

The Community Messenger

May 2025



Erica Extemporaneous

You know that, once upon a time, I was an English major. You know that I enjoy writing, not to mention reading. You might not know, however, that it is entirely possible I have a favorite punctuation mark, or one that I tend to use quite a bit... Dot dot dot... the humble ellipsis, meant to indicate an omission of some sort, or perhaps a purposeful pause. I'm not sure what my ninth grade English teacher has to say about this, but I might find out since she receives our monthly newsletter!

During Holy Week, the church staff welcomed the children of the Learning Center for an Easter parade. This was the first opportunity the little ones have had to explore the whole of Howland Community Church. They visited with me in the sanctuary. I heard one of the children gasp, "Wow! It's so beautiful in here!" I don't want to steal Gabby's thunder, so you will need to read her account of the grand occasion. However...

I shared a children's book, a kid-friendly account of Holy Week and Easter morning, entitled *The Light of Easter*, by Andrew Blackburn. It does a wonderful job of conveying the entirety of the admittedly difficult story without terrifying the listener, or the reader for that matter. It's a lot to take in! The text ends as the narrator offers assurance that Jesus is always with us, even now.

Toward the back of the gathering of children, a little boy stood up, nodding his head in agreement. "That's right," he said, gingerly patting his chest. He went on to say, "He lives right here in our heart. I know that because... because... Well, I just know." You could almost see the resolve on his face, hear it in his tender voice. He didn't need to know why, or how. He just needed to believe. He certainly didn't realize that he was preaching a very powerful Easter message to this weary pastor.

I wonder... what might our lives look like if we had the trusting faith of a child? If we could simply relax into the understanding that we are held, we are loved, and the Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit dwell within? I wonder...

Take good care,

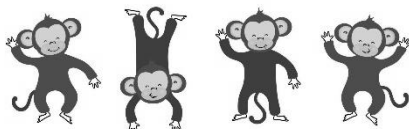
Erica

Greetings from Gabby!

The church has certainly been a bustling place these past few weeks! Well, longer than that, really. Fish fries every week, then extra services during Holy Week, then Easter... Lots of stuff going on!

One of my favorite things that happened was the Easter Parade for the Learning Center. All of the children, and some of the grown-ups, too, wore bunny ears and hippity-hopped up upstairs to see us! The Easter Bunny even dropped by to take some selfies with the littles! There were treats in Easter eggs and soft stuffed animals – there was a bit of a ruckus in Erica's office while everyone decided who was going to get to be a part of everything. Erica read a special story to the children and everyone had a great time. So much fun!

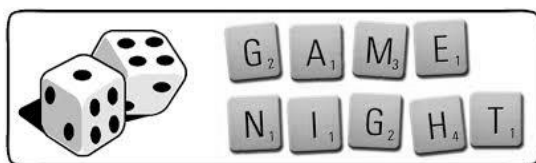
By the way... If you have any great ideas for a theme for any or all of our Vacation Bible School events during the summer, Erica would love to hear them!



Cards, Anyone?

A group of us have been getting together every other Thursday evening in the John Howland Room for cards/game night. Sometimes we play cards and other times we play teams for a board game. It's been a really fun evening!

If you are interested in a fun evening and a light dessert, please come and join us. Our next game nights will be May 8th and May 22nd. There is always room for more players!



To the Church Members of HCC:

Greetings! My husband the Rev. Dr. Brian Byrne has officially announced that he will be retiring at the end of this year. We here at UCH in Huntsville, Alabama will be hosting a surprise retirement party in October celebrating his 43 years of ministry. We will also be sharing memories, stories, and fun moments that we had over the years. We hope that you will participate and send any memories you had or just a note to say hi! Please send any correspondence to:

Alan Ballentine
608 Glencoe Rd. SE
Huntsville AL 35802

Thinking of you warmly,

Sharlene Byrne





To My Church Family –

Thank you to every one of you who prayed for me, visited, sent flowers, and fed me during my recovery from both hip replacements. It meant the world to me.

Love, Katy Kell

Thank you to everyone that helped with the fish fries this year. Your time, desserts, coming to eat, and/or prayers made for a successful season under the leadership of Jill and Terry Gardlock. We would like to thank you, Mr. Raptis, for ordering the fish and coleslaw for us. We would not be able to be successful without all of you.

Thank you. Patty DiGiacobbe



What a great joy to welcome a wonderful group of folks into the Howland Community Church family on Easter morning! We extend a special greeting to Chloe Moison and Phoenix Purdum, who were confirmed. Welcome, as well to Dan and Krystal Moison, Andrew Purdum, Kyler Purdum, Tommy Schmitt, Christian Skrobut, and Noah Youngblood.

News from the Official Board

The trustees have scheduled a work party for Saturday, May 17th at 9:00 AM. Plans are to trim, mulch, and a general clean-up of the church grounds to beautify our property for summer.

Everyone is invited to join us and share in some light work and fellowship!

Terry Gardlock



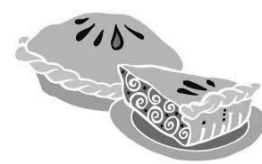
Operating Fund

	March Activity	YTD Balance	Budget YTD
Income	\$16, 323.92	\$68,345.71	\$67,937.00
Expenses	\$21,239.89	\$73,771.66	\$70,022.00
Difference	-\$4,915.97	-\$5,425.95	-\$2,085.00

GAB Sale

May 2nd 9 am – 1 pm

May 3rd 9 am – 1 pm



Don't Miss the Deadline!

Articles for next month's newsletter are due
May 20th.

Diaconate and Elders' Schedules – May

Date	Elder	Diaconate Sanctuary (All Month)	Diaconate Kitchen (All Month)
May 4	Brooke Schubert	Becky Philbin Captain	Sanctuary Linda Raphoon
May 11	Alan Purdum	Linda Raphoon	JHR
May 18	Sarah Sanders	Krystal Moison	Jane Walters
May 25	Barbara Layfield	Dan Moison	

Lectionary for May

May 4, 2025

Acts 9:1-6, (7-20)
Psalm 30
Revelation 5:11-14
John 21:1-19

May 11, 2025

Acts 9:36-43
Psalm 23
Revelation 7:9-17
John 10:22-30

May 18, 2025

Acts 11:1-18
Psalm 148
Revelation 21:1-6
John 13:31-35

May 25, 2025

Acts 16:9-15
Psalm 67
Revelation 21:10, 22 – 22:5
John 14:23-29 or John 5:1-9

Client Choice Pantry

Please mark your calendars for our May Food Pantry... Friday May 16th between 3 – 5 PM. We'll be unloading our food order and restocking our pantry shelves on Thursday morning, the 15th.

In recognition of Mother's Day, this month we will be accepting donations of body wash and shampoo, lotion, and similar items. You can bring your donation to church on May 4 and May 11. The items will be distributed at the pantry on May 16.

A "Thank You" to you, our congregation, for your continued ongoing support of the outreach of this church.

Linda Hitmar





Howland Community Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Fundraiser Raising Cane's 4 PM - 9 PM	2 GAB SALE 9 AM - 1 PM	3 GAB SALE 9 AM - 1 PM
4 10 AM Worship 4 - 8 PM Boy Scout Eagle Court of Honor (Sanctuary and SH)	5 6 PM Trustees 7 PM Boy Scouts (NH)	6 Primary Election Day 🍰 Shirley Bickerstaff	7 1 PM Women's Group (JHR)	8 7 PM Card Club (JHR) 🍰 Sam Wagner	9	10 🍰 Ethel Waggoner ♥ Jane and John Walters 1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH)
11 10 AM Worship Noisy Coin Offering 🍰 Virginia Stein Mother's Day	12 7 PM Elders 7 PM Boy Scouts (NH)	13 🍰 Brian Rollison 🍰 Jimmy Rollison	14 1 PM Women's Group (JHR) 🍰 Beth Parker ♥ Jim and Judi Matyas	15	16 3-5 PM Client Choice Food Pantry 🍰 Chun Gross 🍰 Mark Waid	17 1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH)
18 10 AM Worship	19 6:30 PM Finance 7 PM Official Board 7 PM Boy Scouts (NH) 🍰 John Walters	20 <i>June Newsletter Articles Due</i>	21 1 PM Women's Group (JHR) ♥ Randy and Suzanne Baker ♥ Lew and Deb Christy	22 7 PM Card Club (JHR)	23 🍰 Dawn Adgate 🍰 Andrew Bickerstaff	24 1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH)
25 10 AM Worship	26 Memorial Day OFFICE CLOSED 🍰 Jim Diglaw	27	28 1 PM Women's Group (JHR)	29	30 10 AM Learning Center Pre-K Graduation (Sanctuary)	31 11 AM - 12:30 PM Free Fellowship Meal 1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH)

HOWLAND COMMUNITY CHURCH
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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



Reverend Erica L. Brown, Senior Minister
Andrew Purdum, Director of Music
Rebecca Shelton, Organist
Rita Bobco, Finance Manager
Diane Andrews, Assistant Finance Manager
Linda Mikula, Administrative Assistant
Minta Pitts, Custodian
Alan Purdum, Chairman of the Congregation
Sarah Sanders, Vice-Chairman of the Congregation

The Community Messenger is the monthly newsletter of the **Howland Community Church** (affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the United Church of Christ, and the International Council of Community Churches). Our church is “**A House of Prayer for All People.**” We offer Sunday School for children and a fellowship gathering after Worship. Communion is served every Sunday.

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Friday
9:00 AM – Noon



International Council of Community Churches

