

# The Hickory Rock Messenger

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



## Food Ministry Days

Our monthly Food Days—every 3rd Saturday from 11 am-12:30 pm—continue to be joyful, meaningful, and a way for us to show the compassion of Christ to our community. We serve anywhere between 30 to 50 families each month. The food is different every month, but usually some combination of canned goods, pasta, frozen meat, bread, juice, and toiletries.

The **next Food Day will be Saturday, February 18**. If you can help bag and hand out food, please be there at **9:30 am for setup**. A bit earlier than usual, because we'll have a special guest from the Cooperative Extension. Dominique Simon coordinates family nutrition services, and she is excited about our ministry. She'll come to help us brainstorm ways that we can continue to grow and serve people in the community; then she'll stay and help out.



## Valentines Dinner – February 18, 5:00 pm



There will be a Valentines Dinner on Saturday, February 18, starting at 5:00 pm. All ages are invited to come for a fun meal with fun people. Everyone is welcome, so come by yourself or bring friends. The Youth will help set up and serve it, and we'll accept donations for Youth activities. So come show your support and enjoy the food!

## Youth Trips

The Youth have great trips in store for this year. The **Weekend Mission Trip is April 28-30** in Hampton, VA (near Norfolk). We'll team up with Baptist youth groups from around Virginia and North Carolina to worship and to work. Each year we get a different service project. So we can't wait to see what God has in store for us this time. Youth from 6th-12th grade can sign up, and college students and adults can be chaperones. Turn in a **deposit of \$50 by Feb 15** (which is soon!).



**Youth Camp is July 2-7** at Greensboro College. It will be the same Passport Camp we've been enjoying the past few years, just at a new location. Be ready to work, worship, learn, grow, and have fun! Turn in a **deposit of \$75** by March 1 to sign up.



(Families who had signed up for the Caswell trip that got rained out have a credit on their account that can be used it for either trip, but you still need to pay the deposits.)

## Baptist Women's Day

Sunday, February 26 will be Baptist Women's Day in worship. We will hear from the women of our church about all the wonderful ways they have helped us build the kingdom of God in our community and around the world. We often don't even know about the great things they plan and support on our behalf. So Baptist Women's Day is a chance to hear great updates and testimonies, as well as for us to say thank you for all they do.

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## Lent: Getting Ready for Easter



It's hard to believe, but the time to prepare for Easter is soon upon us. Because Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus, it is one of the most important days of the year for Christians. So it's good to spend time preparing our hearts to celebrate it. Much like Advent is a time to get ready for Christmas, the time to get ready for Easter is Lent. Because Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the desert before beginning his ministry (Matt 4:1-11), Lent lasts 40 days and is a time focused on prayer, repentance, and self-reflection. There will be prayer guides available for use during Lent, to help us focus our minds and hearts.

We'll begin our preparation for Easter with an Ash Wednesday worship service March 1 at 7:00 pm. It will be an opportunity to be still, listen for God, and hear a reminder of humility. All are invited to come worship.

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## Giving to Help Others

During February we're collecting both paper products and non-perishable food for the Baptist Childrens Home and for our local charity Care & Share. Donated items can be put on the pew in the back corner of the sanctuary.

During March we will collect supplies for making Easter baskets, which will be delivered to orphans and children of inmates. Any fun items that would go well in an Easter basket are good to donate: toys, candy, school supplies, and the baskets themselves.

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## Wednesday Night Discussion Topic



For the next few Wednesday nights at 7:00, the adults will be talking about specific activities that help us grow and mature spiritually. Activities like prayer, worship, Scripture reading, fasting, hospitality, and others. Things we do already, and things we need to do more of in order to strengthen our faith. We'll talk about a different spiritual discipline each week that we need to exercise. Come bring thoughts and questions!

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## A Word from the Pastor

On Valentine's Day I was listening to an interview with an author who's written books about love. I enjoy the radio show *On Being* with Krista Tippett, on NPR. And the interview was with Alain de Botton, a British writer who has analyzed the way people love each other—healthy and unhealthy, short-term and long-lasting, picture perfect and down-to-earth reality. Despite being an atheist himself, his discoveries about the human condition and how people practice love were quite thought-provoking.



It's no surprise to anyone who's been in a long-term relationship that not every minute of every day is filled with happiness between you and your significant other. Some minutes and days can be full of hurt or disappointment. Times when you think, "What's wrong with them? Why don't they get it?"

On those days, if we're angry, we try to get the point across about what's "wrong" with our partner. So we yell. We go negative out of instinct. It's hard not to. But unfortunately, in moments of anger, when you blast your partner for their inadequacies, rarely if ever do they say, "You know, when you put it so eloquently, I really see your point. You've opened my eyes to a new understanding. Thank you so much for enlightening me!"

Just think, if your partner did that after you yelled at them, you'd be so shocked you couldn't speak. That's because people don't work like that. As much as we'd like to shout out the cold hard "truth" and tell them how terrible they were, we have to ask ourselves, "Do I want to improve things, or just yell my angry guts out for spite?" (And sure, sometimes you just want to choose the second option. I get it.)

So let's say we do want to help our partner understand better. Well here's what that love author said: "The only conditions under which anyone learns are conditions of incredible sweetness, tenderness, patience--that's how we learn. But the problem is that the failures of our relationships have made us so anxious that we can't be the teachers we should be. And therefore often some genuine legitimate things that we want to get across just come across as insults and attempts to wound, and are therefore rejected." Yep, I think we're all guilty of that. Keep it in mind as you work on your relationship.

But it's not just spouses who are in relationships; it's all of us with all of us. Every person we know, we have some kind of relationship with, however small. Our neighbors, the mail carrier, the grocery cashier, our coworkers, that weird cousin you haven't seen in years, everybody.

Even if someone's not talking to a spouse, you're still talking to somebody who you hope will listen to you. So ask yourself: do you want them to hear and understand you, or not? If you want them to understand, then remember what kind of conditions are necessary for someone to learn something (tenderness, patience), and what hinders us from teaching them (our anxiety). Do you want them to walk away feeling insulted and wounded? Or do you want them to walk away thinking, "I guess I see where they're coming from"?

This doesn't just apply to personal relationships, but with hopefully it can guide our society's relationships too. It's no secret that more and more of our country's national dialogue has regressed into shouting matches. Insults intended only to hurt and demean, instead of trying to really talk and listen.

Remember that in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus called us to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13-16). He also told us to "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matt. 5:44). Spite is easy; love is hard. So as you talk or listen to people, if they say things that are spiteful, mean-spirited, or immature, remember that we're called to pray for them. If someone speaks out of ignorance and judgment, remember that we are called to shine God's light. Yes, it might be tempting to return anger with anger, but we are called instead to raise ourselves above that, and "overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:14-21)--whether it's to a frustrating stranger, or even a frustrating spouse.

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.)

Feb 19 - Kim D.	March 19 - Ella
Feb 26 - Linda	March 26 - Kathy
March 5 - Sharon	April 2 - Miranda
March 12 - Diane	April 9 - Robin

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## Upcoming Events

*February 18, Saturday,*  
11 am-12:30 pm - Food Ministry Day (setup at 9:30)  
5:00 pm - Valentine Dinner

*February 19, Sunday,*  
11:30 am - Kids on Worship  
6:45 pm - Baptist Women meet

*February 26, Sunday,*  
11:00 am - Baptist Women's Day worship  
12:00 pm - Coffee & Snack Fellowship

*March 1, Wednesday, 7:00 pm* - Ash Wednesday service

*March 18, Saturday, 11 am-12:30 pm* - Food 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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## "The Fountain"

by Faye Johnson

Come to the fountain;  
It flows from above.  
He made the sacrifice;  
It's filled with his blood.

All of God's children  
Know this is true.  
Come to the fountain;  
It's flowing for you.

Open the Book of Life;  
Read it today.  
Open your heart;  
He will show you the way.

All of God's children  
Sing you a song.  
Come to the fountain;  
It's been here all along.

Happy the children  
Who know this great truth.  
Keep up the spirit  
That's flowing through you.

You'll never know  
The love that he gives,  
Till you come to the fountain;  
You'll learn how to live.

Live for the Savior  
Flowing with life  
Gained from the fountain.  
Light up the night.

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## Homebound Folks

Remember those people who are unable to be with us in person but are still with us in spirit. Visit or write them so they know they are an important part of our church family.

Marjorie Duke (Lawndale Manor, 601 Lakeside Dr., Garner 27529)

Mildred Smith (Louisburg Nursing Center, 202 Smoketree Way, Louisburg 27549)



*The mission of Hickory Rock is to show our love for God through prayer, service, and fellowship, as we proclaim God's love for all people, encouraging them to grow in the hope, peace, and joy of Jesus Christ.*

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