

# *The Grove Echoes*

## *October 2025*

**HICKORY GROVE UMC**



Friends,

This month we will be observing not only the changing of leaves and World Communion Sunday on October 5th, but also we will dedicate the month to reflect upon James Harnish's book *Earn. Save. Give.* Perhaps you've heard that "the love of money is the root of all evil." It comes from 1 Timothy 6:10, which says "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs." It's not the money itself that is evil, but it is our love for it. Jim Harnish's book, *Earn. Save. Give.*, is based upon practical advice given in John Wesley's sermon "The Use of Money," in which he teaches "Having, First, gained all you can, and, Secondly, saved all you can, Then 'give all you can.'"



These are John Wesley's three simple rules for managing money and how our love for it impacts not only our individual spiritual lives but the wellbeing of the community around us. John Wesley was deeply engaged with various social justice issues during his time and, like Jesus, held a particular commitment to those who were poor.

John Wesley believed that how we use our money serves as a witness to how we live out our Christian faith, not only as a church but also as individuals. To reignite our Wesleyan and Christ-centered understanding of money and financial stewardship, each week in October we will focus on the following themes from Harnish's book, gleaned from the Holy Scriptures, and you are welcome to pick up a book to follow along each week. You can find *Earn.Save.Give* on most sites such as Amazon, or Cokesbury in both physical and e-book copies.

October 5 "We Don't Need More Money; We Need Wisdom"

October 12 "Earn All You Can"

October 19 "Save All You Can"

October 26 "Give All You Can"

(Continued on next page)

**Hickory Grove United Methodist Church**

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

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

You will also be receiving a letter similar to this article along with a pledge card in the mail asking you to make a financial commitment to support the ministries of Hickory Grove UMC in 2026. I ask that you prayerfully fill out the pledge card and please return it to the church any Sunday in October by placing it in the offering plate OR you may send it back to the church by mail. Your financial commitment and contribution gives me and the leadership a gauge at what kind of ministries we can accomplish together as we seek to grow as Christ's disciples in 2026!

Speaking of stewardship, this month we will have a churchwide yard sale on Saturday October 11th from 7am-11am. If you have any donations, please leave them in the church basement youth room, located below the sanctuary. If you have any questions, please reach out to Pastor Candido.

Additionally, we will host our annual fall festival on October 25th from 11am-3pm. This is a great opportunity for us to reach out to our wider community and connect with others. I strongly encourage you to give your time and be present at this event as we cannot be the church, or grow the church, without you!

Grateful to be in ministry with you,

Pastor Caitlin



## **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 (Asbury 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor -212)

Afternoon Children's Bible Study: 1:00 PM (Asbury 2nd Floor—205)

Afternoon Youth Bible Study: 1:00 PM (Asbury 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor - 209)

Latino Service: 2:00 PM (Sanctuary)

## **Church Staff**

### **Rev. Caitlin Lai**

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### **Rev. Colston Wuor-Gabie Morris**

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## **African Ministry**

Greetings my dear friends,

I pray that all is well with you and your family. As we welcome the month of October, I am reminded of how special this time is in my household. My wife, Rhema, was born on October 11, and I would like to wish her—and all of you celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this month—longevity, joy, and God’s abundant blessings.

October is also the season of our annual Fall Festival, a time of fellowship filled with food, fun, and games. We are excited and looking forward to seeing you there. I encourage you to volunteer and participate as we work together to make this year’s festival truly memorable. Remember—together, we can make it great!

Last month, I reflected on the importance of our church living out its mission as a multicultural body of Christ. A key part of that vision is gathering to worship together, at least once a month, in the same space. As we continue to discern and embrace this calling, I pray that God will open our hearts to see the value of being present and participating—because these moments are not meant to be days off. Truly, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

Finally, I want to extend heartfelt gratitude to the Ushers of the African Ministries. Through their food sales, they raised a total of \$2,000 in support of repairing our air conditioning system and maintaining our building. We deeply appreciate their generosity and commitment.

Blessings,

Pastor Colston





## Latino Ministry

The crisp mornings, shorter days, and the colors of fall remind us that seasons are always changing. In many ways, October is a season of preparation—farmers gather the harvest, families pull out warmer clothes, and children look forward to festive traditions. Spiritually, it is also a good time to reflect on how we are preparing our hearts for the next season God is leading us into. I am thankful for each of you and the ways you serve the Lord. May October be a month of spiritual renewal, gratitude, and fruitfulness in your walk with Christ.

In Christ's love,

Rev. Candido Albino



## Preschool News

We are thankful for October and the promise of fall weather and all the beauty that goes with it. The first month of school is behind us and we are starting to settle into our new routines. We have completed our safety drills – both fire and emergency – and hope that we will never need to use these skills.

October will be our first month participating in all of our special activities – Music Class, Bible Stories, Fitkids, and ScienceKids. Our photographer will be here on October 3 for individual pictures. Fall Break will happen on Thursday and Friday October 9,10. Charlotte Speech and Hearing will be here on Monday, October 13 to do speech/language screenings for our children. We will have our Fall Parties on Friday, October 31 and the children will get to come to school in their costumes that day – cuteness overload! Their parents will gather in the FLC for a type of “Trunk or Treat” (without the trunks of course) and the children will get to parade through and see all of the décor as they receive a treat.







Thank you!

Thanks so much Church family! Many people have chipped in to get items to Hickory Grove Elementary School! We sent 80 headphones sets, dry erase markers, copier paper, pencils, other supplies, and lots of school uniforms!

Thanks so much to all who participated! If you didn't get a chance to donate, you can still drop off items at the church.





# **Financial News**

From the Finance Committee – Chair, Randy Bunnell

**2 Corinthians 9:7 : “Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”**

Thank you – I can’t say it enough – we do appreciate your giving. It keeps HGUMC alive with the ability to do God’s work and further His Kingdom !! So thanks again for all you do !!

I wanted to give you a financial update through August. Unfortunately, we are behind our budget for receipts. However, you will see that the data tells us we appear to be in decent shape. We have received more than what we have spent thus far. The IRS Covid refund checks and the congregation stepping up to pay for the HVAC control board has helped considerably !! Thank you !! You will also see that we are controlling our expenses. So please keep your pledges current and do what you can to give a bit more to help us close the deficit. We must continue to keep our church financially stable. This cannot be done without your pledges and donations. We are growing – we do see more people attending our services and we are adding ministries to support those people. However, we need your financial support to do so. And also please continue to pray for our wonderful church !!

In addition, the month of October will be focused on Stewardship. We will be asking you to consider making a financial commitment with God through Hickory Grove United Methodist Church. So please prayerfully fill out your pledge card and return it via mail or by dropping it in the offering plate any Sunday during the month. Thank you in advance for your love and financial support of our church.

	<b>YTD August 2025</b>		<b>YTD Budget 2025</b>
	General Fund		General Fund
Receipts	\$356,192		\$378,345
Expenses	\$340,752		\$366,011
Variance	\$14,440		\$12,334

	<b>YTD April 2025</b>		<b>YTD Budget 2025</b>
	Building Fund		Building Fund
Receipts	\$46,846*		\$55,333

\*Our monthly note payment for the FLC Building is \$6625. Through August in 2025 we have averaged \$5856. As mentioned previously, we still have a reserve, but that will go away quickly if we do not hit the monthly need of \$6625. Please continue to see what you can do to help bring this Fund back up to the monthly note level – thank you so much for your efforts.

If we all work together we can do great things in our community – pray hard and thank you again for supporting HGUMC !!

## **Memorials and Honorariums**

(received in the office by September 28th).

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

### **Memorials:**

**David Nance**

Building Fund: Becky and Denny Baldwin

### **Honorarium:**

