

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.



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.

CONTACT US

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

8426 West 95th Street
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VISIT US ONLINE

Website: www.hickoryhillspres.org

APRIL 2025



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A Letter from Rev. Dr. Edie Lenz



⊗ *THANK YOU!* ⊗

On Tuesday, March 25 I defended my dissertation and received my Doctor of Ministry degree. While we will also attend my hooding and graduation ceremonies in June, my degree has been officially conferred. And this is where I get to say, I literally could not have done this without you. This journey began at the beginning of 2021 with tons of reading and reflection. Every time I went out to CA for a week of learning, you prayed, took care of the work here at the church, and created space for me to be away. Every time I returned I did so with homework – of course a paper to write but also a work that was centered on you, work I needed you to do with me. You have filled out surveys, participated in conversations, given feedback on my writing, and answered question after question. I cannot thank you enough for all you have done to help me through this process.

In a month or so, a bound copy of my dissertation will be available in the church library for anyone who wants to read the full document. It will also be available online in the Fuller Seminary library. My dissertation, entitled: “Joy in the Mourning: Thriving in a Ministry of Loss” is an exploration of grief in churches. Every church I have ever served has gone through a lot and has carried old wounds. My working theory is that until we, as God’s people, learn to grieve together, in community, we will remain stuck and unable to imagine a more hopeful future.

I explored this theory through the lens of closing a church, merging two congregations, and walking with a church that has endured a lot of loss. In this theory I explored tools of mourning, ways we can gather and grieve together; some of them you might recognize because you helped me test them.

I also look at the pastor; what work does a pastor need to do for him or herself to remain healthy, engaged, and doing their own internal work as well as serving the church and walking with people. I reflected on my own journey in ministry as well as all I have learned from these very different congregations.

When I started in ministry, more than 20 years ago I intended to be done with school. I love learning but I had no further academic ambitions. But I kept learning, and I kept finding myself in places where I had to learn new tools to keep the congregations moving forward and learning together. These past six years (did you know we are at six years this month?) and the past four as I have been walking through this degree have been a blessing – I have learned things I never imagined I would need to learn, and I have been richly blessed.

Thank you for being my learning partners, for humoring me when I needed you do to another set of questions and for cheering me on in my learning. It is a privilege to serve as your pastor and a joy to be able to celebrate with you crossing the finish line. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Grace and Peace in Christ,

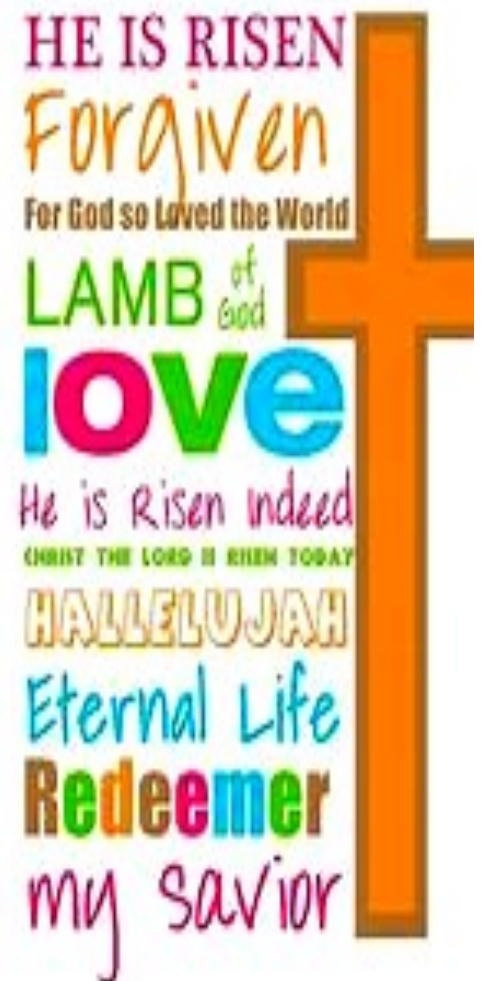
Rev. Dr. Edie Lenz



Join Us For Breakfast

**Easter Sunday,
April 20, 2025
at 9:00 AM**

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church invites you to join us for Easter Morning Breakfast Sunday, April 20, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. There is a sign up sheet available for food and monetary donations. A worship celebration of our Lord's Resurrection follows at 10:00 a.m.



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

**Office E-mail: hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org
708 598 3100**

Website: hickoryhillspres.org



Date/Day	Theme	Scripture
Wed 4/2	Jesus Challenged Assumptions	Luke 9:44-50; Luke 11:37-44
Sun 4/6	Jesus Dignified the Marginalized	Luke 7:36-50; Jn 4:7-31
Wed 4/9	Jesus Prayed	Luke 11:1-13
Sun 4/13	Jesus entered Jerusalem Jesus cleansed the temple	Luke 19:28-40 (41-44) 45-48
HOLY WEEK		
Sun 4/20	Jesus Rose	Jn 20:1-18





**"Keep on praying
and guard your
prayers with
thanksgiving."**

COLLOSSIANS 4:2

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEALING...

Ally (Toni) **Benny** (Toni) **Bernie** (Barb K) **Chris** (Mel) **Dan** (Evelyn) **Danny** (Jeni V) **Everleigh** (Jeni V) **Jaden K** (Toni) **Jerry** (Toni) **Kristen** (Charlie) **Lori** (Evelyn G) **Lois** (Darlene D) **Drew** (Evelyn) **Sharon S** (Debbie) **Karen G** (Grace) **Maria** (Debbie) **Jeff** (Deb H) **Marg** (Bernie) **Melissa** (Charles S) **Nancy** (Debbie Z) **Cheryl** (Evelyn) **Linda** (Wilda) **Mary Jo** (Debbie H) **Melissa** (Bernie) **Mary** (Mel) **Robin** (Mel) **Mave** (Cheryl) **Charlotte** (Deb H) **Rich** (Rick) **Lily** (Kim) **Shirley** (Debbie H) **Todd** (Charlie) **Lou** (Cheryle) **Kathy M** (Debbie H) **Lori** (Debbie Z) **Mike & Ann** (Deb H) **Irene** (Deb H) **Shirley** (Evelyn) **Jamie** (Toni) **Patrick** (Susan) **Ray J** (Sandy) **Diane** (Jeni V) **Doris** (Wilda) **Matthew C** (Debbie Z) **Fran** (Jeni) **Florence** (Kim) **Judy** (Kim) **Janice** (Sheri S) **Patricia** (Debbie H) **Vito** (Katie) **Deb** (Mel) **Virginia** (Mel) **Jeff** (Deb H) **Kathy** (Deb H) **Andrew** (Darlene D) **Sara** (Mel)

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF STRENGTH...

Anne C (Deb H) **Bill** (Bernie) **Bob D** (Dave D) **Bob M** (Grace M) **Carrie** (Deb H) **Cindy** (Deb Z) **Dan** (Susan) **Dee & Joel** (Jeni V) **Don** (Jeni V) **Esther E** (Grace M) **Katie & Joe & Kevin** (Cheryl) **Landon** (Jeni V) **Lisa E** (Grace) **Lucy** (Wanda M) **Mike & Suzanne** (Sandy B) **Natalie** (Bernie) **Patti & Randy** (Jeni V) **Savannah** (Darlene) **Stacy** (Deb) **Wanda M** (Jeni V) **Jessica** (Susan) **Kaitlyn** (Kim) **Millie** (Toni) **Janice** (Katie) **Jacqui** (Katie) **Bob** (Edie) **Kathie** (Jeni V) **Ted** (Grace) **Scott** (Grace) **Gary** (Katie) **Artie** (Doral) **Sheri** (Barb K) **Toni** (Edie) **Kathy** (Jeni V) **Ruth** (Jeni) **Tom** (Katie) **Bud** (Diane C) **Laurie** (Sheri) **Michael** (Tom) **Sanderson Family** (Caleb) **Darren** (Evelyn) **Tony** (Deb H) **Dawn** (Jeni V) **Sam** (Debbie Z)

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF COMFORT...

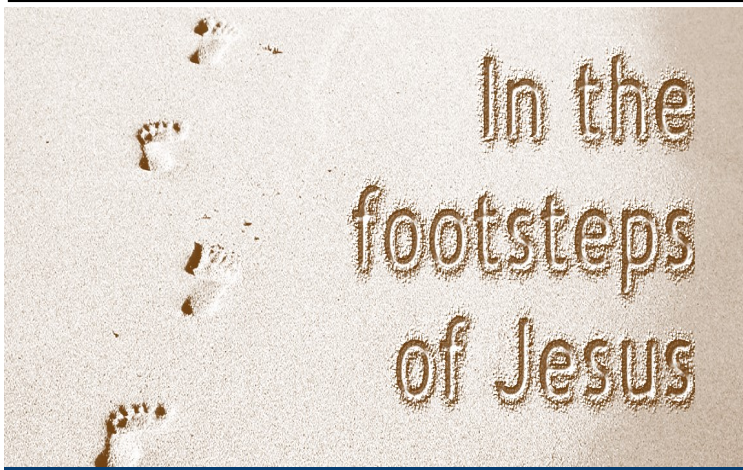
Ada S (Susan) **Steven** (Jean) **Rev Jewel** (loss of husband) **Family of Ramon Villareal** (Jeni) **Hansen Family** (loss of daughter) (Barb K) **Lawrence Family** (Mel) **Victims of the Fire in Justice** (Kim) **Kara's Family**, **Erkaptic Family** (Jeni V) **Farrand Family** (Edie) **Sophie's Family** (Rick) **Clarissa's Family** (Doral) **Wiggins Family** (Jeni)

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED...

Dali, Alinafe, Yankho (Molly) **Diana** (Wilda D) **Kaitlyn** (Karen G) **Christopher** (Edie) **Vretto Family** (Cheryle) **Janet** (Evelyn)

WE PRAY FOR THE BLESSINGS OF GOD...

Brenna—Birth of Jocelyn (Mel) **Birth of Elliot Murray** (Jean S) **For all that God has done & has yet to do** (Barb K)



Shown here are Scriptures to focus on for April. You can prepare for worship by reading and reflecting on these and the questions below.

Join us on April 2, and April 9, at 6:00 p.m. for our Lenten Supper and Service, and Sundays at 10:00 a.m. in person or virtually. If you miss a service, they are available on our website at: www.hickoryhillspres.org. See page 4 of this Newsletter for complete Lenten service schedule.

April 6

5th Sunday in Lent

Readings: Luke 7:36-50
John 4:7-31

Sermon Title: Jesus Dignified
the Marginalized

April 13

Palm Sunday

Readings: Luke 19:28-40
Luke 19:41-48

Sermon Title: Jesus Disrupted Expectations

April 20

Resurrection of the Lord

Readings: 1 Corinthians 15:19-26
John 20:1-18

Sermon Title: Jesus Overcame Death

April 27

2nd Sunday of Easter

Readings: Acts 5:27-32
John: 20:19-31

Sermon Title: Witnesses



Reflection Questions for Lent:

- † *What do you see Jesus doing?*
- † *What is he teaching us?*
- † *What are we called to do?*
- † *How can you live more faithfully?*
- † *If Jesus were living your life, what choices would he make?*

The Seven Last Words of Jesus Christ

First Word

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."
-Luke 23:34-

Fifth Word

"I thirst."
-John 19:28-

Second Word

"Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise."
-Luke 23:43-

Sixth Word

"It is finished."
-John 19:30-

Third Word

"Woman, behold your son. Then He said to the disciple, Behold your mother."
-John 19:26-27-

Seventh Word


"Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.' "
-Luke 23:46-

Fourth Word

"Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani?" that is,
"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"
-Matthew 27:46-

Good Friday
April 18, 2025

4/7/23



Discipleship

The path to knowing and following Jesus

Discipleship Committee Report

Happy Spring! The Discipleship Committee of Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church (HHPC) hopes everyone is able to enjoy the changing weather. March Winds . . . April Showers . . . May Flowers . . . we celebrate the Spring months! Spring brings lots and lots of activity throughout the HHPC building.

Our Bible Study continues to meet Mondays at 1pm. We are currently studying Proverbs. This book of the Bible offers many words of wisdom. Please consider joining us.

Faith Walking continues. A new in person group is now forming; starting date to be announced. If you have an interest or questions regarding Faith Walking, please contact Rev. Edie.

Sunday School for our youth continues! So, too, does our challenges of attendance. HHPC has only two (2) more meeting dates for our youth Sunday School this Spring. We will have Youth Sunday School on April 6 and May 4. May 4 will also be our Recognition Sunday.

We began Wednesday Lent services on March 5. Guests from Faith United Presbyterian Church joined us for the service and meal. The evening began with soup, salad and dessert. We then moved to the sanctuary and enjoyed an evening of music and lessons, which ended with the placing of ashes. The Lenten Soup and Service Series continues on Wednesday April 2, and concludes on Wednesday, April 9. We are so enjoying the variety of soups being donated for the evenings. We are also grateful for salads and desserts! We continue to welcome free-will donations of food and money that support HHPC's Micro Pantry.

Easter Breakfast will be held on Easter Sunday, April 20 at 9am. It will be here sooner than we realize. Plans are underway! A sign-up for donations required for Easter Breakfast is available. Please investigate how you can help, it will be much appreciated! We hope to see you at Breakfast and Easter Service at 10am.

HHPC will be celebrating Recognition Sunday on Sunday, May 4, 2025. We will recognize individuals from our congregation who are reaching an educational milestone. We also recognize and thank all who work to make our church school year a success. Please plan to stay after our 10am service and celebrate these accomplishments in our Fellowship Hall.

Vacation Bible School will be held Monday, June 23—Thursday, June 26, 2025! Supplies have been ordered, plans have begun! Our theme is "ROAD TRIP – On the Go with God!" We will have lessons, games, crafts and snacks each night. The final night will be a Cruise Night! Stay tuned for details.

Please let the office know if you wish to assist with any of our Discipleship activities. We will likely be able to find something for you. Again, Happy Spring! See you soon!



Mission Committee Report by Dave Delaney

In the Blues Brothers movie Dan Ackroyd and Jim Belushi declared they were on a mission from God. We at HHPC may not be on the same kind of mission, but we have many activities that can be considered missions. Several of us participated in the FEED THE NEED pack for Feed My Starving Children. The goal set for that pack of 800,000 meals was met. We try to attend a FMSC pack every 3 months or so. We continue to support our mini pantry which is still in constant use. The free will offerings, either money donations or food donations, collected at the Wednesday Lenten dinners will go to support our mini pantry. In November we collect food for Elsie's pantry. Our tree of warmth is usually overloaded with all kinds of cold weather items. We collect funds for disaster relief in North Carolina, and California, wherever there is a need.

The money we collect for the One Great Hour of Sharing campaign will go in some manner to disaster relief. The plastic caps we collect keeps that plastic material out of landfills and gets recycled into something useful and long lasting (e.g., picnic tables and benches). Our collecting of pop tabs helps recycle the aluminum they are made from.

I am sure many of us make private donations to many worthwhile organizations throughout the year. I encourage everyone to maintain that level of giving if at all possible. My personal donation is to volunteer and donate funds and items that can be used by Hearts In Motion in their thrift store or shipped to Guatemala. There are any number of organizations, too many to list, that anybody can donate either time or money. All of this should be considered a mission for God.

Isaiah 52:7

**How beautiful upon
the mountains are the
feet of him that
bringeth good tidings,
that publisheth peace;
that bringeth good
tidings of good, that
publisheth salvation...**



Musicians Corner

The Old Rugged Cross: A Hymn First Sung in Three Places

by Greg Rolla

The Old Rugged Cross

Geo. Bennard

Approximately a hundred years ago, an evangelist, George Bennard, came to Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin to direct a revival at Sawyer Friends Church which, by the way, still stands today. He was well known throughout the area for his singing and preaching. He carried a Bible and a guitar wherever he went, and wrote many hymns-both words and music.

George grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, the son of a coal miner. As a teenager he worked in the coal mines to support his mother and sisters after his father's death. He eventually became involved in the Salvation Army and married fellow army worker, Arminta Beeler, in 1894. The couple rented an apartment near the Methodist College in Albion, Michigan. From there, George travelled throughout the Midwest bringing the Gospel message wherever he went.

In 1912, he began working on a hymn about the meaning of the cross of Christ. He titled this hymn "The Old Rugged Cross", and he first performed it at the initial revival in Sturgeon Bay. From there he travelled to Pokagon, Michigan where, at the Frist Methodist Episcopal Church, the hymn was sung by a choir.

For approximately a hundred years, three places have claimed "The Old Rugged Cross" as their own. In Albion, there is a plaque that says: "The Old Rugged Cross", one of the world's best-loved hymns, was composed here in 1912. In Sturgeon Bay, the Friends Community Church maintains a beautiful garden with a cross commemorating the first singing of the hymn there. In Pokagon, there is another garden and marker claiming to be the birthplace of the hymn.

Due to his wife's delicate health, the family moved to Redondo Beach, California where Bennard continued to write hymns-three hundred in all. In 1958, a reporter from the Los Angeles Times interviewed him about the famous hymn he wrote. "I was going through a terrible time in my life," he said. "I needed help. Then I remembered an old wooden cross I had once seen. The first ten words came to me: 'On a hill faaway stood an old wooden cross.' It must have been two weeks before I finished it."

During this Lenten and Easter season, may we reflect on the meaning of the cross in our own lives-

So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,

Till my trophies at last I lay down;

I will cling to the old rugged cross,

And exchange it someday for a crown.

Upcoming Events at HHPC



HHPC COMMUNITY MEAL

**MONDAY APRIL 7
5:30 PM – 6:00 PM**

**MONDAY MAY 5
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!



During the Spring and Summer months and nice days in the Fall, you are welcome to enjoy your meal at one of the picnic tables on the church campus.



Please join us on Monday Afternoons @ 1:00 PM
HHPC Fellowship Hall

We are studying the wise sayings written in the book of Proverbs, a wonderful opportunity to reflect on God's Word during the Lenten season

HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IS NOW ACCEPTING DONATIONS FOR ITS ANNUAL YARD SALE BEING HELD THURSDAY MAY 15, 9:00 AM - 7:00 PM; FRIDAY MAY 16, 9:00 AM - 7:00 PM and SATURDAY MAY 16, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM.

INDOOR

YARD SALE

HAPPY APRIL

BIRTHDAYS!

© Fiona Childs

<i>Evelyn Garlic</i>	<i>April 6</i>
<i>Grace Muszynski</i>	<i>April 8</i>
<i>Josh Treccani</i>	<i>April 10</i>
<i>Tucker Treccani</i>	<i>April 10</i>
<i>Kelly Bredlau</i>	<i>April 14</i>
<i>Wanda McIlvoy</i>	<i>April 15</i>
<i>Veronica Swindle</i>	<i>April 23</i>
<i>Michael Dragas</i>	<i>April 24</i>
<i>Stacy Flynn-Brenz</i>	<i>April 25</i>
<i>Kirsten Elam</i>	<i>April 28</i>

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS®

Overeaters Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who support one another in solving their common problem, compulsive eating, and is patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous. Meetings are held at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 8607 S Narragansett Ave Burbank, IL 60459 on Tuesdays at 6:30 PM and 7:30 PM and on Thursdays at 10:00 AM. Other meeting locations can be found at oa.org. There are no dues or fees. For more information call Mary Ann P. at 708-705-1608

If you have a fellowship group that you would like mentioned here or you have an upcoming fellowship retreat or convention and would like to get the word out via this newsletter, please contact Barb K at hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org



FAITHWALKING FOUNDATIONS NEW GROUP STARTING

You are invited to be a part of the Faith Walking Process, led by Rev. Dr. Edie Lenz: Faith Walking is a spiritual formation process based on the belief that change begins with the individual and ripples out into the world. For any and all adults –we can all benefit from becoming more fully human and more fully alive. Faith Walking is open to members and non-members of HHPC, if you have a friend you would like to invite to join you, please do not hesitate to bring them along.

There will be a **Faithwalking 1 group starting in April**. This group will meet during the day and in person. The day of the week and the time of day will be determined when we have a few who are ready to commit. There is a fee for the materials and as always if you have someone ready to commit who cannot afford it we have scholarship money available.

In Faith Walking Foundations Module 1 you will get tools for building self-awareness and self-discovery. You will reflect on both the positive and the negative of your first formation. You will learn how your first formation wounded you and how those wounds are impacting your life. You will learn how to make positive declarations that move your life forward in a healthier direction.

You Are Invited-Community Event

CONNECTION ENCOUNTER



JUNE 13-JUNE 15, 2025



Stronghold Camp & Retreat Center
<https://strongholdcenter.org/>
 1922 IL-2 N, Oregon, IL 61061
 (815) 732-6111

\$250.00 PER PERSON
\$50.00 DEPOSIT NON-REFUNDABLE

Office@harvesttimeworshipcenter.org
 708-576-8570

April 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	2 11:00 AM Chair Yoga 6:00 PM Lent Supper/ Service	3 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	4	5
6 10:00 AM Morning Worship, Children & Youth Sunday School, Fellowship	7 1:00 PM Bible Study 5:30 PM Community Meal	8 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	9 11:00 AM Chair Yoga 6:00 PM Lent Supper/ Service	10 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	11	12 10:00 AM Evelyn Garlic's Card Making Class
13  10:00 AM Morning Worship, Fellowship	14 1:00 PM Bible Study 7:30 PM Session	15 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	16 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	17  At Faith United 6:00 PM-Dinner 7:00 PM Service	18 	19
20  9:00 AM Easter Breakfast 10:00 AM Morning Worship	21 1:00 PM Bible Study	22 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	23 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	24 12:00 PM Presby. Admin Luncheon @ HHPC 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	25	26
27 10:00 AM Morning Worship, Fellowship 11:30 AM Deacon's Meeting	28 1:00 PM Bible Study	29 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	30 11:00 AM Chair Yoga			



2025

The Connecting Link
A monthly newsletter from Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT HOLD

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