

The Grove Echoes

July 2026

HICKORY GROVE UMC



The site Mindful Christianity has a powerful presence on Facebook. A recent quote stood out: "The mark of a great church is not how many people come, but how many people live differently for having been there."

With the 250th anniversary of our birth as a nation only a few days away, perhaps we can change the wording slightly: "The mark of a great nation is not how many people are born here, but how many people live differently for having come here and seen that for which America stands."

Jesus helps us understand this in simple words found in Matthew 22:37-39: Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Loving others as we love ourselves starts ripples of love and acceptance that will make both our churches and our nation great. What are you doing to bring this about?

Blessings,

Rev. De Hillyer, interim pastor



Hickory Grove United Methodist Church

6401 Hickory Grove Road ♦ Charlotte, NC 28215 ♦ 704-537-4686

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 8:30am - 12:15pm

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Traditional Service: 9:00 AM (Sanctuary)

Sunday School for all Ages: 10:00 AM (FLC and Education Bldg.)

Contemporary Service: 11:00 AM (Family Worship Center)

African Service: 11:00 AM (Sanctuary)

Afternoon Adult Bible Study (Spanish) : 1:00 PM (Family Worship Center)

Latino Service: 2:00 PM (Family Worship Center)

Church Staff

Rev. Caitlin Lai

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African Ministry

Greetings, Hickory Grove Family,

I am grateful to God for our safe return from the Western North Carolina Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, and I look forward to serving alongside you as we begin a new chapter and a new conference year. I am especially thankful for the reappointment of all our pastors: Rev. Caitlin Lai, Rev. Candido Albino, and myself, to continue serving at Hickory Grove United Methodist Church.

As we enter this new season of ministry, we are excited about the opportunities God is placing before us and look forward to strengthening and expanding our ministries together.

July is a special month in the life of our church. It is a time when many families travel to visit loved ones, enjoy vacations, and create lasting memories. As you travel, please remember your church family in your prayers and through your faithful giving. Your continued support enables us to carry out the ministries and mission of Hickory Grove throughout the year.

We are also excited to begin our combined blended worship services on Sunday, July 26, at 11:00 a.m. We look forward to gathering together in worship and celebrating the unity and diversity of our congregation every other month. We hope to see you there.

July is also a month of significant celebrations. On July 4th, the United States will commemorate 250 years of independence, giving us an opportunity to reflect on our nation's journey through both its triumphs and challenges and to give thanks for the blessings of freedom.

Likewise, on July 26th, Liberia will celebrate its 179th Independence Day as Africa's first independent republic. To mark this important occasion, the African Ministries of Hickory Grove will host a Thanksgiving and Prayer Service at 3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary, welcoming Liberians from across the Greater Charlotte area for a time of worship, gratitude, and fellowship.

Finally, for all who are celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this month, Rhema and I extend our warmest congratulations and prayers. May God continue to bless you with good health, joy, peace, longevity, and abundant happiness.

Thank you for being a vital part of the Hickory Grove family. May God's grace and peace be with you throughout this summer season.

Blessings,

Rev. Colston Wuor-Gabie Morris
Associate & African Ministries Pastor

(continued)



Latino Ministry

Dear Hickory Grove UMC,

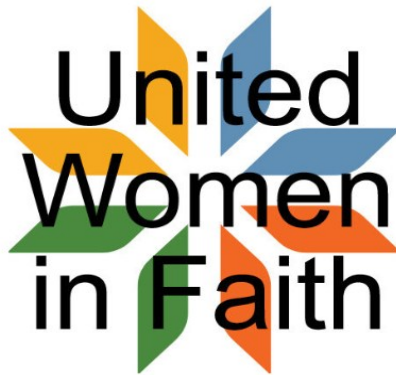
As we enter the month of July, let us give thanks for God's faithfulness and the many blessings He continues to provide. Summer offers an opportunity to slow down, enjoy time with loved ones, and renew our relationship with Christ. No matter what season of life we are experiencing, God walks with us. Let us continue to trust Him, serve one another with love, and be a source of hope in our community. May we carry Christ's light wherever we go and share His grace with those around us.

Thank you for your prayers, generosity, and faithful participation in the life of our church. May God bless you and your family throughout this month.

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Candido Albino



May 31st- United Women in Faith Sunday



June 7th-Confirmation/Graduation Sunday



Annual Conference 2026!

The Annual Meeting of the Western North Carolina Conference was held June 19th through June 21st at Lake Junaluska, NC. HGUMC was represented by lay delegates Jennifer Stribling, Liliana Molina, and Abraham Karva, as well as Pastor Candido, Pastor Colston, and Deaconess Sylvia Sekle-Dueh. HGUMC members Susan Fox, Tom Fox, Randy Bunnell, and Marcella Bunnell, also served as delegates for the Metro District.



Get Ready for Vacation Bible School!!!



**Join us August 3rd - August 5th
5:30pm to 8:00pm at Hickory Grove UMC
Dinner Provided!**

**Kid to Kid Mission Project: Bring Canned Food Items
(chicken noodle soup, canned pasta) or jars of
peanut butter and jelly
Registration begins June 28th!**



Memorials and Honorariums

(received in the office by June 30th).

If we receive your donation after that date, the Memorial/Honorarium will be listed in the July Grove Echoes.

Memorial

Nokie Tuttle

General: Cokesbury-Epworth Sunday School Class

Preschool: Harold Overcash

Building Repair: Betty Nunn

Honorariums:

Patty Smith

Preschool: Jeff and Channing Kirkpatrick

Channing Kirkpatrick

Snack Pack: Betty Nunn, Robbie Bost



VBS Decorating

Help decorate the Family Worship Center after the Contemporary and African Services on Sunday August 2nd at 11am.

VBS Kid to Kid Mission Project

We will have a Kid-to-Kid Mission Project at Vacation Bible School, which takes place August 3rd through August 5th. This project is serving neighbors and kids in the community. We will be supporting two projects supported at Hickory Grove UMC:

- WeCare Food and Clothing Pantry - a ministry that helps families in need that live in the Hickory Grove community
- Please bring peanut butter or jelly to support this mission project.
- SNACK Pack - a ministry that supports the highest at need students at Hickory Grove Elementary.
- Please bring canned soup or canned pasta (like Chef Boyardee) to support this mission project.

We will serve dinner each day of camp starting at 5:30pm – 6:00pm. We invite the family to join us.