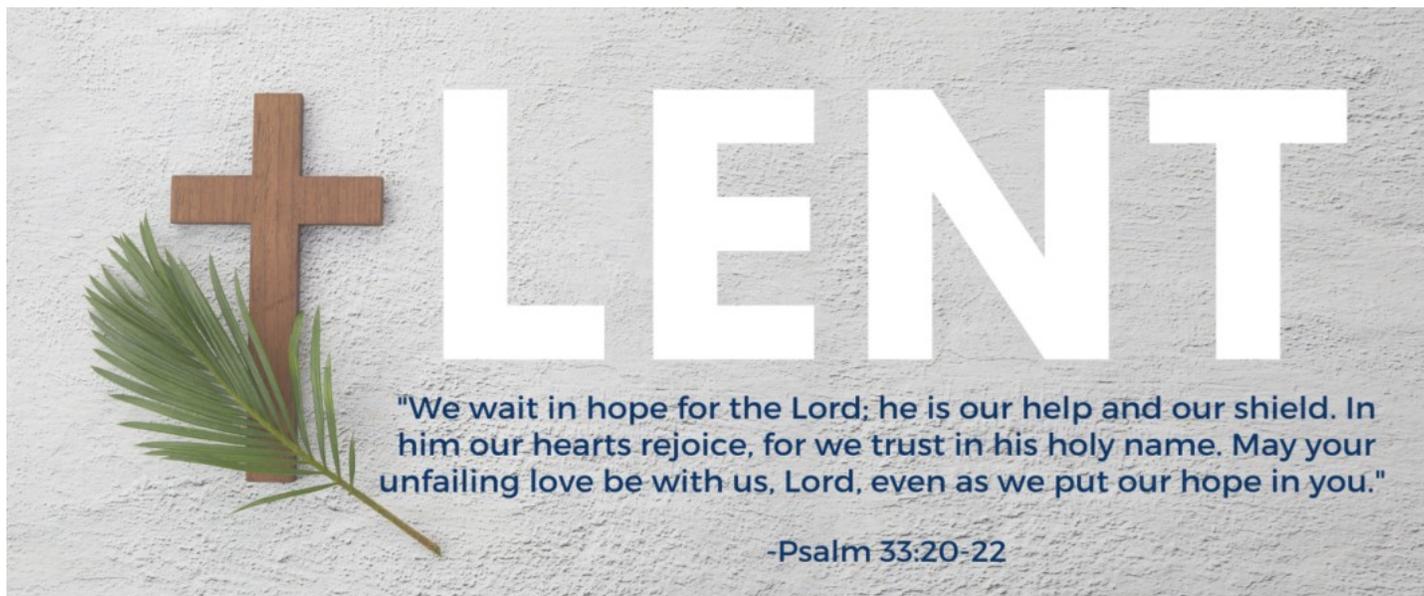


HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
**THE CONNECTING LINK**

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

**CONTACT US**

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

8426 West 95th Street  
Hickory Hills, IL 60457

Phone: 708-598-3100

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**VISIT US ONLINE**

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

Facebook: Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

**MARCH 2026**



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**Reverend Dr. Craig Howard**

## Healing

*Written by Rev. Dr. Craig Howard*

Featured in Presbytery Connect January 14, 2026



As a child, my mother told me stories about going to church with her grandmother. My great-grandmother belonged to a Pentecostal church that believed in divine healing. My mother remembered entering the sanctuary as a little girl and seeing wheelchairs and crutches lined up against the wall. People had left them behind because they no longer needed them. They had been healed.

In those stories, healing was more than recovery from illness. It was evidence of God's power made visible in the lives of the poor and faithful. Healing signaled God's nearness and activity in a believing community where doctors

were often unaffordable and medical care was denied by the color of one's skin. As I grew up with those stories, a part of me became convinced that true faith would be unmistakable and tangible. I would know God through dramatic encounters, through healing, emotion, or unmistakable signs and wonders. Salvation, in my imagination, meant God healing the soul instantly and completely, once and for all.

Over time, my understanding of healing has matured. In her book *[What It Takes to Heal](#)*, Prentis Hemphill offers a definition that resonates deeply with my Reformed faith. She describes healing not as a destination but as an orientation toward living. Healing, she writes, "is a commitment to

mending and developing emotional awareness and integrity." It is a lifelong process of reconnecting to dignity that trauma has disrupted or taken away.

That understanding raises an important question for leaders and communities of faith: What does it look like when we lead from a place of health, and what happens when we lead from unresolved pain? Leadership shaped by healing tends to reflect confidence, respect, and dignity. Leadership rooted

in unexamined trauma often reveals itself through insecurity, defensiveness, and mistrust. Most of us live somewhere between those two realities. The pressures of work, ministry, and life constantly pull us one way or the other.

Here is the grace in this reframing: healing does not demand perfection. If healing is a process, then none of us arrives fully healed, and none of us leads without wounds. Perhaps faith invites us to stop expecting wholeness from one another and instead practice patience, humility, and compassion. We lead as people still being healed, trusting that God is at work in the slow, faithful mending of our souls. And over time, by grace, that healing becomes visible, not in wheelchairs left behind, but in lives marked by dignity, courage, and love.

*Rev. Dr. Craig Howard*

Executive Presbyter





*Shown here are Scriptures to focus on for March. You can prepare for worship by reading the scriptures and reflecting on the questions on page 4 of this Newsletter.*

*Join us during Lent on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. for Soup and meditations. 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](http://www.hickoryhillspres.org)

**March 1**

2nd Sunday in Lent

**Readings:** Genesis 12:1-4; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17  
John 3:1-17 or Matt 17:1-9

**March 8**

3rd Sunday in Lent

**Readings:** Exodus 17:1-7; Romans 5:1-11  
John 4:5-42

**March 15**

4th Sunday in Lent

**Readings:** 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Ephesians 5:8:14  
John 9:1-41

**March 22**

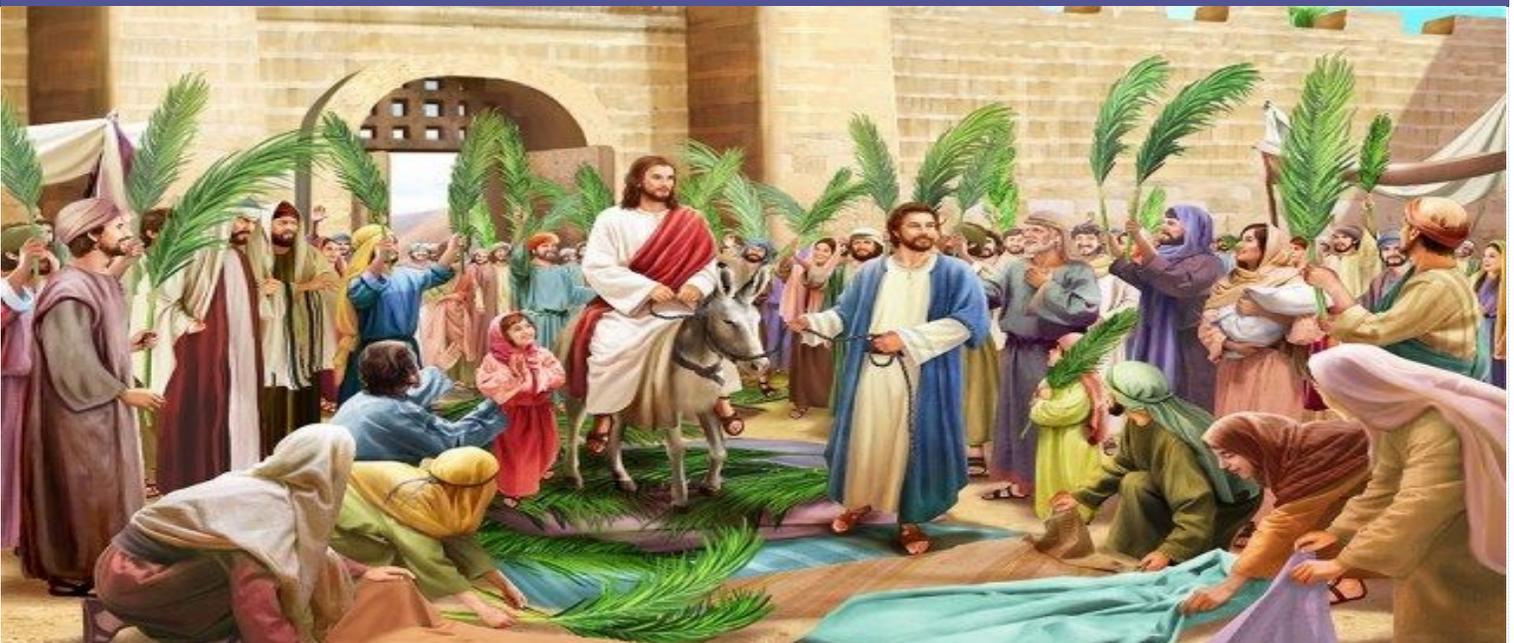
5th Sunday in Lent

**Readings:** Ezekeil 37:1-14; Romans 8:6-11  
John 11:1-45

**March 29**

Palm Sunday

**Readings:** Isaiah 50:5-9; Philippians 2:5-11  
Matt 26: 14-27 or Matthew 27:11-54



# THINK ON THESE THINGS

Philippians 4:8

## March 1, 2026 - 2nd Sunday in Lent

- **Genesis 12:1-4a - The Call of Abraham:** God calls Abraham to leave his country and family to receive blessings. How do you handle God's request to give up what you have to serve Him?
- **Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 - Abraham Justified by Faith:** Have things happened in your life when you set out on your own way instead of taking the journey God set before you?
- **John 3:1-17 Jesus Teaches Nicodemus:** How often do you try to earn the gifts given to you? Do you find it easy to accept God's grace as a gift? Is it easy to share the gift? How does your life show you were "born again"? How easy is it for you to listen to a "teacher" that speaks in parables and answers questions with questions?

## March 8, 2026 - 3rd Sunday in Lent

- **Exodus 17:1-7 - Water from the Rock:** How easy is it to "keep the faith" to trust in the Lord when we don't feel that we get what we need?
- **Romans 5:1-11 - Peace and Joy:** It can be easy to rejoice in the "hope and glory of God." How can you rejoice in your suffering? God revealed His love for us by letting His Son die for our sins. How can you reveal God's love to your neighbor?
- **John 4:5-42 - Jesus Talks with a Samaritan Woman:** Do you find it easy to interact from someone different from you, from a different background, or ethnicity? The Samaritan Woman knew the Jesus was "The One." How can you make Jesus "The One" in your life?

## March 15, 2026 - 4th Sunday in Lent

- **1 Samuel 16:1-13 - Samuel Anoints David:** Have you had a moment when sharing your beliefs, your Christianity, made you afraid? Has there been a time in your life when your choice was not the "obvious" choice to others around you? How did you stay the course and stick with the correct choice?
- **Ephesians 5:8-14 - Live as Children of the Light:** What does "Live as children of the Light" mean to you? How can you share the light of Christ with those around you?
- **John 9:1-41 - Jesus Heals A Man Born Blind & The Pharisees Investigate the Healing :** When did your eyes become open to the goodness of God? Do you know people who suffer from "Spiritual Blindness"? How can you open their eyes and be the Light of Christ in their lives?

## March 22, 2026 - 5th Sunday in Lent

- **Ezekiel 37:1-14 - The Valley of Dry Bones:** Would you describe your spiritual walk as filled with busyness and distractions or as pumping up your relationship with God? Why? Under what circumstances do you most feel as though you're living apart from God? How can you avoid those times? In what situations do you feel closest to God? What steps can you take to increase the frequency of those times?
- **Romans 8:6-11 - Life Through the Spirit:** How can you let the Spirit of Christ enter your life? What actions can you take to share that Spirit with those around you?
- **John 11:1-45 - The Death of Lazarus, Comforting The Sisters, Lazarus Raised:** When life moves according to God's timing, and not ours, what can you do to overcome your impatience with God? Do you find comfort in your faith? Can you share your faith to provide comfort to others?

## March 29, 2026 - Palm Sunday

- **Isaiah 50:5-9A - Israel's Sin and the Servant's Obedience:** Our faith should make us strong enough to stand up to our accusers and those who intend to harm us. How easy is that in real life?
- **Philippians 2:5-11 - Imitating Christ's Humility:** How can you show a servant's heart in the community around you? What action can you take that will show the face of Christ to others?
- **Matthew 26:14-27 - Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus & The Lord's Supper:** Jesus offered a prayer as he ate a meal with His friends. Do you still "say grace" and offer a prayer at your meals? What can you do in your life as a remembrance of Jesus?

# PRAYER REQUESTS

*“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing in according to his will, he heareth us.” 1 John 5:14*

## 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) **Lois** (Darlene D) **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) **Shirley** (Deb H) **Kathy M** (Deb H) **Lori** (Debbie Z) **Mike & Ann** (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) **Andrew** (Darlene D) **Sara** (Mel) **George** (Kim) **John** (Grace) **Sue** (Grace) **Laurie** (Sheri) **Dani** (Andrew) **Tricia** (Deb H) **Helen** (Deb H) **Chris** (Susan) **Tommy** (Evelyn) **Sandy** (Bernie R) **Anthony** (Cindy) **Donna A** (Cindy) **Mario** (Cindy) **Monica, Dolores** (Deb H) **Colton** (Diane) **Katie B, Kirsten** (Deb H) **Donna** (Katie) **Frannie** (Debbie Z) **Delores O** (Debbie H) **Kenneth B** (Deb H) **Frank** (Deb H) **Kristey S** (Debbie Z) **Tina S** (Debbie Z) **CJ** (Debbie Z) **Robbie** (Diane C) **Vince C** (Sandy B) **Marj N** (Charlie S) **Donna** (Ruth) **Jerry** (Debbie Z) **Jamie** (Mel) **Rene** [Arlene Kasper's daughter] (Jeni) **Sharon** (Jeni) **Oma Lilli A** (Kim), **Marie** (Linda) **Susan** (Linda) **Jamie N** (Tom M)

## 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) **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) **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) **Linda** (Deb H) **George N** (Sandy B) **Dave W** (Sandy B) **DeWanna** (Jeni V) **Geraldine** (Jeni V) **Barb & husband** (Evelyn) **Ann** (Bob M)

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

Family of Wanda McIlvoy, Family of Fran Lense, Family of Sue Steele (Debbie Z) **Mike Horvath Family** (Debbie H)

## WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED...

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

## WE PRAY FOR THE BLESSINGS OF GOD...

**Leslie N, Braiden** (Deb H) **Walking Club** (Evelyn), **James Thomas—Great Grandson** (Cheryl N)



The Discipleship Committee of Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church (HHPC) hopes you have enjoyed (and endured) the beginning of 2026. We also look forward to Spring as it welcomes March winds, April showers, May flowers, and, most importantly, Easter!

The Discipleship Committee met January 12 at 6:30pm. Discussions were held regarding Spring and Summer activities at HHPC. We met again in an abbreviated format to discuss VBS 2026.

HHPC continues to offer Sunday School to preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade on the first and third Sundays of each month. We have energetic and thoughtful youth and young adults. Their questions can stymie our teachers, which lead to everyone learning more in their journey with God. The remaining dates for Sunday School are: March 1 & 15, April 5 & 19, and May 3.

Our Bible Study meets every Monday, 1:00 p.m.. (A two-week break was taken during the holidays and one very arctic Monday in 2026.) Bible Study welcomed 2026 with a Bible Study/Potluck combination. Good Food! Good Friends! The group will soon finish Ephesians. Bible Study is open to all, please consider joining us.

Sunday, February 8 was HHPC's Souper Sunday. It was SUPER! Attendees were able to enjoy their choice of 7 soups, bread, desserts, and drinks. We, once again, thank Dan C. for sharing his cookie decorating talents! Freewill donations and soup-to-go fees have helped to keep our Micro Pantry filled during tough times. Thank you to all who donated their time and talents to the Souper Sunday endeavor. Photos can be found within this newsletter.

HHPC's Lenten Soup Suppers have begun. Although not a full responsibility of the Discipleship Committee, we do support the event by overseeing the sign-ups for soup, salad, bread, and dessert. Please join HHPC on Wednesdays through March 25 at 6:00pm; the meal nourishes the body, the Word and Worship nourishes the soul.

Easter Breakfast will be here sooner than we realize! Easter Breakfast is Sunday, April 5, starting at 9am. (We will feed you until our 10 a.m. service begins but ask you to remember many of our "staff" also wish to attend the service.) Our fabulous kitchen crew is in place and ready to cook and bake! A sign-up for Easter Breakfast food items will be available on the Narthex table. Please look at the list as a few changes have been made in our food items supply needs.

### **Future dates of interest . . .**

#### RECOGNITION SUNDAY

Sunday, May 3. Please let the church office or a member of the Discipleship Committee know if you are aware of anyone in our church family who is completing a milestone in their education.

#### VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

The Discipleship Committee is working hard to solidify plans for VBS. Our Theme is "ILLUMINATION STATION" – Shining a light on who Jesus really is. John 8:12. We are excited to begin working toward creating great lessons, games, crafts, snacks, and songs! Stay tuned for announcements from the pulpit and info in the newsletter as this event comes to fruition.





## Mission Committee Report March, 2026

We have an abundance of caps to be sorted. So on March 1, 2026 we held a cap sort-a-thon after worship. Right now we have approximately 890 pounds cleaned and sorted. We also ask that you continue to bring in the pop tabs. Lets see if we can get another million of the tabs.

Feed My Starving Children will sponsor a mobile pack on March 7 and 8 at Illinois Benedictine in Lisle. Thank you to all those that will be volunteering, all HHPC spots were filled. A video about FMSC was shown on February 22.

Again this year we will participate in the One Great Hour of Sharing. We have been more than generous in the past 2 years, and it is hoped we should be as equally generous this year. Some video clips are scheduled for March 1 during worship.

Prayer shawls are needed for Tasha and Gina. 5 skeins of the same dye lot are needed for each shawl. Skeins are to be white. There is a person already trying to obtain the necessary skeins, but if you know of a source let Kim Ambrosat know.

**The next committee meeting is scheduled for April 19, 2020, after service. Everybody is welcome to join us.**





# Events at HHPC



**COMMUNITYMEAL**

**HHPC COMMUNITY MEAL**

**MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2026**

**5:30—6:30 PM**

**MONDAY, APRIL 6**

**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 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Hickory Hills

# Join us Wednesday Evenings at 6:00 P.M., through March 25, 2026



- **Lenten Meditations**
- **Music by Greg Rolla**
- **Delicious Soup, Salad, and Dessert**

**Free will donations for HHPC's Fund for Human Need  
are welcomed and appreciated**



HHPC Annual Chili Cookoff was held on Sunday, January 25. There was an assortment of delicious chili recipes from which to pick a winner.

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A winner was announced!.....

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AND...THEN... an error was realized! Our 2026 Winner is now recognized as Dan C.

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There were several good-hearted comments between the two announced WINNERS

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A very good time was had by all competitors and attendees

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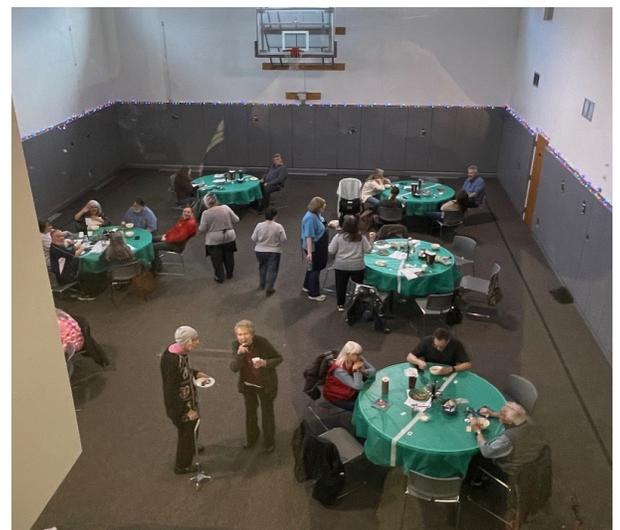
January 4, 2026 Ordination and Installation of Deacons and Elders—Debbie ordained as Deacon



January 4, - Installation of Elders Jean and Rick



Fellowship Hall - all decked out for HHPC's Annual Souper Sunday



Thank you to all who made soups and those who attended.



Hollie Fox	March 1
Cooper Huenecke	March 2
Mike Monczynski	March 2
Donna Bredlau	March 5
Michael E. Dragas	March 11
Lucy Manyenje	March 12
Kim Ambrosat	March 15
Lizbeth Ramos	March 16
Roy Hoffman	March 16
Charles Smith	March 28

## Reuben Soup

**Yield** about 6 servings

What's Reuben soup? Imagine all the flavors of a classic Reuben sandwich brought together in the form of a creamy, warm and hearty soup.

### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup sliced celery
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons water
- 3/4 cup sauerkraut, rinsed and drained
- 2 cups half-and-half cream
- 2 cups chopped cooked corned beef
- 1 cup shredded Swiss cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Rye croutons (optional)

### Directions

- 1) In a large saucepan, saute onion and celery in butter until tender. Add broth and baking soda. Combine cornstarch and water until smooth; gradually add to pan. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened.
- 2) Reduce heat. Add sauerkraut, cream and corned beef; simmer and stir for 15 minutes. Add cheese; heat until melted. Add salt and pepper. Garnish with croutons if desired.



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](mailto:clerk@hickoryhillspres.org)

# March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Morning Worship, Children & Youth Sunday School, Fellowship <b>11:30 AM</b> Cap Sorting	<b>2</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>5:30 PM</b> Community Meal	<b>3</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Indoor Walking Workout <b>7:00 PM</b> Traditional Yoga	<b>4</b> <b>11:00 AM</b> Chair Yoga <b>6:00 PM</b> Lent Soup Supper	<b>5</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Indoor Walking Workout <b>7:00 PM</b> Traditional Yoga	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Morning Worship, Fellowship	<b>9</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>7:30 PM</b> Session	<b>10</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Indoor Walking Workout <b>7:00 PM</b> Traditional Yoga	<b>11</b> <b>11:00 AM</b> Chair Yoga <b>6:00 PM</b> Lent Soup Supper	<b>12</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Indoor Walking Workout <b>7:00 PM</b> Traditional Yoga	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Morning Worship, Children & Youth Sunday School, Fellowship	<b>16</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study	<b>17</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Indoor Walking Workout <b>7:00 PM</b> Traditional Yoga	<b>18</b> <b>11:00 AM</b> Chair Yoga <b>6:00 PM</b> Lent Soup Supper	<b>19</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Indoor Walking Workout <b>7:00 PM</b> Traditional Yoga	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Evelyn Garlic Card Making Class
<b>22</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Morning Worship, Fellowship	<b>23</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study	<b>24</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Indoor Walking Workout <b>7:00 PM</b> Traditional Yoga	<b>25</b> <b>11:00 AM</b> Chair Yoga <b>6:00 PM</b> Lent Soup Supper	<b>26</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Indoor Walking Workout <b>7:00 PM</b> Traditional Yoga	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Morning Worship, Fellowship	<b>30</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study	<b>31</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Indoor Walking Workout <b>7:00 PM</b> 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 95<sup>th</sup> Street  
Hickory Hills, IL 60457