Proclamation

Recognizing Irish Heritage Month
&
Saint Patrick's Day 2026

WHEREAS, by 1776 nearly 300,000 Irish nationals had emigrated to the American colonies and played a crucial role in America's War for Independence***;*** and

WHEREAS, five signers of the Declaration of Independence were Irish-born and 9 signers were of Irish ancestry and 20 Presidents of the United States have proudly claimed Irish heritage, including George Washington, the father of our country; John Fitzgerald Kennedy; Ronald Reagan; and most recently former President, Joseph R. Biden, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, many Irish immigrants came to North America to escape discrimination, inequities, poverty, and famine and seek new opportunities with the largest number of Irish immigrants arriving in the United States in the 1840s, and within the United States, immigrants from Ireland faced discrimination and inequities***;*** and

WHEREAS, Since the founding of our nation, many people of Irish heritage have made their homes in Hillside, adding to the rich cultural legacy of this community, and enhancing the quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Irish Americans have made significant contributions to the overall traditions of the United States, and Irish Americans have impacted all facets of life in our community, including government affairs, business, and education; and

WHEREAS, the 44,000,000 Americans of Irish ancestry, like their forebears, continue to enrich all aspects of life in the United States, in science, education, art, agriculture, business, industry, literature, music, athletics, entertainment and military and government service; and,

WHEREAS, Irish American Heritage Month was first recognized in 1991 with a Presidential Proclamation, calling upon the people of the United States to a month-long celebration of the contributions that Irish immigrants have made to the US; and

WHEREAS, the history of discrimination and inequities toward Irish Americans can be applied to the history and the present experience of people of other lived experiences and backgrounds and, rather than hide the difficult truths of this history and this present, we must work to ensure that we turn away from discrimination and injustice and toward liberty and justice for all: and

WHEREAS, St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland, known for bringing Christianity to Ireland and, it is said, for instilling a sense of literacy and learning that allowed Ireland to become the "isle of saints and scholars" when the rest of Europe was in the Dark Ages; and

WHEREAS, the modern secular holiday of St. Patrick's Day was first celebrated in America in the first St. Patrick's Day Parade in the United States occurred in New York City in 1762, and now all Americans celebrate St. Patrick's Day annually on March17th with pride and the "wearin' o' the green" have become time-honored traditions across the country; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Hillside is working to advance inclusive and equitable policies and practices that ensure that the township is a safe place for all, where every person feels at home and every person belongs; and

NOW, THEREFORE, **I**, **ANDREA L HYATT**, Mayor of the Township of Hillside, New Jersey, do hereby proclaim **March 2026,** as**: IRISH HERITAGE MONTH,** and do hereby proclaim **March 17, 2026** as, **SAINT PATRICK'S DAY** in Hillside Township. I invite all individuals in the community to celebrate our residents of Irish ancestry, and also to learn about the difficult truths of the history and experiences of Irish Americans and commit to taking actions to oppose similar discrimination, injustices, and inequities that continue to be experienced by human beings today.

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Andrea L. Hyatt
Mayor, Hillside Township

DATED: Wednesday, March 3, 2026