

HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE CONNECTING LINK

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We are called to SEEK God's Word, to SHARE and CELEBRATE God's love and to SERVE Jesus Christ in the world.



FEBRUARY 2022

Worship with Us

Note: As we continue in-person worship, masks and social distancing practices are required. Should the COVID-19 situation change, preventing us for 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 the available for viewing on our website at www.hickoryhillspres.org on Sundays by noon.

Pray with Us

Join us for Daily Devotions and Morning Prayer on Tuesdays and Thursdays 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 95th Street, Hickory Hills, IL 60457
Phone: 708-598-3100
E-mail: hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org

Visit Us Online

Website: www.hickoryhillspres.org
Facebook: Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church



To fall in love with God
is the greatest romance.

To seek Him,
the greatest adventure.

To find Him,
the greatest human achievement.

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A Letter from Rev. Edie



Rev. Edie Lenz
Pastor

*“In the bulb, there is a flower
in the seed, an apple tree, in
cocoon, a hidden promise
butterflies will soon be free. In
the cold and snow of winter,
there’s a spring that waits to be
unrevealed until its season;
something God alone can see.”*
-Hymn of Promise by Natalie Sleeth

These are the words to the first verse of one of my favorite hymns. As I sit looking out the window at a snowy yard, glazed over with a layer of ice, I am struck by the words of this verse. Beneath the snow, ice, and cold there lies the promise of spring. Beneath the layers of protection offered the ground as it hibernates in winter lies the promise of beauty, growth and green. By the cold days of February, when we grow tired of coats, cold, and grey; it is often this promise of spring that buoys our spirits, keeps us hoping and anticipating. It is the promise of spring’s beauty that often makes the

Unrevealed, until its season... waiting, planning, anticipating, hoping, longing. These words are all invoked as I wonder about the waiting, the time in-between. We have done a lot of waiting the past few years, haven’t we? Waiting for the pandemic to ebb, waiting for things to return to normal, whatever that is. Waiting for a clearer direction, better understanding, more wisdom and knowledge. We wait in the church as well, we wait for the clear directive of God for a way we should go. We wait for the still small voice

*It is in waiting that
God comes and sits
beside us, when we
are still and open
to God’s presence.*

of our Savior to assure us that we are indeed being faithful. We wait during Advent for the birth of Christ. We wait in Lent for the drama and salvation of Holy Week and the joy of Easter resurrection. Waiting can be particularly hard when we do not know the end of the waiting, when we do not yet clearly see what it is we are waiting for.

What is to be is not always clear is it? I wonder, what are you waiting for? What clarity, understanding, or direction do you seek? What are the things you have set aside, paused, or promised yourself that someday, when things are quieter, calmer, less busy, you will pick them back up? What are the hopes that you have paused? What is it that you are seeking? It can be

(cont’d on next page)

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

hard to keep waiting, we easily lose patience, give up, or just move on. It is the waiting that is so hard.

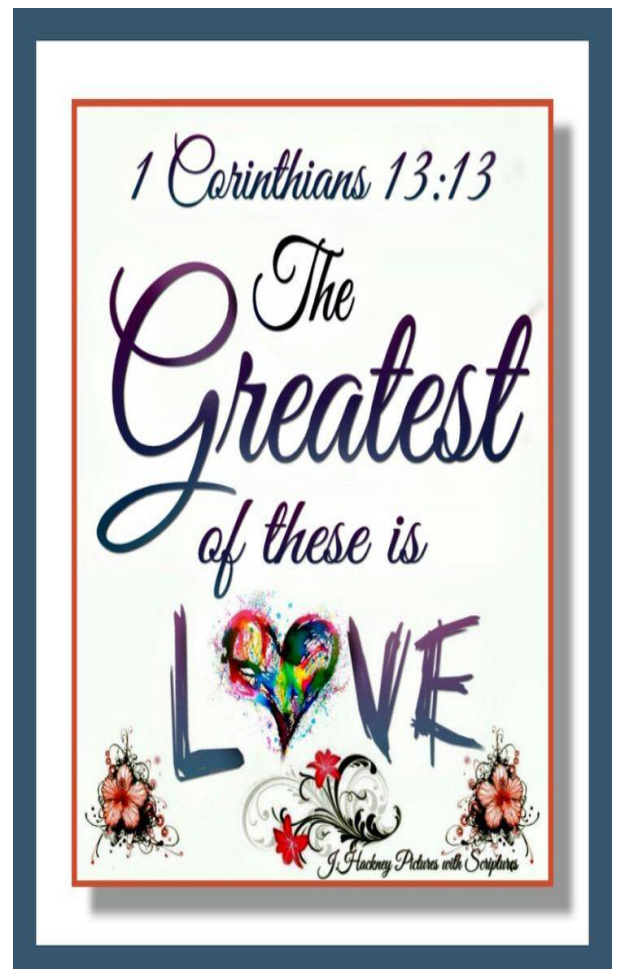
But even the waiting is not without good purpose. We wait, but we also have time to prepare. We anticipate, but that time is a gift in which we can pause, listen, and discern the call of God. It is in winter that the ground rests, the seeds lie dormant and wait to burst forth. It is in waiting that we can begin to gather real excitement and anticipation for what comes next. It is in waiting that God comes and sits beside us, when we are still and open to God's presence. I want to invite you into this space of in-between, not as something to be endured or just gotten through, but as an opportunity to be in the presence of God. An opportunity to reflect, discern and wonder.

In this shortest (but longest) month of the year, I invite you to be curious. I invite you to pause and anticipate. What lies ahead that only God can see; can you also catch a glimpse? What are the promises that we cannot yet grasp but that God will indeed fulfill? What might God be calling you, or calling us as a people to? What opportunities have we not noticed, or been prepared to see that God will reveal? You see even in our pauses, moments of

uncertainty, or moments of rest, God is not idle, God is active and moving. Our God calls us and keeps calling. Our God is with us in the grey days of winter just as much as the bright, hopeful days of spring. Unrevealed, until its season, something God alone can see, even in you.

Peace and Love in Christ,

Rev Edie



Worship Services, Readings and Reflections



Reflections

(by Rev. Edie Lenz)

What comes to mind when you read "Fear the Lord?" What is this kind of fear? How do we love God as Father and Jesus as a friend if we are to also fear God?

How have you been blessed by your faith or by the faith of another person? What story would you tell about a time of blessing because of faith?

If you were to describe a faithful life with Jesus, what would it look like? How does your description align with the instructions given in Luke 6:27-38?

Jesus went to the top of the mountain and was transformed before the eyes of his disciples, even having a conversation with Moses and Elijah.

What do you make of this story? Why does it matter?



The following are readings and sermons that Rev. Edie will focus on during Sunday worship. If you don't have Internet access, you may read and reflect on these Scripture passages in your bible. You can participate in virtual Sunday worship livestreamed on *Facebook* at 10:00 a.m. Sunday mornings or recorded and posted on our website at www.hickoryhillspres.org by noon on Sunday.

Communion will be celebrated
Sunday, February 6 at 10:00 a.m..

Sunday, February 6, 2022

5th Sunday after Epiphany

Readings: Isaiah 6: 1-8; Luke 5: 1-11

Sermon: *Fear of the Lord*

Sunday, February 13

6th Sunday after Epiphany

Readings: Jeremiah 17: 5-10;
Luke 6: 17-26

Sermon: *Blessing and Woe*

Sunday, February 20

7th Sunday after Epiphany

Readings: Luke 6:27-31; Luke 6: 32-38

Sermon: *A Faith-full Life*

Sunday, February 27

Transfiguration of the Lord

Readings: 2 Corinthians 3:12 – 4:2;
Exodus 34: 29-35

Sermon: *Veiled and Unveiled Faces*



*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.*

Let Us Pray for You
Send us your prayer request.

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 or e-mail us at hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEALING AND THOSE WITH HEALTH CONCERNS.

Addy; (Karen H); **Angie and family** (Debbie Z); **Bay** (Rick); **Bob**; **Bob F** (Ar); **Brad** (Andrew); **Bruce** (Jeni); **Chris** (Bernie); **Chloe** (Kim); **Danny F** (Jeni); **David** (Karen H); **DeSean** (Kim); **Diane** (Wilda); **Doris** (Diane's Mom); **Esther** (Grace); **Francie** (Karen G); **Gary and Valarie** (Kim); **Gene** (Grace); **Gert** (Ar); **Glenda** (Melanie); **Gordon** (Diane); **Gracie** (Kim); **Janet** (Evelyn); **Jay** (Susan); **Janine** (Jeni); **Jenette L** (Sandy B); **Jim V** (Bernie); **Jim** (Bernie); **Joe** (Shirley D); **Justin** (Karen H); **Kathy** (Bernie); **Kathy** (Linda L); **Kim B** (Jeni); **Kyle** (Jeni); **Leanne** (Karen H); **Linda**; **Liz** (Evelyn); **Mackenzie** (Bernie); **Mark** (Dianne); **Matthew** (Karen H); **Michael** (Karen H); **Michael** (Shirley); **Mike** (Kim); **Papa John** (Jeni); **Pat** (Karen H); **Pete** (Esther); **Rae** (Karen G); **Ruth S** (Jen); **Sandy** (Mel); **Sandy J** (Bernie); **Shannon**; **Sharon** (Tom M); **Sharon R** (Sandy B); **Sherry** (Peggy); **Stan P** (Bernie); **Suzanne** (Bernie); **Tierney** (Shirley D); **Tim** (Charlie); **Todd** (Charlie); **Tracy** (Debbie Z); **Wanda** (Jeni); **Yvette** (Kim)

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF STRENGTH AND HEALING.

Bernie R; **Bob** (Dave D); **Bree's Mom** (Evelyn); **Carol S** (Ar); **Cathy N** (Sandy B); **David** (Bernie); **Dina and Al** (Cindy); **Douma family** (Evelyn); **Edward** (Evelyn); **Elizabeth** (Darlene); **Erin Beal and children**; **Frankie** (Bernie); **Grace and Christy** (Kim); **Helen & Tony** (Jeni); **Irene and Tiffany** (Katie B); **Isaiah** (Kim); **Jessica** (Joan); **Joan Panko**; **Joellen** (Mel); **Karen K** (Ar); **Kirsten** (Kim); **Lacy** (Melanie S); **Larry** (Karen G); **Lisa, Lorrie** (Debbie Z); **Marley & Bob** (Dave D); **Michelle** (Katie); **Mike B** (Jeni); **Pam** (Katie); **Patti** (Jeni); **Renee M**; **Robert** (Gert); **Shawn** (Kim); **Shirley D**; **Stan** (Bernie); **Stephanie, Mackenzie and Savino**; **Sue** (Grace)

WE PRAY FOR GROUPS IN NEED.

Healthcare providers and others in harm's way, especially **Jean, Kaitlyn, K, and Molly**; for those in hospitals and facilities with health needs; those unemployed, under-employed and those seeking workers; those in isolation; those living in domestic violence situations; those battling addiction; fire and police departments tasked with keeping the peace; systemic racism and social challenges in our country; victims of abuse and their abusers; mental health

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO MOURN.

For the **Nickalaou Family** on the death of **Chris Nickalaou** (Sandy & Susan); for the **DeNovi Family** on the death of **Sandy**; for the **Black Family** (Jeni); for the **Homko Family** (Gert); for those who died in the **recent New York fire** and for their families and the survivors who seek assistance with living accommodations; for the family and friends of **Brian Boam and Dorn School**; for **victims and families affected by violence**; for those who are being impacted by **disasters and other environmental challenges**

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED DURING VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES..

For all those affected by the **recent multi-state tornadoes** and for those who died in these tragedies; for **Dali, Nafa, and Yanko** awaiting immigration; for the current situation in **Afghanistan**; **Lena** (Mel): all those who tested positive for **COVID-19** even without symptoms; **violence against civilians and those living in fear**; **churches who are struggling** to reach members and care for people; those who provide **essential services** we need; for **Elise** (Karen H); **Ethiopia**; **Haiti**; **Holly** (Evelyn); **Kaitlyn** (Karen G); for those who are **struggling mentally and emotionally** at this time; for **students and teachers**

WE GIVE THANKS FOR THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

We rejoice with **Molly Netter** on the great news that **Dali, Nafa and Yanko** will now begin the immigration process.





Discipleship Report *(by Jean Swearingen)*

Happy New Year! The Discipleship Committee of Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church (HHPC) met following the 10:00 a.m. service on Sunday, January 2, 2022. We welcomed the New Year by celebrating 2021 accomplishments in a pandemic and are looking forward to 2022 plans.

BROOKFIELD ZOO'S HOLIDAY MAGIC

HHPC's Holiday Tree was decorated to represent a variety of our missions. We hope you were lucky enough to be able to visit Brookfield Zoo and see our tree. We are grateful to be part of the Zoo's annual event.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Our youth continue to meet every other Sunday.

SOUPER SUNDAY

Souper Sunday will be held on Sunday, February 13, 2022. HHPC will celebrate Souper Sunday in-house and in-person. Final plans and logistics of serving are being developed. We will complete all required tasks with everyone's safety as our goal. Please see more information elsewhere in this newsletter.

2022 LENTEN SERVICES

Ash Wednesday is March 2, 2022. HHPC will be holding evening Lenten Suppers for the six weeks of Lent (*Wednesdays March 2, March 9, March 16, March 23, March 30 & April 6*). Please stay alert for announcements from the pulpit and for sign-ups.

EASTER BREAKFAST

Breakfast will be held on Easter Sunday, April 17, 2022! Further information and sign-ups coming

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)

Yes! Plans are underway for VBS to be held.

The Discipleship Committee discussed activities for Spring, Summer and Fall. We hold great faith to be able to complete our developing events/programming.

The next Discipleship Committee meeting is scheduled for Sunday, March 13, 2022. We strive to complete all our activities responsibly and with appropriate precautions.

Blessings, Jean



Mission Report *(by Rev. Edie)*

Mission Committee Report

With the beginning of a new year and transition in leadership. The Mission Committee would like to thank Kim Ambrosat for serving as our faithful leader for the past several years. We are also excited to share that Jeni Vogl has agreed to chair the committee for the coming year. We on the Mission Committee are always looking for people who want to serve and fresh ideas for ways that we as a congregation can serve our community. *If you would be interested in checking out our committee, we meet on the third Sunday of the month at 11a.m. Our next meeting will be February 20.*

Our Warming Tree was very generously stocked this year! Thank you. A portion of those items have already been distributed in Chicago to the homeless population, some have been set aside for our micro-pantry and still others will be going to The Center.

Community Meal

Our next drive thru community meal will be held on **February 7, from 5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.** We are always looking for assistance to cook, pack meals, or distribute. You are also invited to stop by and pick up dinner for yourself or a neighbor. The menu for February: Hamburger Vegetable Soup, bread, dessert.

MISSIONS OF THE MONTH

January – Share the Warmth. We are continuing to collect warm clothing items. Hats, gloves, and scarves, but also new socks and underwear. We will be donating these items at the end of the month to The Center for their “Share the Warmth” event.

February – Bottle Caps. Many of you are already collecting your caps to donate towards our goal of 1,200 lbs. of bottle caps. This will enable us to replace our two wooden picnic tables and make a second smaller bench. We have already collected, sorted, and weighed 670 lbs. But there are *a lot* of bottle caps in containers that need to be sorted and checked. In the month of February, there will be stations set up in the gym for sorting of caps. You can help with this anytime, stop in the church during the week, stay after bible study, take some time before or after worship. Michael Swearingen has been working to refine this process and we will have instructions available for you. Michael will provide us with an updated weight after we have processed the caps we have in February.

March – Feed My Starving Children. Meal pack will be in March. Stay tuned for a sign-up sheet in March. In the mean time you can help this ministry by taking an M&M container from the entry to the church and filling it with quarters. These tubes of quarters are a great way to provide meals for those in need throughout the year.

Join Us at Women's Bible Study Mondays at 1:00 PM – Fellowship Hall



We have recently begun a study on the 12 disciples. What is a disciple? How is it the same or different from an apostle? Who are these 12 men Jesus called to be his disciples and how are they the same or different from you and I? These are just a few of the kinds of questions we are seeking to answer together.

We hope that you will consider joining us as we explore the Word of God together.



Arlene Pearson, a long-time member of Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church and coordinator of the Women's Bible Study, passed away on December 10, 2021. Her knowledge and love of God's Word was truly an inspiration to all of us.

Love and Hugs, Ar!

We will miss you.

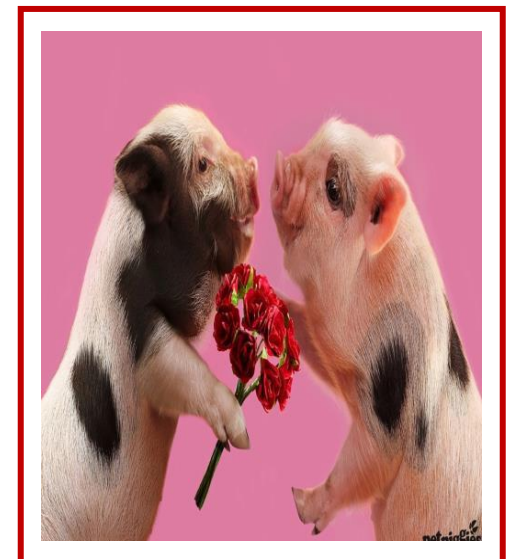
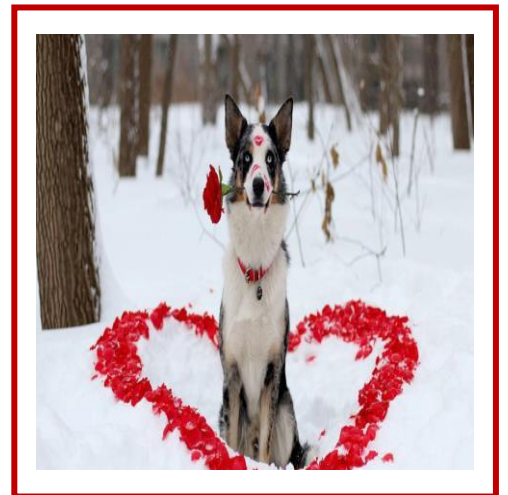
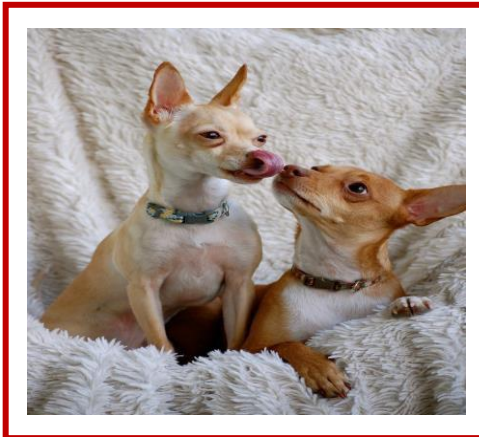
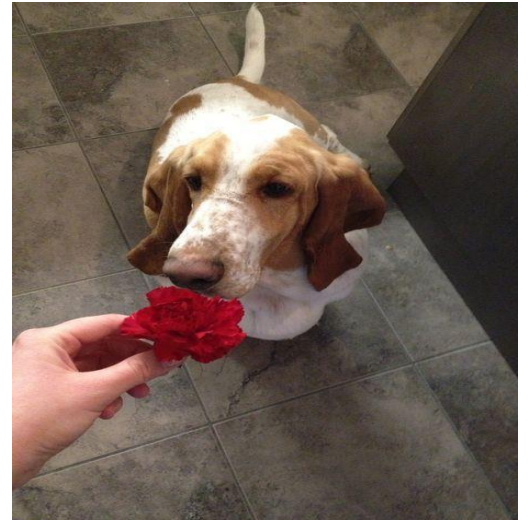


LOL for Valentine's Day



A meme is an image with an amusing caption.

Can you create a meme for these Valentine cuties?



Important Dates and INFORMATION



YOU'RE INVITED!

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 13 2022
FELLOWSHIPHALL

Come and enjoy the delicious
varieties of soups
always made with love!



"JUST EATING?" GROUP MEETUP & DISCUSSION

SUNDAYS AT 5:00 PM
THROUGH FEBRUARY
IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

COMING SOON!

"LENTEN SUPPERS"
WEDNESDAYS THROUGH LENT
BEGINNING MARCH 2
(See Discipleship Report on p. 6 for details)

10 Ways to Love

Read and reflect on what Scripture tells us about loving.

- Listen without interrupting (*Proverbs 18*)
- Speak without accusing (*James 1:19*)
- Give without sparing (*Proverbs 21-26*)
- Pray without ceasing. (*Colossians 1:9*)
- Answer without arguing (*Proverbs 17-1*)
- Share without pretending (*Ephesians 4:15*)
- Enjoy without complaint (*Philippians 2:14*)
- Trust without wavering (*1 Corinthians 13:7*)
- Forgive without punishing (*Colossians 3: 13*)
- Promise without forgetting. (*Proverbs 13:12*)



May God bless our friends celebrating their birthdays in this month of love.

Scott Zimmerman	February 5
Sam Swearingen	February 5
Mike Swearingen	February 5
Shirley Dragas	February 27
Rick Vogl	February 27
Sandy Beal	February 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.

No notifications received this month.

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

Phone: 708-598-3100

E-mail: hhoc@hickoryhillspres.org

The Connecting Link is looking for any pictures, stories or memories that you might like to share with our readers. If it's a picture you are sending, please provide a description of what the picture represents.

Drop them in the office or e-mail them to the office at hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org.



Church Musician's Corner

by Greg Rolla

The Heart and Love of God

There are at least three different saints called Valentine, all of them martyrs and are mentioned in the early martyrologies of the Church under the date of February 14. One is described as a priest in Rome, another a bishop of Terni, and the other a missionary in Africa.

St. Valentine's Day had its origin in both England and France during the Middle Ages. About halfway through the month (February 14), birds began to pair and people looked romantically on this event, and began to write love letters and send love tokens to each other.

In all of this, we should also consider the spiritual aspects contained therein:

The heart and eternal love of God. There are many hymns that were written about the realities. Some examples include *Jesus Loves Me*, *For God So Loved the World*, *O How He Loves You and Me*, *Near to the Heart*, *O the Deep, Deep Love*--the list is endless.

Peace, Greg



***This month,
my musical
selections will focus
on God's eternal
love for us and
His heart.***

FEBRUARY 2022

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6 10:00 AM Morning Worship & Sunday School <i>(Rev. Marge Vander Wagen will celebrate worship)</i> 5:00 PM REV Worship	7 9:00 AM Morning devotion on Facebook Live 1:00 PM Women's Bible Study 5:30 PM – 6:00 PM Community Meal	8 9:00 AM Morning devotion on Facebook Live	9	10 9:00 AM Morning devotion on Facebook Live	11	12 9:00 AM MC8 Meeting on Zoom
13 10:00 AM Morning Worship 11:15 AM Souper Bowl Sunday NO REV TODAY	14 9:00 AM Morning devotion on Facebook Live 1:00 PM Women's Bible Study 7:30 PM Session Happy Valentine's Day!	15 9:00 AM Morning devotion on Facebook Live	16	17 9:00 AM Morning devotion on Facebook Live	18	19
20 10:00 AM Morning Worship & Sunday School 11:15 AM Missions Meeting 5:00 PM REV Worship	21 9:00 AM Morning devotion on Facebook Live 1:00 PM Women's Bible Study	22 9:00 AM Morning devotion on Facebook Live	23	24 9:00 AM Morning devotion on Facebook Live	25	26
27 10:00 AM Morning Worship & Fellowship 11:15 AM Board of Deacons Meeting 5:00 PM REV Worship	28 9:00 AM Morning devotion on Facebook Live 1:00 PM Women's Bible Study					

FEBRUARY 2022



Connecting together to worship and praise our God!

HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
THE CONNECTING LINK

DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT HOLD

CURRENT RESIDENT OR

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church
8426 West 95th Street
Hickory Hills, IL 60457