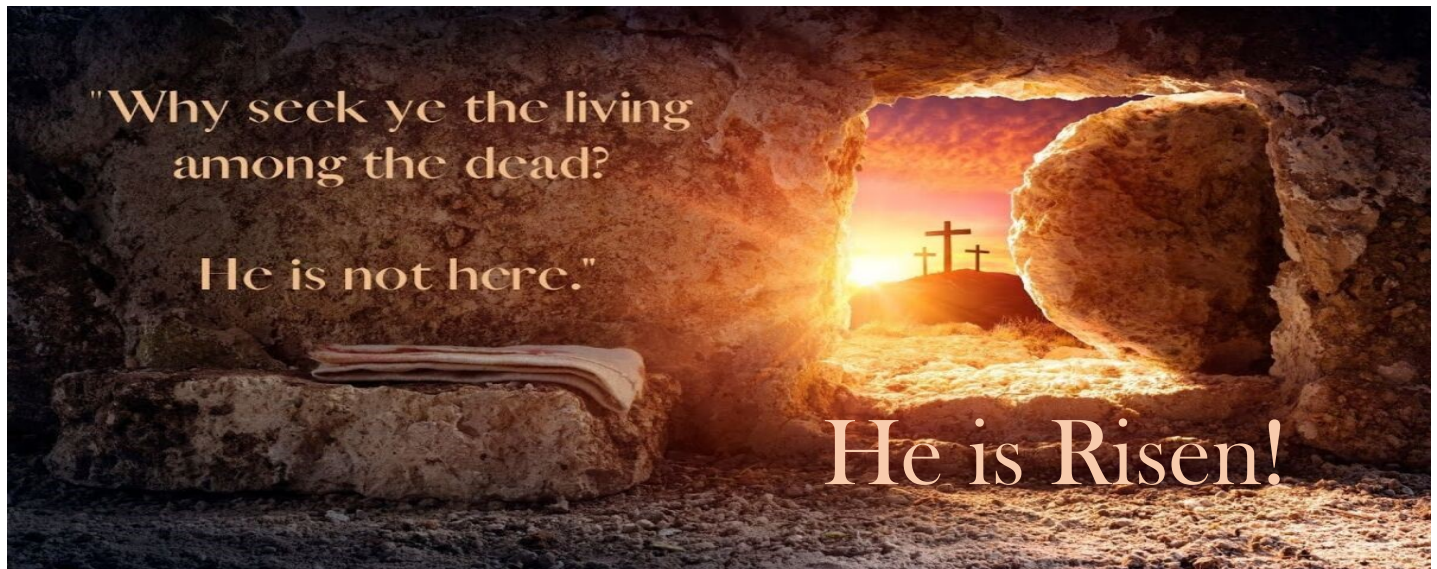


HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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.



APRIL 2026

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
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



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You're Invited to

Easter Breakfast

*Sunday, April 5, 2026
at 9:00 a.m.*

*Easter service begins
at 10:00 a.m.*

**Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church
8426 West 95th Street
In Fellowship Hall**

**For more information:
E-mail: hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org
Phone: 708 598 3100
Website: hickoryhillspres.org**



Reverend Dr. Craig Howard

Let Us Be Peacemakers

Written by Reverend Dr. Craig Howard

Featured in Presbytery Connect March 4, 2026



Let us be peacemakers. Let us be called the children of God, speaking boldly with moral conviction to the nation and to the world, building, with God's grace, a new moral order in the world community; and acting now for world peace, an enterprise of justice, an outcome of love.

("A Psalm of Peacemaking" in [*Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling*](#))

We are living in a moment when war and aggression can be executed with alarming efficiency, yet often without long-term strategic or moral imagination. Battles unfold on the television screens in our living rooms and on digital monitors in command centers across the globe. The distance can dull the senses. But war is never abstract. War is horror. Children are killed. Families are displaced. Land is devastated. Communities are reduced to rubble.

In the nuclear age, a strong military is a sobering reality. My grandfather fought in World War I. My father served in the Korean War. He carried nightmares long after he returned home and was determined that his sons would not fight another war. As a young man, I expressed interest in joining the Marines for the discipline and structure. On one of the few occasions when my father stood firmly in my way, he said no. Absolutely not.

I share this because my respect for those who serve is not theoretical. I grew up with photographs of my father and uncles in the Army and Air Force. My closest cousin joined the Navy; he is the only one in my generation to serve. I understand why congregations honor members who died in service. I understand the patriotic hymns and flags in sanctuaries. Respect for service and longing for peace are not opposites.

And yet, we are called to be peacemakers.

The teachings of Jesus Christ remain clear: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9). Peacemaking is not passive or the absence of strength. It is moral courage rooted in the conviction that justice and love are essential to the equation that shapes our public life.

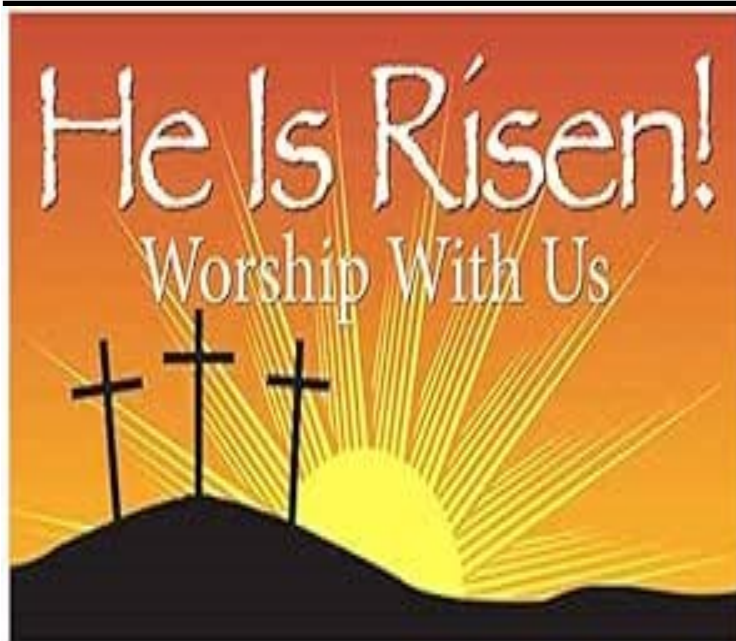
Dietrich Bonhoeffer understood this tension. A German pastor who opposed Hitler, he warned the church against "cheap grace" and silent complicity. His resistance cost him his freedom and eventually his life. Bonhoeffer reminds us that peacemaking is not withdrawal from the world's violence; it is costly engagement in the name of Christ.

In 1980, the Presbyterian Church took that calling seriously. Through [*Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling*](#), the church committed itself to education, advocacy, prayer, and action that would embody the identity of a peacemaking people. Decades later, we continue to uphold that commitment through the Peace and Global Witness Offering. The call has not expired.

As our nation moves from conflict to conflict, sometimes using military action to supplement diplomacy and sometimes to replace it, we are challenged to reconnect with our theological roots. To be a Matthew 25 presbytery means more than compassion in local settings; it means engaging the systems and structures that perpetuate violence. It means praying with clarity, speaking with moral conviction, and acting in ways that align with the Prince of Peace.

I encourage you to take the time to read pages 4 – 8 of [*Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling*](#). May we rediscover our voice as peacemakers. May we pray with intention, speak with conviction, and act with courage in the name of Jesus Christ, whose peace is not fragile, not partisan, and not silent.

Rev. Dr. Craig Howard
Executive Presbyter



Shown here are Scriptures to focus on for April. You can prepare for worship by reading the scriptures and reflecting on the questions on page 5 of this Newsletter.

Our worship services are Sundays at 10:00 AM in person or virtually. If you miss a service, they are available on our website at:

www.hickoryhillspres.org

April 5

Resurrection of the Lord

Readings: Jeremiah 31:1-16; Acts 10:34-43
John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10

April 12

2nd Sunday of Easter

Readings: Exodus 15:1-11; 1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

April 19

3rd Sunday of Easter

Readings: Isaiah 51:1-6; 1 Peter 1:17-23
Luke 24:13-35

April 26

4th Sunday of Easter

Readings: Ezekeil 34:7-15; 1 Peter 2:19-25
John 10:1-10

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

Reflecting With God

In Spirit and In Truth

April Scripture Reflections

April 5, 2026 – The Resurrection of the Lord – Easter Sunday

Jeremiah 31:1-16; Written about 600 years before the time of Jesus. This passage speaks to joy for Israel as they return to the bounty of the Lord. How might a Jewish person interpret this passage today?

Acts 10:34-43; Peter, through Luke's writing of Acts, says, God accepts people from all nations, and does not show favoritism. Is our church today accepting of others? How can we as individuals open our hearts and be more accepting of those that are different than us?

John 20:1-18 or **Matthew 28:1-10**; Early on the first Easter Morning, the risen Jesus chose to meet with Mary first, before the other disciples. Is this significant, or a matter of chance? Do you see an empty tomb or the glory of a risen savior? What impact does Jesus' resurrection have on your life? What steps can you take to gain a deeper faith and joy in the fact that Jesus has indeed risen from the dead?

April 12, 2026 - 2nd Sunday of Easter

Exodus 15:1-11 – The Song of Moses and Miriam. How do you see God? How easy is it to see God as majestic, holy and all powerful, when we live in a human world full of turmoil and conflict?

1 Peter 1:3-9 – Peter offers praise to God for a living hope. He speaks of heavenly inheritance and salvation, yet we live in a human world. Does the eternal, spiritual world of heaven seem distant to you? Do you let earthly opposition and setbacks keep you from giving thought to the joyous gifts that await in heaven?

John 20:19-31 – Jesus appears to His Disciples and Thomas. Are there times when your faith prompts you to isolate, “with doors locked for fear...?” Jesus offers His peace to the Disciples and gives them the Holy Spirit to help them. Where do you find peace in your faith in Jesus? How does the Holy Spirit help you in your daily life?

April 19, 2026 - 3rd Sunday of Easter

Isaiah 51:1-6 – Everlasting Salvation for Zion. Isaiah tells us to look to the Lord for comfort. What is one way that you look to the Lord for comfort? What can you do to offer comfort for others?

1 Peter 1:17-23 – How would you explain heavenly immortality with God, versus our mortal, earthly lives to someone new to our faith, or to a child?

Luke 24:13-35 – On the road to Emmaus. Have there been times in your life's walk when you shared that walk with strangers? How comfortable are you sharing your faith with those strangers? Have you ever had a moment where you realized that it was Jesus walking along side of you?

April 26, 2026 - 4th Sunday of Easter

Ezekiel 34:7-15 – Shepherds and Sheep. Do you picture God as a harsh and unloving judge or as a tender and loving shepherd? What steps can you take to gain a more accurate understanding of what God is like? When have you felt lost or alone? How did God help you in those times? Does your life show that God is your shepherd and rescuer? Do you live in a relationship of trust and dependence on Him?

1 Peter 2:19-25 – Submission to rulers and masters. When others hurt or insult us, how easy is it to keep from retaliating? Can you think of a time that you endured pain or hardship to do the right thing, rather than doing something that is wrong?

John 10:1-10 – The Shepherd and His Flock. What does it mean to seek our wonder in God alone? What temptations in your life do you allow to sidetrack you from seeking your joy and wonder in God? How can you begin to turn back to Christ in order to recover your wonder in Him and in the Gospel?



WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEALING...

Ally (Toni) **Benny** (Toni) **Bernie** (Barb K) **Chris** (Mel) **Danny** (Jeni V) **Everleigh** (Jeni V) **Jaden K** (Toni) **Jerry** (Toni) **Kristen** (Charlie) **Karen G** (Grace) **Jeff** (Deb H) **Marg** (Bernie) **Melissa** (Charles S) **Linda** (Wilda) **Mary Jo** (Deb H) **Melissa** (Bernie) **Mary, Robin, Nick** (Mel) **Mave** (Cheryl) **Charlotte** (Deb H) **Rich** (Rick) **Kathy M** (Deb H) **Lori** (Debbie Z) **Mike** (Deb H) **Irene** (Deb H) **Ray J** (Sandy) **Diane** (Jeni V) **Doris** (Wilda) **Janice** (Sheri S) **Patricia** (Deb H) **Jeff** (Deb H) **Kathy** (Deb H) **Sara** (Mel) **John** (Grace) **Sue** (Grace) **Laurie** (Sheri) **Dani** (Andrew) **Tommy** (Evelyn) **Sandy** (Bernie R) **Anthony** (Cindy) **Donna A** (Cindy) **Mario** (Cindy) **Colton** (Diane) **Kirsten** (Deb H) **Donna** (Katie) **Delores O** (Debbie H) **Kenneth B** (Deb H) **Frank** (Deb H) **Tina S** (Debbie Z) **Robbie** (Diane C) **Vince C** (Sandy B) **Marj N** (Charlie S) **Donna** (Ruth) **Jamie** (Mel) **Rene** [Arlene Kasper's daughter] (Jeni) **Sharon** (Jeni) **Oma Lilli A** (Kim), **Marie** (Linda) **Susan** (Linda) **Jamie N** (Tom M) **Tina F** (Dianne F) **Ada** (Susan) **Irma M** (Scott) **Cheryl** (Jeni) **Alyssa** (Kim)

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF STRENGTH...

Anne C (Deb H) **Bill** (Bernie) **Bob D** (Dave D) **Bob M** (Grace M) **Cindy** (Deb Z) **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) **Stacy** (Deb) **Jessica** (Susan) **Millie** (Toni) **Janice** (Katie) **Jacqui** (Katie) **Kathie** (Jeni V) **Ted** (Grace) **Scott** (Grace) **Gary** (Katie) **Sheri** (Barb K) **Kathy** (Jeni V) **Ruth S** (Jeni) **Bud** (Diane C) **Tony** (Deb H) **Dawn** (Jeni V) **Jane** (Jean) **Janet** (Bernie) **Yolanda** (Bernie) **Howie** (Jeni) **Joe** (Katie) **Madison** (Cindy) **George N** (Sandy B) **Dave W** (Sandy B) **DeWanna** (Jeni V) **Geraldine** (Jeni V) **Barb & husband** (Evelyn) **Ann** (Bob M) **Kathy M** (Deb H) **Kathy** (Deb)

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF COMFORT...

Family of Wanda McIlvoy, Family of Fran Lense, Mike Horvath Family (Debbie H) Family of Laura Silmon (Scott)

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED...

Dali, Alinafe, Yankho (Molly) Diana (Wilda D) Kaitlyn (Karen G) Janet (Evelyn) HHPC-Interim Pastoral Search

WE PRAY FOR THE BLESSINGS OF GOD...

Walking Club (Evelyn), James Thomas—Great Grandson (Cheryl N) Reina (Kim)



Discipleship Committee Report April, 2026

Spring began in March with Central Daylight Saving Time change. Easter is Sunday, April 5, 2026! The Discipleship Committee continues to plan and to co-work with other committees to complete church and summer activities! Here's what we have on the calendar . . .

SUNDAY SCHOOL - We meet with our youth on the first and third Sunday of each month through May 3, 2026. We will meet April 5 (Easter), April 19 and May 3, 2026. That means only three more Sunday School days until September!

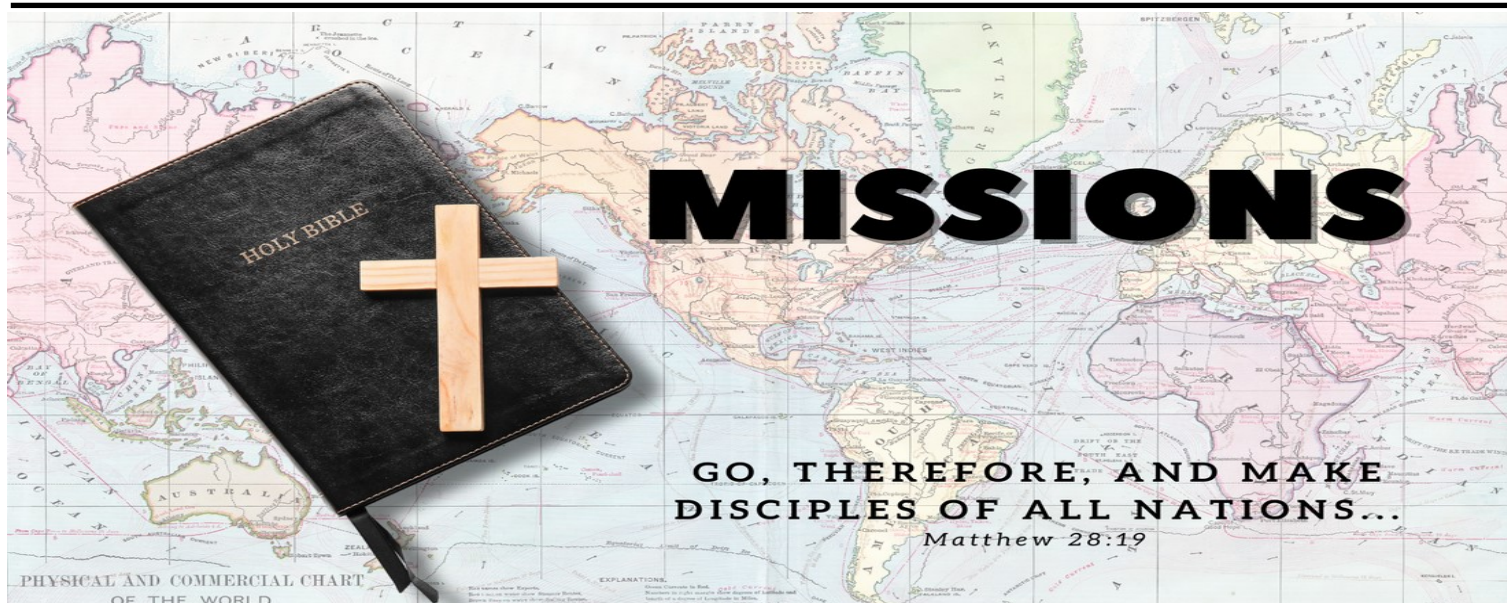
BIBLE STUDY - Bible Study continues to study Ephesians. The group meets Mondays at 1pm downstairs.

LENT - Wednesday Lent services ended on March 25, 2026. Discipleship enjoyed being a part of these services. The messages and fellowship were wonderful. The soups, salads, breads and desserts were awesome! Always fun to enjoy the 'tried and true' soups and the new ones that appear every year. Thank you to everyone who assisted with set-up, serving, cooking, clean-up and every portion of effort used to make these meals successful. See page 11 of this Newsletter for pictures.

EASTER BREAKFAST - SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2026 - Easter Breakfast is served beginning at 9am. We will feed you until 10am service begins but remind you many of our "breakfast staff" also wish to attend 10am service. Kitchen cooks are ready. The sign-up for Easter Breakfast donations has been out and complete. **THANK YOU!**

RECOGNITION SUNDAY - Sunday, May 3, 2026. We use this Sunday to **celebrate** and **thank** all who have assisted the Discipleship Committee throughout the June 2025 - May 2026 year. We also use this to recognize members of our HHPC family who have reached a milestone in their educational journey. We are aware of one. Please let a Discipleship Committee member or the church office be aware if you know of someone.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL - Monday, June 8—Thursday, June 11, 2026. 6:30pm - 8:30pm. HHPC Discipleship Committee has been working hard to solidify our 2026 VBS plans. Our theme is "ILLUMINATION STATION - Shining a light on who Jesus really is. John 8:12. Discipleship is excited to announce our progress toward making this a wonderfully memorable week. Our songs and lessons will be completed by Jeanine Knox. (Jeanine is part of our pulpit team). Her enthusiasm will be a blessing for VBS! HHPC is excited to say we also have tech assistance in place, artists willing to paint scenery and others volunteering to assist with games, crafts and food.



Mission Committee Report April, 2026

Feed My Starving Children

On March 7 and 8 several of us went to Benedictine College in Lisle for the Feed My Starving Children Feed the Need mobile pack. Because of some funding issues the goal for the pack was half of the goal in 2025. This goal was easily met with over 400,000 meals packed. The date for our next Feed My Starving Children pack is still undetermined.

Plastic Caps and Pop Tabs

We held a cap-sort-a-thon on March 1, 2026. We had the help of 10-12 people who sorted an additional 50 pounds of caps. We now have approximately 945 pounds of clean caps. Our goal is somewhere around 1200 pounds, so keep the caps coming. **Please, please make sure the caps you bring to church are clean, with no food residue on them.** If the cap has a hinge, open it up and clean around the hinge. Our next cap-sort-a-thon is scheduled for the first Sunday in June. Also, please continue to bring the pop tabs to church. We want to collect another million.

Lap Robes and Prayer Shawls

We had a request for 3 prayer shawls, white only. So far, at least 2 shawls have been delivered. Gina got hers on March 18. Not sure when the others were or will be delivered. Is there enough yarn? We want to make sure we have enough yarn to keep the knitters occupied.

One Great Hour of Sharing

Collection day for the OGHS is set for Palm Sunday, March 29. We will not object if you donate on Easter Sunday. Just mark your donation as being for the OGHS.

Feel Good Story

Somebody, not associated with the church, shared a video of herself with a great message. She had noticed our mini pantry and was driven to purchase some needed items and put them into the mini pantry. The video shows her stocking the pantry. We need more people like her!



Events at HHPC

Community



Meal

HHPC COMMUNITY MEAL

MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2026

5:30—6:30 PM

MONDAY, MAY 4,

5:30—6:30 PM

Come Join Our

BIBLE



STUDY

Join us for Bible Study
Monday's at 1:00 PM

Fellowship Hall
(Lower Level)



All Weather Indoor Walking Club

Tuesdays & Thursdays

1pm – 2pm

*Enter through the East door from the lower parking lot
and meet in the gym*

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church, 8426 W 9th Street, Hickory Hills

Up-Coming Events at HHPC

**HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
8426 W 95TH STREET
708 598 3100
<https://hickoryhillspres.org/>**

Indoor Yard Sale



SALE HOURS

THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2026
9:00 AM—7:00 PM

FRIDAY, MAY 15
9:00 AM—7:00 PM

SATURDAY, MAY 16
9:00 AM—1:00 PM

**YOU'RE
INVITED!**

**We begin accepting donations April 1.
Please call 708-598-3100
for drop off appointment or pick up.
Must be received, NO DUMPING.**

**NO Clothing, T.V.'s, Knives, Curio Cabinets,
or Mattresses, will be accepted**

SAVE THE DATE

iLLUMiNATION STATION

VBS 2026

Mon June 8 - Thurs June 11, 2026. 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Round Our Church



Lent Soup Suppers



Beginning Ash Wednesday, our church gathers together Wednesday Evenings to enjoy soup, salad, dessert and the Word of God. We eat, sing, worship and pray.

Thank you to all the wonderful chefs that provided delicious soups, salad, and dessert each week.

Thank you to Melanie and Rick for leading us in worship with prayer, the Gospel, and moving reflections.

Thank you to Greg Rolla for leading us in song and for the soothing piano music during the suppers.

Thank you to everyone who assisted with set-up, serving, cooking, clean-up and every portion of effort used to make these meals successful



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


Sunday, May 3, 2026. We use this Sunday to **celebrate** and **thank** all who have assisted the Discipleship Committee throughout the June 2025 - May 2026 year.

We also recognize members of our HHPC family who have reached a milestone in their educational journey. We are aware of one. Please let a Discipleship Committee member or the church office be aware if you know of someone.



Our Micro-pantry located outside our church is being used daily, especially at this time and with Easter just around the corner. We appreciate donations.

**Thank you, everyone,
for your generosity!**



Please use the new clerk of session email address when you need to request use of the church building, submit committee reports, or other church business. Thank you!

clerk@hickoryhillspres.org

April 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	2 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	3	4
5 9:00 AM Easter Breakfast 10:00 AM Morning Worship, Children & Youth Sunday School	 He is Risen! (Resurrection Sunday) 6 1:00 PM Bible Study 5:30 PM Community Meal OFFICE HOURS 10:00 AM—5:00 PM	7 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout	8 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	9 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	10	11
12 10:00 AM Morning Worship, Fellowship	13 1:00 PM Bible Study 7:30 PM Session	14 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout	15 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	16 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	17	18 10:00 AM Evelyn Garlic Card Making Class
19 10:00 AM Morning Worship, Children & Youth Sunday School, Fellowship 11:00 AM Mission Committee Meets.	20 1:00 PM Bible Study	21 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout	22 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	23 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	24	25
26 10:00 AM Morning Worship, 11:00 AM Meet Your Deacon Fellowship	27 1:00 PM Bible Study	28 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout	29 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	30 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga		



2026

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