

# *The Grove Echoes*

## *May 2025*



**HICKORY GROVE UMC**

Friends, Christ IS risen!

Thank you for your ongoing presence throughout our East Charlotte Noonday Lenten services, Palm Sunday Cantata, Holy Thursday Last Supper, East Charlotte Good Friday service, Easter egg hunt, as well as our Easter Sunrise and Combined Services! I am especially grateful for all of you who help lead worship – from the music to a/v to serving as the liturgist, and those of you who have served through WeCare and in teaching our children, youth, an adult Sunday School classes. I am thankful for those of you who are actively visiting our members who are homebound and those of you who offer your time assisting in the church office on a regular basis. Thank you to those who are inviting friends and neighbors to Sunday worship and different activities. Thank you, to our Administrative Council, who helps keep us on track with our mission and vision as a church in love of our Risen Lord!



I write with joy in sharing that Bishop Carter has appointed Pastor Colston, Pastor Candido, and I for another year with you at Hickory Grove UMC! I am so thankful for our ministry together thus far and am looking forward to what God has in store for the future of our church! Change is afoot, however. You may know that we rent our facilities out to two other churches. This rental income, in addition to your tithes and offerings, goes towards our operating budget at HGUMC. One of the churches, who rents office space, classroom space, as well as our Family Life Center on Sunday afternoons, will be moving to a new location at the end of this month. This means we have more availability on Sundays afternoons and throughout the week. If you know someone who needs office space to rent (nonprofit, counseling practice, occasional meetings for remote employees), please have them contact the church office and/or fill out a facilities use request form on the website. Please also consider our church when you/your loved ones are looking to rent space for an event!

Lastly, the recent reduction in federal government funding has affected two partnerships close to our church: Second Harvest and Roof Above. We support Roof Above through Room in the Inn (our winter shelter to unhoused persons), and our WeCare Ministry receives food from Second Harvest for our neighbors in need. Food has been restricted and staffing has been reduced. This means our commitment and work as Resurrection People must be at the forefront of our minds. How can we help our community? How might we need to pivot and do things differently? The needs are great, and it will be up to us, the people of the church, to offer aid and solutions, whether in material/financial donations or policy change. The prophet Jeremiah says in Jeremiah 29:7 “But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.”

**Hickory Grove United Methodist Church**

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



# Lent and Easter at Hickory Grove!









## **SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

Traditional Service: 9:00 AM (Sanctuary)

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

Contemporary Service: 10:45 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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### **Rev. Candido Albino**

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### **Robin Whisenant**

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Greetings Hickory Grove family,

I am grateful to God who made it possible for our safe return from Liberia. Our trip went well and we were able to connect with family, friends and our home church. Many thanks to all of you who participated in worship services especially Alex Kwiagaye and Victor Teclar who delivered the messages.

Rhema and I are always grateful and would like to wish those of you who are celebrating your birthdays and anniversaries for the month of May. It is our prayers that God will give you longevity and God's blessings.

It was announced last Sunday, April 27, 2025 that I will continue to serve as your Associate and pastor of the African Ministry for another year starting July 1, 2025 at Hickory Grove UMC. My family and I are grateful to the Bishop and the Cabinet for this appointment. We look forward to serving you and this community.

Please keep us in your prayers.

Blessings and peace to all,

Rev. Colston Wuor-Gabie Morris









## Latino Ministry

Blessings Hickory Grove UMC family. The month of April was one of great moments as we remembered the great redemption we received from our Lord Jesus Christ as He died for our salvation. Great moments and a lot to do. Four Wednesdays of combined worship with our beloved Memorial, Cokesbury and Commonwealth brothers and sisters. We shared His word and we also fellowship. Maundy Thursday play was great and we all had fun. A Tenebrae Friday with inspiring music and ending with a great Easter service. Now we have to continue living in Grace with the assurance that we are saved and that our God guides us in the midst of all our circumstances. I recommend constant prayer, radical service, and reflective reading of God's Word during this month of May. God with us!

In Christ,

Rev. Candido Albino





## Preschool News

It's May already? That means we are wrapping up another year of faithful ministry to pre-school children and their families. We thank God for the opportunities we have had this year impacting our Preschoolers and being impacted by them as well.

We are very excited to host our Pre-K class families for a special graduation program on Friday, May 16 at 11:00. "A Day at Preschool" will be a musical celebration followed by graduation ceremonies. Please come out and celebrate with us on this day!

I want to take this opportunity to thank our amazing staff – Sarani Nath and Katherine Bulat (Ones), Kim Rogers and Diann Moore (Twos), Cindy Scavotto and Linda Stout (Threes), Edith Rivas (Pre-K, 4/5s), and Patty Smith (music) and Sarah Amedio (FitKids and Science-Kids). These ladies do such an amazing job working with the children and each other. This school year went well and we thank God for his faithfulness and for such amazing and willing ladies!

Our Year in Review – During the 2024-2025 School Year, our Preschool:

- Served 48 different children and their families
- Collected hats and gloves for We Care ministry in November
- Collected 187 canned goods for the We Care ministry in December
- Hosted a Christmas program for parents and family members in December.
- Collected 113 canned pasta items for the Snack Pack ministry in February
- Had Music Class, Bible Stories, and FitKids and ScienceKids classes each month. Students learned nine Bible verses and songs that help them remember these verses.
- Hosted the Butterfly Farm in April where children and staff got to feed and hold butterflies and learn about their lifecycle.
- Mailed Valentines to the shut-ins at HGUMC.
- Made Easter crosses for the shut-ins.

It's hard to believe that we are getting close to the end of this school year. We remember God's faithfulness and his blessings on allowing us to be in ministry to preschool age children.

We've had an amazing year! God is good - ALL the time!

Until September,

Sharon Freeze









## **Memorials and Honorariums**

**(received in the office by April 20th).**

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

### **Memorials:**

**Dorothy Carbone**

Building Fund: Rosemary Mock

### **Honorarium:**

**Patty Marks**

Snack Pack: Channing and Jeff Kirkpatrick



The Church Office will be closed on Monday, May 26 in observance of Memorial Day.



**All graduates (high school or college),** please contact the Church Office, Rev. Caitlin Lai or Rev. Colston Morris with your graduation information.

You can email your graduation picture to [estribling@hgumc.com](mailto:estribling@hgumc.com) along with name of your school, what you plan to do after graduation and for college graduates—your degree. Deadline is Sunday, May 20th.

***We will celebrate our graduates during our combined service June 8th.***



## **Additional Announcements**

### **Future Combined Worship Services:**

June 8th: Confirmation and Graduation Sunday

June 29th: 5th Sunday Combined Service

### **Attendance Pew Pads**

Due to a lack of engagement, will be transitioning away from our historical use of pew pads for attendance. Instead, the ushers will take attendance by number and report to the church office. If you have any questions, you may reach out to any of the Pastors or members of the Admin Council.

## **Mother's Day Celebrations**

Circle Naomi warmly invites you to join us in honoring the extraordinary women we call Mom. Though we cherish mothers every day, on Sunday, May 18 at 11AM we have set aside a special time to celebrate their enduring love, gentle care, patient guidance, and unwavering devotion. Come and help us give thanks for the incredible impact these women have made in our lives.

Please join us for the Latino Ministries Mother's Day celebration on Saturday, May 10th from 6:00PM to 10:00PM in the Trinity Room!

