

THE HICKORY MESSENGER

HICKORY UNITED EPC | JANUARY 2023



The Vision

Leading one another into growing relationships with Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit all for the glory of God.

The Mission

*Reaching upward to God,
Growing inward with God,
Serving outward for God.*

Pastor's Pen

BY PASTOR DAN CLARK

2022 will soon be history. With that in mind, I present to you a few highlights and lowlights from this past year that you may wish to remember or forget.

Will you remember or forget the champion Georgia Bulldogs, L.A. Rams, Colorado Avalanche, Golden State Warriors, Houston Astros? Will you remember or forget the supply chain disruptions, economic uncertainty, IT company layoffs and the move to hybrid work and work-from home models? Will you will remember or forget how world-wide inflation forced families to choose between eating or heating this winter? Will you remember or forget the U.S. Supreme Court overturning abortion rights, the FBI searching Mar-a-Lago, or the crisis at the southern border? Will you remember or forget the record-breaking

heatwaves that killed 53,000 in Europe, the devastating world-wide wildfires, droughts, and flooding? Will you remember or forget that Russia invaded Ukraine which led to global crises for both food and energy, as well as displacing millions of people? Will you remember or forget that the world's population reached eight billion people? Will you remember or forget the moment Will Smith slapped Chris Rock, the live-streamed trial of Johnny Depp vs. Amber Heard, the divorce of Tom Brady and Gisele Bundchen, Taylor Swift's Ticketmaster fiasco, Bennifer 2.0, Elon Musk's \$44 billion purchase of Twitter, or Ye's fall from grace? Will you remember or forget monkeypox, the global death toll from COVID-19 surpassing 6 million, the deaths of Sidney Poitier, Meat Loaf, William Hurt, Madeleine Albright, Ray Liotta, James Caan, Mikhail Gorbachev, Queen Elizabeth II, Loretta Lynn, Jerry Lee Lewis, or Shinzo Abe?

(CONTINUED ON PG. 4)

Sunday Worship Services:

8:30 am Contemporary

11:00 am Traditional

Inside This Issue

Pastor's Pen / cover

Deacon's Corner / p.2

Stewardship / p.3

Misc. News / p.4

Haiti Update / p.5

Nativity Recap / p.6

Calendar / p. 7

Connect / p. 8

Deacon's Corner

PAGE 2



Thank you

for your donations for this year's Angel Tree, Holiday food drive, and to everyone who helped and made food/desserts for the bereavement lunches this past year. We are grateful and blessed!



Happy New Year!

UNIFIED SERVICE DATES

NEW YEARS DAY
1.1.23 | 9:00 AM

CALLED
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING AFTER SERVICE
1.29.23 | 9:00 AM

UPCOMING
COMMUNION
REMINDER:
January 1
9:00 AM

2022-2023 Deacons

Lisa Alexander

Kenneth Alrutz

Tracey Fasnacht

Jackie Fawley

Janet Greene

Patti Jacobs (Moderator)

Mary Jordan (Vice Moderator)

Sharon Mechtel

Barb Rea (Secretary)

Deb Rea (Treasurer)

Denise Rollinitis

A Deacon's Role in the EPC:

According to Scripture, those who bear the office of Deacon should especially exhibit the spiritual qualities of the Christian and should be steady and reliable. The first duty of the Deacon is sympathy and service, and together the Board of Deacons carries out the ministry of compassion. As the law of love places certain duties upon each Christian, the Deacon is especially bound to fulfill those duties and to be an example to all.

Ref: The Ordination and Installation of Deacons Book of Government 14-1E.



STEWARDSHIP

and Mission Ministry Team *Managing God's Gifts To Us*

January 1 - First Sunday after Christmas

"Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters." Hebrews 2:11

The birth of Jesus proclaims that despite all the challenges and disappointments of it, we are truly brothers and sisters of Jesus, and of one another. How is that for a Christmas gift? And how in the world Can we live up to it?

January 8 - Second Sunday after Christmas

Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt. Matthew 2:14

Joseph's consistent care for Jesus has won him the title of 'patron saint' of stewardship. Joseph remains a role model for all stewards. What can we do to further the presence of Jesus in today's world? How can we advance his mission? How can we care for people like Jesus did?

January 14 - Baptism of the Lord

And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." Matthew 3:17

Jesus' baptism inaugurated his mission. We too have been baptized into the mission and ministry of Jesus and we are invited to share his compassion and care with the people of our time.

January 22 - Second Sunday after Epiphany

When Jesus turned and saw the two disciples following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" John 1:38

What a question! Yes, what are we looking for? Hopefully one thing we're always looking for is the opportunity to be of service to our families, friends and larger community.

January 29 - Third Sunday after Epiphany

And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. Matthew 4:19-20

Part of being a steward is leaving something behind. Maybe that 'something' is time, or money, or convenience, or maybe it's prejudice or a sense of entitlement. We can't expect to grow as stewards without leaving something behind.

***Our Culture of
Thankfulness
& Generosity***

Notes of THANKS

Dear Church Family,

I want to thank you all for your prayers, cards, delivering food after my surgery. It all means so much to me. The welcome at the Living Nativity and Church meant so very much to me. Thank you all so very much.

LOVE IN CHRIST,
LYNN ARBUCKLE

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

PAGE 4



FULL SEASON SCHEDULE AVAILABLE AT:

<https://www.hickorychurch.com/upward-basketball>

**GAMES
BEGIN
JAN. 7!**

(CONTINUED FROM COVER)

Will you remember or forget the Robb Elementary School shooting, the Buffalo, New York supermarket shooting, or the mass shooting in South Carolina mall on Easter weekend?

With an eye on the past, we must also be looking forward to the future. The Psalmist does exactly this in the final two verses of Psalm 73. He writes, "Look! Those who left you are falling apart! Deserters, they'll never be heard from again. But I'm in the very presence of God. Oh, how refreshing it is! Those who are far from you (God) will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds." (Psalm 73:27-28 from The Message) Upon finishing his review of the past, the psalmist hammers out a philosophy with which to face the future. No matter what anyone else may do, the Psalmist is resolved to live in close companionship and draw closer to God. He helps us to see the importance of this New Year's resolution by putting it in the form of a contrast:

COMING JANUARY 2023!

- Learn to knit with Prayer Shawl Ministry
- Craft an item to donate to the community
- Free & open to the public

**Saturdays 1-2 PM | Parlor
(4 week session)**

**Contact Mary Jordan
412-760-5825**

**"Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!"
~ PSALM 90:17**

"Those far from You will certainly perish ... but as for me, God's presence is my good." When it comes down to it, there are only two positions in life: close to God or far away from Him. I wonder, as the psalmist penned these words, was something like this going through his mind: "What has caused me so much trouble in in the past and accounted for all my difficulties, was the fact that I did not keep close to God. I erroneously believed that the cause of my problems was the prosperity of the ungodly. But having entered into the sanctuary of God, I see that this was not the cause of

my problems at all. My problems came because I had chosen not to remain close to Him." For me, there is now only one thing that matters: staying close to God.

As you enter into 2023, I ask you, just as I have asked myself, how close are you to God? If you feel that God is far away, guess who moved?! Let us do more than read the words found in James 4:8: "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you." Let us believe, respond, and allow the Words of God to be our first and foremost New Year's resolution for 2023.

HAVE A **HEART** FOR HAITI:

LACROIX NEW TESTAMENT MISSION

UPDATE WEEK OF 12.7.22



"He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward him for what he has done"

(Proverbs 19:17)

DEAR PASTOR DAN AND CHURCH:

Greetings in the matchless name of Jesus our Lord. Thank you very much for your ongoing prayers along with your financial aid. Remember prayers go farther than money. If it was not for prayer our ministry would not survive these hardships. Thank you. Thanks for the check in the amount of \$5,700.00 issued on 11/25/2022.

We are very thankful and grateful to God and to you. Thank you for paying for our children to go to school. They would not go to school if it was not for your support. On top of that, they get one hot meal five days a week. Thank you.

May God bless you!

-Vaugelas Pierre

**To see how you can get involved with this Mission, visit
www.hickorychurch.com/have-a-heart-for-haiti or contact
Gretta MacIntyre at geese@hky.com**

LIVING NATIVITY 2022

PAGE 6

Living Nativity Reflections

BY ELLEN WARREN

What started as a childhood memory became an idea that then took life in the eager and excited hands of this church family. 2022 marked the sixth performance year for Hickory United Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

For a 90 minute performance on only one night, nearly 300 people were in attendance. Many hands helped to make it a fun, deeply moving and love-filled evening. We are grateful to all our volunteers that managed the parking lot; fixed, fitted, and carefully packed away costumes; made dozens of homemade cookies; patient, yet enthusiastic cast members; animal handlers and transporters; prepared dinner for the cast; helped to get the word out; built, moved and painted the stages; and many more un-thanked supporters.

We were also visited by Katherine Mansfield from the Observer-Reporter. What an exciting night. Thank you all for being part of our event.



(Above) Shepherds take a break to pose. Pictured L to R, top row: Dan Steele, Jackie Fawley, Matt Errett, SalleeJane Little, Tommy Throckmorton, Greg Melone, Seth Fawley. Bottom Row: Mason Steele, Joan Shields, Elsie Strnisa



(Above) Edna Krakosh as the Angel Gabriel, welcoming visitors to the Living Nativity and is the first narrator of the journey.

(Above Center) Centurion Guards played by J.D Little and Brian Shields review the "census" results. (Above) Slade Waller (Joseph), Michele Waller (Mary) and Arya Waller as infant Jesus share a serene moment.

JANUARY CALENDAR

ALL EVENTS, DATES & TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

SPECIAL DATES THIS MONTH

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1/1 New Years Day Unified Worship & Communion 9:00 am (S) No Sunday School | 1/7 Upward Basketball Games Begin 8:00 am (CC) Removal of the Greens 9:00 am (S) |
| 1/2 No Preschool | 1/8 Covenant Center Reserved - Afternoon |
| 1/3 No Preschool | 1/16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day |
| 1/4 Preschool Resumes | 1/29 Unified Worship 9:00 am (S) Called Congregational Meeting 10:00 am (S) No Sunday School |
| | 2/1 First Day of Black History Month |

RECURRING WEEKLY MEETINGS/CLASSES/GATHERINGS

SUNDAYS

- Worship Service | 8:30 am Contemporary & 11:00 am Traditional (S)
- Sunday School - Adults | 9:45 - 10:45 am (Various Locations)
- Hickory Kids (Pre-K - 5th grade) | 9:45 - 10:45 am (Various Locations)
- IGNITE (6th-12th grade) | 9:45 am (L)

MONDAYS

- Fit Club | 8:00 am (CC)
- Volleyball | 7:00 pm (CC)

TUESDAYS

- Staff Meeting (Every Other Week) | 10:00 am (Parlor)
- *KidVenture will not be meeting in January, stay tuned for February!*
- Boy Scout Meeting | 7:00 pm (CC)
- Dartball League | 7:00 pm (CC for Home Games)

WEDNESDAYS

- Fit Club | 8:00 am (CC)
- Praise Band Practice | 7:00 pm (S)
- Cub Scouts | 7:00 pm | (CC)

THURSDAY

- Handbells | 6:30 PM (CR)
- Choir | 7:30 pm (CR)

FRIDAYS

- Fit Club | 8:00 am (CC)

SATURDAYS

- *Yoga will not be meeting in January, stay tuned for February!*
- Upward Basketball Games | 8:00 am - 1:00 pm (CC)

RECURRING MONTHLY MEETINGS/GATHERINGS

- Building & Property Meeting | 7:00 pm (P) | Every 2nd Wednesday
- Discipleship Meeting | 6:30 pm (LB) - *Monthly meetings are fluid, please check the online church calendar*
- Deacons Meeting | 7:00 pm (LB) | Every 4th Monday
- Outreach Committee Meeting | 6:30 pm (P) | Every 2nd Tuesday
- Prayer Shawl Ministry | 12:00 pm (CC) | Every 2nd Wednesday
- Preschool Team Meeting | 12:30 pm (FH) | Every 1st Tuesday
- Security Team Meeting | (P) Every 1st Tuesday
- Session Meeting | 6:30 pm (P) | Every 3rd Wednesday
- Stewardship Meeting | 6:30 pm (P) | Every 1st Monday **after** 1st Wednesday
- Women's Cancer Survivors Group | 12:00 pm (CC) | Every 4th Wednesday - *Currently not meeting*
- Women's Ministry Meeting | (P) - *Monthly meeting days and times are fluid, please check the online church calendar*

(CC) Covenant Center (CR) Choir Room (FH) Fellowship Hall (L) Loft (LB) Library (P) Parlor (S) Sanctuary

LET'S



HICKORY UNITED EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Pastoral & Ministry

Pastor Dan Clark | dan.clark@hickoryunitedepc.org

Lay Pastor, Lou Templeton | (724) 356-7835

Director of Music Ministry, Tim VanNasdale | tim.vannasdale@hickoryunitedepc.org

Kids & Youth Coordinator, Dan Bender | dan.bender@hickoryunitedepc.org

Administrative / Support

Office Manager, Paula Steele | paula.steele@hickoryunitedepc.org

Communication Coordinator, Lynn VanNasdale | communications@hickoryunitedepc.org

Financial Director, Linda Carter | linda.carter@hickoryunitedepc.org

Assistant Treasurer, Melissa Fluharty | melissa.fluharty@hickoryunitedepc.org

Audio Visual Technician, David Sykut | david.sykut@hickoryunitedepc.org

Hickory Christian Preschool

School Director, Maria Moore | (724) 356-7337 | hickorypreschool@hickoryunitedepc.org

Facilities

Sexton, Eugene Short | (724) 356-4424 | eugene.short@hickoryunitedepc.org

Facilities Assistant Housekeeper, Will Smith | (724) 356-4424

Prayer Tree

Phone Requests: Sharon Mechtel | (412) 496-9147

Email Requests: Sharon Merckle | sharon.merckle@yahoo.com

LET'S GET LINKED!



scan



GET THE
APP!



SHARE
SOCIAL!

text

HICKORYUNITED
TO 84576



follow



@hickorychurch
hickorychurch.com



724-356-4424
210 Main St., Hickory, PA.
15340

contact