

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.

# Lent

Be joyful in hope,  
patient in affliction,  
faithful in prayer.  
Romans 12:12



MARCH 2024

## WORSHIP WITH US

- Morning Worship on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Our services are also recorded and made available later. You can find us on Facebook at *Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church* and on our website at [www.hickoryhillspres.org](http://www.hickoryhillspres.org).

- Evening Worship on Sundays at 5:00 p.m.

## CONTACT US

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

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Hickory Hills, IL 60457

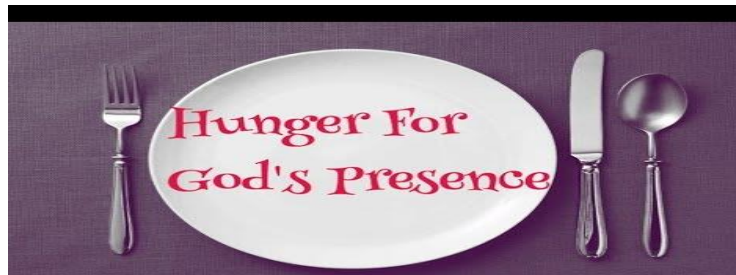
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E-mail: [hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org](mailto:hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org)

## VISIT US ONLINE

Website: [www.hickoryhillspres.org](http://www.hickoryhillspres.org)

Facebook: Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church



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## A Letter from Rev. Edie



*Rev. Edie Lenz, Pastor*

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” This verse from Ecclesiastes has been echoing in my mind, as I seek to express to you in just a page the hard work of discernment and tough choices of the Session in the past few months. The short version of what I am saying is this: After 17 ½ years of faithful worship and community, our evening REV Service and Meals will be coming to an end on May 5. Our task now is to celebrate this long-loved ministry of HHPC and end it well. There will be information coming to you in the future on how we will do that.

This was not a decision entered into without a lot of conversation, reflection, prayer, and tears. It is never easy to make a decision to stop doing something, even if that thing is not what it once was. REV has been a place of deep connection and worship throughout its history. But the reality is that over time, REV has both evolved and shrunk.

When I arrived, it was clear to me that REV was struggling. Attendance averaged about 12 a week (including musicians, tech, and worship leader). As COVID hit and as the 5 years I have now been here have gone on, attendance has shrunk even further. The average attendance for REV last year was 8 (again including those leading the service). In terms of leadership and resources, this is not a long-term sustainable option for the church.

Over the years we have experimented with many different variations and possibilities, REV has been creative and curious. While there have been many different experiments and ways of worshipping, REV has also been stuck. The core group of leaders and worship participants

have been steadfast and dedicated. Our current musicians in particular, need to be thanked again and again. From the very beginning of REV, Charlie and Peggy Smith have dedicated their gifts, energy, and time to the service. Since 2018, they have been the volunteer band that offered music during our worship. Charlie and Peggy, thank you for your dedication and your gifts.

Throughout the years, many of you have been impacted by the ministry and worship at REV. As we bring this chapter of our life together to a close, I want to request that you share your stories with us. As we move forward, we want to capture the memories. Would you please share those memories with us? I would love to have a series of memories to share in the next newsletter. If you are more comfortable being anonymous, I am happy to hold your name from your story. But would you still consider sharing the impact of this ministry on your life and faith journey?

You can submit those in writing to the church office, via email to me: [pastor@hickoryhillspres.org](mailto:pastor@hickoryhillspres.org) or even stop by and tell me and I will take notes and write it up. If you have questions or want to understand more about this decision, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or speak with a member of Session.

Finally, I ask for your prayers for the REV Group as we draw this ministry to a close and seek to discern God's plans for us into the future.

Grace and Peace in Christ,  
*Rev. Edie*

## Sunday Worship Readings and Reflections



Shown here are the theme and Scripture focus during Lent. You can prepare for worship by reading and reflecting on them before Sunday worship.

Join us on Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in person or virtually. If you miss a service, they are available on our website at:  
[www.hickoryhillspres.org](http://www.hickoryhillspres.org)

### March 3, 2024

3rd Sunday in Lent

**Readings:** Isaiah 63:1-8; Luke 13:1-9

**Sermon Title:**

*Cultivating Self-Compassion; Letting Go of Perfection*

### March 10

4th Sunday in Lent

**Readings:** 2 Corinthians 15:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

**Sermon Title:**

*Cultivating Abundance; Letting Go of Scarcity*

### March 17

5th Sunday in Lent

**Readings:** Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8

**Sermon Title:**

*Cultivating Lavish Love; Letting Go of Assumptions*

### March 24

Palm Sunday

**Readings:** Psalm 118:19-29; Luke 19:28-40

**Sermon Title:**

*Cultivating Purpose; Letting Go of Supposed To's*

### March 31

Resurrection of the Lord

**Readings:** Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; John 20:1-18

**Sermon Title:**

*Cultivating Joy; Letting Go of Expectations*

As we continue in the Lenten Season, what are you letting go of?

How are you releasing what you no longer need to be carrying?

What practices are helping you let go?



What is God cultivating in you?

What do notice growing or changing?

How are you slowing down to pay attention to the careful work of God's care?



*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](mailto:hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org).*

*You can also send prayer requests online through our website at:*

*[www.hickoryhillspres.org/prayerrequest/](http://www.hickoryhillspres.org/prayerrequest/)*

## **WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEALING...**

**Ally** (Toni) **Benny** (Toni) **Carroll C** (Sandy B) **Charlie** (Evelyn) **Chris** (Mel) **Danny** (Jeni V) **Diane** (Toni) **Everleigh** (Jeni V) **Fanny** (Molly) **Fay B** (Sandy B) **Fran** (Jeni V) **Jaden K** (Toni) **Jarett** (Kim) **Jay** (Susan F) **Jerry** (Toni) **Jill R** (Jeni V) **Joe R** (Jeni V) **Kathy & Jim** (Jeni V) **Lori** (Deb) **Lori** (Evelyn G) **Mike & Suzanne** (Sandy B) **Raymond** (Diane C) **Rick & Ruth S** (Jeni V) **Susanne L** (Sandy B) **Joyce** (Renee M) **Pat** (Renee M) **Lois** (Darlene D) **Dave** (Renee M) **Sam** (Debbie Z) **Drew** (Evelyn) **Katie D** (Barb) **Bernie** (Debbie) **Jason** (Peggy) **Sharon S** (Debbie) **Ann** (Debbie H) **Steve & Dawn** (Jen) **Jaden**

## **WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF STRENGTH...**

**Bill** (Bernie) **Bob D** (Dave D) **Bob M** (Grace M) **David D** (Karen G) **Dee & Joel** (Jeni V) **Don & family** (Jeni V) **Doris** (Wilda D) **Esther E** (Grace M) **Katie & Joe Kevin** (Cheryl) **Landon** (Jeni V) **Lisa E** (Grace) **Lucy** (Wanda M) **Mike B** (Jeni V) **Natalie** (Bernie) **Patti & Randy** (Jeni V) **Savannah** (Darlene) **Stacy** (Deb) **Toni Valentine** (Doral) **Francie** (Karen G) **Rae** (Karen G) **Loretta** (Wanda) **Jessica** (Susan)

## **WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF COMFORT...**

**Ada S** (Susan) **Bruce & Kathie & family** (Jeni V) **Doris** (Diane C) **Georgene** (Jeni V) **The Home Family** (Gordon) **Barbara** (Evelyn) **Janet** (Evelyn) **Mary** (Debbie) **The Vickers Family** on the passing of **Gert**

## **WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED...**

**Dali, Alinafe, Yankho** (Molly) **Diana** (Wilda D) **Kaitlyn** (Karen G)





## **Discipleship Report** by Jean Swearingen

*The Discipleship Committee of Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church (HHPC) is continuing to work through a rather busy first quarter of 2024.*

### **SOUPER SUNDAY**

HHPC's Souper Sunday was held on Sunday, February 11, 2024. We were able to serve a variety of soups with bread and topped off with desserts. THANK YOU to everyone who chopped, sliced, diced, simmered, stirred, mixed, baked, served, decorated etc. Everyone's talents are appreciated. The Free Will offering has been directed toward HHPC's Micro Pantry.

### **LENT**

Ash Wednesday marks the first day of Lent. HHPC and our guests from Faith United Presbyterian Church celebrated the beginning of the Lenten Season on Wednesday, February 14, 2024. THANK YOU to all who participated in this meaningful event. Lenten Soup Suppers will continue through March 20. We gather at 6:00pm. All Lenten Series Free Will offerings will support HHPC's Micro Pantry. A sign-up sheet is available if you wish to help.

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

We continue to offer Sunday School for youth on the first (1st) and third (3rd) Sundays of each month. We are grateful for our youth! We are thankful for those who accept the challenge of teaching.

### **BIBLE STUDY**

After a one week delay due to frigid weather, Bible Study is off and running for 2024. We are currently studying the life of David. We continue to question and to learn. We welcome all to be a part of our group! Bible Study meets on Mondays at 1pm.

### **EASTER BREAKFAST**

Sunday, March 31, 2024, is Easter. Plans are underway! An Easter Sign-up for donations is available!



## **Mission Report** *by Dave Delaney*

Because many slots were full when we went to register for the Feed the Need pack in early March only 4 people from our congregation will participate. Even with this slight setback we still plan to support the Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) organization. We are aware of another mobile pack that will take place in Palos Heights in August. We also plan to participate in 2 other packing days at their permanent location in Aurora. Dates for this will be announced when we determine what those dates will be.

One of the reasons we support FMSC is the proof that good nutrition can greatly enhance the wellbeing of children who sorely lack access to proper foods needed for growth. The picture associated with this letter, although not from FMSC, clearly shows the effects of good nutrition. The picture below is from Hearts in Motion, and I personally have seen this child.

Part of a mission obligation is to expand one's horizons, both domestically and internationally. We, as a congregation, have not done this in recent years. One way to revive this tradition is to participate in the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS). We plan to semi-revive that program during the month of March. Anyone who remembers Theodore Atidu and his story of disaster relief in his home country of Ghana will appreciate what disaster relief can mean for people who need it. The OGHS not only provides disaster relief in foreign countries but also here in the United States.

There will be envelopes available for anyone who wishes to make such a donation. We ask everyone to be as generous as you can be. The formal day for this collection will be Palm Sunday.





# Round Our Church

Recent events at HNPC



## Celebrating Bernie and Introducing Barb



## Easter Egg Bread



### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast
- 1 to 2 teaspoons ground cardamom
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 6 to 6-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1-1/2 cups whole milk
- 6 tablespoons butter, cubed
- 3 eggs
- 1 egg plus 2 tablespoons water for egg wash
- 3 to 6 colored hard-boiled eggs

### DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, mix sugar, yeast, cardamom, salt and 2 cups flour. In a small saucepan, heat milk and butter to 120°-130°. Right before it boils, remove from heat. Let cool until you can hold your finger in it for fifteen seconds. Add to dry ingredients; beat on medium speed for 2 minutes. Add 3 eggs; beat on high for 2 minutes. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough (dough will be sticky). Turn dough onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease the top. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 45 minutes.

Gently fold down dough. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide in half. Set the one half back in bowl. You are going to make two loaves. Divide the one half into three equal portions. Roll each portion into a 24-in. rope. Place ropes on a greased baking sheet and braid. Bring ends together to form a ring. Pinch ends to seal. Lightly coat dyed eggs with oil; arrange on braid, tucking them carefully between ropes.

Cover with a damp kitchen towel; let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 20 minutes. Preheat oven to 375°.

In a bowl, whisk the remaining egg and water; gently brush over dough, avoiding eggs. Bake 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pan to a wire rack to cool. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 2 loaves (12 slices per loaf). About 187 calories per 1/12th of a single loaf.



### MARCH

Hollie Fox	March 1
Cooper Huenecke	March 2
Mike Monczynski	March 2
Donna Bredlau	March 5
Michael Dragas	March 11
Lucy Manyenje	March 12
Kim Ambrosat	March 15
Lizbeth Ramos	March 16
Pat Lorenz	March 16
Roy Hoffman	March 16

### Keep Your Contact Information Up-to-Date!

Call Us: 708-598-3100

Email Us: [hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org](mailto:hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org)



# HHPC UPCOMING EVENTS



**Community Meal**

**HHPC COMMUNITY MEAL**  
**MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024**  
**5:30 PM – 6:00 PM**

*If you would like to help at this meal, please see Debbie Zimmerman or Evelyn Garlic.*

*We appreciate you!*

**CULTIVATING & LETTING GO**

**JOIN US WEDNESDAY EVENINGS DURING LENT 6:00 PM FELLOWSHIP HALL**

- *Lenten Reflections by Rev. Edie Lenz*
- *Music by Greg Rolla*
- *Soup, Salad & Dessert*

*All free will donations will be used to support our Micro-Pantry*

**Maundy Thursday**

March 28, 2024, we will be joining Faith United Presbyterian Church, 6200 W 167<sup>th</sup> Street, Tinley Park, IL in worship. Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m., the service follows at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 31, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. All are welcome. A worship service will follow at 10:00 a.m.

**Easter Morning Breakfast**

# March Humor





*Declutter your home for easy cleaning and organizing.*

# DECLUTTER Checklist

- KITCHEN**
- Refrigerator
  - Pantry
  - Spices
  - Tupperware/Containers
  - The Junk Drawer
  - Pots, Pans, & Utensils
  - Kitchen Appliances
  - Paperware & Plastic Cups
  - Plastic Bags
  - Glasses & Mugs
  - Water Bottles
  - Serving Dishes
  - Recipes & Cookbooks
  - Papers & Magnets
  - Under the Sink

- BEDROOMS**
- Clothing
  - Shoes
  - Jewelry & Accessories
  - Electronics & Cords
  - Night Stands
  - Books & Games
  - Totes & Boxes
  - Winter Gear
  - Hats & Purses
  - Sheets & Blankets
  - Pillows
  - Luggage
  - Glasses
  - Decor
  - Under the Bed

- LIVING/FAMILY ROOMS**
- DVDs
  - Games
  - Toys
  - Electronics
  - Closets
  - Coats
  - Blankets & Pillows
  - Magazines & Newspapers
  - Decor
  - Coasters
  - Books
  - Tables & Drawers
  - Pet Toys
  - Knick-Knacks
  - Candles

- BATHROOMS**
- Towels
  - Makeup
  - Medicines
  - Shower Items
  - Toiletries
  - Soaps & Lotions
  - Hair Accessories
  - Combs & Brushes
  - Curling Irons & Blow Dryer
  - Cleaners
  - Samples & Mini Toiletries
  - Hair Products
  - Perfumes & Sprays
  - Decor
  - Under the Sink

- OFFICE**
- Paperwork
  - Filing Cabinet
  - Pens & Pencils
  - Office Supplies
  - Desk Drawers
  - Mail Baskets
  - Books & Binders
  - Receipts & Warranties
  - Instruction Manuals
  - Computer Items
  - Power Cords & Chargers
  - Craft Supplies
  - Boxes/Storage Items
  - Tax Documents
  - Phone Books

- DINING ROOM**
- Linens
  - Table Decor
  - China Hutch
  - Buffet

- HOLIDAY DECOR**
- Bins & Totes
  - Gift Wrap & Bags
  - Ribbons & Bows
  - Tissue Paper & Cards
  - Linens
  - Holiday Dishes
  - Costumes



# CULTIVATING & LETTING GO

## Lent 2024

Sun March 3		Cultivating Self-compassion, Letting Go of Perfection Luke 13:1-9; Isaiah 63:1-8
Wed March 6		Hope Isaiah 55:1-9
Sun March 10		Cultivating Abundance, Letting Go of Scarcity Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32; 2 Corinthians 15:16-21
Wed March 13		New Creation 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
Sun March 17		Cultivating Lavish Love, Letting Go of Assumptions John 12:1-8; Philippians 3:4b-14
Wed March 20		A New Thing Isaiah 43:16-21
Sun March 24		Cultivating Purpose, Letting Go of Supposed To's Luke 19:28-40; Psalm 118:19-29
Thurs March 28	Meal at 6:00 PM Worship at 7:00 PM	Maundy Thursday Service @ Faith United
Sun March 31		Cultivating Joy, Letting Go of Expectations

# MARCH 2024

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fr	Sat
					1	2
3 <b>10:00 AM</b> Morning Worship, Sunday School & Fellowship <b>5:00 PM</b> Evening Worship	4 <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>5:30 PM</b> Community Meal	5	6 <b>11:00 AM</b> Chair Yoga	7 <b>7:00 PM</b> Yoga	8	9
10 <b>10:00 AM</b> Morning Worship, Fellowship <b>5:00 PM</b> Evening Worship	11 <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>7:30 PM</b> Session	12	13 <b>11:00 AM</b> Chair Yoga <b>6:00 PM</b> Lenten Supper	14 <b>7:00 PM</b> Yoga	15	16 <b>10:00 AM</b> Evelyn's Cardmaking Class
17 <b>10:00 AM</b> Morning Worship, Sunday School & Fellowship <b>5:00 PM</b> Evening Worship	18 <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study	19	20 <b>11:00 AM</b> Chair Yoga <b>6:00 PM</b> Lenten Supper	21 <b>7:00 PM</b> Yoga	22	23
24 <b>PALM SUNDAY</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Morning Worship & Fellowship <b>11:30 AM</b> Board of Deacons Meeting <b>5:00 PM</b> Meal & Worship	25 <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study	26	27 <b>11:00 AM</b> Chair Yoga in the Gym	28 <b>7:00 PM</b> Yoga	29	30
31 <b>EASTER SUNDAY</b> Breakfast at 9:00 am Morning Worship at 10:00 am						



**The Connecting Link**  
*A monthly newsletter from Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church*

DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT HOLD

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