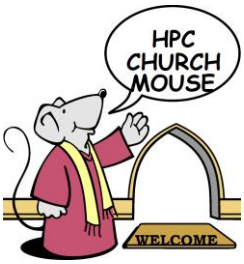
HILLSBOROUGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

102 West Tryon Street
Post Office Box 717
Hillsborough, NC 27278
(919) 732-3131 (Office)

The Church Mouse
December, 2026



Reverend William Hawkins, Temporary Pastor
hillsboroughpresrev@gmail.com
Website: www.hillsboroughpres.org

A Hallelujah from Head to Toe

The story is told about Charles Dickens attending a meeting of clergy so interminably dull and lifeless, that out of frustration with the proceedings the great novelist proposed a suggestion to these dour ministers of the Gospel. He suggested that they all gather around a table, join hands, and *attempt to communicate with the living*. Though I have no idea if this Dickens tale is apocryphal or true, I have no trouble imagining such a meeting. I have attended more than a few – and so have many of you!

At the core of our faith are the twin affirmations made by two of the three greatest days in the Church Year - Christmas and Easter (the third is Pentecost). Each day is kept in to remember, teach, and enjoy the central truths of our faith. The news of Christmas is that God is not "out there," "up there," or "back then," but that God is here, with us, "Immanuel," incarnate in the nitty-gritty of our earthly existence. This is the good news, the "tidings of great joy," the angels sang while the shepherds listened in.

The great fourth century theologian Augustine once said that "a Christian should be an alleluia from head to toe." Such an alleluia demeanor is no pretense, no manufactured good attitude. It rises from reality, the deepest and highest truths about how things really are, namely that God is with us and that life is stronger than death.

Grace & peace,
Bill



CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY WORSHIP

As we enter the season of Advent, it is time to organize and plan for our Christmas Eve family worship service. We need volunteers to read parts of the service. The readings are short and easy to read. We would love to have volunteers of all ages… adults, children who can read, youth. The service will be at 5 o'clock on Christmas Eve.

HANGING OF THE GREENS

Hanging of the Greens' will be on Saturday, December 5, beginning at 9:30 AM with Breakfast hosted by the Congregational Care Committee. The Worship Committee will be leading the decorating activities for adults and children. There will be a tree in Strudwick and in the Sanctuary. This has always been a fun fellowship time. Kids are welcome!

CALLING ALL COOKS AND BAKERS!

Our choir is preparing a Christmas Concert for us and the community on December 13th at 6 PM. The Worship Committee is requesting church members and friends of HPC to please show your appreciation of our wonderful choir by bringing an appetizer (finger food) either savory or sweet to share at the reception. The reception will follow the beautiful gift of Christmas music.

You may bring your dish when you come and leave it in Strudwick Hall or the kitchen. If you need to bring it early, you may leave it in the kitchen.

Thank you for sharing the joy of the Christmas Season. Questions? See Alicia Gonzalez, Stephanie Morgan, or Carol Childers.

-- The Worship Committee

CIRCLE #1 INVITES ALL WOMEN

The ladies of Circle #1 (ladies bible study group) would like to invite all the ladies of the church to a luncheon on Monday, December 14, at 11:30. We will meet at Ann Sebesan's house. Please see Ann Sebesan or Karoline Mathewson for further information.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we lift up past, present, and future leaders of the church. God has blessed the church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well. This Offering provides support for at-risk children, youth and young adults, leadership development for people of color, Presbyterian church workers and their families in their time of need and leadership development and education for communities of color at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

Think back on those people in your life who have truly developed your faith. It may be a pastor or Christian educator, a youth minister or Sunday school teacher. Devoted and caring leaders have led many of us in the way of Christ. Church workers have shaped our faith, and they have been God's gifts among us. As we celebrate Christ's coming and think of the profound impact these individuals have had on us, the Christmas Joy Offering provides a way for us to offer a gift in response. Our gifts through the Christmas Joy Offering support these people who give so much of themselves to Christ's church.

Community Outreach has chosen to collect for this special offering on December 6th, 13th and 20th. You can give your offering with cash (using an envelope stating it is for the Joy Gift offering), by check and putting Joy Gift in the memo line, or you can use the online link from our website. The dropdown list includes the Joy Gift Offering. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years, so please give generously.



FELLOWSHIP / COMMITTEE NEWS

FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

The Christian Education Committee will host **Fellowship Breakfasts** on Sundays, November 29 and Sunday, December 27 (in lieu of Sunday School) at 9:45 a.m. in Strudwick Hall. Coffee and juice and an assortment of breads and fruit will be provided. If you have a favorite breakfast dish that you would like to share, please bring it with you, or just come and enjoy a light breakfast and fellowship with your church family.

HPC BOOK CLUB

Book Club will be meeting after Worship on December 6 to discuss "The Rosie Project," by Graeme Simsion. The Orange County Public Library has this to say about the Book: "Don Tillman, a professor of genetics, sets up a project designed to find the perfect wife, starting with a questionnaire that has to be adjusted a little as he goes along. Then he meets Rosie, who is everything he's not looking for in a wife, but she ends up his friend as he helps her try and find her biological father." I haven't read it yet, so you won't get any spoilers from me 😊 Please bring your lunch if you are so disposed, otherwise there are typically snack items and beverages to share. Questions? See Rich Erdosy. Happy Advent!

PLEDGE AND GIVING REPORT

Donations received through this date: 11/11/2026

	2026 Total	Weekly Average
2026 Operational Budget	$272,666	$5,244
All Donations Received	$229,414	$4,881
2026 Pledge Budget	$214,540	$4,126
Pledges Received	$211,348	$4,497

2026 Potential Operations Over/Short: $(18,846)

Any questions? See James Watts.

KNITTING GROUP



The HPC Knitting Group is gathering at HPC! If you like to knit, crochet or do other needlework, join us Wednesday, December 16, from 12:30-2:30 in the parlor to work and enjoy community time. Questions? See Sara Clay.

HPC COFFEE AND TEA CLUB

The Coffee and Tea Club is one of the many fellowship groups guided by the Congregational Care Committee. We meet at 9:00 AM for breakfast twice a month.

Join us on the first Thursday of the month at The Village Diner (12/3) and on the third Thursday of the month at Steve's (12/17). Questions? See Joe Crane.

FINISH-IT-FRIDAY



The Finish-It-Friday group will meet on Friday, December 18. Bring any craft project, and work on it in Strudwick with friends. Bring your knitting, crochet, painting, sewing, quilting, etc. Come any time between 6:00 and 11:00 PM. There is plenty of room to spread out to work and visit. Questions? See Ann Sebesan.



ANNUAL BONFIRE AT New Hope Camp and Conference Center

Early November on a Sunday evening, we had 46 adults and youth attend our **Annual Bonfire** at **New Hope Camp and Conference Center**. This was a wonderful opportunity for Christian fellowship, sharing stories, and enjoying delicious foods while outdoors in God's creation! And we celebrated 3 birthdays while gathered together!





Some photos from the Annual HPC Bonfire!



FELLOWSHIP / COMMITTEE NEWS

HPC Book Club hosted Hillsborough citizen and award-winning author Hal Crowther on Sunday November 8, to discuss themes from his book, Bible Belt Blues: Collected Essays. Hal's wife, Lee Smith, also a noted author, joined in our gathering. We enjoyed hearing Hal's stories and learned more about our nation's history of journalism.







FELLOWSHIP / COMMITTEE NEWS

Cold Weather Shelter Meals for Winter 2026 – 2027

Hillsborough Presbyterian Church has offered to provide hot Meal Service at the Orange County Shelter location at the old police station, 828 MLK Jr Blvd in Chapel Hill, for these 2 weeks: **Sunday December 20 – Saturday December 26, 2026**, and **Sunday January 31 – Saturday February 6, 2027**.

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Hillsborough has offered: **Sunday November 22 – Saturday November 28, 2026**. They plan to offer a second week with dates to be determined.

"Cold Weather Cots" is an emergency shelter program run jointly by Orange County and IFC that provides shelter for unhoused residents during the winter, starting in November and running through the end of March.

Would you like to help with Meal Service? Use this Sign-Up Genius to sign up ahead of time to serve a hot meal and/or sides on the evening of your choice: Click Here. Or you can simply tell Jan McKelvey or David Remington which evening you would like to help, and we will add you to the online Sign-Up Genius. Either way that you sign up, we will let you know a few days ahead if your volunteer evening is not activated. Orange County will only activate and open the shelter when temperatures are at or below 32 degrees. We want to stand ready to help.

How else can we help? Again, this Winter Season 2026-2027, we are seeking supplies for personal hygiene kits (new socks, new underwear in original packaging, soap, washcloths, gloves) and small food items (breakfast bars, instant grits/oatmeal, cracker packets). See the flyer or request lists on the Orange County website: Click Here. You can bring your donated items to Hillsborough Presbyterian Church to a collection bin in the Kitchen. We will deliver donations for you.

Questions? Ask Jan McKelvey or David Remington







Orange County
JUSTICE UNITED

2026 FALL REPORT

What we've won, together

$2 million+ to preserve existing affordable housing

for longtime homeowners to keep their homes, by securing increased County and Town funds for home repairs and property tax assistance.

$9 million saved in property taxes for longtime homeowners,

thanks to 200+ property value appeals through the Orange County Property Tax Justice Coalition, co-organized by Justice United with the Jackson Center, RENA, and the NC Housing Coalition.

171 neighborhoods re-assessed for property value fairness,

after the Orange County Property Tax Justice Coalition identified countywide racial disparities in the 2025 property revaluation that had shifted the property tax burden to historically Black neighborhoods by millions of dollars.

Immigrant Rights

Commitments to protect immigrants' full 4th Amendment rights (freedom from searches and seizures without a judicial warrant) from **all four Orange County municipalities and the school systems.**

Immigration attorney clinic provided free legal consults to **75+ community members.**

Healthcare Access

Commitment from the Director of UNC Health Financial Assistance to remove barriers in the application process that often prevent residents from accessing healthcare - and to hold **regular same-day approval sessions** (rather than 6-12 week wait times for approval).

Over 184 applicants were approved for Financial Assistance in the first two same-day approval events.

Deeply affordable homeownership

$2 million "Heaven Practice Housing" deeply affordable homeownership campaign launched to expand access to affordable homeownership for hard-working households.

www.ocjusticeunited.org

BENEVOLENCE FARM

Benevolence Farm in Graham, North Carolina, is a housing program that provides women leaving prisons a place to live, work and re-establish themselves in North Carolina. The farmhouse serves 3 to 6 residents, with a workshop to make candles and soaps in the basement. Residents grow lavender and other herbs in the garden, and learn work skills. The Tiny Home Community is behind the farmhouse and will house 7 residents who are working hard on re-entry into the community.

On September 22, 2026, Linda Jaubert and Jan McKelvey visited Benevolence Farm for a tour and to deliver curtains for 2 of the 7 Tiny Homes on behalf of the Women's Circle and Community Outreach Committee at Hillsborough Presbyterian Church.

On November 12, a group of us visited Benevolence Farm again for the Ribbon Cutting Celebration. It was a day filled with joy and promise!

Want to learn more about Benevolence Farm? Still need to get a few more Christmas presents? View, shop, and donate: https://www.benevolencefarm.org/









FELLOWSHIP / COMMITTEE NEWS

NEW HOPE CAMP

News from New Hope Camp: As a non-profit 501(c)(3) outdoor ministry organization, New Hope Camp relies on donations to make ends meet each year. Please consider if you are able to make an end-of-year donation to New Hope Camp. Donations for Afterschool and Summer Camp Scholarships or Annual Fund can either go through our offering at church with a designation to the camp, or can be made directly to New Hope Camp: https://newhopedonations.campbraingiving.com/

We are furnishing Nutter Lodge to use this lovely 3-to-4-bedroom home as a rental unit. Here is our "Wish List": Do you have bed frames and box springs suitable for re-use? We plan to purchase inexpensive mattress toppers for any donated beds. Dressers? Dining room chairs? Washer and dryer? Rental of Nutter Lodge can be either on a year-long lease or short-term rental. We are seeking reliable renters.
Learn more here: https://www.newhopeccc.org/copy-of-outdoor-facilities-1 Questions? See Jan McKelvey.

Volunteering: The wrap-around deck at Fleming Hall is beautiful, thanks to the volunteer crew from HPC! There are always volunteer projects awaiting you are New Hope Camp. We especially need volunteers to







FELLOWSHIP / COMMITTEE NEWS

HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAY TO:



01 Jane McIver
13 Gail Crane
13 Kirsten Talley
15 Suzy Williams
15 Sara Clay
18 Brenda Spruill
19 Forrest Heinze
21 Tyler Erdosy
26 Mae Lee Brizendine
29 Sharon Hall
30 Susan Waldrop
30 Judy Brown
31 Roxanne Barksdale
31 Silas Rowe

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HAPPY DECEMBER ANNIVERSARY TO:

16 Craig and Jackie Harrell

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To update the Birthday List or Anniversary List please contact JoAnn in the church office (732-3131) or hpchurch@hillsboroughpres.org).

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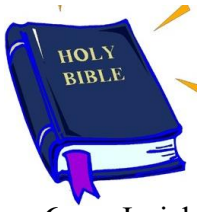

DECEMBER LECTIONARY READINGS

6 Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; II Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

13 Isaiah 61:1-4; 8-11; Psalm 126; Luke 1:47-55; I Thess. 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

20 II Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:47-55 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

25 Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-12; John 1:1-14

27 Isaiah 61:1-10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

December 6 Advent II
Liturgist: Phil Weber
Children's Sermon: Rev. Bill Hawkins
Advent Candles: Amanda Ridenhour
Nursery: Ximena Ceja-Reyes, Emma Cathey
Video: Kenneth Stephenson, Ben Stephenson

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December 13 Advent III
Liturgist: Jane Gaede
Children's Sermon: Barbara Younger
Advent Candles: Christine Jackle and Jim Perry
Nursery: Ximena Ceja-Reyes, Anna O'Connor
Video: Alicia Gonzalez, Cheryl Morgan Maxey

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December 20 Advent VI
Liturgist and Children's Sermon: David Remngton
Advent Candles: Quinn and Marie Curtis and family
Nursery: Ximena Ceja-Reyes, Jackie Harrell
Video: Martin and Judy Brown

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December 24
Advent Candles: Eric and Katherine Cathey & family
Video: Joe Crane, Cheryl Morgan Maxey

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December 27
Liturgist: Vernon Cooper
Children's Sermon: Barbara Younger
Nursery: Ximena Ceja-Reyes, TBD
Video: Hervey McIver, Joe Crane





December, 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1	2 "Get Real & Heel" 10 – Noon (Strudwick) Choir 7 PM (#221)	3 HPC Coffee & Tea Club 9:00 AM (Village Diner) Stewardship 7:00 PM (Zoom)	4 Explorer Post 1903 6:30 PM (Strudwick)	5 Hanging of the Greens & Breakfast 9:30 AM(Strudwick)
Advent II 6 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship & Joy Gift Offering 12:15 PM HPC Book Club	7 "Get Real & Heel" 10 – Noon (Strudwick)	8	9 "Get Real & Heel" 10 – Noon (Strudwick) Choir 7 PM (#221)	10 "Get Real & Heel" 10 – Noon (Strudwick) Christian Education 7:00 PM (Zoom)	11	12 Piano Recital 3:30 – 6:30 PM (Strudwick)
Advent III 13 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship & Joy Gift Offering 6:00 PM Choir Concert & Reception	"Get Real & Heel" 14 10 – Noon(Strudwick) Circle #1 invites all Women of HPC - Potluck Lunch 11:30 AM (Location TBD)	15 Community Outreach 7:00 PM (Room #204 / Zoom)	16 "Get Real & Heel" 10 – Noon (Strudwick) Knitting Group 12:30 PM (Parlor)	17 HPC Coffee & Tea Club 9:00 AM (Steve's) "Get Real & Heel" 10 – Noon (Strudwick)	18 Finish-It-Friday 6:00 – 11:00 PM (Strudwick)	19 Piano Recital 8 AM – 2 PM (Strudwick)
Advent IV 20 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship & Joy Gift Offering & OCIM Food Collection	21 "Get Real & Heel" 10 – Noon (Strudwick) JoAnn away December 21 – January 4	22	23	24 Family Service 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Worship and Communion 7:00 PM	25  Christmas Day	26
27 9:45 AM HPC Fellowship Breakfast (Strudwick) 11:00 AM Worship - Lessons & Carols	28	29	30 January Newsletter Deadline 12:00 Noon	31	Join us on Sunday mornings! Sunday School – for all ages at 9:45 AM Traditional Worship at 11:00 AM (In-person or YouTube Live Stream)	

Unhanging the Greens following Worship on Sunday, January 3rd!

NOTE: If you have any January calendar dates or articles that you would like included in the newsletter – just send an email (hpchurch@hillsboroughpres.org) – by 12:00 PM on Wednesday the 30th of December! (January newsletter will be mailed on January 7th)

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY



"PEANUT BUTTER" FOR OCIM

Please continue to give to the OCIM Food Pantry as you are able. We are known as the "peanut butter church" and they welcome as much peanut butter as we can give! We collect peanut butter in the narthex of our sanctuary and you may bring jars of peanut butter with you any time you come to church. Specific needs also vary week-to-week – watch the weekly NewFlash.



ORANGE COUNTY CORRECTIONAL

We are collecting personal hygiene items for the residents of Orange County Correctional. **Regular size toothpaste; Arm and Hammer Deodorant, Suave 3 in 1 body wash and 8shampoo.** Please, full-size products only, no sample or hotel-sizes. You can drop these items off in the OCC basket in the narthex at church.



ORANGE COUNTY FOSTER CLOSET

Quinn Parker, a local girl scout, has been managing an Orange County Foster Closet for the past few years at HPC. Quinn set up the space in Room 222 and opened it up for foster families to get needed supplies for foster children that are placed with them and needing diapers, clothing, shoes, etc. She works with families referred to her by social services. Linda Jaubert is the community outreach contact, so if you have any questions, please contact her.

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How does PCUSA help us connect beyond our church? Here's how to find out:

The Community Outreach Committee wants to help you get informed about what our denomination, PCUSA, is doing in our country and the world.

- For Newsletters and Blogs: PCUSA Newsletters
  Find topics you are interested in and learn what the church is doing. If you would like to receive blogs or newsletters on a subject you can scroll down to the bottom of that screen and sign up.
- For Action Alerts: PCUSA Office of Public Witness
  At this site, you can find out how PCUSA is advocating for social justice. Want to get involved? Scroll down to the bottom and sign up for action alerts.
- Search by Topic: Resource Hub | Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
  If there is a topic you are most interested in, go to this link to perform a search and find sources.

We hope this information will be helpful to you!

-- The Community Outreach Committee

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SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday School – for all ages! 9:45 AM

Traditional Worship 11:00 AM

(Gather in the Sanctuary or by Live Stream Worship on YouTube)

2026 COMMITTEE MODERATORS OF HILLSBOROUGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Buildings and Grounds – Jan McKelvey

Christian Education – Katherine Cathey

Connector (welcoming people to our church) – Stephanie Beckler

Community Outreach – Linda Jaubert

Congregational Care – Sam Nesbit

Finance – Josh Fernandez

Stewardship – Martin Brown

Worship – Cheryl Morgan Maxey

Clerk of Session
Jane McIver

Temporary Pastor
Rev. William Hawkins

Our vision at Hillsborough Presbyterian Church is "to listen, learn, share and serve as we journey with Jesus Christ to nurture relationships that bring healing, hope and joy to all, in our church and beyond." We do this within the context of the Reformed tradition, specifically the Presbyterian Church (USA). But no matter who you are or where you come from, we welcome all to journey alongside us!

Living God,
Fill us with your spirit so that we can be Love in Action.
We humbly ask for your guidance as we live into the vision
that loving our neighbor is loving you
and that welcoming the stranger and standing by the oppressed is loving you.
Help us to discern how to nurture and support one another and our neighbors.
May we see your face in everyone we meet.
In your name we pray.
Amen.