

# The Hickory Rock Messenger

News of how God's Spirit is moving through the ministries and activities of Hickory Rock Baptist Church



## 'Tis the Season

The season of Advent is upon us: the time of year when we get ready for Christmas. Starting Sunday, November 27, we will spend four weeks preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Each Sunday in worship we will light a candle, as God's light breaks brighter into the world.

**Christmas Celebration Sunday - December 18.** For the culmination of Advent, there will be many great things at church that day. During worship, the Hickory Rock Kids will tell us the Christmas story in a presentation they are working on. (Parents, make sure your kids are at church each Sunday to practice.) After worship, we will have a fun Christmas lunch. Then after lunch, everyone is invited to go Christmas caroling for the elderly and shut-ins. It will be a joy-filled day! Make sure you and your family are here to join in.



**Christmas Day Family Worship - Sunday, December 25.** Christmas Day is on a Sunday this year. We will not have the regular Sunday schedule or Sunday School classes, but we'll have a casual, fun, family worship time at 11:00. Pajamas and slippers are definitely allowed. There will be no nursery service that morning as all kids are invited to enjoy celebrating Jesus' birth.

## Food Ministry Days

We continue to have Food Days on the 3rd Saturday of every month, from 11 am - 12:30 pm (volunteers come at 10:00 for setup). Families can call the church to make an appointment if they can't come to the Food Day. The Food Days for the rest of the year will be: **Saturday November 19 and December 17.**

Since the next Food Day is before Thanksgiving, as you do your grocery shopping, consider grabbing an extra Thanksgiving food item for that day. Cranberry sauce, stuffing, whatever would help make a good Thanksgiving meal, grab an extra and place it in the Fellowship Hall. Frozen foods are okay too (in the Fellowship Hall or storage shed freezers).



## Wednesday Night Discussion Topic



The current Wednesday night discussion topic is about building a life that is integrated with prayer. We're talking about making our lives less disjointed, hectic, and empty, by making them more holy and meaningful. In the weeks ahead, we'll consider some helpful prayer practices. Anyone is invited to come, pray, listen, and share, Wednesdays at 7:00 pm.

## Fall Fun

We've had many good times this Fall, like...

a Prayer Tree that grew in the hallway,



a misty but great Yard Sale,



and nifty pumpkins that were carved!



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## Devotional Thought

by Aaron & Stephanie Rider

***"God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble."  
- Psalm 46:1***

"It's too hard!" "I can't do this!" "This is not what I had planned!" "Why is this happening?" "Why me?"

These are all things we have said or asked at some point in our life. It's easy to lose focus or give up when things are not going the way we wanted or thought they should go. The truth is that things do change, plans do fail, and life does happen. It doesn't always go according to our plan. So when things don't go our way and the storm of life overwhelms us, what do we do then? Where do we go to find our strength and shelter?

Psalm 46:1 encourages us to hope and trust in God. God is for us! He is the place we can go and find shelter when the storms of life overwhelm us--a source of strength to us when we don't think we can keep going. We are all going to have difficulties, troubles, times when things seem dark and threatening, but we need to take comfort in the Lord when faced with these situations. We may never understand the whys, but He does. So the next time you are faced



with a storm and need a safe, strong place to ride it out, call out to the one that knows. You will find strength you never knew you had and an indestructible shelter that will not fail.

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## Community Thanksgiving Worship

This year, the Thanksgiving service with other churches in our community will be Sunday, November 20, 6:00 pm, at White Level Baptist Church. (This is the correct time. The worship bulletin's time was incorrect.) There will be food and fellowship afterward. All Hickory Rockers are invited to attend, worship with our church neighbors, and give thanks as a community. (If you'd like to carpool, meet at Hickory Rock at 5:30.)

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### A Word from the Pastor

A few months ago I was fascinated to learn the history of the Doxology that we--and churches around the world--sing in worship every Sunday. Kathy discovered why and when the song was written and shared it with me. I had always assumed that the words and lyrics were ancient, coming from the earliest centuries of the Christian church. But not so.



Actually, they were published in 1709 by Thomas Ken, a bishop and professor in England. To help his students develop daily prayer times, Thomas Ken wrote three songs, one each for the morning, evening, and night. He wanted the songs to encourage prayer throughout the day.

The morning hymn was appropriately titled "Morning Hymn" and had 14 verses. That might sound like a lot, but considering how much of a morning person I am *not*, it takes me 14 verses just to wake up. Here's the first stanza:

Awake, my soul, and with the sun,  
Thy daily stage of duty run,  
Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise,  
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

So where does the Doxology that we sing come in? Well, Thomas Ken wrote it to be the last lines for each of his morning, evening, and night hymns. So in the morning you would sing (or mumble groggily) all 14 stanzas of the "Morning Hymn," then sing the Doxology chorus. (As the Brits would say, "Bob's your uncle, and your day gets off to a good start!") Same goes for when you lay down at night. Thomas Ken wrote the Doxology to close each prayer song in the same way. What a neat idea, because it gives your day and life such a good rhythm. Our needs and thoughts in the morning are different than what they are at night, so it's normal to pray differently at different times. But some things never change no matter what time it is, so part of our prayers don't need to change:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise him, all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

So that's where the Doxology that we sing every Sunday came from. The song we know by heart because it seeps into your heart.... but, I have to confess something. Sometimes, if it's a Sunday when my mind is in a hundred different directions, or I'm distracted by a problem that's bothering me, I'll stand to sing the Doxology, and I plum forget the words! Isn't that terrible? After the first few words, I start mumbling incoherently because I can't get my mind on track and sing them right. Hopefully no one is looking close enough to notice that I'm singing nonsense.

So how could I ever forget the Doxology? I've only sung it a million times! But that happens in life. When your mind is distracted, burdened, scattered, and stressed, it's hard to focus, even on the basic stuff we've always known. Like, we always know that our friends and our church family are here to support us in whatever we're going through, but when we're totally shaken, we forget that and feel alone. Or we always know that we are a beloved child of God, but when we're really down, we forget that and feel worthless.

No wonder such constant, daily prayers are so helpful; we need reminders every day of even the simplest truths so that we don't forget: we are created and loved by God, we are supported and loved by each other. And that's something worth singing about--morning, evening, and night.

Grace and peace,

*Stuart*

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## Nursery Schedule



Hickory Rock has a great nursery with loving nursery workers! And we are pleased to offer childcare for ages 5 and younger during worship. Below is the nursery worker schedule the next few weeks. If you can't make it on your day, simply find someone to switch with. (If you want to be removed or added to the nursery worker list, let Sara L. know.)

November 20 - Jeanette	December 11 - Sharon
November 27 - Kim D.	December 18 - Diane
December 4 - Linda	December 25 - Everyone worships together

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## Upcoming Events

*November 19, Saturday, 11 am-12:30 pm - Food Ministry Day*

*November 20, Sunday, 6:00 pm - Community Thanksgiving Worship (White Level Baptist)*

*(November 23, Wednesday - No church activities)*

*December 17, Saturday, 11 am-12:30 pm - Food Ministry Day*

*December 18, Sunday,*

11:00 am - Christmas Worship

12:00 pm - Christmas lunch

12:45 pm - Caroling around town

*December 25, Sunday, 11:00 am - Family Christmas Celebration  
(no Sunday School classes that day)*



*Every Wednesday -*

7:00, Building Faith. All school-aged kids are invited to learn about God and have fun.

7:00, Prayer & Bible Study (adults). Share prayer concerns, then have an interesting discussion to explore the Bible and other spiritual issues.

7:50, Choir Singing. Anyone who enjoys music is invited to come, sing along, and enjoy the fellowship.

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## "When Daddy Sings"

by Faye Johnson

When in my youth (the wondrous thing),  
When Daddy said, "It's time to sing,"  
We would sing the sweet old hymns,  
The noes we knew, the songs of home.

His voice would roll so deep and sweet,  
I'd try to sit close to his seat.  
To hear with love the rolling tones  
When again we'd sing the sing we'd always know.

Christmas time was sometime sad:  
The olden times, when times were bad.  
Still our hearts would lift so high  
When Daddy sang on Christmas night.

He'd look around as though to keep  
His family close around his seat.  
Mama sang the soft refrain  
When Daddy sang with us again.

God gave us each a special voice  
To gain join the again the heavenly chorus.  
To make the sound we loved to hear,  
The happy sounds would fill our ears.

We'd lift our hearts to find our Lord;  
Sing the precious songs once more.  
Our voices joined in precious sounds,  
We sang and felt the place of home.

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