

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
Hickory Hills, IL 60457

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VISIT US ONLINE

Website: www.hickoryhillspres.org

Facebook: Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

SEPTEMBER, 2026



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Reverend Jewel Willis Thomas

TRUSTING GOD THROUGH EVERY TRANSITION

Written by Reverend Jewel Willis Thomas



“There is a season for everything, and a time for every matter under heaven.”
—Ecclesiastes 3:1

Life is filled with transitions. Some transitions are joyful: a new marriage, the birth of a child, graduation, retirement, or the beginning of a new opportunity. Other transitions arrive through loss, illness, relocation, changing relationships, or circumstances we did not choose. Even welcome changes can leave us feeling uncertain because they require us to release what is familiar and enter something new.

Churches also experience seasons of transition. Leadership changes. Ministries evolve. New people arrive, beloved members move away, and the needs of the community shift. During these seasons, we may ask: What will happen next? Will we be all right? Where is God leading us?

The story of Exodus reminds us that transition is not evidence of God’s absence. God remained with the Israelites as they moved from slavery toward freedom. God heard their cries in Egypt, called Moses from the burning bush, made a way through the sea, provided food in the wilderness, and brought water from a rock.

The journey was not easy. The Israelites often became afraid because they could not see what was ahead. They sometimes wanted to return to Egypt—not because slavery was good, but because it was familiar. The wilderness was uncertain, and uncertainty can make the past appear safer than it truly was.

We may understand that temptation. When the future is unclear, we may hold tightly to old routines simply because we know them. Yet faith calls us to remember that the God who was faithful yesterday will also be faithful tomorrow.

During transition, God often invites us to do three things.

First, we remember. We remember the ways God has guided, protected, and provided for us in the past. Our history becomes a testimony: the God who brought us this far has not abandoned us now.

Second, we listen. Transition can become holy ground when we slow down and pay attention. God may be speaking through prayer, Scripture, conversations, new leaders, emerging gifts, and the needs of our neighbors.

Third, we move forward together. The Israelites did not travel through the wilderness as isolated individuals. They journeyed as a community. In the same way, the church needs every person.

As we move through this season, let us resist the temptation to allow fear to make our decisions. Instead, let us pray faithfully, listen carefully, speak graciously, and remain open to the new things God may be doing among us.

We may not know every detail of what lies ahead, but we know who goes with us. God’s promise to Moses remains an assurance for us: “I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12).

Therefore, let us enter this season with hope. Let us honor what God has done in the past without becoming afraid of the future.

The road may change, but our God does not. The season may change, but God’s faithfulness remains. We may be in transition, but we are never alone. Together, let us trust God through every transition.

In Christ’s service,

Your Interim Pastor

Reverend Jewel Willis Thomas



Fall Welcome and Sunday School Start



**Sunday,
September 20,
10:00 AM**

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- * The 2026-2027 Sunday School year begins September 20, 2026 and continues to May 2, 2027.
- * Classes are held every first and third Sunday during the Sunday morning service at 10:00 AM.
- * Classes are available for kids/youth 3 years thru 12th grade.
- * Nursery available for kids under 3.

**Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church
8426 West 95th St, Hickory Hills
FELLOWSHIP HALL (LOWER LEVEL)**



Shown here are Scriptures to focus on for September. 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

September 6

15th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings: Ezekiel 33:7-11; Romans 13:8-14
Matthew 18:15-20

September 13

16th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings: Genesis 50:15-21; Romans 14:1-12
Matthew 18:21-35

September 20

17th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings: Johah 3:10-4:11; Phil 1:21-30
Matthew 20:1-16

September 27

18th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32; Phil 2:1-13
Matthew 21:23-32

Come, Join Us!



We meet every Sunday for Worship at 10:00 AM. Then we gather in Fellowship Hall for conversation and refreshments.

We have a Bible Study on Mondays. It's a good opportunity to learn more about God and connect with Him

We love to reach out to the community by offering a Micro Pantry for those in need of food. We have many events and all are invited.



September 6 - 15th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings:

Ezekiel 33:7-11 - Ezekiel, A Watchman

- How can you serve as a “watchman” for the community around you?
- How easy do you find it to turn away from evil and repent to the Lord?

Romans 13:8-14 - Love for the Day is Near

- How do you interpret “Love your neighbor as yourself?”
- What can you do to “Clothe yourself in with the Lord Jesus Christ?”

Matthew 18:15-20 - A Brother Who Sins Against You

- How have you handled people who have “sinned against you” in the past?
- What resources are available to you to help resolve conflicts with others?

September 13 - 16th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings:

Genesis 50:15-21 - Joseph Reassures His Brothers

- What helps you to forgive those who have done wrong to you?
- What can you do to see God’s Plan in your life?

Romans 14:1-12 - The Weak and The Strong

- In what ways do you find yourself judging “your brothers?”
- How do you feel, or respond, when someone comments on how you practice your faith?

Matthew 18:21-35 - The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

- When someone “wrongs” you, how easy is it for you to forgive them, especially when they do the same thing again?
- Do you afford those who do wrong by you, the same consideration that you expect when you are in the wrong?

September 20 - 17th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings:

Jonah 3:10-4:11 - Jonah’s Anger at the Lord’s Compassion

- How do you respond when you see someone that you feel is in the wrong gets only a slap on the wrist?
- Can you share compassion when it seems those around you just don’t seem to care?

Philippians 1:21-30 - Paul’s Chains Advance The Gospel

- Paul is in prison yet continues to share the Gospel message.
- What would help you share “The Message” with the burdens you have in your life
- What chains and burdens do you have in your life? How does The Gospel message help you?

• **Matthew 20:1-16** - The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

- How do you feel with others get the same level of reward as you when they seem to put in less time or effort?
- “So the last shall be first, and the first will be last.” Can you give up what you have worked for, and earned, to someone who didn’t work for it?

September 27 - 18th Sunday after Pentecost

Readings:

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 - The Soul Who Sins Will Die

- How can we move forward when we think about a statement like, “The soul who sins will die?”
- In what ways can we turn away from our wickedness? Who can we turn to for help?

Philippians 2:1-13 - Imitating Christ’s Humility

- I worked hard to get what I have. Why can’t I seek the attention I deserve?
- How difficult is it to have a “servant’s mind?”

Matthew 21:23-32 - The authority of Jesus Questioned & The Parable of the Two Sons

- Jesus often answers questions with parables. Sometimes he doesn’t seem to answer the question at all. How are we to learn, what are we to learn from this?
- Which is more frustrating, your child says they won’t do something but then do it, or the child who says they will do it, but don’t?
- How often do we say we will do something, and just don’t get it done?

PRAY

**In accordance with
His WORD and
His WILL** 1 John 3:22

Knowing-Jesus.com

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. hnp@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) **Irene** (Deb H) **Ray J** (Sandy) **Doris** (Wilda) **Patricia** (Deb H) **Sara** (Mel) **Tommy** (Evelyn) **Sandy** (Bernie R) **Anthony** (Cindy) **Donna A** (Cindy) **Mario** (Cindy) **Colton** (Diane) **Kirsten** (Deb H) **Donna** (Katie) **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) **Marie** (Linda) **Susan** (Linda) **Jamie N** (Tom M) **Tina F** (Dianne F) **Ada** (Susan) **Irma M** (Scott) **Danny Mickey** (Mel) **Declan C** (Barb K) **Aleta** (Charles S) **Barb** (Melanie) **Shirley J** (Donna L) **Stan F** (Barb K) **Jerry K** (Toni) **Katie B** (Evelyn) **Gordon** (Susan) **Trudy** (Kim) **Alana** (Melanie) **Elizabeth L** (Rev Jewel) **Mia** (Jeni V) **Sally E** (Charlie S)

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** (Sandy B) **Natalie** (Bernie) **Patti & Randy** (Jeni V) **Stacy** (Deb) **Jessica** (Susan)

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

Millie (Toni) **Janice** (Katie) **Jacqui** (Katie) **Kathie** (Jeni V) **Ted** (Grace) **Scott** (Grace) **Gary** (Katie) **Kathy** (Jeni V) **Rick 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) **Matthew Carver Fam** (Barb K) **Aleta's Fam** (Charles S) **Rayna** (Jewel B) **Zilly's Fam** (Deb Z) **John S** (Debbie H) **Byron & Debbie** (Debbie H)

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF COMFORT...

Mike Horvath Family (Debbie H) **Family of Laura Silmon** (Scott) **Dick** (Darlene) **Darlene** (Evelyn) **Lenahan Family** (Sandy B) **Ratliff Family** (Sandy B) **Lars Family** (Jeni V) **Steele Family** (Jeni V) **Oma Lilli A** (Kim)

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED...

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

WE PRAY FOR THE BLESSINGS OF GOD...

James Thomas—Great Grandson (Cheryl N) **Reina** (Kim) **Matt & Rachel** (Andrew)

Discipleship

The path to knowing and following Jesus

Discipleship Committee Report September 2026

The Discipleship Committee at Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church (HHPC) hopes you have had an enjoyable and relaxing Summer (Except for the extreme heat, storms, electrical outages and etc.) We welcome you back to a new school year and church year! We hope you will be able to join us as we work to celebrate old friends and welcome new friends to our HHPC family. Here's what is happening:

SEPTEMBER 20, 2026 - A busy and fun day, see page 3 in this newsletter for flyer

- * **The 2026-2027 SUNDAY SCHOOL year will begin!** HHPC has Sunday School on the **FIRST** and **THIRD** Sunday of each month September 20, 2026 thru May 2, 2027. Our Sunday School will be during our 10am service. Sunday School is available for kids/youth 3 years thru 12th grade. **A nursery is available for those under 3 years of age.**
- * HHPC will celebrate our **Fall Welcome following the 10am service** by challenging HHPC family to bring a friend to church. This challenge results in the **Fall Welcome** evolving into **Friends and Family Sunday!** Fun for all ages! There will be Games! There will be food! There will be Family! There will be Friends!
- * Watch for a Sign-up to let us know how you can assist with this event. We will provide the main course, but will be on the lookout for side dishes.

BIBLE STUDY

- * Bible Study continues to meet on Monday afternoons at 1pm. This is a mighty group who read and discuss what the Bible says. The group ranges in attendance with 8-10 becoming the norm. We would certainly enjoy having more.

PULL TAB COLLECTION

- * HHPC has been working toward donating 1,000,000 pull tabs to the Ronald McDonald House in Oak Lawn for several years! Please see **page 8** in this newsletter for an official notice of our progress.

TRUNK or TREAT - See page 12 in this newsletter for the flyer

- * Saturday, October 24, 2026 @ 2p.m.-4p.m.
- * New day of the week.
- * New time.
- * Watch for our Sign-up. We must have 8 participants signed up by Sunday, October 11, 2026! If not, HHPC will not be able to host this creative and fun event.
- * There will be prizes for Best Entry and Best Costume.

CHRISTMAS TEA

- * Sunday, December 6, 2026 @ 1pm
- * Our entertainment will be "The Arlingtones". (Sound familiar? This is the same group who helped us have a successful 2025 Christmas Tea. This is the first time a group stated they had so much fun they wanted to return. "The Arlingtones" asked if they could be a part of our 2026 Christmas Tea!!)
- * Plans are well underway for this beautiful tradition.



**Ronald
McDonald
House®**
Chicagoland &
Northwest Indiana

posthumously recognizes

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

as a



" Thanks a Million Club"
One Million Tab Member

at our Ronald McDonald House: Advocate Children's Hospital

HHPC POP TAB HISTORY - DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church (HHPC) has been collecting pop tabs for many years. Where have these tabs gone? They have been donated to The Ronald McDonald Houses at Loyola Medical Center and Advocate Children's Hospital Oak Lawn Campus.

HHPC reached the goal of donating 1,000,000 tabs to Loyola several years ago. Our accomplishment is documented within the Ronald McDonald House at Loyola.

Our HHPC family has continued to give to the Ronald McDonald House at Advocate. This is our progress:

2009 - Our first donation to the Ronald McDonald House Oak Lawn was sizable. The tabs were used to raise funds to assist the Ronald McDonald House Charities. Unfortunately, the Oak Lawn House was new and not yet documenting amounts donated by specific groups. Because of this, our 2009 donation is not included in HHPC's total toward 1,000,000 tabs.

2011	223 pounds donated
2014	166 pounds donated
2018	139 pounds donated
2020	138 pounds donated
2022	-35 pounds donated
2025	-95 pounds donated

In May of 2026 HHPC received official documentation stating, **WE HAVE MADE OUR GOAL OF COLLECTING AND DONATING 1,000,000 PULL TABS TO THE RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE - OAK LAWN!**

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE who has helped to meet this goal! We also ask you to continue to collect!

1 pound	= 1267 pull tabs
1 cup	= 196 pull tabs
1 mile	= 63,360 pull tabs laid end to end
789.27 pounds	= 1,000,000 pull tabs

"The generous will
themselves be blessed, for
they share their food with
the poor."

Proverbs 22:9

THANK YOU



Each Sunday through September and October, we will be collecting specific items to support our church's Micro Pantry. Each week will focus on a different item. Your faithful generosity helps us keep our Micro Pantry stocked and ready to serve our community. Please place the items in the box in the narthex. Thank you for giving so generously.

August/ Sept.	Food Item	Sept/ October	Food Item
9/06	Pasta Sauce	10/04	Cake/Muffin Mix
9/13	Peanut Butter and/or Jelly	10/11	Peanut Butter and/or Jelly
9/20	Canned Veggies or Fruit	10/18	Canned Veggies or Fruit
9/27	Canned Meat	10/25	Canned Meat
* Other items: Box of Jello or Pudding, Box of Granola Bars or Fruit Snacks, Cereal			

Recurring Events at HHPC



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.

HHPC COMMUNITY MEAL

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2026,

MONDAY OCTOBER 5

5:30—6:30 PM

Bible Study

**Join
Us**

Monday's at 1:00 PM - Fellowship Hall



All Weather Indoor Walking Club

Tuesdays & Thursdays

1pm – 2pm

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church
8426 W 95th Street, Hickory Hills

Enter through the East door from the lower parking lot



K Zimmerman	September 13
Cheryl Nirtaut	September 15
Dawn Rellinger	September 18
Charles Huenecke	September 19
Dave Delaney	September 20
Debbie Zimmerman	September 22
Ryan Brenz	September 23
Greg Rolla	September 27
Debbie Hejna	September 30

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ORLAND PARK

Spaghetti Dinner

FUNDRAISER

Join us for a delicious evening of food, fun, and community spirit. We will have Marko the Magician and Raffle Baskets

**SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 26**
SEATINGS AT 5PM, 6PM, 7PM

All proceeds support the local outreach and the path ways program at The Center

MENU:
SALAD BAR, SPAGHETTI AND SAUCE, MEATBALLS, SAUSAGE, GARLIC BREAD, GLUTEN FREE MEATBALLS AND PASTA, SPUMONI OR ITALIAN ICE AND COOKIES

TICKETS
ADULTS \$20
SENIORS \$15
12 & UNDER \$10

To purchase tickets, please contact us at:
708-448-8142
www.pcorlandpark.org
13401 Wolf Rd., Orland Park, IL

Schedule Your Stroke & Cardiovascular Disease Risk Screening

Over 11 million people screened since 1993

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

**Tuesday,
September 8, 2026
In the Gym**

Who should attend:
Anyone age 40+

Special Pricing for \$129

- ♥ Carotid Artery Disease Screening
- ♥ Atrial Fibrillation Screening
- ♥ Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
- ♥ Peripheral Artery Disease Screening

4 ways to book your appointment...

Call 800-324-9458 and use
promo code HABC001

Visit [LLSA.SOCIAL/HABC](https://llsa.social/habc)



Text the word "circle"
to 216-279-1607

These tests cannot detect all risk factors for all conditions, such as and including the presence of coronary artery disease. Those with abnormal results should discuss possible next steps with their family healthcare provider and ensure they understand the risk and benefits of any additional testing or procedures.

Cap Sorting Event

Sunday, September 13

Following the Church Service

Join Us for Trunk or Treat 2026!

Saturday, October 24

2:00 PM - 4:00 PM



Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church

8426 W 95th St

- * Decorate your car with a creative theme or just come and have fun.
- * Prizes will be awarded for Best Decorated Car & Best Costume.
- * We must have 8 participants signed up by Sunday, October 11. If not, HHPC will not be able to host this fun event.
- * A sign up sheet will be available in the Narthex.

(Lower Parking Lot)

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout	2 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	3 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	4	5
6 10:00 AM Morning Worship, Fellowship	7 No Bible Study No Community Meal 	8 9:00 AM Life Line Screening 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout	9 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	10 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	11 	12 9:00 AM FMSC Packing Event 10:00 AM Card Making Class
13 10:00 AM Morning Worship, Fellowship 11:30 AM Cap Sorting Event	14 1:00 PM Bible Study 5:30 PM Community Meal 6:30 PM Discipleship Committee Meeting 7:30 PM Session	15 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout	16 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	17 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	18	19
20 10:00 AM Morning Worship, Sunday School Begins 11:30 AM Friends and Family Fall Welcome	21 1:00 PM Bible Study	22 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout	23 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	24 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout 7:00 PM Traditional Yoga	25	26 9:30 AM HHPC Hosts Presbytery Records Review
27 10:00 AM Morning Worship, Fellowship	28 1:00 PM Bible Study	29 1:00 PM Indoor Walking Workout	30 11:00 AM Chair Yoga	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