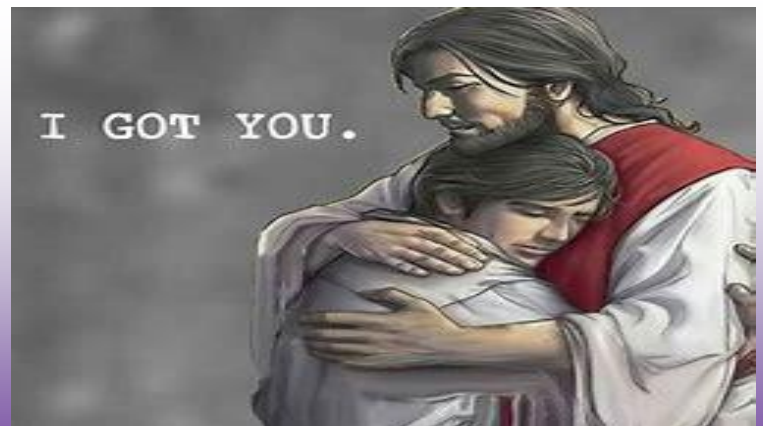
**10:00 A.M.** (Traditional Worship)  
**5:00 P.M.** (Contemporary Worship)

## PRAY WITH US

Join us for Daily Devotions and Morning Prayer on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 9:00 a.m. on *Facebook Live* at *Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church* or at another time later in the day.

## CONTACT US

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church  
8426 West 95<sup>th</sup> Street, Hickory Hills, IL  
Phone: 708-598-3100  
E-mail: [hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org](mailto:hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org)



*Our struggles are real, but so is Jesus.*

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## A Letter from Rev. Edie



**Rev. Edie Lenz**  
*Pastor*

### Lent is the journey

towards the cross with the promise of Easter resurrection. It is only after we have walked the way of the cross, dying to ourselves and returning to Christ, that we experience the new life offered in the resurrection.

As we walk the way of the cross this Lent, it seems clear that in some ways we have been walking this road for a very long time now. It was in the midst of Lent 2020 that everything changed. When did you first suspect that this pandemic was more serious than first imagined? Where were you when you realized that the world had changed, that something had shifted? What was the “thing,” the moment you realized just how serious all this would be?

It has been a year now that we have collectively (and alone) walked this traumatic road of pandemic. We have endured, experienced, and borne witness to moments in history that no one else has ever seen

or imagined. We have been hidden away, kept safe at home and safer behind masks. We have learned new technology that we didn’t even know existed before. We have sought new and creative ways of being human, being in relationships, and being the church. It is one thing to reflect as a group on all that has changed, but I wonder, have you also spent time reflecting on how YOU have changed?

Have you spent time wondering and noticing how different you are from the person who entered Lent in 2020? What has changed in you, about you, and around you in the past year? What have you learned about yourself? How have you grown, changed, or dug in to remain the same? What have you learned about your God, and in your relationship to God? What values have carried you through? Are there parts of your life that you deeply miss and can’t wait to get back to? Are there things you stopped doing a year ago that you don’t ever want to start doing again? What has grown in importance? What

used to seem so important to you that just doesn’t seem to matter much anymore? Can you see, can you feel how you have changed?

One of the temptations on this journey is going to be a deep desire to just get back to the way things used to be – to turn around and go back the way that we came; to run as fast as we can back towards what we remember as “normal.” The problem with this, as I hope you can already see, is what was normal 12 months ago is no more; what was isn’t what is. We have traveled a long way down this road; we have changed, we have learned, we have become and we cannot undo all of that, we can’t “unsee” all that we have seen.

The question then is not how and when do we get back to “normal?” but what will our new normal be? Who will we choose to be

Letter from Rev. Edie (*cont'd. from p. 2.*)

on the other side of all that we have been through? Are there new priorities that have risen in you as a result of all that has been happening in our world? Are there new values, passions, or clearer goals than you had before?

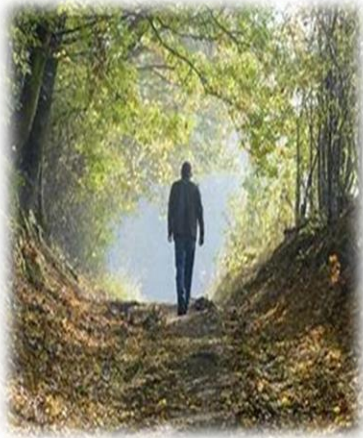
As individuals, it is important to begin asking these questions, for our own individual lives and for our life together as a congregation. Who is God shaping you to be in the coming weeks, months and years? Who is God shaping us to be as a congregation in the coming weeks, months, and years? Where are we called to lean in? Where are we called to be still? Where are we called to speak? Where are we called to?

I believe these are the questions that we must begin to wrestle with next. As we mark a year since the world changed, as we are living in hope that a vaccine will make the difference in allowing life to restart, we must also reflect on where it is that we are going. Who will we be going forward? What opportunities do we have to create something new? What can we improve or do differently? What is emerging? How will we experience resurrection?

*Love and peace in Christ,  
Rev. Edie*

**NOTE: This year's Maundy Thursday service will be a joint service with many of our MC8 Churches. The service will be prerecorded and made available to our churches on Thursday, April 1 at 7:00 p.m. Stay tuned for more details.**

## FAITHWALKING CONTINUES AT HHPC



Faithwalking is a discipleship journey that invites you to dive deep into your own faith journey, while walking with a small group of other people. Rev. Edie has been involved with the Faithwalking community for over 10 years. There are already three small groups that have begun the journey here at HHPC in the past year.

You are invited to join us in the next round. Faithwalking is open to anyone interested in going deeper in their faith; there are no age or knowledge requirements. There is a cost for materials, \$60 per person (*scholarships are available*).

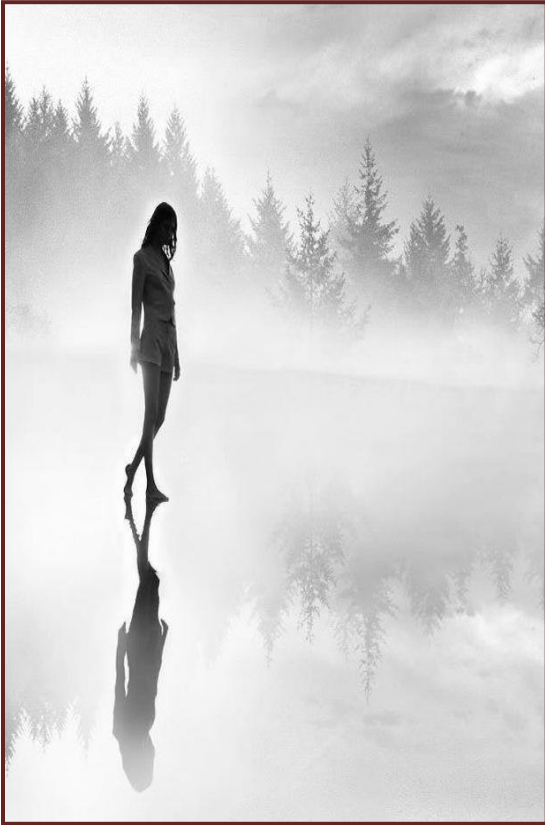
Our next Faithwalking journey will begin the week of April 11. We meet weekly for 10 weeks for about an hour. In between meetings you will have materials to read, videos to watch, or reflections to engage. The specific date and time of meetings will depend on who signs up and their availability. If you would like to know more, you can visit [www.faithwalking.us](http://www.faithwalking.us) for more information or see Rev. Edie. **If you would like to sign up** for Faithwalking, you can do so with Rev. Edie no later than Sunday, April 4.

*Sign up for  
Faithwalking  
no later than  
Sunday, April 4.*

**Come  
Faithwalk  
with us.**



## Worship Services, Readings and Reflections



### REFLECTIONS

#### Our theme this Lent is *God's Covenant with Us.*

As you reflect on the scripture passages for Sundays during March:

- What are the promises God has made to us? What are the promises we are asked to make to God? How has God sought you out or come to you?
- What do these different covenants mean for you? How do they impact your understanding of who God is? How do they impact your understanding of who you are in God's eyes? In this past year, how has God been faithful to you?



The following are readings and sermons that Rev. Edie Lenz will focus on during Sunday in-person worship. You can participate in virtual Sunday worship livestreamed on *Facebook Live* at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings and recorded and posted on our website at [www.hickoryhillspres.org](http://www.hickoryhillspres.org) by noon on Sunday. If you are worshipping from home, and don't have Internet access, you may read and reflect on these scripture passages in your bible.

#### Sunday, March 7, 2021 (*Communion*) 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent

Readings: Exodus 20: 1-17; John 2: 13-22  
Sermon Title: *God's Covenant: Israel*

#### Sunday, March 14 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent

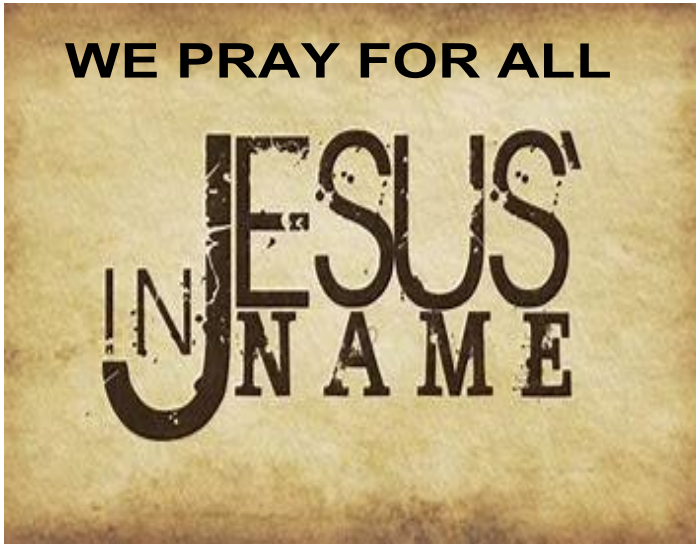
Readings: Ephesians 2: 1-10; John 3: 14-21  
Sermon Title: *God's Covenant: The World*

#### Sunday, March 21 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent

Readings: Jeremiah 31: 31-34; Hebrews 5: 5-10  
Sermon Title: *God's Covenant: A New Covenant*

#### Sunday, March 28 – PALM SUNDAY (beginning of Holy Week)

Readings: *Mark 11: 1-11; Philipians 2: 5-11*  
Sermon Title: *Covenant Fulfilled*



*The following is a complete list of those we are remembering in prayer. If you are on this prayer list and wish to be removed or you would like to be added to the list, please call the church office at 708-598-3100.*

#### **FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEALING AND THOSE WITH HEALTH CONCERNS.**

**Addy**; (Karen H); **Amanda and Angel**; **Bob**; **Bob F** (Ar); **Brad** (Andrew); **Cindy** (Katie); **Chris** (Bernie); **Chloe** (Kim); **David** (Karen H); **DeSean** (Kim); **Francie** (Karen G); **Gabriel** (Katie); **Gary and Valarie** (Kim); **Gene** (Grace); **Gloria and Heidi** (Diane C); **Gracie** (Kim); **Jackson**; **Janet** (Evelyn); **Jay** (Susan); **Jeff** (Shirley); **Jerry** (Joan); **Joe** (Shirley D); **Joyce** (Sandy B); **Julie W** (Andrew); **Justin** (Karen H); **Kathy** (Bernie); **Katie B and her husband Joe**; **Kiley** (Katie); **Kyle W**; **Leanne** (Karen H); **Lynn** (Diane); **Mackenzie** (Bernie); **Marj** (Charlie); **Michael** (Karen H); **Michael** (Shirley); **Michelle** (Grace); **Mike** (Karen H); **Mike** (Kim); **Pat** (Gert); **Pat** (Karen H); **Patty** (Katie); **Paula** (Bernie); **Peter** (Katie); **Phyllis** (Katie); **Rae** (Karen G); **Raymond** (Diane C); **Richard** (Diane C); **Rick** (Sandy B); **Roger** (Sandy B); **Rose** (Katie); **Sandi**; **Sandy** (Mel); **Shannon**; **Sharon** (Tom M); **Suzanne** (Bernie); **Tierney** (Shirley D); **TJ** (Katie); **Tim** (Charlie); **Tracy** (Noelle L); **Trevor** (Donna); **Wanda** (Jeni); **Willa** (Diane)

#### **FOR THOSE IN NEED OF STRENGTH AND HEALING.**

**Andrew** (Darlene); **Bob** (Dave D); **Dick** (Jeni); **Diane and Nancy** (Jeni); **Dina and Al** (Cindy); **Edward** (Evelyn); **Erin Beal and children**; **Frankie** (Bernie); **Guy K**; **Gwynn** (Katie); **Harry** (Katie); **Irene and Tiffany** (Katie B); **Isaiah** (Kim); **Jessica** (Joan); **Joan**; **Joellen** (Mel); **Karen K** (Ar); **Marj and Dar** (Melanie); **Michelle** (Katie); **Tabby**, **Grace and Christy** (Kim); **Tammy** (Gordon); **Natalie** (Bernie); **Pam** (Katie); **Patti** (Jeni); **Sandy D** (Ar); **Stephanie and Savino**; **Susan** (Katie); **Vickie** (Bernie)

#### **FOR GROUPS WHO ARE IN NEED.**

Healthcare providers and others in harm's way, especially **Jean, Kaitlyn, K, and Mollie**; those in hospitals and facilities with other health needs besides COVID-19 who cannot have loved ones with them; those in lockdown and isolation; teachers, students, and parents challenged with e-learning; those living in domestic violence situations; all who are coping with being furloughed from their jobs or who have lost their jobs; those battling addiction; fire and police departments tasked with keeping the peace; the systemic racism and social challenges in our country

#### **FOR THOSE WHO MOURN.**

For family and friends of **Kylie** who passed away (Katie); for the **Netter family** in the loss of **Mollie's brother Benjamin and sister-in-law Futhi** who have passed away in South Africa from COVID and for their children, Dali, Nafe and Yankho who are orphaned and still very young; **Michael & friend Jeff** (Shirley D); for families who have lost loved ones in this time and cannot mourn for them as we normally would; for victims and families affected by violence

#### **FOR THOSE IN NEED DURING MISCELLANEOUS CIRCUMSTANCES.**

For those who are struggling mentally and emotionally at this time with the prolonged isolation and depths of winter; Coronavirus upsurge throughout the world; **Jenny D** (Andrew); those who provide essential services we need; churches who are struggling to reach members and care for people; the injustice and violence around the country

#### **WE GIVE THANKS FOR THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.**

For **Ryan Krueger and Olivia** on the birth of their son **Maxtor Bear Krueger** (Mel); for neighbors and families helping one another; our micro-pantry; for the return of work for some; for the guidance to find ways to share our hope with the world; for the gift of our Savior and the hopes of a new year

**We cling to the promises that God is always with us; that there is NOTHING that separates us from the love of God in Christ.**

## WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

**JOIN US MONDAYS  
1:00 P.M.  
FELLOWSHIP HALL**



***Studying the Word of God, together.***

---

*I, Jesus, have sent my angel to you  
with this testimony for the  
churches. I am the root and the  
offspring of David, the bright  
morning star.*

*Revelation 22:16*

*The grace of the Lord Jesus be  
with all the saints. Amen.*

*Revelation 22:21*

*Love and Hugs,  
Arlene Pearson*



The peacefulness of spring,  
the closeness of family  
and friends . . .

Some of the best gifts are held  
in our hearts, not in our hands.



## Discipleship Report

by Jean Swearingen

The snow is melting! The snow is melting! Where the snow is melting, tulips are emerging! **GOD IS GOOD!**

The Dicipleship Committee of Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church (HHPC) meets every other month, but didn't meet in February. However, no meeting does not mean no activity.

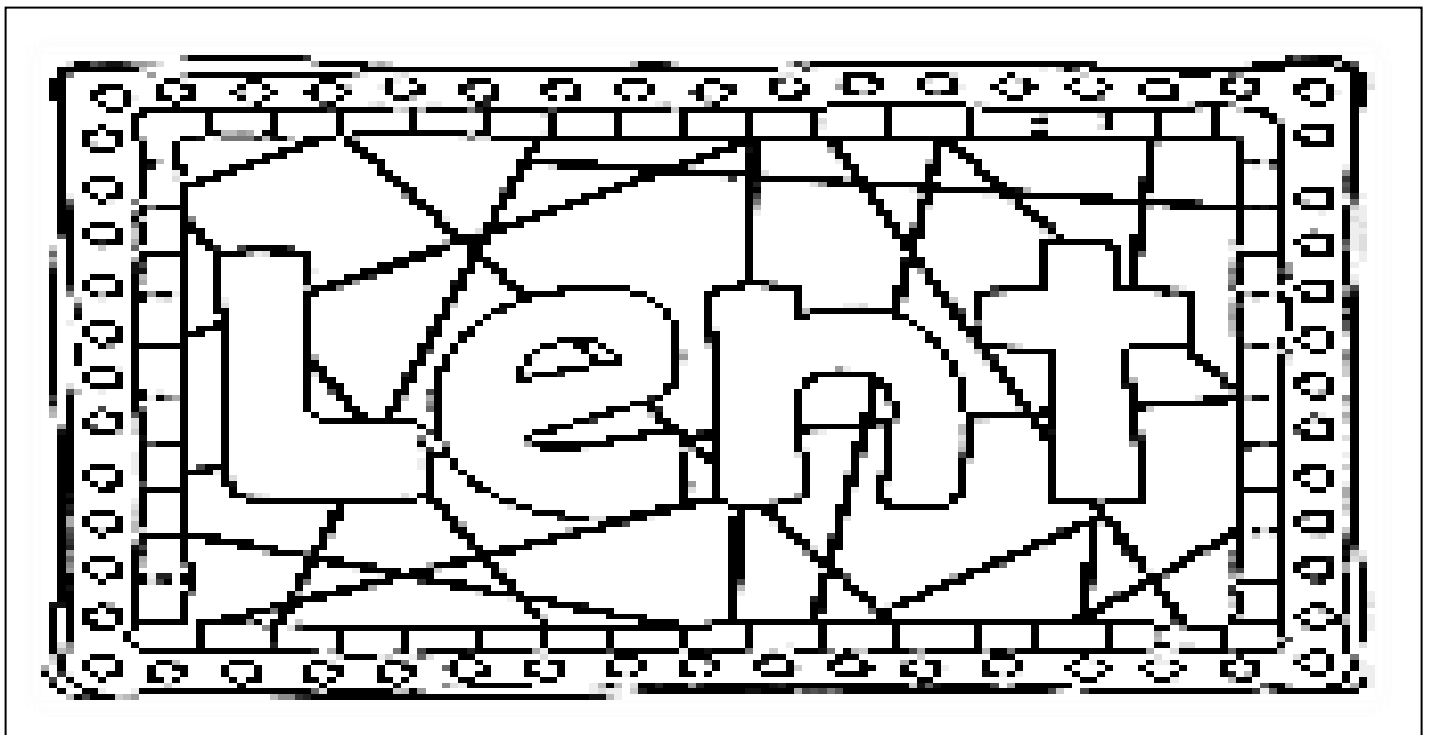
HHPC's Souper Sunday was "different" in 2021. We welcomed cans of soup to be shared with our community through our own Micro-pantry and our donation to Elsie's Pantry. Our congregation collected over 130 cans of soup! We are happy to help support our Mission committee and

their support of these HHPC missions. Thank you to all who donated. If world events or weather prevented you from donating, donations will continue to be accepted.

We also continue to collect pop-tabs and support the collection of plastic bottle caps. Please send only clean tabs and caps. If possible, please remove any paper lining from bottle caps. Pictures of what is and what is not acceptable are posted at the bottle caps donation bin.

**Discipleship will be meeting March 14, 2021 at 11:45 a.m. in our sanctuary.** Social distancing and masking will be practiced.

We invite our adults to color the Lenten picture below, using it as a form of reflection while pondering on your Lenten journey to the cross. Youngsters may also want to color it and later display their masterpiece in their rooms or present it as an addition to the family's refrigerator's outside door.





## Missions Report

by Kim Ambrosat

**Our March 2021 mission focus is to serve the smallest of our brothers and sisters.**

We will collect **Diapers and Formula** to donate to the South Suburban Family Shelter (SSFS) in Homewood, Illinois. Please place all donated items in the bin located in the narthex.



### Welcome March! Spring is near!

As we begin to gather again, we must rethink our greetings to one another and our community. Handshakes and hugs are so ingrained in our culture — a movement that is such an automatic reflex that it seems cold to withhold the gesture, especially in encounters with friends we haven't seen in months. Handshakes? Not advised. Fist bumps? Not recommended. Kisses on the cheek? Absolutely not! Even elbow bumps are too close for comfort, according to the head of the World Health Organization (WHO).

A WHO director recommends the Hindu greeting of *namaste*, which is accompanied by placing one's palms together, fingers pointed upwards and drawing the hands to the heart. As long as we have the intent of looking out for the well-being of others and being mindful of the germs we are spreading, then there is the right intent.

Our next Community Meal is scheduled for March 1st from 5:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Meals will be served in drive-thru fashion, as in the previous months. In February, our fabulous planners and cooks served Chop Suey, Rice, and even homemade Fortune Cookies! Fifty-seven (57) meals were served, 33 in the first 15 minutes! Questions? Want to help? Contact Evelyn or Debbie. Join us on the 1st for pulled pork sandwiches, macaroni and cheese, broccoli and a special sweet treat.

Our February mission project, *Hands and Feet of Jesus*, didn't fare too well. I can only conclude not being in

the building to worship hindered our collection. In March, we will have a collection box for baby items. Anything and everything is welcome! Diapers, wipes, clothing (*new or gently used*), blankets, bottles, formula, and food. All will be donated to South Suburban Family Shelter.

When the Mission Committee met in December, it was decided to put in writing our mission ideas for the year. In doing this, it is our hope that if you know what is upcoming, you can shop for sales. This is in addition to our regular collection of clean bottle caps.

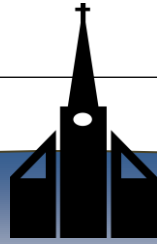
Continue to pray for one another and the work HHPC continues to do. We are truly blessed! Looking forward to seeing (more of) you again!

*Namaste, Kim*

### HHPC UPCOMING MISSIONS

- MARCH** – Baby items – South Suburban Family Shelter
- APRIL** – Pop-tabs and Detergents, possibly meal preparation at Ronald McDonald House
- MAY** – The Undie 500 – Underwear Collection for BedsPlus
- JUNE** – Dakota Partnership – Swimsuits and Towels
- JULY** – School Supplies
- AUGUST** – *Feed My Starving Children*
- SEPTEMBER** – Hygiene Kits – Church World Service
- OCTOBER** – Tree of Warmth
- NOVEMBER** – Reverse Advent Calendar – Elsie's
- DECEMBER** – Jones Center – Children's Gifts





*What we've been up to*  
**'ROUND OUR CHURCH**

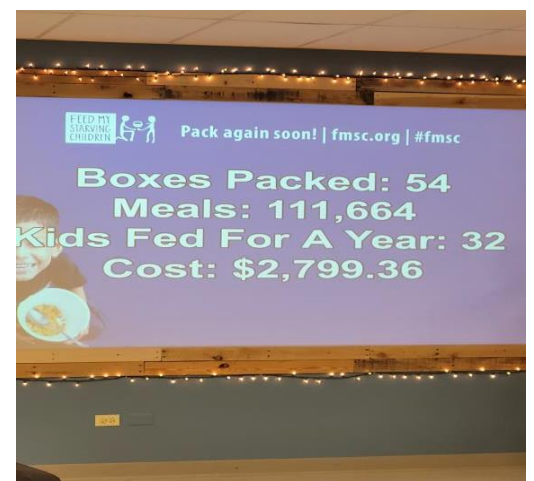
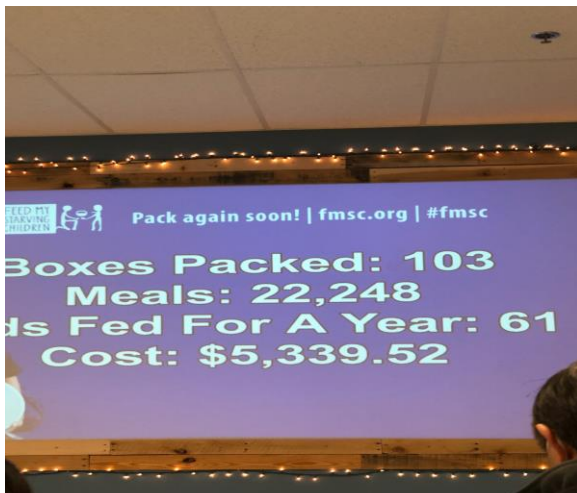


**HHPC** members continue to support when help is needed.

At a recent packing event for *Feed My Starving Children* held in Aurora on January 30th, some of our HHPC members volunteered their time during the two shifts offered.

Here are some pictures of our dedicated members at work. The results of their efforts are shown in images at the bottom of the page.

May God bless each of them for their service to others.



God has deposited love,  
joy, prosperity, peace,  
laughter, and many  
more blessings in your  
ATM account.

Use without limit.

The PIN Code is



**P.R.A.Y.E.R.**



<i>Name</i>	<i>Date of Birth</i>
Hollie Fox	March 1
Cooper Huenecke	March 2
Mike Monczynski	March 2
Joyce McKinney	March 4
Donna Bredlau	March 5
Mary Fellers	March 7
Michael E. Dragas	March 11
Lucy Manyenje	March 12
Karl Haack	March 14
Amanda Gulotta	March 14
Kim Ambrosat	March 15
Pat Lorenz	March 16
Roy Hoffman	March 16
Lizbeth Ramos	March 16
Darlene Krueger	March 18
Frank Esparza	March 22
Victoria Pettis	March 23
Jeanette Grisko	March 28



The Connecting Link publishes only the names of those members who have submitted a change in their contact information. However, more information can be provided upon request by calling the church office at **708-598-3100** or via e-mail at **hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org**.

If you have a change to your personal contact information, please notify the church office.

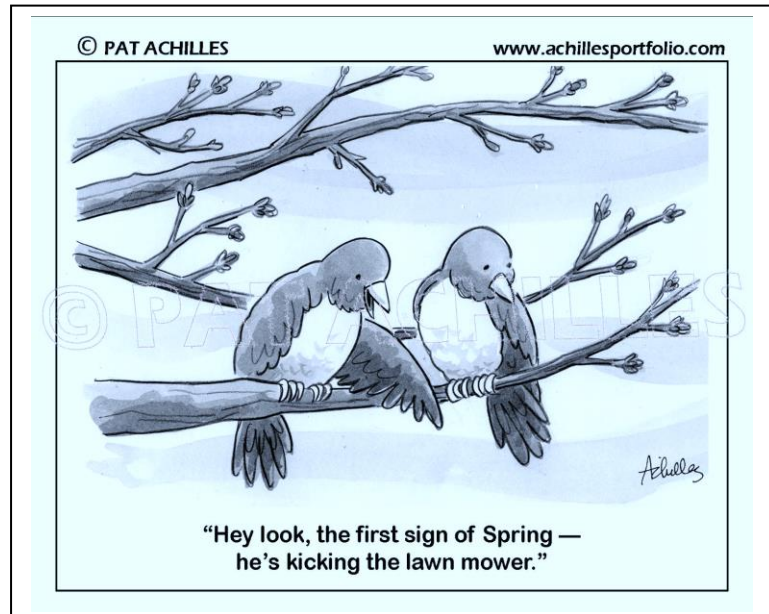
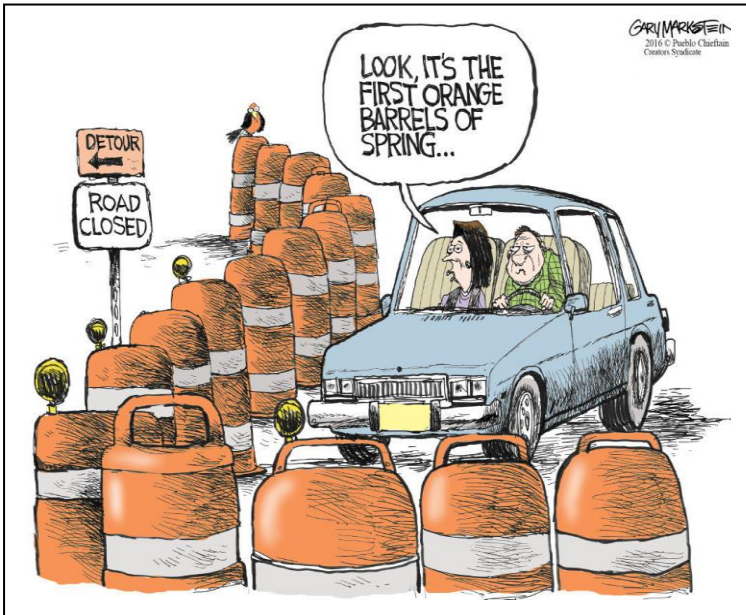
# LOL TIME

Spring begins March 20<sup>th</sup>!

Enjoy these LOL's as we welcome spring and tell Old Man Winter "it's time to go!"



Old Man Winter





## Lent Calls

(A poem by Elizabeth Herbert Cottrell)

### *Lent calls to me again . . .*

To do what?  
Like Martha, I tend towards doing,  
Doing is something I understand--  
Chairing a committee,  
taking food to the sick,  
Reading the bible.

### *Lent calls to me again . . .*

He wants more of me than I've ever given,  
more than Lenten study, more than giving up  
dessert, more than extra church services.

### *Lent calls to me again . . .*

He wants more of me and I'm frightened.  
Frightened of losing control,  
frightened of letting go,  
frightened of what he might ask me  
to do if I really listened.

### *Lent calls to me again ...*

I feel a yearning,  
a tugging towards something more.  
Whisper of a love unimaginable,  
glimpse of a relationship unshakable,  
taste of a water so clear and sweet  
that my thirst is slaked forever.

### *Lent calls to me again ...*

A step is all I can manage, Lord,  
a hand extended, a head bowed,  
a conscious placing of myself  
on your Potter's wheel.

### *Lent calls to me again...*

Help me with the hard part, Lord.  
Help me surrender.  
Help me abandon myself to you.  
Help me reconcile myself to you.

### *Lent calls to me again . . .*

Here I am, Lord.



## A Wintery Scene Outside HHPC Worth a Gaze

One cold workday in February, as I went outdoors (*without a coat*) to quickly bring in HHPC's mail, I was totally in awe at the beautiful snow-filled landscape posed in front of me, urging me to linger awhile. Funny, I didn't feel the cold, but only a desire to stay and reflect on this beautiful winter scene. After a short time, I went inside to get my phone and snapped a few pictures to preserve this wintery beauty and look at whenever I wished. God's beautiful artistry is all around us to enjoy . . . if we just linger awhile.

--Bernie Roche

(*Note: If you so happen to come across a stunning or interesting scene, take a photo of it and share it with all of us along with a few words about what drew you into that scene. E-mail: [hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org](mailto:hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org).)*



# MARCH 2021

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live <b>1:00 PM</b> In-person Women's Bible Study <b>5:30 PM – 6:00 PM</b> HHPC Drive-thru Community Meal (Pulled Pork Sandwich, Mac & Cheese, Broccoli)	<b>2</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live <b>7:00 PM</b> Worship & Music Meeting (Zoom)	<b>3</b> <b>9:30 AM</b> Prayer and Care in our homes <b>11:00 AM</b> Lenten Devotions (in-person) Fellowship Hall	<b>4</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	<b>5</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	<b>6</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Session & Deacons Visioning (until 12:00 noon)
<b>7</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> In-person Worship <b>5:00 P.M.</b> REV In-person Worship	<b>8</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live <b>1:00 PM</b> In-person Women's Bible Study <b>7:30 PM</b> Session on Zoom	<b>9</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live <b>7:00 PM</b> <b>Worship &amp; Music</b>	<b>10</b> <b>9:30 AM</b> Prayer and Care in our homes <b>11:00 AM</b> Lenten Devotions (in-person) Fellowship Hall	<b>11</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	<b>12</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> In-person Worship <b>11:15 AM</b> Discipleship Meeting on Zoom <b>5:00 PM</b> REV In-person Worship	<b>15</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live <b>1:00 PM</b> In-person Women's Bible Study	<b>16</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	<b>17</b> <b>9:30 AM</b> Prayer and Care in our homes <b>11:00 AM</b> Lenten Devotions (in-person) Fellowship Hall	<b>18</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	<b>19</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	<b>20</b> <b>SPRING IS HERE!</b>
<b>Rev. Edie on vacation from March 16-19; returns March 21.</b>						
<b>21</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> In-person Worship <b>11:15 AM</b> Mission Meeting on Zoom <b>5:00 PM</b> REV In-person Worship <b>DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER CONTENT</b>	<b>22</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live <b>1:00 PM</b> In-person Women's Bible Study	<b>23</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	<b>24</b> <b>9:30 AM</b> Prayer and Care in our homes <b>11:00 AM</b> Lenten Devotions (in-person) Fellowship Hall	<b>25</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	<b>26</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> <b>PALM SUNDAY</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> In-person Worship <b>11:15 AM</b> Deacons Meeting on Zoom <b>5:00 PM</b> REV In-person Worship	<b>29</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> <b>Women's Bible Study</b>	<b>30</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Morning Devotion on Facebook Live	<b>31</b> <b>9:30 AM</b> Prayer and Care in our homes <b>11:00 AM</b> Lenten Devotions (in-person) Fellowship Hall	<b>NOTE:</b> Sunday worship continues to be livestreamed on our Facebook page at Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church and is also recorded and then available for viewing on our website at <a href="http://www.hickoryhillspres.org">www.hickoryhillspres.org</a> on Sundays by noon.		



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8426 West 95<sup>th</sup> Street  
Hickory Hills, IL 60457

**CURRENT RESIDENT OR**

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# **THE CONNECTING LINK**

*Connecting together to worship and praise our God!*



*A monthly newsletter from the Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church*