

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.

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**  
SHINING A LIGHT ON  
WHO JESUS REALLY IS  
**ILLUMINATION**™  
**STATION** JOHN 8:12  
**MONDAY JUNE 8 - THURSDAY JUNE 11, 2026, 6:30 P. M. - 8:30 P. M.**

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

**CONTACT US**

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

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**VISIT US ONLINE**

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

Facebook: Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

*Slappy*  
**Father's Day**

The righteous man walks in his integrity;  
**His children are blessed after him.**  
PROVERBS 20:7

**INSIDE...**

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**Reverend Jewel Willis Thomas**

## Listening to the Spirit

*Written by Reverend Jewel Willis Thomas*



We have just experienced, once again, Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost reminds us of the powerful workings of the Holy Spirit and the need to listen for it. One of the most important practices in the Christian life is learning to listen to the Spirit of God. We often speak about prayer as talking to God, and that is true. But prayer is also listening. It is creating space in our hearts and lives to hear how God may be guiding, correcting, comforting, or calling us.

In a world filled with noise and distractions, listening can be difficult. We are surrounded by opinions, responsibilities, schedules, news. Our phones are constantly beckoning us to engage with them. Many of us move from one task to the next without ever pausing long enough to ask, “Lord, what are You saying to me?” Yet Scripture reminds us that God is not silent. The Holy Spirit continues to lead the people of God.

In John 16:13, Jesus says, “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth.” This promise reminds us that the Spirit is not distant or inactive. The Spirit guides. The Spirit teaches. The Spirit helps us recognize the way of Christ.

Listening to the Spirit does not always mean hearing an audible voice. Often, the Spirit speaks through Scripture, prayer, worship, wise counsel, conviction, peace, and the needs of people around us. Sometimes the Spirit gives us courage to do what is right. Sometimes the Spirit gives us patience when we want to rush. Sometimes the Spirit nudges us toward forgiveness, generosity, or reconciliation.

The book of Acts gives us a powerful picture of a church learning to listen to the Spirit. The early believers did not have every detail of the future

mapped out. They faced uncertainty, opposition, and change. Yet again and again, the Spirit guided them. The Spirit sent them, corrected them, empowered them, and opened doors they never expected.

That is still true for the church today.

As individuals and as a congregation, we are called to listen carefully for the Spirit’s leading. This requires humility. We must admit that we do not always know the way forward on our own. It also requires patience. God’s timing is not always our timing. And it requires courage, because the Spirit may lead us beyond what is comfortable or familiar.

*The Spirit of God  
is still moving.  
The Spirit is still  
speaking.*

Listening to the Spirit also means paying attention to where God is already at work. Where is love growing? Where is healing needed? Where are people longing for hope? Where is God calling us to serve? The Spirit often speaks through the opportunities placed before us.

In this season, may we become a church that listens before we act, prays before we plan, and follows where God leads. May we be attentive to the quiet whispers of grace and the holy nudges that call us deeper into faithfulness.

The Spirit of God is still moving. The Spirit is still speaking. The Spirit is still strengthening the church for the journey ahead.

May our prayer be simple and sincere:

“Speak, Lord. Your servants are listening.”

In Christ’s service,

*Reverend Jewel Willis Thomas*



*Shown here are Scriptures to focus on for June. You can prepare for worship by reading the scriptures and reflecting on the questions on page 4 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](http://www.hickoryhillspres.org)

**June 7**

2nd Sunday after Pentecost

**Readings:** Hosea 5:15-6:6; Romans 4:13-25;  
Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

**June 14**

3rd Sunday after Pentecost

**Readings:** Exodus 19:2-8a; Romans 5:1-8  
Matthew 9:35-10:8

**June 21**

4th Sunday after Pentecost

**Readings:** Jeremiah 20:7-13; Romans 6:1b-11  
Matthew 10:24-39

**June 28**

5th Sunday after Pentecost

**Readings:** Jeremiah 28:5-9; Romans 6:12-23  
Matthew 10:40-42

Let Our Lives  
Become  
A Reflection  
of Your Word



# Reflect on God's Word

**June 7, 2026** - 2nd Sunday after Pentecost

**Hosea 5:15-6:6** - Israel Unrepentant

- Israel has been unfaithful to God. How can they return to Him? When you have gone astray, how did you find the path to return to God? How do you come to understand that the God who heals can be a God who punishes?

**Romans 4:13-25** - Abraham Justified by Faith

- It is by our faith, not our actions, that we are saved. In what ways does your faith change your actions in a more positive direction? How can you maintain your faith, when the world around you and the actions of others challenge it?

**Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26** - The Calling of Matthew & A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman

- Jesus says "Follow Me," and Matthew does, changing his life forever. How has your life become different as a "follower" of Jesus?
- A man, whose daughter had died, came to Jesus saying that he believed Jesus could help her with just His touch. In what ways do you show your faith in Jesus?
- A woman's faith was strong enough to know that she could be healed just by touching Jesus' cloak. We often pray for healing. How often do we expect immediate healing? How hard is it for you to maintain your faith, when healing isn't immediate, at the touch of a cloak?

**June 14** - 3rd Sunday after Pentecost

**Exodus 19:2-8a** - At Mount Sinai

- It is easy to praise the Lord after receiving a great gift. How can you continue to offer praise when the going gets tough, again? The Israelites turned to Moses as their leader. To whom do you turn to lead you through your troubles?

**Romans 5:1-8** - Peace and Joy

- How do difficult times impact your faith? Do you have a favorite Bible verse that gives you Hope? A verse that gives you Joy? A verse that gives you Peace?

**Matthew 9:35 - 10:8** - The Workers are Few & Jesus Sends out the Twelve

- How can you contribute to God's work that needs to be done?
- As a disciple of Jesus, how do you see your mission? Why would Jesus tell the Disciples to reach out within their own community, and not go to those who have not yet heard the Gospel?

**June 21** - 4th Sunday after Pentecost

**Jeremiah 20:7-13** - Jeremiah's Complaint

- Jeremiah was prophesying in the name of The Lord. He was persecuted for that. Do you feel persecuted when you speak about your faith? How do you envision The Lord standing beside you?

**Romans 6:1b-11** - Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ

- How has your baptism changed your life? What can you do, today, to show that you are "Alive in Christ" and "Dead to Sin"?

**Matthew 10:24-39** - Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

- What actions that you take show your love of God to those around you? What helps you to look to spiritual, eternal reward over earthly needs and desires?

**June 28** - 5th Sunday after Pentecost

**Jeremiah 28:5-9** - The False Prophet Hananiah

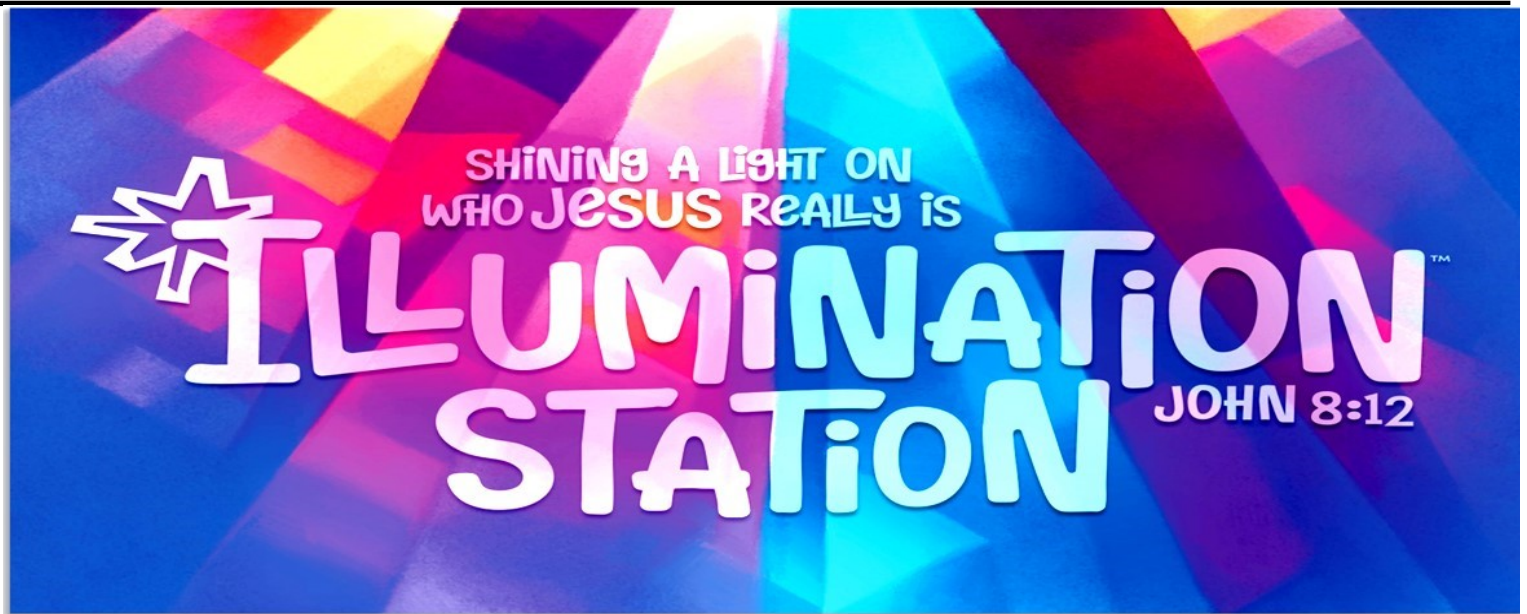
- With so many "prophets" speaking of "war, disaster, and plague," how can you focus on the message of peace? What can you do to hear the true voice of God, over the din of "False Prophets"?

**Romans 6:12-23** - Slaves to Righteousness

- Are you making progress in the fight against sin? How can you tell?
- What can you do to more completely rely on the Power of Christ as you battle against sin? What Christian friend, or resource, can you reach out to to help you in your struggle with sin?

**Matthew 10:40-42** - Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

- Do you see yourself as a "Disciple of Christ"? How do others around you see this in you?
- What is your reward for your faith and service to God?



**HICKORY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
8426 WEST 95TH STREET**

## **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

**MONDAY JUNE 8 – THURSDAY JUNE 11, 2026  
6:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.**

YOUR CHILDREN WILL: LISTEN TO BIBLE STORIES; MAKE CRAFTS; PLAY GAMES, ENJOY MUSIC, MAKE NEW FRIENDS, EAT A DELICIOUS SNACK, AND HAVE GREAT FUN!



**To Register on or before  
June 8:**

- ⇒ **Call the Church Office—**  
**708 598 3100**
- ⇒ **“Message us” online at**  
**[www.hickoryhillspres.org](http://www.hickoryhillspres.org/contact/)**  
**[g/contact/](http://www.hickoryhillspres.org/contact/)**
- ⇒ **Sign up on the day the**  
**program begins**



If you are on the list for prayer and your prayer has been answered or you would like to be removed from this list, please let us know.

hhpc@hickoryhillspres.org

## 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) 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) Alyssa (Kim) Danny Mickey (Mel) Joan P (Barb K) Declan C (Barb K) Aleta (Charles S) Barb (Melanie) Shirley J (Donna L) Stan F (Barb K)

## 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)

## WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF STRENGTH...(Cont'd)

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) Rick & 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) Danny & Marge (Melanie) Matthew Carver Fam (Barb K) Aleta's Fam (Charles S)

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

Mike Horvath Family (Debbie H) Family of Laura Silmon (Scott) Ed & Family (Mel) Dick (Darlene)

## WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED...

Diana (Wilda D) Kaitlyn (Karen G) Janet (Evelyn) Nancy S & Fam (Barb K)

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

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



## Discipleship Committee Report June 2026

June will bring the "Official" start of Summer. We have witnessed a few days of weather that tell us Mother Nature will oversee the switch to warmer days. Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church (HHPC) continues to be a busy place!

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** - Our last Sunday School for the 25-26 year was May 3, 2026. Classes will resume in September for the 26-27 year.

**BIBLE STUDY** - The Bible Study of HHPC meets on Mondays at 1pm. Everyone is invited to become a part of this group for lively discussions of God's Word.

**RECOGNITION SUNDAY** - HHPC was able to celebrate two milestones:

**Mackenzie Netter** - High School graduate of Stagg High School - Class of 2026. She has plans to attend DePaul University. CONGRATULATIONS!!!

**Rev. Jewel Willis Thomas** - Discipleship worked in tandem with Session to welcome Rev. Jewel as interim pastor to HHPC. We say WELCOME and THANK YOU!

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL** - Monday, June 8 - Thursday, June 11, 2026 - 6:30pm-8:30pm.

*"ILLUMINATION STATION" - Shining a light on who Jesus really is - John 8:12. The Discipleship committee and others are working to make this a memorable VBS. Lessons and songs, games, crafts and treats; what more can you ask for?! We welcome Jeanine Knox as our music and lesson leader. We invite everyone to join us on Thursday evening. We will share what the children have learned and enjoy a meal of fellowship!*

### LOOKING FORWARD:

Fall Welcome - September

Sunday School starts - September

Trunk or Treat - October

Christmas Tea - December 6, 2026



## Missions Committee Report June 2026

### One Great Hour of Sharing

Final results for this collection show a total of \$437.00 collected. Although this is not as much as in previous years, it still shows what a truly generous congregation we remain. Plans are to participate in the OGHS next year.

### Feed My Starving Children

Plans are made to participate in a pack at their Aurora facility on June 27. A signup sheet is available on the Narthex table

### Plastic Caps and Pop Tabs

A cap sort-a-thon is scheduled for June 7 after worship. A reminder that any cap you bring to church must be free from any contaminate. This includes food or any other material. Caps can be cleaned in a dish washer or in a washing machine. Although we no longer suggest you drink a case of beer a night, we are still collecting pop tabs. We are working on our goal of 2 million tabs collected.

### Our Micro Pantry and Elsie's Pantry

Rather than a dedicated collection for Elsie's pantry in November we are asking for a specific food every week during the month of June. What is collected will be shared between our micro pantry and Elsie's pantry.

| JUNE | FOOD ITEMS X 2 |
|------|----------------|
| 7th  | Peanut Butter  |
| 14th | Jelly          |
| 21st | Pasta          |
| 28th | Pasta Sauce    |



**VBS is being held June 8 to June 11**

See page 5 of this Newsletter for more details



# Events at HHPC



## HHPC COMMUNITY MEAL

**MONDAY, JUNE 1, 2026**  
**5:30—6:30 PM**



*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.*

**JULY - ON SABBATICAL - NO MEAL**

**MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2026**  
**5:30—6:30 PM**

**Monday's at 1:00 PM**

GROW IN FAITH  
**JOIN OUR BIBLE  
STUDY**



**Fellowship Hall**  
**(Lower Level)**



## All Weather Indoor Walking Club

**Tuesdays & Thursdays**  
**1pm – 2pm**

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church  
8426 W 95<sup>th</sup> Street, Hickory Hills

*Enter through the East door from the lower parking lot*



|                          |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Brittany Brown</i>    | <i>June 7</i>  |
| <i>Amanda Swindle</i>    | <i>June 12</i> |
| <i>Cheryl Huenecke</i>   | <i>June 14</i> |
| <i>Alvin Swearingen</i>  | <i>June 14</i> |
| <i>Albert Netter</i>     | <i>June 16</i> |
| <i>Doral Pavlicek</i>    | <i>June 19</i> |
| <i>Megan Zimmerman</i>   | <i>June 23</i> |
| <i>Linda Lavaretto</i>   | <i>June 27</i> |
| <i>Hanna Treccani</i>    | <i>June 29</i> |
| <i>Thomas M. Morrell</i> | <i>June 29</i> |

To stock HHPC's micro pantry and Elsie's pantry announcements have gone out with a request to bring in specific food items on a specific Sunday. This collection began in May and will continue throughout June. Please see table below for dates and food item.

| JUNE | FOOD ITEMS X 2 |
|------|----------------|
| 7th  | Peanut Butter  |
| 14th | Jelly          |
| 21st | Pasta          |
| 28th | Pasta Sauce    |

## Father's Day June 21, 2026

In 1908 a service to honor fathers took place in Fairmont, West Virginia, following the Monongah mining disaster. It was organized by Grace Golden Clayton, whose father was killed in the accident. She asked that a special church service be held to commemorate her father and others who had died. While some consider this to be the first Father's Day service, the event garnered little attention outside Fairmont, and it was not held the following year.

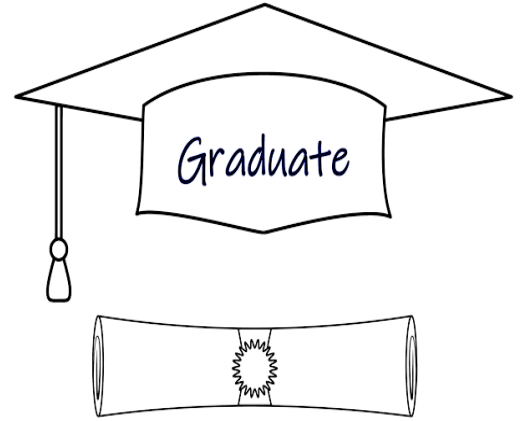
Sonora Smart Dodd in Spokane, Washington, also decided to hold a service for Father's Day. She came up with the idea in 1909 while listening to a sermon on Mother's Day. Local religious leaders supported Dodd's idea, and the first Father's Day was celebrated on June 19, 1910, the month of the birthday of Dodd's father. However, the holiday met some resistance, particularly from men who questioned the "manliness" of an event connected to Mother's Day and flowers. Others saw it as a "commercial gimmick." Nevertheless, the holiday began to spread across the country. In 1924 U.S. Pres. Calvin Coolidge gave his support to the observance, and in 1966 Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson issued a proclamation that recognized the day. It became a U.S. national holiday in 1972, when Pres. Richard Nixon signed legislation designating the third Sunday of June as Father's Day.

While many other countries also celebrate the holiday on the third Sunday of June, some mark the observance at other times of the year. Notably, a number of Catholic countries celebrate it on March 19, the feast day of St. Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus.





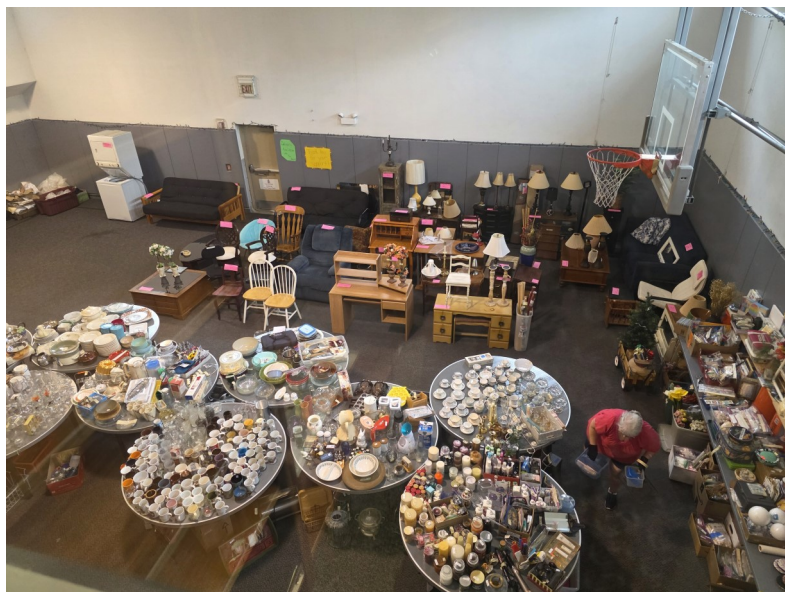
Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church welcomes their new Interim Pastor, Reverend Jewel Willis Thomas.



Congratulations Mackenzie,  
HS Class of 2026



# 'Round Our Church Indoor Yard Sale 2026



# READY!



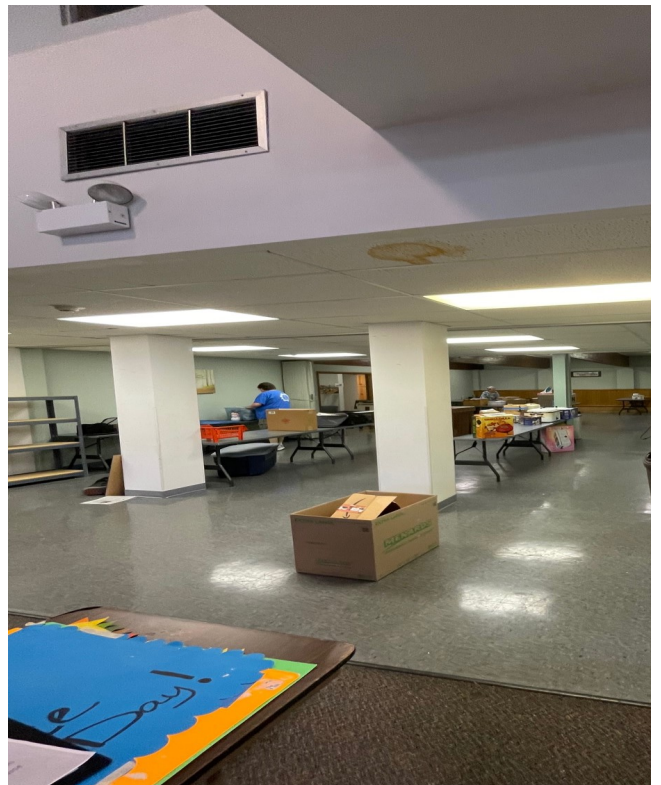
'Round Our Church  
Indoor Yard Sale 2026



SET!



**GONE!**



**'Round Our Church**



**Indoor Yard Sale 2026**

# June 2026

| Sun   | Mon   | Tue   | Wed  | Thu  | Fri       | Sat  |
|---|---|---|--|--|-----------|--|
|   | <b>1</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Bible Study<br><b>5:30 PM</b><br>Community Meal                     | <b>2</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Indoor Walking<br>Workout   | <b>3</b><br><b>11:00 AM</b><br>Chair Yoga  | <b>4</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Indoor Walking<br>Workout<br><b>7:00 PM</b><br>Traditional Yoga                    | <b>5</b>  | <b>6</b>   |
| <b>7</b><br><b>10:00 AM</b><br>Morning Worship,<br>Fellowship<br><b>11:30 AM</b><br>Cap Sorting Event<br><b>Pantry Item x 2:</b><br>Peanut Butter | <b>8</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Bible Study<br><b>6:30 PM - 8:30 PM</b><br>Vacation Bible<br>School | <b>9</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Indoor Walking<br>Workout<br><b>6:30 PM - 8:30 PM</b><br>Vacation Bible<br>School | <b>10</b><br><b>11:00 AM</b><br>Chair Yoga<br><b>6:30 PM - 8:30 PM</b><br>Vacation Bible<br>School | <b>11</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Indoor Walking<br>Workout<br><b>6:30 PM - 8:30 PM</b><br>Vacation Bible<br>School | <b>12</b> | <b>13</b>  |
| <b>14</b><br><b>10:00 AM</b><br>Morning Worship,<br>Fellowship<br><b>Pantry Item x 2:</b><br>Jelly  | <b>15</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Bible Study<br><b>7:30 PM</b><br>Session                           | <b>16</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Indoor Walking<br>Workout  | <b>17</b><br><b>11:00 AM</b><br>Chair Yoga<br><b>7:00 PM</b><br>Worship & Music Mtg                | <b>18</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Indoor Walking<br>Workout<br><b>7:00 PM</b><br>Traditional Yoga                   | <b>19</b> | <b>20</b><br><b>10:00 AM</b><br>Evelyn Garlic's Card<br>Making Class |
| <b>21</b><br><i>Happy Father's Day</i><br><b>10:00 AM</b><br>Morning Worship,<br>Fellowship<br><b>Pantry Item x 2:</b><br>Pasta                   | <b>22</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Bible Study  | <b>23</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Indoor Walking<br>Workout  | <b>24</b><br><b>11:00 AM</b><br>Chair Yoga   | <b>25</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Indoor Walking<br>Workout<br><b>7:00 PM</b><br>Traditional Yoga                   | <b>26</b> | <b>27</b><br><b>9:00 AM</b><br>FMSC Event in<br>Aurora               |
| <b>28</b><br><b>10:00 AM</b><br>Morning Worship,<br>Fellowship<br><b>11:30 AM</b><br>Deacons Meet<br><b>Pantry Item x 2:</b><br>Pasta Sauce       | <b>29</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Bible Study  | <b>30</b><br><b>1:00 PM</b><br>Indoor Walking<br>Workout  |  |  |           |  |



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