The Cloud of Witness

110 Years of Faith

1893–2003

Highland Baptist Church

Louisville, Kentucky

by Peter Smith

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Dedications

In memory of:

Marge Ackman, by Mark and Kathey Golightly Sanders
Francesca Allen, by Dave and Wanda Nakdimen
Lee R. (Andy) Anderson, by Doris L. Anderson
Zelma Augustus, by Don Burke
Louis and Thelma Baisch, by Jim and Rose Hawkins
Gene and Virginia Bell, by Mark and Kathey Golightly Sanders
Lillian Brown, by Mark and Kathey Golightly Sanders
Henry and Rebecca Cleaton, by Edith Hoeing
Larry Corman, by Ken and Connie Campbell
Tom and Juanita Dennison, by Angela Dennison
Belle Lloyd Drake, by Tom and Barbara Lee
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Bill and Gladys Goodell, by Alice Vardiman
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Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Horn and Katie, Frieda, Nettie and Elsie Horn, by Alice Vardiman
Fred and Lucretia Huber, by Don Burke
I. Grundy and Cecile Janes, by Jean and Grundy Janes
Will and Dorothy Lee, by Tom and Barbara Lee
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Ellis Merrifield, by Dave and Wanda Nakdimen
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Charlie and Foreman Westray, by Mark and Kathey Golightly Sanders
Foreman Westray, by Donna Heil
Hazel Wheeler, by Mark and Kathey Golightly Sanders

In honor of:

Don Burke, by Dave and Wanda Nakdimen
Phil Christopher, by Connie Sorrell
Homer and Dorothy Coggins, by Jim and Gayle Williamson
Kathy Collier, by the Sanctuary Choir
Kristen, Katrina, Kelley, Megan and Michael Connolly, by Bob and Theresa Connolly
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Paul Duke, by Connie Sorrell
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Gareth and Nathan Hedges, by Dr. and Mrs. Scott Hedges
Luke, Paul and Anna Holladay, by Tracy and Debbie Holladay
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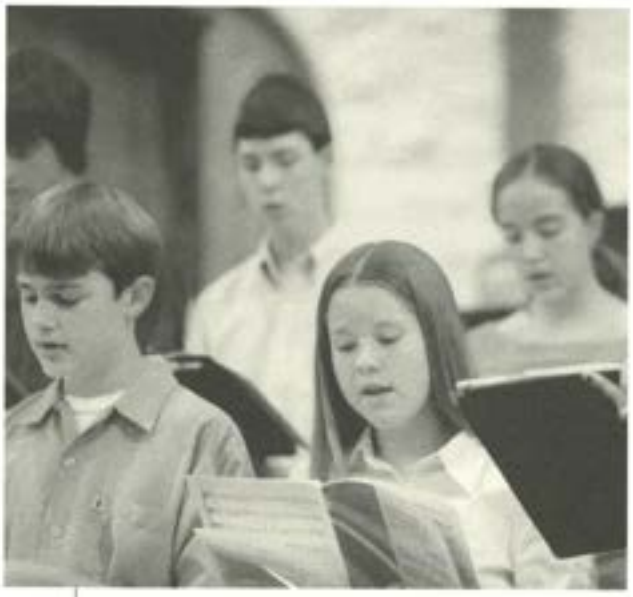
Nina Maples, by the Vineyard Sunday School Class
Edna Newland, by Samuel Newland
Russell, Frances, Russell Jr., Dottie and Bill Newton, by Doris L. Anderson
Joe and Terri Phelps and family, by the First Tuesday Night G.R.O.W. team
Wade and Adam Pierce, by Ken and Susan Pierce
Leon Smith, by Keith Eiken
Edwin Lowe and Verna Vardiman, by Alice Vardiman
Kim, Gary and Logan Waller, by Joey Whitlock

Preface

When Highland Baptist Church celebrated its 110th anniversary in 2003, its leaders recognized the need for an updated history of one of Louisville's oldest churches. The last history had been written in 1968, and a seminarian retained to write a centennial history in 1993 was unable to finish the task. I agreed to pastor Joe Phelps's request to write this history. Several church members formed a History Task Force to coordinate the project.

For a historian, one of Highland's great blessings and banes is its vast archives, preserved almost completely from its founding in 1893, with only a few gaps here and there. The church's business minutes and Sunday School records are preserved from its earliest years. From the 1920s onward, we also have a fairly complete archive of bulletins and announcements, which open the window wider to the day-to-day life and activities of the church. The blessing is that this material provided the means to tell a solid story about Highland. The bane is that these comprehensive archives presented a small mountain of material to go through. I supplemented this research with readings of wider Baptist histories, including those of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the W. O. Carver School of Missions and Social Work and the Long Run Baptist Association, all of which have had close ties with Highland. And I drew on the extensive archival resources at the seminary to learn more about Basil Manly and Juliette Norton Marvin, the driving forces behind Highland's founding, who accomplished much on behalf of Baptist causes before their tragic deaths. I also drew on the archives related to such seminary personalities as John R. Sampey, E. Y. Mullins and J. B. Weatherspoon, who had important roles in shaping the church, and that of the late Louisville mayor Wilson Wyatt, whose reminiscences fleshed out the portrait of one of the church's founding families. I and other members of the History Task Force conducted interviews of longtime members and reviewed previous oral histories, drawing on recollections that date into the early twentieth century. (Even well-kept minutes often gloss over sensitive material, and on some occasions the archives even candidly record instances of church leaders shielding sensitive material from



posterity. The oral histories have filled some, but not all, of these gaps.) The result is the portrait of Highland that you hold in your hands, one that should reflect the spirit of Highland's current logo of a cluster of saints gathered at the cross, with some going out into the world in service and others being drawn in.

Acknowledgments

There are many people to thank for their help with this project. I wrote this manuscript in part for academic credit at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, where I am working toward a master's of arts degree in religion. I would like to thank my faculty advisor, the eminent church historian E. Glenn Hinson, for his many words of advice and encouragement, and his patience in fielding questions from this native New Englander about historic Southern Baptist traditions.

Thanks also to the hard-working members of the History Task Force, particularly chair Alice Vardiman, who coordinated business and logistical aspects, organized meetings, conducted interviews and always ended every conversation with me with the question, "Is there anything more I can do to help you?" Photographer Bill Luster provides a characteristically exquisite portrait of Highland's worship life today in these pages, both in the color center section and in many of the black-and-white pages. Carrie Daniels retrieved archival materials and performed the tedious but essential task of transcribing oral-history interviews. These transcripts will themselves form a valuable addition to Highland's archives. Tom and Barbara Lee spent countless hours taking book orders, reviewing manuscripts and coordinating the printing of the book. Nancy Goodhue meticulously copyedited every word of the draft and final versions of the text. Edith Hoeing, whose family has roots dating back 100 years at Highland, provided many insights into Highland's past and provided encouragement and helpful suggestions for my manuscript. Steve Brown and Dave Nakdimen provided help with archival materials, interviews and guidance drawn from years of involvement at Highland.

In addition to the committee members, other Highland members provided valuable contributions. Bill Campbell's excellent photos further document Highland's recent history in the black-and-white pages. Susan Coleman beautifully designed posters and brochures to promote the book.

Pastor Joe Phelps was an enthusiastic booster and supporter of the project from its inception. His vision was to go beyond an institutional history of building programs and pastoral tenures. His goal, which became mine, was also to tell the larger story of Highland's personalities and how they related to historic developments in the wider church and society.

Thanks also to church secretaries Andria Hester and Betsy Neill. Andria scanned and sorted dozens of photos, Betsy helped organize the project's finances, and both patiently helped in other tasks through the course of the project.

Graphic artist Carol Johnson provided the outstanding work of designing and laying out the book you hold in your hands.

I am also indebted to Highland's previous historians. Carolyn Hoeing wrote three histories of Highland between 1943 and 1968. Seminarians Richard Kremer and Matt Prosser wrote unpublished histories of Highland's early years. These helped me learn where to look for information in Highland's archives.

Many thanks to Jason Fowler, archivist at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, who generously provided archival photos of prominent Highland members who taught and studied at the seminary, and who provided access to many unpublished manuscripts by and about them. He often suggested I look at manuscripts I would not have thought of otherwise. Southern and Highland have so much shared history, despite the strains of recent years, and I hope this book serves as a benefit to both.

Thanks also to the Georgetown College Special Collections and Archives for information and a photo of Henry Noble Sherwood; General Baptist Women's Ministries for photos and information on the remarkable Asenath Brewster; Terry Birdwhistell and the Public Policy Archives of the University of Kentucky Libraries for materials on Wilson Wyatt; the University of Louisville's Special Collections for a photo of the 1937 flood; and *Courier-Journal* librarian Sharon Bidwell.

Many people contributed to this history through providing valuable oral histories. They are more fully listed in the bibliography, but special thanks go to former pastors Don Burke, David Nelson and Phil Christopher and to Frances Parker, wife of the late pastor Hankins Parker, for providing perspectives that no one else could. Particularly poignant was my interview with retired seminary professor Henlee Barnette just months before his death in 2004; though never a Highland member, he provided irreplaceable information about Highland members' work from the slums of Jefferson Street to the halls of Southern Seminary. Former seminary president Duke McCall's recollections bring to life the Highland of the 1930s.

Most of all, I thank my wife, Holly, who has enthusiastically supported this project even as she saw me spend many hours over church archives and a computer. She shared my goal of making Highland's history better known to those who, like ourselves, have found a spiritual home at Highland.

Notes on Style

Some notes about style are in order. Early records were sometimes incomplete about names, often giving only initials for men and giving only the husband's name of women (such as "Mrs. Trevor Whayne"). The names in this manuscript are based on the information available in the records.

For brevity's sake, most endnotes refer to books only by the author, or by author and title. Full references to their books are in the bibliography at the end. Also, when dates are given in endnotes, two-digit years are used for twentieth century dates and four-digit years are used for nineteenth and twenty-first century dates. For example, May 8, 1893, is 5/8/1893; May 8, 1993, is 5/8/93; and May 8, 2003, is 5/8/2003.

Frequently used sources are identified by abbreviations in endnotes. They are as follows:

CB—Church Bulletin.

CJ—*The Courier-Journal.*

CM—Church Minutes, which includes records of churchwide business meetings, baptisms, transfers, deaths, reports, correspondence and other church business.

DM—Deacons' Minutes.

HBH—Highland Baptist Herald, a newsletter published 1950–1979.

LR—Long Run Association of Baptists of Kentucky, annual reports.

LT—*Louisville Times.*

MP—E. Y. Mullins Papers, in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary archives.

SP—John R. Sampey Papers, in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary archives.

SSR—Sunday School Record of Highland Baptist Church.

The Tie—The Tie: News About the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

WR—*Western Recorder.*

WRH—Highland Baptist newsletter supplement to the *Western Recorder* (published since 1979, called Highland Highlights since 1996).

Introduction

At the eleven o'clock Sunday service on November 23, 2003, a full congregation gathered in the historic sanctuary of Highland Baptist Church for what was both a typical and untypical Sunday. Sunlight gleamed through the stained-glass windows on the eastern side of the sanctuary, dappling worshipers with a rainbow of colors. The purple-robed choir, nearly three dozen strong, gathered at the back of the sanctuary for a processional, fronted by three adults in white robes preparing for baptism. The choir softly began singing the traditional gospel hymn "Down to the River to Pray," an a capella song with stark four-part harmony (made newly popular through a recent film, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*). From those hushed beginnings, the church's majestic pipe organ led the congregation into a full-throated singing of "The King of Glory Comes" as the choir processed forward and young people carried banners that proclaimed "King of Kings" and "Lord of Lords." This was the feast day of Christ the King, in effect the New Year's Eve of the ancient liturgical calendar that Highland had been observing with growing interest in recent decades. (The following week, the church would restart the whole cycle of seasons—Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter and Pentecost.) Shortly after the hymn, the congregation stood to watch as each of the three baptismal candidates came forward to make their professions of faith—Carrie Daniels, a newcomer to Louisville who was drawn to Highland by its promotional spots on public radio; and Crystyl and Jason McGuire, who found Highland when they were looking for a beautiful sanctuary in which to get married and who were subsequently drawn to join the congregation itself.

As pastor Joe Phelps immersed each candidate, the congregation joined him in the words, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Ghost." His sermon contrasted the majestic imagery of Christ the King Sunday with the reality that in our daily headlines, the reign of God has not yet been fully realized. Yet he drew a strand of hope from the story of a good-natured, mentally disabled man who lived in a rough neighborhood. This man was routinely mugged whenever he cashed his government check and finally was murdered. The man's parents, given the opportunity to seek the death penalty, rejected that option and instead embraced their son's murderer, saying their son

The procession at the start of the service on the feast day of Christ the King, November 23, 2003.

would have wanted them to do so. That, said Phelps, was evidence of the reign of God. His benediction, as always, announced that we "end this form of worship to resume the worship that is our very lives."

That worship resumed at Highland that afternoon, as the church hosted two groups of people with whom it is seeking to build closer ties. One group, members of a predominately African-American church from the Newburg neighborhood, Forest Missionary Baptist Church, came to Highland for an afternoon of woodworking, creating sets of simple, white, wooden crosses similar to those Highland has placed on its lawn each December in recent years in memory of victims of violence in Louisville. While the Highlands represents one of the relatively safest neighborhoods in the city, the annual memorial is intended to show solidarity with victims and their loved ones. This day's project marked the church's effort to expand that goal and build both interracial and cross-neighborhood ties with a church that deals with such crime on a regular basis. (Both churches would put the crosses on their lawns on December 7.)

At the same time as the cross-making project, other Highland members were gathering in the fellowship hall, hosting about thirty Albanian refugees for an early Thanksgiving feast. Highland had been seeking to build ties with the local Albanian community at the encouragement of Rick and Martha Shaw, missionaries sponsored by Highland and working with the Albanian people in the Balkans. The Thanksgiving gathering turned out to be a solid

first step. Highland members and their guests talked over dinner, and church members who had traveled to Kosova shared their stories. Albanians performed folk music on their traditional stringed instruments and taught the church members some of their folk dance steps. When the guests had gone and the food was put away, the remaining group of about fifteen church members gathered in a circle for a closing prayer of gratitude for a day of crossing boundaries. Leading them in prayer was retired minister Don Burke, who thirty years earlier had led the church as pastor.

Phil Collier talks with Albanian visitors to a pre-Thanksgiving meal at Highland on November 23, 2003.

* * *

The day was unusually active and yet also typical for the 110-year-old Highland Baptist Church. Through missions and social outreach, even through deliberately planned architecture, music and liturgy, Highland has presented a Baptist and Christian witness from the corner of Grinstead Drive and Cherokee Road, even before those streets took their current names. Twenty-seven people, gathering in a house meeting in May 1893, started Highland as a church to serve the new and growing Cherokee Triangle suburb east of downtown Louisville. Since then, Highland has ministered to its immediate neighborhood as it has evolved from its orientation around a boulevard of patrician mansions in the early twentieth century, through a period of urban decline, into its present mix of rental units and gentrified homes with a college-town feel of cafes, used-book stores and restaurants on the nearby artery, Bardstown Road. But Highland Baptist Church has held a wider significance as well.

Closely tied from its birth to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Highland has touched the lives of generations of Baptist pastors, missionaries and leaders. For many years, students by the dozens came to Highland, both for spiritual nurture and for laboratory lessons on how church should be done. Women students came from a seminary-affiliated missionary training school and later from the seminary itself, as well as from the nursing school at nearby Kentucky Baptist Hospital. They volunteered in Highland's mission outreaches as they prepared for a life of bold and arduous public service, from the gritty streets of Louisville's Haymarket to the provincial cities of Nigeria and Taiwan. Many students worked as associate pastors, Sunday School teachers or leaders of Highland's missions in other neighborhoods, doing preparatory work that would later bear fruit in careers in the ministry and social service. Indeed, the names of Baptists who came through Highland could fill a Who's Who of twentieth-century Baptists (not even counting the roster of public servants who included a mayor—Wilson Wyatt—two state attorneys general and several judges). Highland was home

to three Southern Baptist Convention presidents (John R. Sampey, W. J. McGlothlin and Herschel Hobbs), two seminary presidents (Sampey and Duke McCall), four Baptist college presidents (Basil Manly[i], McGlothlin, Henry Noble Sherwood and Morgan Patterson), a president of the Baptist World Alliance (McCall), prominent Baptist theologians (J. B. Weatherspoon and Frank Stagg), and a woman for whom a Baptist missions offering is named (Asenath Brewster).

Yet Highland's connection with the Southern Baptist Convention had its strains as well. Its inaugural house meeting in 1893 foreshadowed this complicated relationship when two sponsors of Highland—T. T. Eaton, pastor of one of its mother churches, and William Whitsitt, president of the seminary—gathered to help launch the church. This must have been one of their last acts of cooperation. Soon they were engaged in a ferocious battle over control of the seminary. The controversy "set in motion divisive influences and dividing forces that continued . . . to operate among Southern Baptists and to be virulent in Kentucky," one seminary professor later wrote.[ii] Sometimes Highland played a neutral or conciliatory role in such controversies; other times it rushed to the front lines of the fight on the more progressive side. Given the depth of Highland's long ties to Southern, members grieved in the 1990s when they saw the seminary shift to the right. At the start of the new millennium, Highland maintained only nominal ties with the convention.

The story of Highland, then, is a microcosm of the larger Baptist controversies of the late twentieth century in the American South. Yet the story does not end with the grief and acrimony of separation. Highland's is a living history. The confrontation forced members to rethink and rediscover the core values of being a Baptist—one in which a faith that is not freely given is not faith, one that values the priesthood of the believer as much as the assembly of the faithful and the authority of the Bible as interpreted by the criterion of Jesus Christ. Highland joined new networks of like-minded Baptist churches and with organizations dedicated to missions and the carrying out of the gospel in the spiritual, ethical and social arenas.

Despite the upheaval, it is remarkable to see the continuity of even highly specific ministries at Highland over the past century. Without break since 1894, Highland members have been ministering to orphans and other at-risk juveniles through Baptist children's homes. On communion Sundays since 1900, members have contributed money to the poor through its Fellowship Fund. From 1901 onward, Highland members have given their time and money to urban ministries for down-and-out residents on Jefferson Street. And from Louise Tucker's arrival at a Shanghai church in 1911 to Kristen Connolly's work as a teacher in Macedonia in 2003, members have been supporting missions not only with their money but with their labors. These members, some recorded in history, others known only to God, comprise the saints that the church honors in its centennial hymn, "The Cloud of Witness," which itself takes inspiration from the roster of biblical and historical heroes honored in the church's stained-glass windows. They have followed the engraved injunction that meets the eye of departing worshipers: "Be Ye Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only."

* * *

One could hardly enter Highland without seeing, in its very architecture and its stained glass, how the church values its place amid the wider church history. A short summary of that history helps prepare for the story of the church that arose at Cherokee and Grinstead.

The Baptist movement arose in the seventeenth century among English Protestants, possibly influenced by Mennonites, who adopted the practice of baptizing only adult believers. They believed that each person must approach God directly, so no one should subvert the consciences of infants by baptizing them. The Baptist movement's hallmark also included the belief that for faith to be genuine it must be free. And Baptists were ahead of their time in calling for the separation of church and state, whose blending, they said, had degraded both.

Despite the early development of a more melancholy Baptist tradition—schism—the Baptist tradition took hold and spread to colonial America through the work of such people as Roger Williams, who founded the colony of Rhode Island with its unprecedented religious toleration. Baptists grew rapidly in the new American republic, particularly among settlers in the fertile lands of Kentucky. Baptists soared in numbers in the early 1800s amid a wave of revival known as the Second Great Awakening. "A religious awe seemed to pervade the country," a traveler reported of the once-outlaw region of Kentucky.[iii] Other religious groups, from Shakers to Catholics, came to Kentucky to build what the latter still call an "American Holy Land."[iv]

In 1803, twenty-six Baptist churches from Jefferson and surrounding counties organized the Long Run Baptist Association, drawing its name from the creek near where they held their first meeting. Soon the urban churches in the growing city of Louisville overshadowed their rural neighbors in leadership of Long Run. First Baptist Church, which evolved into present-day Walnut Street Baptist Church, has served directly or indirectly as the mother church of virtually every Baptist congregation in Louisville, including Highland. Like Baptist churches elsewhere, First Baptist was ripped apart in the 1820s and 1830s by disputes with the Disciples of Christ, followers of Alexander Campbell, over complicated doctrinal disputes. These controversies would affect Baptists for more than a century, fueling reactionary wings in both denominations.

Baptists increased their cooperative ventures, founding Georgetown College in 1829 and the statewide General Association of Baptists in Kentucky, forerunner of today's Kentucky Baptist Convention, in 1837.

In 1845, Kentucky Baptists joined the new Southern Baptist Convention, which split with its northern counterpart over slavery. The convention soon developed into a quasi-established, majority religion of the South, drawing everyone from rural country folk to wealthy plantation owners. Different traditions developed within Southern Baptists' life. Among them were the more urban, formal "Charleston" or "regular Baptist" tradition, which influenced Highland and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; the revivalist "Sandy Creek" tradition; and the Landmarkist movement, an exclusionary group that clung to an exalted and unhistorical view of Baptists as the only ancient, true church.[v]

Like other border states, Kentucky was torn by the Civil War. It remained pro-slavery yet pro-Union, which made it suspect by both sides even as its citizens fought on both sides. Baptists churches were divided and decimated by the war. Long Run members formed an orphan's home to care for children who lost parents during the war. The end of the war healed some splits but started an enduring one: black Baptists formed separate congregations as slavery gave way to segregation.

Amid Louisville's postwar economic rise, Baptists grew in numbers as well, from 3,000 members in the 1870s to 13,000 members at the turn of the century, and from twenty-two to thirty-eight churches. Among them was German Baptist Church, which catered to a growing immigrant population, including some families that later joined Highland. That gave Highland a slender but meaningful connection to Walter Rauschenbusch, who served the German church for two summers as a seminarian before working in New York's Hell's Kitchen, where he became one of Protestantism's greatest voices of social conscience. He is now immortalized in one of Highland's rear windows.

The most dramatic postwar development to affect Baptists in Louisville was the decision of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary to move from war-torn South Carolina to downtown Louisville. Southern Seminary built a small but stately campus on Broadway. Its centerpiece, Norton Hall, was named for the wealthy George W. Norton family, which would long support Baptist causes in Louisville. Under professor Basil Manly, seminary students received on-the-job training by doing mission work in various parts of Louisville, an endeavor funded in part by Norton and later by his daughter, Juliette Norton Marvin. In the early 1890s, Marvin, Manly and Manly's students would join forces with Baptists in a newly developing eastern suburb to form a new church.

Notes

i. Although Manly died before Highland's congregation was formally organized, he was a founding trustee and Sunday School teacher.
ii. Carver, *Out of His Treasure*.
iii. Bolin, 31.
iv. Crews, *An American Holy Land*.
v. Leonard, *God's Last and Only Hope*, 31–39.

Chapter One

1891–1914

"Our Enterprise Here in the Highlands"

Born on a farm in Hardin County, Kentucky, Richard H. Wyatt arrived in Louisville in the 1880s as a teenager. Despite having just an eighth-grade education, he was determined to make his way in the grimy and bustling city. Wyatt got a job with the city railway and navigated the dusty nineteenth-century streets as he drove slow, clattery streetcars pulled by teams of two small mules. In such humbling circumstances, it would have strained even the imagination of an ambitious young man like Wyatt to foresee that he would rise to the executive suite of the city railroad company and live long enough to witness his son taking the oath of office as mayor of Louisville. But if Wyatt's route ever took him along the Bardstown Pike, as the Highlands' main artery was then known, he would have glimpsed his more immediate future. Until then the Highlands had amounted mainly to a dusty way station between country and city as stockmen drove cattle down the Bardstown Pike into the city stockyards. When not busy with cattle, men often stopped off at the rowdy roadhouses that lined the pike. But the Highlands was transforming into a growing suburb. Developers began building stately suburban subdivisions around the newly developed East Broadway (now Cherokee Road). First a retreat for the rich from downtown's grime, smog, noise and occasional floods, the Highlands increasingly drew the middle class. This development was made possible in part by the very streetcar service that Wyatt and his company were providing between the neighborhood and downtown.

The Highlands was attracting residents by such leafy amenities as the historic Cave Hill Cemetery (opened in 1848) and the new Cherokee Park, developed in 1891 by famed Boston landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. The centerpiece of the neighborhood was East Broadway, with its blocks of individually styled mansions, many of which still exist, and from which Highland Baptist Church would draw many of its members. "The street is a very aristocratic one, ground is high and the residences upon it are handsome and costly," *The Courier-Journal* reported in 1887.[1] Not all

Sketch of Highland Baptist Church's first building.

was wealth in the Highlands. More modest, middle-class homes lined the unpaved side streets. And in that era of rigid racial segregation, some African-American residents lived in alley apartments above barns or in small tenement blocks near the mansions where they worked as domestic servants.[2]

Richard H. Wyatt himself moved to a modest house on Morton Avenue in the Highlands. With other newly arrived Baptists, he would soon launch a neighborhood church.[3]

Laying the Foundation

As the houses rose, so did the churches. Episcopalians and Presbyterians built their Gothic sanctuaries in the 1880s. Baptists moving into the neighborhood soon launched their own congregation.[4] Getting them started were members of two of the most prominent dynasties in nineteenth-century Baptist life, Juliette Norton Marvin and Basil Manly Jr.

Marvin, an heiress of the Norton family that had helped bankroll Southern Seminary's move to Louisville and other Baptist causes, approached the seminary with a bold offer: she would pay for constructing a suburban preaching chapel to aid in the students' missionary work. Marvin, enlisting her sisters Lucie and Mattie Norton to contribute as well, agreed to build the church free of charge if the Baptists in the neighborhood would acquire the lot. Seminary president John Broadus accepted the offer and turned the matter over to Manly, a longtime seminary professor in charge of local student missions. Manly and Marvin selected the site of East Broadway and Transit Avenue, now Cherokee and Grinstead. The choice had far-reaching effects. The prominent location, which in coming decades would be passed by tens of thousands of cars each day, helped spur Highland on to growth. However, the constricted space on the lot meant that for the next sixty years, the ever-increasing members would chafe at their confines, and sometimes each other, until they could expand into a space adequate for the church's size.

Acting as trustee, Manly and his wife, Hattie, acquired the property for $3,300 in May 1891, partly by assuming the mortgage that the

Seminary professor Basil Manly was Highland's founding trustee and helped start its Sunday School.

Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

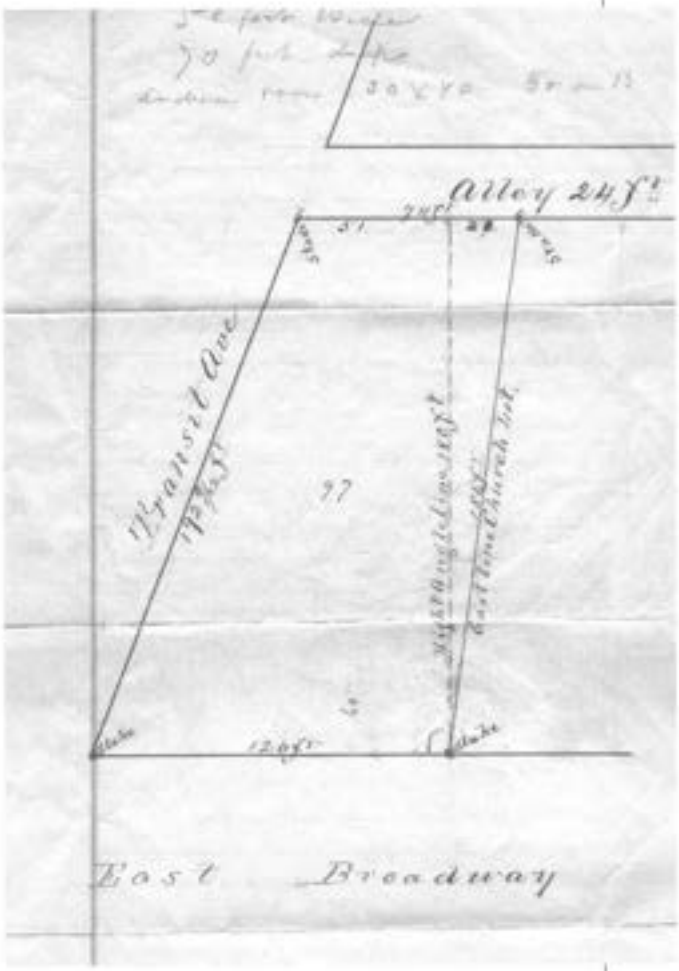
RECORDS AND REPORTS of the Highland Baptist

Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1877, by Frank H. Hall,

NO.	MAIN SCHOOL. CLASSES BY TEACHERS.	FIRST SUNDAY 7 Attendance.	FIRST SUNDAY 7 Contributions.	SECOND SUNDAY 14 Attendance.	SECOND SUNDAY 14 Contributions.	THIRD SUNDAY 21 Attendance.	THIRD SUNDAY 21 Contributions.	FOURTH SUNDAY 28 Attendance.	FOURTH SUNDAY 28 Contributions.	FIFTH SUNDAY Attendance.	FIFTH SUNDAY Contributions.	TOTAL MONTHLY Attendance.	TOTAL MONTHLY Contributions.
1	Bible Class	7		6	25	7	50	8	66			28	1 41
2	Miss Hegan					4	25	5	25			9	50
3	Primary Class	17		16		19	16	18	7			70	23
4	Miss Chase	5		6	15	7	15	6	20			24	50
5	Mrs. Phelps	2		7	12							9	12
6	Mr. Faris	2		2								4	
7	MD·S												
8													

previous owners, Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Robinson Jr., had themselves assumed from the owner before them. (The records don't make clear how the Robinsons had used the parcel, but they probably had a house on it; the property had changed hands several times since the 1870s, when it was developed as part of a residential subdivision known as Henning & Speed's Highland Addition.) Three men joined Manly as trustees in August—veteran pastor William M. Pratt, printer and Baptist publisher Charles T. Dearing and James S. Phelps, a tobacco executive who lived on East Broadway near the church. The deed described the trustees' intention to use the land for a "regular Baptist Church to be organized upon the Highlands, . . . holding to the doctrines of the Long Run Baptist Association."[5] (The term "regular" linked the church with a movement that stressed an educated ministry, a Calvinist-influenced theology, an orderly worship rather than emotional revivalism and denominational cooperation rather than jealous separatism.[6]) Prospective members still needed to pay for the lot, however, and Manly indicated in late 1891

Above: Sunday School Attendance Record from 1892. Below: Map of Highland's property, from its original deed in 1891.



Juliette Norton Marvin: An "Ever Growing" Influence

Juliette Norton Marvin, who with her sisters financed the construction of Highland Baptist Church's first sanctuary, inherited from her parents both a large fortune and an eagerness to lavish it on Baptist causes. So central is the role of the Nortons in the history of Southern Baptists in Louisville that one can only speculate whether, without them, Baptists today would have such a large institutional presence in the city.

Born in Russellville, Kentucky, in 1850, Juliette moved to Louisville with her family in 1867 as her father, George W. Norton, was amassing one of the state's largest personal fortunes. Successful in banking and land speculation, George Norton also served as treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention for thirty-five years and made a crucial pledge to lure Southern Seminary to Louisville in 1877 when it left war-torn Greenville, South Carolina. Buildings named Norton Hall on both the seminary's original downtown campus and its current Crescent Hill campus attest to the Norton family's long commitment to seminary causes. George Norton, daughter Juliette and other family members became charter members of Broadway Baptist Church, a tall-steeple church of the Baptist elite.

While traveling abroad, Juliette Norton met prominent Louisville physician Joseph B. Marvin. They married in London in 1879, when he gave her a ring engraved "For Life and Death—4-30-79." Dr. Marvin, highly regarded in both medical and Baptist circles, later served as president of the Kentucky School of Medicine and of the Medical Department of the University of Louisville. He was credited with forcefully and rationally combating everything from a yellow fever epidemic in the 1870s to the reactionary attacks on Baptist historian William H. Whitsitt in the 1890s. Juliette served on the boards of the fledgling Women's Missionary Union Training School and of the Louisville Baptist Orphans' Home, where Dr. Marvin would be house physician. Both Marvins were trustees of Oneida Baptist Institute in Clay County, donating a building called Marvin Hall; Dr. Marvin would serve on several other Baptist boards.

After her death, people recalled less the financial largesse of Juliette Marvin than anecdotes about her character. One recalled how she followed an ailing Training School student to the door of the operating room and, after the surgery, visited her regularly with flowers. The student recovered and became a missionary to India. Another recalled her visit to Oneida, in which she brought the children gifts. "She did not expect them to come to her to receive as from some Lady Bountiful, but taking her gifts in her hands, she went from house to house, seeking to make them feel that in her they had one who had come to know and love them." Highland member Annie C. Eager said when she moved to Louisville in 1901, Marvin quickly made her welcome; Eager was continually impressed with "her spirit and character, so human, so genuine, so courageous."

On September 2, 1913, Dr. and Mrs. Marvin and their daughter, Martha, were riding by train through Connecticut, returning from a vacation in Maine. Another train ran a signal and slammed into their train from behind, shattering the wooden Pullman sleeper in which they

were riding and killing all three Marvins and eighteen others. Since the Marvins were dressed in nightclothes at the time of the accident, investigators at first could only identify the bodies by items such as monograms and Juliette's wedding ring, still clearly engraved, "For Life and Death – 4-30-79." The tragedy dominated Louisville's front pages for days, with outpourings of grief for the family coming particularly from the medical and religious communities. Highland members joined others mourners for a memorial at Broadway Baptist Church.

Said a Highland member, Mrs. Trevor Whayne, on behalf of the Long Run Women's Missionary Union: "The influence of such a life can never die, but lives on and on, in an ever growing circle, whose ends shall meet at last before the Great White Throne."

Juliette Norton Marvin and her husband, J. B., were pictured in The Courier-Journal *after their deaths in a train crash in 1913.*

DOCTORS GRIEVE

General Sorrow Over Dr. Marvin's Untimely End.

ORATION IN SURGERY BY DR. GAVIN FULTON.

LOUISVILLE PHYSICIANS CONSPICUOUS AT MEETING.

BARBECUE IS WELL ATTENDED

Bowling Green, Ky., Sept. 3.—(Special.)—The State Medical Association began the second day's session here to-day with about 400 delegates from all parts of the State in attendance. The session to-day has been a very interesting one, but a damper was cast over the meetings by the news of the tragic death of Dr. Joseph B. Marvin, of Louisville, who was one of the most prominent physicians in the State, and who was known personally to almost every physician in attendance here. Upon receipt of the news messages of condolence were sent by the association and several individuals to members of the bereaved family. As soon as the House of Delegates meets resolutions will be adopted upon the death of the noted physician. The programme for the day consisted largely of technical discussions on scientific and surgical subjects of interest.

One of the most interesting addresses of the day was that of Dr. Gavin Fulton, of Louisville, on "Modern Methods of Infant Feeding," in which he discussed new inventions and manufactured food intended to take the place of natural food.

A symposium on diseases of the renal accessory organs was conducted by Dr. Ernest Bas, of this city, and Drs. S. G. Dabney, of Louisville, and J. A. and W. S. Stucky, of Lexington.

Dr. W. E. Mercer, of Bellevue, delivered the oration in surgery, dwelling on the important achievements which have been made since the practice was begun. The speaker showed how the popular mind was beginning to appreciate more and more the value of surgery, and to realize its importance to mankind.

One of the most interesting of the afternoon features was the address by Dr. D. F. Keith, of Louisville, on the X-ray as an aid in the diagnosis of diseases of the internal organs.

A symposium on diseases of the gall bladder was conducted by the following physicians: J. H. Lichtig, W. F. Bergamo and Louis Frank, of Louisville, and J. D. Jackson and P. H. Montgomery, of Danville. The entertainment will close with to-morrow's session, which promises to be the most

LOUISVILLE VICTIMS OF TRAIN DISASTER

DR. J. B. MARVIN AND MRS. MARVIN.

DIES AT PRAYER

Lexington Man Passed Away Kneeling By Bedside.

FUSIONISTS NAME MISS FIDDLER FOR SCHOOL HEAD.

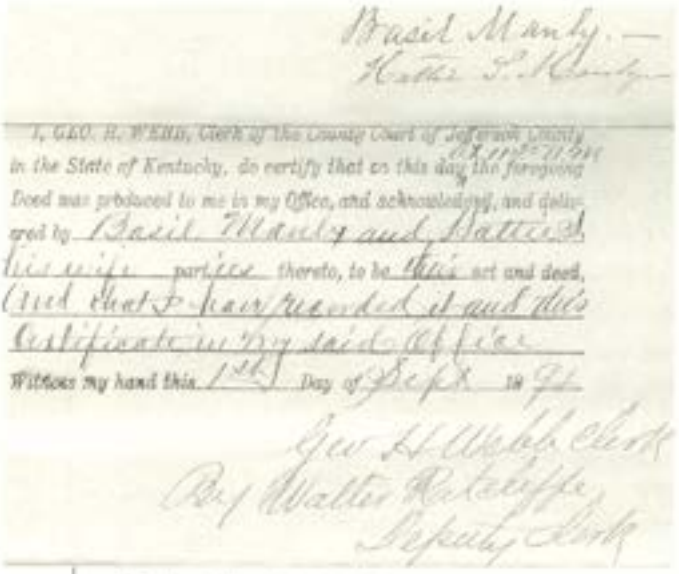
LEXINGTON MAY HAVE FLOAT IN PERRY PAGEANT.

BLUEGRASS CAPITAL NOTES

Dr. Mullins Pays Glowing Tribute To Louisville Train-Wreck Victims

"The death of Dr. J. B. Marvin and Mrs. Marvin and their daughter is not [illegible] than a disaster when viewed in relation to their interest in things [illegible] have been for the higher welfare of the community where they lived [illegible] said the Rev. Dr. E. Y. Mullins, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, yesterday.

"I have personally known all of them a number of years, and ha[illegible] had exceptional opportunities of observing of their daily interest in mat[illegible] great educational and philanthropic movements. Dr. Marvin and Mrs. Marv[illegible] were among those rare people who could find time, apart from the[illegible] own ordinary affairs, to devote themselves earnestly to many other [illegible] interests. Both of them were thoroughly interested and enlisted in the a[illegible] fairs of the Broadway Baptist church, and along with other members [illegible] the Norton and Marvin families responded to every appeal made by t[illegible]


Basil Manly. —
Hattie P. Manly

I, GEO. R. WELLS, Clerk of the County Court of Jefferson County in the State of Kentucky, do certify that on this day the foregoing Deed was produced to me in my Office, and acknowledged, and delivered by Basil Manly and Hattie P. his wife parties thereto, to be their act and deed, and that I have recorded it and this Certificate in my said Office.

Witness my hand this 1st Day of Sept 1891

Geo R Wells Clerk
By Walter Ritcliffe
Deputy Clerk

Basil and Hattie Manly's signatures on the original deed to Highland Baptist Church's property.

that the money wasn't coming in quickly. "I fear our enterprise here on the Highlands is . . . too much in the future to promise anything available," Manly wrote to a St. Louis correspondent who was hoping to place an out-of-work pastor friend in the mission's pulpit. "The lot is bought, but not paid for, nor the plans for building settled upon."[7]

Organizers of the new church weren't waiting for their new building to get started, however. They canvassed the neighborhood for Baptist families and held weekly prayer meetings at private homes. Along with seminary students, they began teaching afternoon Sunday School classes in 1891 at the German Baptist Orphans' Home near Cave Hill Cemetery. Class titles included Bible, Primary and German.[8] Manly himself taught in the morning at Walnut Street Baptist Church, then trekked over to the Highlands to repeat his lessons in the afternoons.

Launching Highland turned out to be one of the final entries on a prolific resume for Manly. The son of a prominent Charleston pastor and Confederate statesman, Manly served several years as a pastor in Richmond, joined the founding faculty of Southern Seminary in South Carolina and wrote the seminary's official hymn and articles of faith. After a stint as president of Georgetown College from 1871–1879, Manly returned to the faculty of Southern—since relocated to Louisville—to calm the waters with his reliable orthodoxy after a professor, Crawford Toy, was forced to resign for liberal teachings.

Heading up the seminary-sponsored mission in the Highlands, Manly tried to overcome his disappointment on the first Sunday of December 1891, when attendance dipped to forty-four from sixty-three the previous week. "But I think we shall grow," he wrote his mother that night. "If I could only . . . get the money to pay for the lot! But doubt now if I do anything much at that till next spring."[9]

Manly was trying to conserve his flagging health, but he did not live to see the spring. He died January 31, 1892, suffering from a heart condition and the lingering injuries from a brutal mugging five years earlier.[10] Others—the Marvins, the seminary students, the Baptists of the Highlands—would have to carry on the work.

By one newspaper account, William Pratt took a prominent role, raising the entire amount for the lot with help from female members of his family (and a $100 donation from Dr. Joseph B. Marvin, husband of Juliette). In a later version of events, Pratt's daughter Mary wrote that fifteen women formed a Ladies Aid Society, raising the needed funds through "cake sales, quilt and apron making bazars [*sic*] and entertainments of all kinds to procure the lot for our much desired church."[11] Regardless of the details, the church opened debt-free.

Soon, the embryonic Highland church was making the progress that, a year earlier, Manly could not see on the horizon. Construction of the building got under way in September 1892. The Sunday School became independent from the seminary's mission society in the following month. By April 1893, a month before the church building opened, some sixty-five pupils on average were attending Sunday School.

A Church and a Covenant

On May 4, 1893, with the new sanctuary ready for occupancy, neighborhood Baptists gathered at William Pratt's home on East Broadway for the organizational meeting of Highland Baptist Church. Twenty-seven charter members approved articles of faith that, like the Long Run Association, reflected traditional Baptist views and a modified Calvinist theology that prevailed among Louisville Baptists, giving due both to God's sovereignty and to human free will in salvation. Members also signed a church covenant, pledging to show love and fellowship to each other, live holy lives, do business honestly, aid the sick and poor, labor for the church and support its ministry, ordinances, discipline and doctrine.

The charter members came from six area Baptist congregations, most from Walnut Street, Broadway and East churches, with one each from Fourth Avenue[12] and Portland Avenue churches and one couple from a church in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Other prominent Baptist professors, pastors and other representatives of area Baptist churches witnessed the meeting to give their blessing to the new congregation. A representative of the German

Excerpt from

Original Church Covenant of Highland Baptist Church

Having been, as we trust, bought by divine grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and to give up ourselves wholly to Him, we do now solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other, to walk together in him with brotherly love to his glory as our common Lord.

We do therefore in his strength engage:

That we will exercise a mutual care, as members one of another, to promote the growth of the whole body in Christian knowledge, holiness and comfort, to the end that we may be perfect and complete in all the will of God.

That to promote and receive this object we will uphold the public worship of God and the ordinance of his house, and hold stated communion with each other . . . ; that we will cheerfully contribute of our property for the support of the poor, and for the maintenance of a faithful ministry of the gospel among us.

That we will not omit church and family religion, nor allow ourselves in the too common neglect of the great duty of religiously training up our children, and those under our care with a view to the service of Christ and the enjoyment of heaven.

That we will walk circumspectly in the world that we may win souls to Christ, remembering that God hath not given to us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind, that we are the light of the world and the salt of the earth and that a city set on a hill cannot be hid.

Highland's Charter Members

Following are the charter members of Highland Baptist Church, listed by the congregations from which they transferred.

From Broadway Baptist:
Mr. And Mrs. John B. Hamilton
Kate Hardin
Arthur Kaye
Sallie Rutherford
Mrs. M. L. Rutherford
Rev. William M. Pratt
Mary E. Pratt
Mary B. Pratt
Laura Dolle

From Walnut Street Baptist:
James S. Phelps
Hiram Phelps
Lucy Phelps
Pearl Chase

From Fourth Avenue Baptist (McFerran Memorial):
Mrs. Zach Phelps

From East Baptist:
William J. Seaman
Lula M. Seaman
Eva Seaman
Mr. and Mrs. John W. Tucker
Mary Tucker
Louise Tucker
Florence Tucker
Mrs. George Martin

From Portland Avenue Baptist:
Richard H. Wyatt

From the Baptist Church of Hopkinsville, Kentucky:
John C. Day
Sister B. M. Day

congregation, Ernest Horn, attended the meeting; within a year he would join Highland and give decades of service to it. Ominously, witnesses at the Pratt home that night included Walnut Street pastor T. T. Eaton and seminary professor William H. Whitsitt. It must have been one of their last acts of cooperation. They were destined to square off three years later in a fierce Baptist controversy that went down in history under Whitsitt's name.

Founding Families

"This is the church, this is the steeple, open the doors and see all the people," goes the nursery rhyme. But since Highland's people had gathered long before there was any church, door or steeple, it is worth pausing to describe these founding families. Some of Highland's twenty-seven charter members passed quietly into history as quickly as they entered it, leaving little mark on the church. Others, however, embarked on years of service and made enduring contributions.

The elderly William Pratt clearly took up the mantle of leadership after Manly's death, serving as trustee and organizing some of the church's earliest business meetings. As with Manly, launching Highland was the cap on a long and distinguished career in the ministry for Pratt. A New York State native and former missionary to pioneer Indiana in the 1840s, Pratt later served as pastor of First Baptist in Lexington and other churches. He received wide acclaim as a preacher, supplied in prominent pulpits in his retirement, had ties to Southern Seminary and served as the president of Georgetown College's governing board. He

died in 1897 at age seventy-nine, leaving a wife and four children.[13] Pratt's daughter Mary, for many years the head of the Highlands' neighborhood public library, served stints as Sunday School teacher and organist and organized the church's first library.

James Phelps, joining from the Walnut Street Church, had moved to Louisville in 1862 from Hopkinsville and rose to be proprietor of the Louisville Tobacco Warehouse Company.[14] Phelps served on the original boards of trustees and deacons. He began teaching Sunday School as early as 1892. His wife and their daughter Lucy also taught Sunday School.

Arthur Kaye, joining from Broadway Baptist, served as the church's first Sunday School superintendent and on its first board of deacons. His soon-to-join wife, Amanda, served many of the next forty years on the Louisville Baptist Orphan's Home board, and their daughter, Luda, worked as a mission fund treasurer, Sunday School teacher and building committee member.

Joining from Portland Avenue Church was Richard H. Wyatt, the onetime streetcar driver who was rising toward the executive ranks of the city's railroad company. Wyatt gave more than fifty years of service to Highland in almost every capacity, from clerk to trustee to deacon. He and his wife, Mary, had the distinction of marrying at the first wedding at Highland. They lived in a modest but comfortable home on the unpaved Morton Avenue, where they raised five children, including future Louisville mayor Wilson Wyatt.

The large Tucker family, descendants of Jefferson County pioneers, joined from East Baptist. Tuckers appear everywhere in the church's early records. John W. Tucker, owner of the Jefferson County Stone Company in Jeffersontown, provided the most visible legacy of any founding member: the quarry stones for the original and current church buildings. He also served as Sunday School superintendent, deacon, trustee, pulpit supply committee member and, for decades, a messenger to Long Run Baptist Association meetings. The portrait that accompanies his obituary in 1927 shows an expressive, bow-tied man with big ears, pronounced mustache and angular face. His wife led a missionary society at the church. Daughters Mary, Louise and Gertrude taught Sunday School. Gertrude also played the organ and Louise helped organize a mission fund before going herself as a missionary to China in 1911. Florence, a onetime Women's Missionary Union circle leader and public librarian, remained a Highland member until her death in 1957. Surviving letters from the Tucker sisters, replete with prayer requests, missionary tales and quotations from hymns, show an earnest spiritual devotion reflected even in the spikes of an unpolished but passionate handwriting.[15]

A "Place Magnetic to Sinners"

Designed by architect Henry Wolters, Highland's new Gothic-styled church had a capacity of 200. Huge blocks of rough limestone, provided by Tucker's quarry, rose to a steeply gabled roof and a steeple. The building measured 54 by 62 feet on the outside, with a 30 by 40-foot interior, a 24-foot-high ceiling and a 22 by 16-foot Sunday School room, separated by a partition that could be removed to expand seating for the auditorium. The church also included a vestibule, a 13 by 14-foot

Louise Tucker: Charter Member, First Missionary

When she died in 1963 at age eighty-seven, Louise Tucker was Highland Baptist's longest-living charter member, and she was its first foreign missionary, serving many years in China.

She joined Highland at age 17 at its founding in 1893, along with two sisters, her mother and her father, who was a founding trustee. Louise taught Sunday School for several years and also taught in the Louisville public schools. After a year of study at the Women's Missionary Union Training School, she set sail for China in 1910 under the auspices of the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board. She formally joined North Gate Baptist Church in Shanghai in March 1911.

For many years, Tucker served as principal of the Eliza Yates School in Shanghai, where she taught girls who included the daughters of many high officials.

Tucker returned home after World War I and enthralled audiences throughout the South with speeches about China. She appeared in native dress and arranged for children in the audience to model lavish Chinese costumes, such as a crimson satin bridal gown or a nobleman's elaborately embroidered robe. She also displayed an array of laces, embroideries, costumed Chinese dolls and other items. Her talks were "not a mass of cold gloomy facts" but vivid accounts like a "personally conducted tour through China," wrote W. L. Walker of First Baptist Church in Danville, Kentucky.

After the death of her father in 1927, Tucker returned to China to work at the Door of Hope Children's Refuge in Shanghai. When the Japanese army attacked Shanghai in early 1932, Tucker cabled her family, "All Safe—Psalm 46." The church gratefully reprinted the message in the bulletin as well as the psalm, which begins, "God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble."

The following year Tucker sent Highland a remarkable report. Tucker, by then in her late fifties, wrote that she had traveled on a sort of hammock slung between two clumsy mules to visit the country churches where an astonishing revival was breaking out.

"My own eyes have seen some of the same mighty words as recorded in Acts," she wrote. Paralytics walked and jumped down the street, demons were cast out and people held loud all-night prayer meetings where they repented and paid back tithes they had earlier withheld, she wrote.

Tucker returned to America in 1934 and taught Bible for several years at a school in Charlotte, North Carolina, where her students included young Grady Wilson, a future close associate to evangelist Billy Graham. She returned to Louisville and Highland in 1948. She followed the traumatic developments in China with great interest, corresponding with former students who had fled to Formosa after the communist takeover. She died in 1963.

The original education building, opened in 1908, as it stands today.

pastor's study and an 8-foot-square baptistery pool set in a bay window behind the pulpit.

The Sunday following the organizational meeting at the Pratt home, the charter members of Highland, along with well-wishers and the curious, crowded into their new church for the inaugural service. "Every pew was filled and people were packed in every available space," reported *The Courier-Journal*. "Many stood around the door and many went away, unable to get inside."[16] Norton family members gave a church bell and a Communion set. Juliette Marvin's husband, Dr. J. B. Marvin, donated a large pulpit Bible. (Displayed in a case by the inside entrance to the current sanctuary, the Marvin Bible is the only artifact from the original church that remains at Highland.)

Seminary president John Broadus made the opening prayer, while renowned seminary scholar A. T. Robertson offered the dedicatory prayer and Walnut Street pastor T. T. Eaton gave the benediction. Dr. William Pickard, pastor of Broadway Baptist Church, preached the inaugural sermon. He used the sobering text of John 2:13–17, in which Jesus cleanses the ancient Temple courtyard of moneychangers—a cautionary tale for a new congregation in its new house. "Here is to be preached faithfully the gospel of danger," he said. "This place is to be consecrated to the great doctrine of the atonement." But, he added, "God's love is to be faithfully proclaimed," and the promise of regeneration in Christ. "So live as to make this place magnetic to sinners," he continued. "How can this be done? Why, so live in your hearts and homes, that you will have power in your hearts from on high."[17]

Opening festivities over, the church quickly settled down to business. It elected officers, including Richard Wyatt as clerk and Phelps, Tucker and Pratt as trustees. It also formed a young people's missionary society, ordered offering envelopes and took care of such literally down-to-earth needs as sodding the lawn. The Sunday School, led by superintendent Arthur Kaye, continued to grow, aided by teachers who filled the record books of the early years: Edith Harp, Mary Tucker Gould, Pearl Chase, Lucy Phelps, Louise Tucker, James Phelps and J. Bullock.

Highland selected a seminary student to fill the pulpit for its first months. George Hammon, a native of Hamburg, Germany, had already been teaching in Highland's nascent Sunday School. Some of the records refer to Hammon as "pastor," but it appears the church never intended for him to be more than a temporary

Preaching "the Gospel of Danger" and "the Love of God"

Inaugural sermon at Highland Baptist Church, May 7, 1893
By Dr. William Pickard, pastor of Broadway Baptist Church, Text: John 2:13–17

This snatch of sacred history records the deeds of the Christ in His Father's earthly house. The son of God found that the holy purposes of the temple had been sacrilegiously perverted, so He made a scourge of small cords and drove them all out of the temple. Let us think awhile about Christ's Father's house. First, it is a place where God especially manifests Himself. Nothing can be called common in connection with special manifestations of Deity. Second, the Father's house is a place especially connected with the salvation of souls. The temple of old was a place of worship. The salvation idea was the dominant one of the temple. Third, Christ's Father's houses in the Christian dispensation are for holy purposes. They are where His spiritual Israel are to worship. Here the unsaved are to learn the truth with reference to themselves and to God, and their relation to God, hence the salvation idea is to be kept prominent in the local church, as well as in the ancient temple.

Here is to be preached faithfully the gospel of danger. This place is to be consecrated to the great doctrine of the atonement. Here, too, God's love is to be faithfully proclaimed. It is not enough to preach the gospel of danger as to sin and its ruinous results. It is not enough to stop with the blessed doctrine of the atonement. Back of Bethlehem and Calvary is the love of God for poor lost sinners. Here is to be kept sacred one other doctrine, vast in its import and absolutely essential to the purity of church life, namely, the doctrine of regeneration.

God's spiritual kingdom is composed of those who have been born of the spirit of God. God's churches are to be composed of God's people. This church belongs to that order of believers who never have swerved from Christ's teachings to Nicodemus on this point. Christ's Father's house in the New Testament dispensation is a place where His children are to keep sacredly those simple and expressive ordinances, which through all time are so mightily to testify of Him, namely, baptism and the Lord's supper.

In general, how may the members of this church make this place what it ought to be? Let me urge that you not only hold prayerfully and faithfully to the teachings that should be held in Christ's Father's house so as to keep it pure in doctrine, but place great stress on the life Christ emphasizes in all of His teachings by a holy life. The good, the wicked, yes, devils, will admire those who are really good, really pure. So live as to make this place magnetic to sinners. How can this be done? Why, so live in your hearts and homes, that you will have power in your hearts from on high. Let the worship here be in Christ's name, and for His sake enshrine Him in your hearts. Enthrone Him here. So pray for His presence here as really to expect Him to be here when you come to church. So expect Him as to go home heartbroken if He should not meet you here. Then He will come to meet you in power, and where He is, the people are drawn.

supply preacher while it looked for a permanent pastor. By October 1893 Hammon's term had "expired," according to church minutes, and he wanted to return to seminary. By whatever title, little is recorded of the ministry of this fair-haired, angular-faced young German who gazes out intently from a seminary portrait of that time. But his memories of Highland were fond; nearly forty years later, he wrote from Kassell, Germany, expressing "his interest in our church."[18]

In December 1893 Highland held the first of many evangelistic revivals and added eighteen to its number. By then, Sunday School attendance was averaging sixty-one. The growing church still lacked the means to support a full-time minister, but that month it hired its first part-time pastor: George H. Simmons. A Bullitt County native, Simmons had attended George-town College and had been ordained by East Baptist Church in Louisville. While working at Highland, he continued his job as manager of the Baptist Book Concern, a local publishing house and store that became the eventual flagship of the nationwide Baptist Book Store chain.[19]

Attendance continued to grow under Simmons as church women launched missionary societies and Highland began its long association with the downtown Louisville Baptist Orphans Home. Members formed a committee to look after the neighborhood needy, and they began taking financial pledges for support of the church. They formed five groups, each around a different neighborhood in the Highlands, for purposes of monthly prayer meetings and social gatherings.

With the pastor's work growing along with the membership, the church raised Simmons's salary to $1,200 in May 1894 (the original figure is not recorded), after he received permission from the Baptist Book Concern to increase his hours at the fledgling church. Simmons hired an assistant pastor out of his own salary in July to help shoulder the growing burden. But on December 10, 1894, Simmons offered his resignation, which the church accepted at his "urgent request." With membership past 100, Simmons correctly observed, the church needed and could afford a full-time pastor. Simmons's interest lay elsewhere, but he assured the church of his positive experiences there. "Should I write a thousand [sentences] not one of these would in the least breathe the slightest reproof or speak of any unpleasant occurrence. There are none. Great peace and prosperity have attended us in all our works."[20]

German student George Hammon, shown in his seminary portrait, was Highland's first preacher but not an official pastor.
Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

B. A. Dawes

The pastoral transition took place quickly. After hearing a sermon by B. A. Dawes of Carlisle, Kentucky, Highland called him as pastor on December 30, 1894. The marriage lasted as long as the courtship was short: Dawes, a strong evangelist and widely respected pastor, served the next twelve, formative years at the church, the longest term of any pastor in Highland history. Highland would grow from 130 to 424 members under Dawes.[21]

With a pronounced fin-de-siècle mustache and an assured gaze, Dawes quickly and

B. A. Dawes, admired as an effective evangelist, served for twelve years, longer than any pastor in Highland history.

confidently assumed the pulpit. He conducted revivals that brought twenty-two people into the church in 1896 and another eighteen in 1898. "He uses no methods, but lays a strong foundation for days before he gives any invitation," wrote a fellow pastor, J. M. Bruce of Kirksville, Kentucky, where Dawes conducted a successful revival. "It seems a pity he does not love the evangelistic work above the pastorate. No wonder his people are so appreciative of his labors."[22] Cultivated as Dawes's style may have been, he left no doubt what his message was. "Are you saved?" asked one bill advertising a revival at Highland in 1906, adding the biblical question: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own SOUL?"

In 1905 Highland sent Dawes to the inaugural meeting of the Baptist World Alliance in England, along with several Southern Seminary professors who had worked hard to realize the dream of such an international body. While in England, Dawes accepted an invitation to preach in the church of Baptist pioneer John Bunyan.[23]

Dawes's ministerial colleagues further showed their respect for him by electing him to numerous prominent roles in the Long Run Baptist Association, including its Sunday School and temperance organizations. Something of Dawes's vigorous evangelistic spirit—and his expectations for an active, educated laity—can be gleaned from this 1897 report issued by the Long Run Committee on Sunday School and Colportage (religious literature) Work, a committee which he cochaired:

> The Sunday school should be the congregation gathering to study the law of God. It should therefore be composed of all the church members that can possibly attend, all the children that can be gathered, and the non-Christian adults.
>
> Its success is not to be measured in attendance, but by what is learned of the Word of God. Let this be kept before the minds of the people. . . .
>
> We recommend that more attention be given the Sunday school libraries and that they be selected not by lists furnished but by competent persons who will select no thing but what has been personally read and approved, that instead of so much soft, good kind of literature, we may have something stimulating, strong, manly.[24]

Clearly, a passive pew sitter would be uncomfortable in Dawes's church.

Highland's growth brought it an enviable problem: it was outgrowing its space. It started a building fund as early as 1902 and formed a building committee in 1905. The church adopted a recommendation for a two-story education building (plus basement) for about $7,000. The new stone and brick building along Grinstead opened in February 1908. Today, the structure stands as the oldest on the Highland property.

The building consisted of a main floor of classrooms with a central assembly hall (the present-day Commons) that was open to the second-floor ceiling. On the second floor, classrooms were positioned all along the sides, accessible by a balcony that ran along the perimeter overlooking the assembly hall. (The church later put a solid floor across the entire second floor.)

The basement, including the present-day Fireside Room, provided additional meeting space, particularly for youth groups.

Highland's physical plant made a further advance in 1909 when its sanctuary was wired for electricity to replace its gas-powered fixtures.

Dawes resigned as pastor in 1907 to take a pulpit in Georgetown. By that time he had done more than put Highland on its way as a growing church; he had set a high bar by which future Highland pastors would be judged. His successor soon learned just how high.

The Doolan Controversy

The church next hired Leonard W. Doolan, who had taught at Baylor University and Southwestern Seminary in Texas. Doolan came well recommended and immediately took a leadership role on several Long Run committees.

But Doolan's relationship with the church quickly degenerated into Highland's first crisis, for reasons that remain mysterious.

Deacons tried quietly to persuade Doolan to leave in mid-1910. Doolan told friends, acting as intermediaries, he would pursue promising job prospects elsewhere. But by January 1911, with Doolan showing every sign of staying for a while, deacons lost their patience. At a meeting, seven of the eleven deacons called on Doolan to resign, hoping he would comply discreetly. Instead, Doolan broadcast the conflict in a letter to the entire congregation. He complained that the deacons acted "without ever having had him come before them or without having sought from him any explanation of any issues in detail. The only charge obtainable from them so far, is the indefinite one that many members hold grievous objections to the pastor."[25]

Leonard Doolan served as pastor from 1907 until his resignation amid controversy in 1911.

At a called meeting on January 18, 1911, Doolan and his wife recused themselves early in the meeting, and most of the subsequent proceedings are airbrushed from history because the church later "revised" the minutes.[26] Only one page of the original minutes survives, indicating that Doolan still didn't know, or at least professed not to know, what the trouble was about, since he asked "that he be recalled if any matter such as neglect to visit the members etc. etc. should be brought up so he should have opportunity to explain."[27]

Ultimately, the January 18 meeting produced only a resolution praising Doolan's character, leadership and scholarship—a here's-your-hat-what's-your-hurry gesture that Doolan rebuffed. Several deacons and other officials—many of them longtime members—resigned en masse on January 31, and some left the church entirely. Doolan remained the defiant head of an antagonized, truncated congregation. Surprisingly, in the midst of all this turmoil, Highland hosted a successful two-week revival in March. Thirty-three people joined the church in services led by a visiting preacher brought in by Doolan.

Eventually, Doolan recognized the obvious and offered his resignation on April 16. The church accepted it immediately. Glowing testimonials for Doolan then followed from his friend John H. Chandler, who had taken the awkward role of go-between among sparring

parties, and seminary professor John R. Sampey. Both men had apparently helped broker Doolan's departure, and they moved and seconded the church's acceptance of his resignation.

The mystery remains: why did the relationship between Highland and Doolan sour? Membership stagnated under his leadership, but whether that was the cause or result of the conflict is unclear. More clear is the obvious evidence of miscommunication and the ill-advised use of go-betweens. Doolan's portrait shows a dignified, fair-haired man in an impeccable suit and tie, and he was well regarded as a biblical scholar.[28] But there is some reason to suspect a cultural clash between a rough-edged Texan and a congregation with a silk-stocking reputation in a fashionable neighborhood. In 1909 the church voted on a proposal to discontinue the ringing of the church bell. The motion was defeated, and the congregation then approved a compromise to ring the church bell before Sunday School and before the Wednesday night prayer meetings, but at no other times. Contemporary minutes don't record Doolan's role, but a later church historian with deep roots in the church, Carolyn Hoeing, reported that Doolan wished to discontinue the "useless and disturbing" bell ringing. "The older members were very much attached to everything connected with the little church, and opposed" the proposal.[29] In fact, Mrs. Hoeing remembered as a little girl that children enjoyed ringing the bell so much the neighbors wanted to cut its rope.[30]

Doolan's penchant for riding a motorcycle may also have struck the church as vulgar. "Dr. Dawes would never have done such a thing," Mrs. Hoeing said in a later interview. But, as Doolan complained, the records contain no specific complaints. "He was just peculiar," Mrs. Hoeing recalled much later. "Folks did not like him."[31] Nevertheless, the church's mixed feelings about him persisted in its official history, which touted his "aggressive, progressive and very constructive work with us."[32]

Doolan took an assignment in Bowling Green and later ones in Hopkinsville and Danville, later moving to a farm and doing supply preaching before settling in a retirement home on Taylorsville Road, where he died in 1943. There is every reason to believe that Sampey and others were sincere in their fond words for Doolan, for it was Sampey, by then president emeritus of Southern Seminary, who presided over Doolan's funeral at Cave Hill Cemetery.

Highland soon recovered from the debacle, regathering the ex-deacons and other alienated members and calling for help from E. Y. Mullins, president of Southern Seminary and Highland's neighbor on Cherokee Road. Mullins, who must have recognized Highland's need for a strong, steady pastor, gave "glowing testimony" to the abilities of Glasgow pastor A. Paul Bagby.[33] The church unanimously voted to hire him. Incredibly, Highland reported a net gain of sixteen members over the previous tumultuous year in its annual report to the Long Run Association in August, and the church settled down to the business of building repairs and other routines. On New Year's Eve, 1911, "Brother J. G. Pope came forward this date and stated, that while he was not decided as to his Church affiliation, he desired to acknowledge Jesus Christ, as his Saviour."[34] This must have been for the congregation an encouraging conclusion to a year that began in such turmoil.

A Vigorous New Start

Bagby, a minister like his father and brother, was the scion of a prominent family of Baptist pastors and missionaries tracing its roots to colonial Virginia.[35] The Kentucky native graduated from Richmond College and Southern Seminary before taking the Glasgow pulpit.[36]

Bagby embarked on one of the happiest pastor-church relationships in Highland history and a period of growth. Numbering 451 members at the start of Bagby's pastorate, the church would grow to 590 by 1915, when it dedicated its new building. That number would slide to 550 by the time of Bagby's departure in 1921, but that was hardly remarkable given the disruptions of war, plague and Bagby's own eventual health problems.

At the start, Bagby brought a combination of vigor and scholarship to the pulpit. He avidly hunted and "loved all sports,"[37] reportedly twice winning state amateur golfing tournaments. Oral tradition says that some members questioned whether golfing wasn't superfluous and unseemly for Highland's pastor to engage in, but Bagby's youthful athleticism proved particularly popular with the young people. And Bagby's ministerial colleagues quickly ratified Mullins's high appraisal of his talents. The Long Run Association chose him to give their annual sermon in 1917, and the YMCA tapped him to work among soldiers at nearby Camp Taylor during World War I. A photo on the cover of the Highland bulletin for Bagby Day, marking his third anniversary in the pulpit in 1914, shows a Bagby in profile, his trim, youthful physique combined with a beyond-his-years gaze that suggests the intensity he brought to his work and that led eventually to a physical breakdown. At the tribute service, members of Highland got up to pay tribute to Bagby's work with the Sunday School, the young people, the men and "the new church"—a reference to his oversight of the building project that would solve, at least temporarily, the happy problem that the church had outgrown its space.

Pastor A. Paul Bagby won admirers for his athleticism and his dedication to church work.

Missions, Social Outreach and Social Issues

From its start, Highland regularly budgeted for "missions and benevolences," demonstrating how it viewed evangelism as inseparable from meeting the physical needs of the poor, the sick and others. In 1900 it started an enduring tradition by collecting for a Fellowship Fund for the needy each Communion Sunday. When area Baptists opened Hope Rescue Mission at 8th and Jefferson, Highland members joined its governing board and made contributions, starting a century of partnerships between Highland and those serving the neediest of Louisville on Jefferson Street.

Closer to home, Highland agreed in 1908 to cosponsor a new mission on Bardstown Road at Duker Avenue, which was then at the edge of the growing Louisville suburbs. Founded in May 1907, the City Limits Mission met first in a house, then a tent and then, as the weather turned cold, a coal shed. In April 1908 Highland agreed to share costs evenly with

Walnut Street Baptist Church for the property, building and operation of the mission. Members of the two churches served on its operating committee. The new mission became Deer Park Baptist Church, which built a small chapel and, in 1915, its present sanctuary on Bardstown Road. In 1910 a Highland committee studied the possibility of merging with Deer Park but concluded, for unspecified reasons, that "it was not advisable" to do so.[38]

One of Highland's earliest and most enduring contributions has been to Louisville Baptist Orphans' Home, which has evolved into today's Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. Highland routinely took special collections on behalf of the home. Early members like Amanda Kaye, Scott Duncan and Trevor Whayne served for years on its board.

From Highland's first year, women formed missionary societies for themselves and their children. Groups such as the Little Workers Missionary Society listened to missionary stories and supported Baptist causes. The Sunbeams, a children's group organized in 1907, numbered more than 100 members by 1910 (not all of them from families of church members). That year the Sunbeams heard talks from two missionaries from China and collected $45 to aid Su Ying, a girl at a missionary school in Laichow Fu, China, "whom we are educating."[39] They raised another $135 for missions to Africa. Charter member Louise Tucker took the missionary imperative further in 1910, embarking on decades of missionary work in China.

Whatever political involvement Highland members may have had in its early years, the records are silent on it. The Spanish-American War, the assassinations of President McKinley and Kentucky Governor Goebbel, the passage of Kentucky's discriminatory Day Law, the stolen Louisville election of 1905, the sinking of the Titanic—all of these passed without notice in the annals of church activities. Perhaps the pastors discussed them from the pulpit; perhaps some Highland members got involved in reformist Louisville politics (on the example of seminary president Mullins). Certainly members discussed such issues among themselves, but what they thought is unrecorded.[40]

Highland also lived in a segregated state—and state of mind. In its early decades, the white church made occasional, usually patronizing references to African Americans, but it wasn't until well into the twentieth century that the church showed concern about racial justice or considered blacks for membership.

On one social issue, however, Highland made its voice heard loudly and often: temperance. In an era of heavy alcoholism, Highlanders and other Baptists fiercely advocated government restriction of alcohol sales, not to mention individual abstinence. One Wednesday night in 1909, Highland canceled its midweek prayer meeting so members could attend a rally of the Anti-Saloon League in Louisville. George Eager, a seminary professor and active Highland member, served on the executive committee of the Anti-Saloon League. Pastor Dawes, as chairman of the Long Run Association's committee on temperance, called unequivocally for prohibition. The trafficking of intoxicants was "the cause of nearly all the poverty, crime [and] suffering of our State and nation," his committee contended in 1896, adding that even the governmental licensing of alcohol "is morally wrong because it gives legal respectability and

. . . protection to that traffic." Individual Baptists should abstain and urge others to do so, and churches should consider disciplining those who make or sell alcohol, the committee said.[41] Early in Highland's years, the use of alcohol was grounds for expulsion.[42]

Seminary Influences on Highland

Southern Seminary took a central role not only in birthing Highland but in raising it. Professors John Sampey, George Eager and William J. McGlothlin took active roles as members of the church, bringing a mix of backward- and forward-looking influences: a copious serving of nostalgia for what has been called the "Lost Cause" of the Confederacy, an intellectually sophisticated conservatism in theology and a moderate dose of the Social Gospel.

Sampey was born into an Alabama household where Confederate loyalties were almost literally an article of faith. Highland members were undoubtedly on the receiving end of some of the devotional talks he gave throughout his life on Robert E. Lee, who was practically his patron saint and that of the South. Eager, with his Mark Twain-like mustache and mane of white hair, brought even more impeccable Confederate credentials. He had enlisted in the Confederate Army at age sixteen and served as a courier in combat. Later graduating from Southern Seminary, Eager served pastorates in Virginia, Tennessee and Alabama and joined Highland in 1901 when he became the seminary's professor of biblical introduction and pastoral theology. He remained an active member until moving away in 1925, four years before his death. Eager was "the embodiment of that chivalry which was the old south," recalled William O. Carver, a seminary colleague. Carver's wife added that the seminary got its money's worth out of Eager's salary just by enabling "the students to see what a true Christian gentleman was like."[43] Carver said Eager was less successful as a teacher than he was popular for his easy exams, but Sampey said he "was a pleasing speaker, with literary and scholarly gifts, and, above all, a Christian gentleman. . . . With his cultured wife he was a valuable addition to the teaching staff."[44] Whatever Eager's merits as a seminary professor, he performed valuable service to Highland as Sunday School secretary, deacon, messenger to the Southern Baptist Convention and moderator of the difficult 1911 meeting on Doolan's status as minister.

In theology, Highland absorbed the professors' optimistic conservatism, which shunned the novel theologies but also reactionary attempts to boil the faith down to a set of legalistic shibboleths.

Sampey and Eager were well-established enough to be their own men by the time they joined Highland, but one cannot overlook the influence on them, and on the church overall, of E. Y. Mullins. President of the seminary from 1899 until his death in 1928, Mullins was surely more influential than any nonmember in Highland's history except patrons Marvin and Manly. He lived about three blocks away from Highland in a turreted brick home at 1311 Cherokee Road. Mullins swiftly rose to local and international renown as an able

Professor George Eager, who served in many roles at Highland, brought an unusual mix of nostalgia for the Confederacy and support for the Social Gospel.

Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

administrator, a shrewd denominational politician and a sophisticated theologian. Whereas the hallmark of many reactionary Baptists of his day was fear—of evolution, of immigration, of movies, of mixed bathing, even of automobiles—Mullins brought an affirming message of freedom of conscience, the priesthood of the believer, democratic church government, the separation of church and state and the right of individuals to read and interpret the Bible. "If there is any one thing which stands out above others in the crystal clearness in the New Testament, it is Christ's doctrine of the soul's capacity, right, and privilege to approach God directly and transact with Him in religion," Mullins wrote in his classic work, *The Axioms of Religion: A New Interpretation of the Baptist Faith.*[45]

Professor William McGlothlin supplied Highland's pulpit during vacancies.

Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Such views doubtlessly filtered down to Highland, which today honors Mullins with a stained-glass window showing him with his *Axioms.* Bagby viewed Mullins as a mentor and taught some of Mullins's classes while the president was traveling. A later Highland member, J. McKee Adams, served as Mullins's personal assistant in the 1920s.

Mullins and the seminary also showed some openness to the Social Gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch, the German-American Baptist theologian.[46] Rauschenbusch believed Christians must bring the Kingdom of God to life in all aspects, including social justice. Eager favorably reviewed books advocating the Social Gospel. His wife, Annie Eager, was also a leading organizer of the Women's Missionary Union Training School. Its students worked in the slums of Louisville and were surely influenced by the Social Gospel—and students who attended Highland would have brought that influence to church. The Social Gospel likely had some influence on Highland's early outreaches to the poor on Jefferson Street and beyond.

In fact, Rauschenbusch has a direct connection to Highland, where today he is depicted in a stained-glass window at the rear of the church, holding his classic work, *Christianity and the Social Crisis.* As a seminarian, Rauschenbusch served for two summers at the German Baptist Church and, according to a later Highland pastor, boarded with the family of Ernest Horn, which joined Highland soon after its opening. Horn's daughter Elsie Kottke recalled sitting on Rauschenbusch's knee as a girl and receiving an autographed copy of his book.[47]

Highland and the Whitsitt Controversy

The Baptist and seminary families were torn in a fierce controversy in the late 1890s. Seminary president William H. Whitsitt published his historical conclusions that the Baptist movement arose in seventeenth-century England. He also wrote that the earliest Baptists sprinkled rather than immersed their adult converts. Such views scandalized many Southern Baptists, who held Landmarkist views that Baptists always immersed and could trace an unbroken line back to John the Baptist himself. (The name comes from an obscure injunction in Proverbs to "remove not the ancient landmark," and it reflects a Baptist counterattack to Campbellites

John R. Sampey: "The Fighting Parson"

Between 1909 and 1929, Highland was the home church to one of the most colorful personalities in Southern Baptist Convention history. John R. Sampey, a Southern Seminary professor who would later become president of the seminary and the convention, played a leading role at Highland at that time, helping move pastors in and out, serving two terms as a supply preacher and working on almost every influential committee of his era.

As something of a Southern Renaissance man, Sampey divided his time seamlessly between the sophisticated Highland Baptist, with its professors and professionals, and the rustic Forks of Elkhorn Church, where he served three stints as pastor between 1885 and 1926 and whose summer revivals were still scheduled for full-moon nights so rural folk could see their way home. Sampey was equally at ease in Sunday School publication board meetings and in literary societies. He was a progressive ecumenist who nevertheless steered the Southern Baptist Convention away from the embryonic World Council of Churches. He was a Dixie devotee and segregationist who, late in life, quietly allowed the first steps toward integration at Southern Seminary.

Born in 1863 in the Alabama home of a relative who had died that same week in the Battle of Chickamauga, John Richard Sampey grew up amid wounded veterans and tales of wounded Southern glory. Highland, like generations of seminary classes and other audiences, must have often heard Sampey's stump speech in praise of Robert E. Lee, whom he adored as a saint. Sampey seemed a man more suited to the chivalry of the late nineteenth-century South than to the twentieth-century world in which he was living, said Duke McCall, a former Highland member and seminary president who worked for Sampey as a seminary student and admired him enough to name a son John Richard. Indeed, Sampey's patriotic speeches during both world wars earned him the nickname "the Fighting Parson." Yet he also was a progressive champion of academic freedom in defense of seminary president William H. Whitsitt, whose historical research drew reactionary criticism.

Raised the son of a farmer, Sampey often worked as a shepherd boy, a biblical occupation that gave him firsthand sermon anecdotes. He accepted Christ at age thirteen and was licensed to preach at fifteen. Soon Sampey was riding horseback to preach revival services. The high school valedictorian attended Howard College and graduated from Southern Seminary in 1885. He planned to go to the mission field, but seminary professor Basil Manly persuaded him to stay and work as a professor—which he did for fifty-seven years.

Sampey and his wife, Annie, faced tragedy early in their marriage with the loss of their young daughter, a precocious two-year-old whom Sampey always remembered for her eagerness to say her bedtime prayers for her family, the disabled boy across the street, and others. Sampey drew comfort from Psalm 103: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord

pitieth them that fear him." Sampey recalled saying aloud, "O Lord, is thy pitying love like this thing tugging at my heart? If so, it will never fail us."

In 1909 the seminary provided a home for the Sampeys at 1313 Willow Avenue, and Sampey transferred membership from Fourth Avenue Baptist Church to the nearby Highland Baptist. He immediately took a leadership role, serving as a trustee and supply preacher and on the building and pulpit committees. In the minutes of some meetings Sampey seems to be moving or seconding every item on the agenda. At other points he is less involved: Highland could only share Sampey's time with his phenomenal workload. Nevertheless, he was always a powerful presence, almost a bishop in residence. Sampey showed fierce loyalty to pastor A. Paul Bagby and his successor, Jesse B. Weatherspoon, whom Sampey eventually lured away to the seminary faculty. "Dr. Sampey is the best man who ever wore shoe leather," said Bagby, who had Sampey preach revivals at both Highland and Wake Forest College, where Bagby later served as pastor.

Sampey's wife, Anne, also took an active role at Highland and lamented having to cut back her work due to illness. In a letter to Sampey, she wrote: "I do so long to get to church. For twenty-five years after we were married I taught a [Sunday School] class and filled my place in the pew at church, but I can't do that anymore."

Sampey said Anne accepted her last illness with grace and courage. At her funeral in 1925, 300 people crowded into the church.

"Telegrams, letters and cards keep coming in from a wide circle of friends," Sampey wrote his daughter Elsie. "The body of your mother lies beside little Anita in the Seminary lot [in Cave Hill Cemetery] in which the bodies of Drs. Boyce, Broadus and Manly are buried. The flowers covered the entire grave, and enough remained to lay on the other adjacent graves."

Sampey in his grief poured himself into missionary work. He often regaled Highland audiences with tales of his evangelistic crusades, which he eventually preached on five continents, often traveling with his second wife, Ellen. Locals in Brazil gave Sampey a dramatic cape that Sampey wore proudly as a symbol of his missionary endeavors.

Sampey left Highland for Broadway Baptist in 1929, about the time he succeeded the late E. Y. Mullins as seminary president. Church archives do not explain the transfer, but Highland members lamented his departure. Perhaps Sampey felt obligated to worship with wealthy seminary benefactors at Broadway, as did Mullins before him, or perhaps he was upset with Highland's refusal to approve an expansion program. As president, Sampey guided the heavily indebted seminary through the Depression. He was elected to three terms as Southern Baptist Convention president. He retired in 1942 and died in 1946.

History has tended to overlook Sampey in favor of his contemporary E. Y. Mullins, whose theology and statesmanship set the standards for a generous-minded conservatism that influenced Southern Baptist leaders for decades. Yet Sampey, in a career nearly twice as long as that of Mullins, embodied that spirit in his own feisty way. A former student, Henlee Barnette, still sees Sampey's long finger stretched out at a rambling classmate, telling him: "Boy, put up your shotgun and bring out your rifle! We want some specificity about this!"

who claimed to be restoring the pure, primitive church.) It did little good to point out the lack of historical evidence for the Landmarkist claims or that even Whitsitt claimed immersion to be the divinely ordained, ancient practice.

Whitsitt's one-time pastor, T. T. Eaton, campaigned to get Whitsitt either to recant or to leave the seminary. Eaton, the pastor of Louisville's flagship Walnut Street Baptist Church, railed against Whitsitt in his influential newspaper, the *Western Recorder*.[48] Matters came to a boil in 1896 at a meeting of the Long Run Association at Walnut Street, when opposing messengers came, as one observer said, with speeches in their pockets with the destructive potential of "a dynamite bomb."[49] At first, the association appeared willing to put down the discussion with a polite resolution, but seminary professor and future Highland member John R. Sampey took the floor and launched a two-hour broadside in favor of Whitsitt, often interrupted by applause and catcalls. Whitsitt "ought to have freedom of spirit and freedom of speech to express what he finds in history," Sampey said.[50]

The next day, the association passed a resolution praising Whitsitt, and Sampey half apologized for his speech, which left a lasting record of both the tensions of the time and the feisty spirit he later brought to Highland:

> I do not believe I will ever inflict a speech on Long Run Association as long as the one I dumped on you yesterday. In the second place, I do not believe I will make any such wild gestures and jump over the pulpit as I did yesterday. Thirdly, . . . I do not believe I will ever get half as mad as I was yesterday. And in the fourth place, I hope, in the goodness of God, nobody will ever stir me up to get as mad as I was yesterday.[51]

But Eaton and other opponents persisted, and in 1897 Long Run joined a growing chorus calling for Whitsitt's resignation. Disappointingly, the only Highland messenger on record, John Tucker, joined in that call. Perhaps Tucker genuinely doubted Whitsitt's conclusions, or perhaps, like even some of Whitsitt's friends, he believed that only the president's resignation could bring peace. Highland's minutes say nothing about the controversy, and we should not take Tucker's stance as representing Highland's. Whitsitt resigned in 1899. History has since vindicated Whitsitt, and Landmarkism persists only in isolated pockets.[52]

What is clear is that Highland never became a reactionary, Landmarkist church. Sampey was just one of Whitsitt's strong supporters to join Highland in the ensuing years. Charles T. Dearing, who published Whitsitt's controversial book[53] and voted in his favor in that crucial 1897 Long Run meeting as a messenger from another church, joined Highland in 1898. Professor McGlothlin, who joined Highland in 1913, succeeded Whitsitt as professor of history, and he "quickly put to rest the fear that freedom of historical thought had been bridled at the seminary," one researcher said.[54] McGlothlin approached his work with pastoral concern rather than polemical rigidity, urging tolerance between those who differed on Baptist origins.

Baptist and Ecumenical Relations

Despite controversies within the Baptist family, Highland never saw itself as anything but loyal to that family. In its early years, it seemed to identify more closely with the local Long Run

Association than with its national affiliate, the Southern Baptist Convention. But Highland's Southern Baptist identity grew as that convention forged a dominant religious ethos in the twentieth-century South. By the early 1900s, Highland was using record books and Sunday School materials published by the convention.[55]

For all its Baptist identity, Highland cooperated ecumenically from the first. Pastor Simmons conducted a pulpit exchange with his Highland Presbyterian Church counterpart in 1894, and the following year those two churches and a Lutheran congregation held a joint service. Temperance provided a further opportunity for cross-denominational cooperation. Highland and other Baptist churches also helped support the interdenominational Union Gospel Mission, which ministered to the down and out on Jefferson Street.

Cooperation was rare between Highlanders and the dreaded two C's—Catholics and Campbellites. The latter was a slightly pejorative term for those in the Disciples of Christ or "Christian churches," which followed nineteenth-century preacher Alexander Campbell amid bitter schisms with Baptists and other denominations. Shortly after Edenside Christian Church opened, Highland's church minutes recorded archly that four Highland members were dropped from the roll after joining the "Campbellite Church on Bardstown Road." The records are silent on views toward Catholics. Baptists of that time agreed almost universally on Catholics' need for conversion, though the two faiths' demographic parity in Louisville made peaceful coexistence a civil necessity.

Women's Missionary Union Training School

Highland had a close link with the Women's Missionary Union Training School from its early twentieth-century opening, through its evolution into a social work school, to its controversial closing in 1995.

The endeavor began when women sought an education for missions and other church work. At first, they took classes at Southern Seminary, and Highland member Annie Eager led an effort to set up a chaperoned home for the women students. In 1907 the WMU opened a separate school with instruction given by seminary professors such as Sampey, McGlothlin and Annie Eager's husband, George. Annie Eager chaired a school board and recruited key personnel to the school. "Mrs. Eager's leadership was typical of her driving personality," recalled a later school president and historian.

Annie Eager was a driving force in creating the Women's Missionary Union Training School.

> When she [recruited] a person, that person might as well give in sooner, for she would have to do so later. . . . Mrs. Eager was at that time in the prime of life, a brilliant, alert woman who was completely happy when she could work for a cause that claimed her loyalty and devotion. . . . She was the persuasive leader, the keen strategist, the tactful diplomat

> who handled the difficult situations and wrote the important letters where words must either be weapons or healing agents.[56]

In their later years, Mr. and Mrs. Eager lived next to the school, and she became known to students as Grandmother Eager. Several Highland women, such as Mary Pratt, Lucy Short, Mrs. Trevor Whayne and Mrs. William J. McGlothlin served on the school's board, and Mr. Trevor Whayne put his real estate training to work in finding the school's home downtown. For decades, many women students from the school attended Highland.

Faith, Order and Money

For all the intellectual and ecumenical crosscurrents in which it swam, Highland determinedly retained its core Baptist identity and practice. Revivals, always a highlight of the church year, gathered in the children of members for baptism and new Baptist neighbors for membership.

Conservative in matters of the Bible and evangelism, the church showed its progressive impulse elsewhere. In January 1907, it voted "that this church receive members from other denominations upon their giving evidence of having been converted at the time they were immersed." Although low-level debates on that topic recurred for decades, the church clearly was not hung up on the dangers of "alien immersion" as were its Landmarkist counterparts. Along the same lines, Highland accepted members "by relation" or under "watch care," both indicating an associate status that Landmarkists would be less likely to accept. Still, Highland guarded its Baptist dignity, granting outgoing letters only to those joining other Baptist churches. Those joining other denominations, even friendly ones such as Presbyterians or Methodists, were dropped from the rolls as summarily as those joining the Campbellites or Catholics.

Highland followed typical Baptist polity of installing a governing board of deacons. The full church, meeting monthly, voted on budgets, elected officers and made other major decisions. Pastors chaired the full business meetings and attended deacons' meetings, with the understanding that they handled the preaching, evangelistic and other spiritual tasks. Only rarely, as in Doolan's case, was the balance of power between pastor and deacons upset. A separate board of trustees handled deeds and other legal transactions with the outside world. Sunday School officers oversaw that vital function of the church.

Annual budgets rose from more than $2,000 in the late 1890s to $6,000 in 1913, when $2,500 went to the pastor's salary. Church records show the church had little financial cushion in its early decades, finishing more months in the red than in the black. The church sometimes borrowed or took up special collections to balance its books, but this never seemed to rise to a crisis in the early years.

In fact, the church seemed to live a double life financially, spending generously on handsome buildings and weekly paid quartets and soloists, yet pinching pennies elsewhere. In 1915, for example, when Highland raised the salary of organist Gertrude Tucker from $15 to $25, it voted that she should have

> the privilege of organ practice between the hour of noon and such time as the turning on of lights should be necessary; also, that she be granted the use of the organ during these same hours for the purpose of instructing

> pupils who have acquired a knowledge of the piano, provided she will at all times be present with the pupil who is practicing, furthermore, that the Church is not to be heated for this purpose and Miss Tucker is to pay monthly for such electricity as Church Treasurer shall determine is excess charge above the amount of bill rendered for regular use of the organ.[57]

Music and Liturgy

Because no church bulletins from the early years survive, we are left to guess that early services were conducted in the dignified yet evangelistic style of many urban Baptist churches.[58] Interestingly, the two earliest bulletins that survive—one from Bagby's anniversary celebration in 1913, the other from the new sanctuary's dedication in 1915—show that Highland's twin tastes for gospel and classical music have deep roots. The Bagby Day titles included congregational hymns like "It's Just Like Jesus" and "Rescue the Perishing," while the dedication service featured more formal solo numbers like "How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings" and "Miriam's Song of Triumph."

The church's reliance on paid singers indicates the pew sitters were relatively passive in musical matters; only in later decades would the church get rid of its paid singers, in part to save money but also in recognition of the spiritual value of robust congregational singing and larger volunteer choirs.

Not all was polished and professional, however. Carolyn Hoeing, who grew up in the church, recalled that children usually operated the hand pump on the organ, and if their attention got diverted, the organ would fade in the middle of the hymn.[59]

Life of the Church

Highland developed an early reputation as a silk-stocking church, according to oral tradition, and partly for good reason, given the "aristocratic" label of its street.

Certainly Highland's paid quartets spoke of affluence, or at least aspirations to it. So did its stately house of worship, with which the Baptists of the Highlands showed they could match the Episcopalians gable for gable. (Highland was hardly the classiest church even within its own faith and order: both Walnut Street and Broadway Baptist churches had built themselves towering cathedrals downtown.)

Yet the roster of Highland's members speaks more of solid than spectacular success—more of a vigorous bourgeoisie than a pampered aristocracy. Many members were busy building their own businesses—James Phelps in tobacco, John Tucker in quarrying, Charles Dearing in printing, Scott Duncan in wallpapering, for example. Members pursued their professional aspirations among each other. Dearing printed some of the church's envelopes and other materials, and Tucker either sold or donated his stones to the church. Trevor Whayne advertised his real estate business in a church directory, while a business card preserved in the church archives suggests that Charles Gould solicited insurance business from fellow members.[60]

And if Cherokee Road displayed the aristocratic side of the Highlands, the church also drew many ordinary, middle-class households from the dusty, unpaved side streets, such as the Wyatts of Morton Avenue. Richard H. and Mary Wyatt and their five children shared three bedrooms besides a kitchen, living room, dining

room, bath and outhouse. "We were not a poor family but our circumstances were quite modest, especially when we children were growing up," recalled their son, future mayor Wilson Wyatt, who was born in 1905. "Our home on Morton Avenue was comfortable but not fancy at all. . . . Ours was a traditional middle-class neighborhood and we knew most of our neighbors."[61]

Carolyn Cleaton Hoeing recalled growing up in a large, white frame house in what was known as Slaughter's Field, just off the unpaved Transit Avenue (now Grinstead Drive), which turned muddy in winter and dusty in summer. Early memories include chasing the family cow around Slaughter's Field.[62]

As Louisville continued to develop outward into such new neighborhoods as Tyler Park and Deer Park, the church drew members from there as well. Furthermore, the move of seminary professors to the Highlands—Sampey to Willow, Mullins and Eager to Cherokee Road—brought to the neighborhood and church an educated, if not especially moneyed, element.

An Active Laity

Paid singers aside, Highland members knew instinctively that a democratic institution such as a Baptist church could function only as well as its members. Like such charter families as the Wyatts, Tuckers and Phelpses, later joiners put in impressive records of service.

H. G. Brownell, onetime director of the Bardstown Baptist Institute, an academy, served as deacon and building committee member and was Highland's Sunday School superintendent. Scott Duncan served as church treasurer and deacon, as a representative to the orphans home and as a member of a soldiers correspondence committee during World War I. J. D. Shouse served on the deacons and the education building committee, while Trevor Whayne served for years as trustee, deacon, active board member of the orphans home and in other roles. Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Cleaton joined in December 1899. Mr. Cleaton was ordained to the ministry two years later, although he never served as a pastor; Mrs. Cleaton served as a financial secretary and on various committees. But perhaps they are most notable today for starting the longest family tradition in the history of Highland, where their granddaughter, Edith Hoeing, continues to be active.

In the early days, only men served as pastors, deacons and trustees. But as is often the case, women performed much of the indispensable work of the church, from the pre-1893 fundraisers onward. They taught Sunday School, took active roles in denominational affairs, formed ambitious missionary societies for themselves and enrolled their children in still others.

Highland poured much of its energy into its youth, developing not only a Sunday School but, by 1910 at the latest, a Baptist Young People's Union, which provided further religious education and recreational activities. Young people joined missionary societies. A Baraca club for boys met in the basement of the education building, though the installation of a pool table there scandalized the church enough that it removed the table and reimbursed the boys.[63] Church minutes, which generally skimp on details in the early years, provide a verbal snapshot of a Sunbeam picnic in 1909, when some sixty children and the women tending them piled into carriages and rode up to Cherokee Park for a picnic.

Highland's early success claimed one beloved casualty: its original building. The small, gas-lit, coal-heated sanctuary served a lifespan of two decades before the church outgrew and replaced it. Yet far in the future, at the church's fortieth anniversary, members looked back nostalgically at the "first little stone Church built at the very edge of the City Limits (at that time) with its bell in the tower calling the people many miles around to the services," church secretary Nettie Horn recorded.

> Stepping inside one found it very cozy and inviting. The miniature library presided over by Miss Mary Pratt with its book shelves around the walls of the vestibule; the warm hand shake from the pastor as he greeted you at the doorway; the small organ that solemnly called the congregation to worship; the cushioned bench near the front where Miss Lucy Phelps, the invalid, was always sure to be found whenever services were held; [and] the beautiful flowers contributed regularly for many years by Mrs. Seers.[64]

Fittingly, the last wedding in the old sanctuary was that of Carolyn Cleaton and Fellmer Hoeing on October 6, 1913. In more than sixty-five years of married life, they would serve as living pillars of the growing church in its new building.

Notes

1. Quoted in Thomas, 12.
2. Thomas, 59, 86–87. However unequally segregated its housing was then, the Highlands may be less racially diverse today, when African-Americans take long bus treks from the West End to work in service jobs along Bardstown Road.
3. Wyatt family history is contained in Highland archives, Wilson Wyatt's *Whistle Stops*, Hall's *Complete Conviction* and Terry Birdwhistell's oral-history interview with Wilson Wyatt.
4. Two accounts survive of Highland's founding—one published in *The Courier-Journal* on the day of its opening, the other written twenty-one years later by charter member Mary Pratt, daughter of a founding trustee and longtime librarian for both the church and the Highlands. They essentially corroborate each other; where they differ in small details, one has to choose between the contemporaneous secondhand report and the later firsthand account, filtered through two decades of memory. Mary Pratt's account puts greater emphasis on the role of women in founding the church, drawing no doubt from her own experience working alongside the Miss Tuckers, Miss Phelpses and Miss Dearings who fill the rosters of early Sunday School teachers.
5. Property deeds, 5/20/1891, 8/31/1891.
6. "Regular Baptists," Leonard, *Dictionary*, 234.
7. Manly to J.S. Kirtley, 11/25/1891. The Manly letters cited in this chapter are contained in Letter Copy Book vol. 21 of Basil Manly Jr. at Southern Seminary. Since the church Sunday School records begin only in January 1892, the only peek we have into 1891 are in the property deeds and occasional references in Manly's correspondence.
8. SSR, 1892.
9. Manly to Louise Manly.
10. Dr. Marvin was his physician in his last years. Several contemporaries noted that Manly died the same date as another renowned Baptist, the British preacher Charles Spurgeon.
11. Quoted in Highland Baptist Church, by Edith Hoeing. Unpublished manuscript in church archives.
12. Identified in records then as McFerran Memorial.
13. LR, 1898.
14. CJ, 8/21/13.
15. The letters are: Mrs. Charles Gould to Sampey, 4/9/26, SP; Louise Tucker to HBC, 4/3/33, CM; Florence and Louise Tucker to HBC, 4/25/43, CM. Other sources include an undated CJ obituary of John W. Tucker from 1927 and a resolution on the death of Florence Tucker, CM, 6/19/57.

16. CJ, 5/8/1893. The ads surrounding the article form a period piece in themselves, hawking "Dr. Price's Delicious Flavoring Extracts," the "famous waters" of French Lick Springs, Indiana, and European-bound ocean liners.
17. CJ, 5/8/1893.
18. DM, 4/6/31. Designated to reply was Ernest Horn, the erstwhile member of the German Baptist Church who probably knew Hammon from when both men helped get Highland started.
19. Acquired in 1925 by the convention's Baptist Sunday School Board, the store became the first in the Baptist Book Store chain, though it no longer exists in its original downtown spot. The chain, now called LifeWay Christian Stores, with about 100 outlets, describes its history at www.lifeway.com/about_pr0501b.asp.
20. CM, 12/16/1894. Simmons went on to earn a doctorate at South Western Baptist University in 1897. In the last reference that could be found of him, Simmons was listed in Terre Haute, Ind., in 1899, according to *The Ministerial Directory of the Baptist Churches*, George W. Lasher ed., Ministerial Director Co., Oxford, Ohio, 1899. Email from Pat Brown, LifeWay Christian Resources, 3/16/2004.
21. LR, 1895, 1907.
22. The article, clipped from an unidentified publication, is in the HBC archives.
23. Letter from Lucile Dawes Whitehouse and Zilla Dawes Farris, HBH, 5/24/68.
24. LR, 1897.
25. CM, 1/17/11.
26. The church voted on 5/31/11 "that minutes of called meeting of Jan. 18, 1911, be expunged from the records, and the minutes as revised by Dr. Geo. B. Eager and Bro. Trevor H. Whayne, a committee appointed for that purpose, be substituted therefore."
27. A separate set of minutes has been pasted over the original, but the latter is legible by backlighting.
28. W. O. Carver wrote that Doolan worked as temporary instructor at Southern Seminary and "was a very competent Old Testament teacher, especially in Hebrew." "Recollections," 100.
29. "History," 1943.
30. WR, 6/24/81.
31. Quoted in Kremer, 8.
32. "History," 1943. It should be noted that this history, written within living history of the events, did not mention the controversy.
33. CM, 7/23/11.
34. CM, 12/31/11.
35. "The Bagbys," by Harry Ashby Bagby (1863–1945), Paul's brother, reprinted on the family genealogical Web site, www.bagby.org.
36. WR, 5/7/53.
37. "History," 1943.
38. CM, 6/15/10; Deer Park "Prospectus."
39. CM, 5/29/10.
40. Some Louisville Protestant figures, such as Mullins, supported a "fusionist" coalition of Republicans and reformist Democrats against the Whallen political machine. Whether any Highland members joined in is not evident.
41. LR, 1896, 1898.
42. Mrs. Fellmer Hoeing, quoted by Kremer, 18.
43. Quoted in Leonard, *Dictionary*, 108.
44. Carver, "Recollections," 83; Sampey, *Memoirs*, 105.
45. *Axioms*, 72.
46. Ellis, 24, 129.
47. Interview, sermon, Don Burke.
48. Then published by the Baptist Book Concern, which Eaton controlled, the WR did not come under the official aegis of Kentucky Baptists until 1919.
49. WR, 9/10/1896.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. Bugg, 101.
53. *A Question in Baptist History*, 1896.
54. Bugg, 215.
55. This is particularly noteworthy since Sampey was for decades a member of a somewhat competing ecumenical Sunday School publisher.
56. Littlejohn, 83, 99, 118.
57. CM, 6/2/15.
58. Often known as the Charleston tradition, with its flagship at First Baptist in Charleston, South Carolina, where Basil Manly Jr.'s father served as pastor.
59. WR, 6/24/81.
60. Inserted in SSR, 1908–09.
61. Hall, 5.
62. WR, 6/24/81.
63. CM, 7/14/09.
64. CM, 5/33.

CHAPTER TWO

1915–1929

"The Church of Tomorrow"

Highland opened a new, larger sanctuary in 1915 and had every reason to be optimistic for a renewed beginning. Instead, for the next six years, it barely held its own as it was buffeted by crisis after crisis. America's entry into World War I drew pastor A. Paul Bagby and several members into one form or another of military-related service. When a global influenza pandemic swept through Louisville, Highland was largely spared casualties, but the plague shut down services for several weeks as its leaders provided pastoral care for the dying. After the war, Bagby suffered repeated health breakdowns that kept the church unsettled through his departure in 1921. But with the 1922 hiring of pastor Jesse B. Weatherspoon, who brought scholarship, social conscience and evangelistic passion to the pulpit, and with an aggressive youth program, Highland membership nearly doubled by the end of the decade. On the eve of the Depression, Highland's biggest problem seemed to be the same one it was facing in 1915—where to put all the new people it was attracting.

A New Home

As Highland outgrew its original sanctuary, it began collecting $16,000 in pledges in 1913 toward a building program. Expanding the existing structure proved unfeasible, architects reported, so the church decided to raze the existing structure and build anew, laying the cornerstone in 1914.

Architect Hugh Lloyd Nevin designed a church in the English Gothic manner (a simpler

Highland's new sanctuary was opened in 1915.

style than that of continental Europe's soaring cathedrals). Unlike the first church, which faced Cherokee Road, this one stood at a forty-five-degree angle to the streets, facing the intersection directly with a broad, welcoming entrance way. As with the original church, deacon John W. Tucker provided blond limestone from his quarry.

The windows rose to gentle Gothic points, with diamond-shaped, amber-tinted glass panes. The church dedicated one window to the late Juliette Norton Marvin, benefactor of the original building. The walls were supported by sturdy buttresses, and the tower emulated "a turreted fortress,"[1] similar to the squat, crenellated towers that adorn many English forts and churches. The sanctuary featured graceful, wooden ceiling beams with circular ornamentation, a new $2,500 Pilcher organ directly behind the pulpit, a small choir loft and a floor-level baptistery. (Popular legends state that because the church was modeled on an Anglican one in England, or because the architect was Presbyterian, no one made provisions for a built-in baptistery, forcing the church to improvise one. No evidence supports either legend.) The clerk reported:

> It was the general opinion that the Church had more than gotten value received, both in workmanship and material, and the Architect and Building Committee were highly commended in remarks by the Pastor and several of the Brethren for their close application to detail in seeing that contracts were carried out.[2]

On the second Sunday in May 1915, marking the twenty-second anniversary of Highland, members and other Baptist luminaries dedicated the sanctuary. Accompanied by the new Pilcher organ, paid singers performed anthems titled as "How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings" and "Except the Lord Build a House." Seminary president E. Y. Mullins and Broadway Baptist pastor W. W. Landrum gave prayers, and Bagby delivered the inaugural sermon. Members pledged $12,996 toward the building that day, though whether these were part of or in addition to previous pledges is unclear. (Subsequent records show the church worked off a $10,000 debt over the coming five years.)

This is the last original window from the 1915 sanctuary. It is dedicated in memory of Juliette Norton Marvin, who paid for construction of the original sanctuary.

A snapshot of church statistics at this moment showed a healthy congregation, with 590 members, a $7,695 budget and a Sunday School with 350 pupils and 25 teachers. The church also streamlined by reducing its number of deacons from 15 to 12 and seeking to clean its books of inactive members and doubtful pledges. But Highland did not bask long in its hopeful new beginning.

World War I

On April 6, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany, entering a world war that had already been ravaging Europe for three years. Several Highland members entered military service, and the church formed a committee to correspond with them and issued them "traveling letters" to enable them to link up with Baptist churches near their bases. The only serviceman from Highland whose name is recorded—John R. Sampey Jr.—served as an

infantry second lieutenant in a machine gun battalion in France and was commended as "a faithful officer."[3]

The war was far more than just a distant echo from France. The U.S. government placed a large training base in southern Jefferson County. Almost overnight, Camp Zachary Taylor rose as a virtual city. It trained more than 150,000 soldiers by war's end and housed still more returning from Europe. The YMCA launched a ministry there and asked Bagby to take a leading role. The church voted in July to grant him a one-year leave of absence. "Dr. Bagby said that he had considered the matter for the past two weeks and was convinced that the only conscientious thing for him to do was to take up the work," the church clerk recorded.[4] Highland contracted John R. Sampey Sr. and William J. McGlothlin—seminary professors and church members—to supply its pulpit in the meantime, with deacons handling visitation. Those men fulfilled their task despite being drawn into war work of their own.

Sampey, in between his supply preaching, teaching and tending a victory garden at home, gave so many patriotic speeches that he earned the nickname "the Fighting Parson."[5] He spoke two to three times a week at Camp Taylor, exhorting troops to defend civilization against what he viewed as German barbarism. Sampey urged his seminary students to enlist—not as chaplains but as fighters. "Had Dr. Sampey had his way, I think the entire student body would have enlisted in World War I," one student recalled.[6] At the Long Run Association meeting in 1918, messengers rose to a chorus of "My Country 'Tis of Thee" after Sampey called for the "willing loyalty and sacrifice to aid our native land in winning a glorious victory and to consecrate all to her in the hour of world strife which is being waged for freedom and liberty."[7]

McGlothlin went to work for the U.S. Food Administration, which had recruited religious figures to spread its call for the prudent use of food supplies. "The war must be won, and each of us can help by food conservation," McGlothlin urged Baptists.[8] Highland authorized McGlothlin to take leaves from the pulpit as needed. "It is a great sacrifice to have to be away from home so long, but I am willing to make this personal sacrifice if I can thereby bring this campaign to a successful issue," McGlothlin wrote from Washington to a colleague.[9] McGlothlin later worked on a government committee providing humanitarian relief to war-torn Europe.

Highland also reached out to soldiers in town, receiving some as members or taking them in under "watch care." A Rev. Lawrence M. Kelly of the British Army was listed as a member.

Bagby attended some church meetings and gave the annual sermon at the Long Run Association in 1917. With the war still raging into 1918, he felt he should continue his Camp Taylor work beyond his one year's leave of absence and offered to resign. But the church instead extended his leave as well as its supply contracts with Sampey and McGlothlin. The church did want Bagby to lead a revival in November, but events overtook those plans. Stationed at Camp Taylor's hospital, Bagby was about to witness an apocalyptic scourge.

Influenza

Soldiers returning from World War I carried with them the most vicious strain of influenza ever to sweep the world. The plague, destined to kill at least 20 million people worldwide, swept Camp Taylor and spread into Louisville. From September to November 1918, at least 10,000 soldiers were hospitalized at Camp Taylor; at least 800 died. Another 6,400 cases and 500 deaths were reported in the city.[10] The city Board of Health banned all public gatherings, so Highland canceled services and Sunday School from October 6 to November 10, and even after that the board closely monitored Sunday School gatherings. Not until early 1919 could the church serve communion at Parr's Rest, a nearby home for elderly Baptist women.

"The Lord spared the people of our Church" from the influenza, a grateful church clerk recorded.[11] But at least two members were in the thick of the crisis: Bagby, stationed at Camp Taylor, and Sampey Sr., who volunteered more than usual there. "Strong young men went down before the sudden onset of the mysterious disease," Sampey wrote:

> When the scourge was at its worst, I continued my visits to the hospital and tried to minister to the sick. As men grew worse they would be moved to the section of the ward where their comrades lay dying. When men could tell the address of loved ones, I wrote letters for them. There were few who could dictate a letter, but I would write and then read to them what I had written, and get their consent to send the message as written.[12]

Twenty-seven years later, Sampey received a letter from one such soldier, thanking him for writing his family when he was ill.[13]

On November 11, the day after the quarantine on church gatherings was lifted, news arrived of the Armistice signaling the end of World War I. Members of Highland and other Baptist churches met the following Sunday at Broadway Baptist Church for a "Victory Thanksgiving Service."

Other Tragedies

Though the worst wave of influenza spared Highland, the plague struck the church on the rebound. Sixteen-year-old Evelyn Mortimore, who had attended Highland with her sister, died at age sixteen on October 8, 1919, of tuberculosis compounded by influenza. Her father had also died recently, and although her parents were not members of Highland, the church had helped the family with coal and other supplies during the winter. Four days after losing her daughter, Mary E. Mortimore came forward and presented herself as a candidate for baptism.[14]

Tragedy also struck another young life. Richard H. Wyatt Jr., son of charter member Richard Sr. and his wife, Mary, died at age seventeen in September 1917 of an infection resulting from a ruptured appendix. Wilson Wyatt recalled for the rest of his life the day he met his parents on the street as he was doing an errand and was told of the death of the older brother he had admired. Wilson Wyatt later said he never indulged in nostalgia for "the good old days" before medical advances, such as the antibiotics that could have saved his brother's life.[15]

Postwar Recovery and Posttraumatic Stress

With the war and plague over, Highland sought to resume business as usual. It held a revival in March 1919 with an all-star cast of preachers that included Sampey, Mullins, Broadway's Landrum and others. Five people joined the church. But the war continued to reverberate.

Highland lost one of its leading members when William McGlothlin—who had gained recognition as a denominational leader in wartime—accepted the presidency of Furman University in South Carolina in 1919. He was launched on a trajectory that carried him to the Southern Baptist presidency in the early 1930s before his sudden death in June 1933.[16] Highland held a bittersweet reception for him in June 1919.

> Dr. McGlothlin's response was a fatherly farewell to us all. We felt that our brotherly connections do not cease though Dr. McGlothlin and his family have left us. We are still much interested in their welfare. Music and refreshments added to the joyful occasion. God be with them till we meet again.[17]

A restless Bagby returned to Highland's pulpit but was soon considering a call to Richmond, Virginia. The church responded magnanimously with a resolution that

> we have such love for our pastor and such appreciation of his worth and character that we desire to express our complete confidence in him and to state that we are willing for him to go to look over the field at Richmond or elsewhere believing that he is actuated solely by his desire to serve God in such manner and such place as he shall be led to serve.[18]

Bagby later concluded "that it was God's will to remain with our Church here in Louisville." With that renewed commitment, he helped organize a neighborhood survey of potential members and urgently promoted a revival for March 1920. "Our Church is in the best condition today that it has ever known," he wrote members, calling for prayer and work to "win our section of the city for Christ."[19]

But Bagby quickly worked himself to exhaustion. The church granted him a two-month leave in April. This was becoming a familiar pattern for Bagby. Even the nineteen-year-old John R. Sampey Jr. could see the strain in his pastor during a 1916 revival meeting. "Preaching is a trying job and it is so easy to overdue it [*sic*]," he wrote his father. "Our meeting is doing very nicely but I fear Dr. Bagby is carrying too much."[20]

Bagby returned from his leave to a busy time at Highland. On hot summer nights in those days before air conditioning, Highland advertised itself to the neighborhood with outdoor Sunday night services on its lawn, attended by as many as 200. On September 26, 1920, the church held a "Silver Dollar Day," urging each member to contribute at least one extra dollar to finish off the building debt. "The joy of giving was surely rampant," the church clerk recorded. "Old and young gladly made their offering. Grandfathers and mothers carried children to the front to lay down their dollars. The last of our Church debt was raised and all were happy indeed."[21]

The following week, about 300 members "from far and near" gathered for a daylong celebration of Bagby's ninth anniversary in Highland's pulpit as well as its dedication of

the debt-free church. The ever-active John W. Tucker ceremonially burned the loan notes, and the congregation sang "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow." Fifteen people were baptized.

> A bountiful dinner was prepared by the ladies of the church. . . . Dr. Bagby, our dear Pastor, in a touching prayer dedicated our Church Home to the service of the Lord and spoke of the future plans for the advancement of our work. . . . The Lord's Supper was the conclusion of a happy day for our pastor and his people, long to be remembered.[22]

But Bagby had rushed his return too quickly and suffered another health breakdown. Doctors ordered a rest period of at least six months. The church approved a paid leave of absence "out of the love to Dr. Bagby and appreciation of his faithful service."[23]

The church once again appointed Sampey as a supply preacher along with McGlothlin's successor at the seminary, F. M. Powell, who had joined Highland.

A letter from longtime deacon Scott Duncan to Sampey reflects growing worries about the impact of Bagby's absences: "We are looking to your supplying with a great deal of pleasure and assure you that we will not even nod during your ministry. You are right about keeping things moving during the absence of our Pastor, and we will."[24]

Indeed, the records teem with continued activity—recruitment visits in the neighborhood, a service of Christmas music, a $378 collection for food relief in Europe. Sampey baptized such people as young Ralph Logan, a pillar of Highland leadership in future decades.

Bagby, meanwhile, motored off with his family to Virginia, where he relaxed by hunting squirrels and rabbits. He took special pleasure in bagging two birds that flew right in front of him, even if they were out of season. "I am feeling quite a deal better already, eating well and sleeping well," he wrote Sampey.[25]

Records never indicate what was wrong with Bagby; perhaps neither he nor his doctors knew. Today we can speculate he had chronic fatigue syndrome, bipolar disorder or perhaps post-traumatic stress disorder from the Camp Taylor plague experience.

In any case, Bagby needed a change. He made only a brief return to Highland the following May, resigning in August 1921 to accept the pastorate of Wake Forest College and its accompanying church in North Carolina. He later went on to other pulpits, including that of First Baptist in Williamsburg, Kentucky, from which he sent Highland congratulations in 1933 on its fortieth anniversary:

> My ten years' pastorate of the church brought to me and my family blessings many. It is a noble church—a loyal and lovable people. I shall love the church to the end of my days. . . . Mrs. Bagby would join me in this greeting, but she is about to slip away to meet with the redeemed of the ages on the other shore, but her love has always abounded toward the Highland Baptist Church.[26]

A. Paul Bagby died on April 13, 1953.[27]

A Mission in the West End

The very day Bagby formally tendered his resignation, August 8, 1921, Highland also voted to assume responsibility of a new mission at 38th and Market streets in the West End. Near the end of 1921, it authorized spending $8,000 on

a new building there, and Highland began counting members of the mission among its own official members.

The mission gestated quickly. By November 1922, it averaged a worship attendance of sixty and hosted a Sunday School, a midweek prayer meeting and Baptist Young People's Union chapters. On September 5, 1923, Highland formally discharged about 100 members of the mission when it became an independent congregation, known as Shawnee Baptist Church. Through the decades, Shawnee continued as a small neighborhood church. Led by pastor Lonnie Mattingly since 1972, however, the church has gone on to dramatic growth as a fundamentalist church, independent from the Southern Baptist Convention and using only the King James translation of the Bible. It now meets in larger facilities on Bank Street, drawing 1,200 worshipers on Sunday mornings and hosting a Christian school and Bible college.[28]

J. B. Weatherspoon

Soon after Bagby's departure, Highland zeroed in on a successor: Jesse B. Weatherspoon, a North Carolina pastor and former instructor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Texas. In November the church agreed to hire Weatherspoon at $5,000 a year based on a glowing pulpit committee recommendation:

> He is a man of deep spiritual sense and power, without which a great church can never be built up. He is a winner of souls, an able preacher, an effective organizer and a true, companionable and energetic man, whose deepest concern is his high calling as a man of God, and he has caught the vision of a great future for our Church.[29]

That recommendation seemed to set an impossibly high bar for Weatherspoon, but he met every expectation in a pastorate that brought strong growth to Highland for the rest of the decade. "He was the gold standard by which all others were measured," with "his brilliant preaching, his warm pastoral style, his scholarship," recalls John Ewing Roberts, who grew up in Highland after Weatherspoon had left but while his reputation endured.[30] Wilson Wyatt also recalled Weatherspoon preaching impressive, scholarly sermons. His views were well formed in the 1920s on the need for a "prophetic passion" in the pulpit, though surviving bulletins show few references to the social witness for which Weatherspoon became well known after leaving Highland.

Weatherspoon quickly made his mark on Highland, preaching a ten-day revival in 1922 that resulted in eighteen new members. He later organized some of the most successful revivals in Highland's history.

Sixty-two people joined during a two-week meeting led by Virginia evangelist John J. Wicker in 1924. Eighteen of them presented themselves for baptism after one youth service alone.

Two years later, evangelist Lloyd Tilghman Wilson led a revival that brought in fifty-nine members, preaching on such eclectic topics as "the most popular sin in the world," "life's most important lesson," "the fall of the apostle Peter," "serving the risen Christ," "the imperious now," "old-time religion" and "the barren life." Eighteen converts were baptized at a single Sunday night service.

Fifty-one new members joined in 1927 after yet another revival, led by Bowling Green pastor J. E. Hampton and Jewish-Christian evangelist

Jacob Gartenhous. "We enjoyed a wonderful meeting with the ingathering of many souls and the rededicating of those of us who were in need of a new awakening to our task," the clerk reported.

Nor was the church waiting for prospects to show up at its door. Volunteers fanned out in the neighborhood to promote the meetings, held "cottage prayer meetings" in members' homes to pray for the success of upcoming revivals and organized a "win one" week in 1925, urging members to witness to non-Christian friends. Young Sunday School students searched the Highlands for new pupils. "They promise to bring back a report as favorable as that of Joshua and Caleb and to avoid the weak-hearted report of the other 10 spies who went into the land of promise," the church bulletin reported. Older students should follow their example "or admit that 'A little child shall lead them.' "[31]

Highland, meanwhile, was spreading evangelistic fervor elsewhere. Weatherspoon regularly conducted revivals at other churches. John Sampey embarked on a new missionary career. He enthralled Highland's Women's Missionary Union and other groups with his tales of evangelistic crusades in Brazil and other foreign lands, where he had begun traveling after the death of his first wife in 1925. A church bulletin in 1928 kept members up to date on his latest evangelistic successes in Brazil: fifty-five professions of faith in just one week.[32]

Highland's bulletin captured the evangelistic ethos of the times in 1927 with this quotation from the prominent northern Baptist pastor Russell H. Conwell:

> The mission of the church is to save the souls of men. That is its true mission. It is the only mission of the church. That should be its only thought. The minute that any church admits a singer that does not sing to save souls; the moment a church calls a pastor who does not preach to save souls; the moment a church elects a deacon who does not work to save souls; the moment a church gives a supper or entertainment of any kind not for the purpose of saving souls, it ceases in so much to be a church.[33]

Youth Activities

More than just harvesting souls, Highland nurtured them as well. Assistant pastor J. Floyd Morris, a Southern Seminary student, led a dynamic youth program with the slogan "The Church of Tomorrow." The church's weekly calendar was packed with Sunday School programs, weekday missionary society meetings and Sunday evening gatherings of the Baptist Young People's Union (BYPU), which trained pupils in the Bible and Baptist identity.

Children in the BYPU performed educational dramas that were so effective that one visitor asked where he could buy a script, assuming it had been professionally done. In one drama, titled "The Superiority of the Bible," a lawyer, a physician, a farmer and others visit a library and pour out their troubles to a kindly librarian. She dispenses "a comforting bit of scripture to all who came tired and troubled to her desk." The BYPU attendance record "was smashed" that night, said the bulletin.[34] In 1928, Chinese seminary student Fu Chun starred in a BYPU play called "The Color Line," portraying a native Chinese student encountering such characters as a Western college president, a daughter of missionaries, an ROTC

The Prophetic Passion of J. B. Weatherspoon

After a Southern Seminary student delivered a flamboyant country sermon in class, professor J. B. Weatherspoon told him, "Young man, there are two ways to go through a door. One is to turn the knob and the other is to knock it down. You knocked it down."

Weatherspoon devoted his entire life to the art of turning the knob.

Pastor J. B. Weatherspoon led Highland through a period of dramatic growth in the 1920s.

Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Jesse B. Weatherspoon was born on July 21, 1886, the youngest of eleven children, and grew up working in the family grocery in Durham, North Carolina. Family devotions and prayer were daily practices in the Weatherspoon home. At a boarding high school, he learned to study long hours without interruption, a habit that served him well as a pastor and professor. Weatherspoon entered Wake Forest College, where he joined the debating team and practiced public speaking in the woods. He earned a doctorate at Southern Seminary in 1911, writing a dissertation on the book of Isaiah under professor John R. Sampey.

Weatherspoon taught for five years at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, then pastored churches in North Carolina, where he met his wife, Ada, whom he married in 1913. (Always called "Lady," she would become well-known among Highland women for leading missionary study circles.) While serving at First Baptist in Winston-Salem, Weatherspoon was mentored by a previous pastor who encouraged him to apply Christian ethics to modern social problems.

Sampey personally visited Weatherspoon to recruit him to be pastor of Highland Baptist. Weatherspoon led the church from 1922 to 1929 while also teaching part-time at the seminary and serving on denominational boards.

Weatherspoon, his biographer says, "disliked many of the routine tasks of the pastor and despised the many unnecessary interruptions that kept him from his primary task, but he was always available in time of need." He planned his sermons a year in advance, believing that "slovenliness in sermon-making is a sin."

In surviving church records and bulletins from the 1920s, Weatherspoon talks mainly of evangelization and church growth, but by the time he left Highland in 1929, he had fully developed what he called the "prophetic passion" for social justice. "The ethical content of the Gospel . . . must have the constant though certainly not the whole attention of the preacher," he said in his inaugural address as professor of ethics at Southern Seminary.

In 1929, he went to Southern Seminary as a professor, first in ethics and sociology and then in preaching. A student of his, Henlee Barnette, said Weatherspoon taught thousands of future pastors the techniques of cool, persuasive and scholarly preaching.

"There was a spiritual atmosphere in his classes," recalled another contemporary. "His own faith and the richness of his personal relationship to God spilled over into his teaching."

Never a flashy denominational politician, Weatherspoon made lasting contributions by

writing Sunday School lessons that, despite many Southern Baptists' aversion to the term "Social Gospel," tactfully emphasized the ethical demands of Jesus.

As a member of the Southern Baptists' Social Service Commission, he persuaded the conservative convention to pass measures that even today seem bold in their ethical ambition, urging a ban on atomic weapons and the compulsory draft. After the Supreme Court ordered the desegregation of public schools in the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision, he persuaded the Southern Baptist Convention to urge compliance with the ruling. "Nobody thought anybody could do that," Barnette recalls.

Weatherspoon succeeded by urging messengers to live up to an overhead banner at the convention hall that read "Forward, Jesus Christ." To reject the resolution, he said, would be to march backwards and say, "Count the Baptists out in the matter of equal justice."

After retiring from Southern Seminary in 1956, Weatherspoon went on to teach several more years at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in his native North Carolina. He died in 1964.

officer and a college flapper. Whatever plot they made out of this, the play was "enough to break up an anti-missionary church."[35]

The youth also had plenty of outdoor activities, ranging from Thanksgiving sunrise services at Big Rock in Cherokee Park to baseball and basketball teams. In the spring they crowned a "queen of the May," chosen out of nominees from each class. That award was based on how well the winner's class performed on Sunday evenings according to a six-point grading system developed by the ever-efficient Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. It measured whether the children:

1. were present
2. arrived on time
3. brought Bible
4. studied lesson
5. brought offering
6. attended the Sunday night preaching service that followed

The BYPU grew so rapidly that it split into various groups and subgroups bearing dynamic names like Bubbling Over, Old Faithful, Vim, Vigor, Vitality, Peacemakers and Pacemakers. Adults formed a "Mr. and Mrs." union.

"I have no fears for the future of a church that can have so many young people in an assembly on a Sunday evening in August like this," professor F. M. Powell remarked after a 1927 BYPU meeting.

In the late 1920s, the church launched its first Vacation Bible School programs, beginning with an ecumenical venture with other churches in the neighborhood, later as Highland's own program. For the youngest children, the church opened its first nursery in the 1920s.

Adult students also found a welcome at Highland. Seminarians continued to gravitate to the church where several of their professors worshiped. In 1926 new student members began to be recorded under the address Mullins Hall. That was the new dormitory on the leafy new Crescent Hill campus, where the seminary moved from downtown. The related WMU Training School remained downtown until

1941, when it moved next to Southern's campus in Crescent Hill. Its female students continued to attend Highland.

Adding a new dimension to the church were students from the nursing school of Kentucky Baptist Hospital, which opened in the Highlands in 1924. The names on Highland's roles from that period—such as Miss Mildred Lancaster of Georgetown, Miss Irene Brock of Hazard, Miss Zella Bryant of Middlesboro, Miss Sadie Wilson of Waddy—speak of how the church became a home for young women who had arrived in the city from some of the deepest reaches of Kentucky. The church followed one student, Daisy Hicks, from her school days through her long career as a medical missionary to Africa with husband William Jester.

Growing Pains

Growth seemed everywhere in the church. Membership in the Sunbeam group for preschool and young children (overseen by the WMU) nearly doubled between 1924 and 1925. In 1927, as church membership soared past 800, the Philathea women's class had fifty-three members attending in a room that had capacity for only forty-three. "The question has arisen, 'Why visit and solicit new members when we have no room for them?'" its officers wrote to deacons. "Our need for a larger class room is urgent." Every bit of space was pressed into service. Children were sometimes baby-sat in a slightly spooky second-floor room in the church tower.[36]

Noise from the crammed classrooms spilled over into each other. "In our crowded quarters what is a sweet song in one department is a noise in another assembly's program," the church bulletin said.[37] A Sunday School teacher, whose classroom for intermediate boys was separated only by a curtain and a screen from an adjacent class, "said that he was ready to make a liberal pledge for a new building and to start it with a cash contribution. This spirit is growing among all those who are working in our crowded quarters."[38]

A Wednesday Night at Highland

Following is a description of a typical Wednesday night service from the June 3, 1928, church bulletin.

The miracle studied from John's Gospel was that of restoring sight to the blind man. The only announcements made were the hymn numbers by Mr. Klapper, and these were selected for their bearing upon the miracle. A prayer for the general welfare of our people was offered by Mr. Reed. Dr. Powell led in a special Memorial Day Prayer. Chas. Dawson Stout read the Scripture, and the Misses Atwood sang, "Open Mine Eyes," with Miss Marian McGinty at the piano. Mr. Morris brought a brief message at the conclusion of which Mr. Jester sang, "O Love That Will Not Let Me Go," accompanied by Miss Gertrude Tucker. . . . Mr. Gibbs pronounced the benediction. The leader says that any church wanting a good prayer meeting program could not find better help.

Weatherspoon attended the cornerstone laying for Crescent Hill Baptist Church's grand new edifice in 1926, and he made no secret of his ambitions for a similar building for Highland.

"Our members are doing the finest personal work that we have ever seen," he wrote in a letter to the congregation that year.

> Every organization in our church is clamoring for names of persons with whom they can work. The Board of Deacons is committing itself to more than an advisory task, and every member is assuming a spiritual leadership in going out to enlist the unchurched and the unsaved. The WMU is meeting its obligations in a great way in enlistment. . . . Assure your pastor such continued co-operation and we can predict what is going to happen—Highland will be one of the best-known churches in the Southern Baptist Convention within ten years' time.[39]

Seeking more Sunday School space, the church offered in 1923 to buy member George L. Pope's home next door on Cherokee Road for $14,000. He refused. The church continued doing building studies and began soliciting pledges in 1926. In 1928 leaders proposed making another offer to Pope, this time for $27,500. "There was a feeling among the leaders that something must be done if our progress is to continue," said a report of deacons, trustees and finance committee members.

The church narrowly approved the proposal, then reconsidered and voted it down ninety-four to eighty-nine. Opposition rose from quarters not normally heard from. A women's Homemakers Class went on record against the Pope purchase "until architects investigate expanding the building on ground we already have." Architects had already done so, but the church agreed to bring back architect Nevin to take another look.

Nevin reported that the only way the church could reach its goal—for church and Sunday School facilities that could each hold 1,000—was to demolish everything on the site and build anew, and even that would be a crowded fit. The church rejected such radical surgery. But it adopted more modest renovations, such as extending a ceiling clear across the Sunday School auditorium (currently the Commons). This created a full second floor rather than just the perimeter balcony and side class rooms.

In 1929 Highland purchased a different house, the adjacent "Cooper" property on the Grinstead side, for $6,500. This served as a Sunday School annex for more than two decades. Probably the cheaper price made the difference between the church's decision to buy the Cooper house and not the Pope house.

In any case, the dissension left a bitter aftertaste to a boom period. "Highland must not suffer because of our recent differences

Highland purchased the Cooper property next to the church on Grinstead Drive in 1929 and used the building as a Sunday School annex.

of opinion," said a letter, probably by Weatherspoon, in May 1928. Despite its diplomatic tone, the very fact of the letter shows how open the dispute had become. "If there were any unpleasantries, let us set them right and forget them. Christ needs every one of us. God will lead us on."[40]

The dispute may have influenced Weatherspoon's decision to resign from Highland in mid-1929. Sampey, who had risen to the seminary presidency after the death of E. Y. Mullins in 1928, took Weatherspoon with him as professor of ethics. "I had long desired him as a member of the Faculty of the Seminary," wrote Sampey, who also arranged a 10 percent raise over Weatherspoon's $5,000 Highland salary. Sampey himself soon transferred his membership to Broadway Baptist. Perhaps as seminary president he needed to worship with the Nortons and other wealthy benefactors. And perhaps Weatherspoon was more pulled by opportunity than pushed by church dissension. Church legend, however, has endured that they were offended by Highland's refusal to expand. A later pastor, Hankins Parker, said he believed the church effectively turned its back on the needy in surrounding neighborhoods and chose to remain a small, cozy country club.[41] Depending on who's telling the story, either Weatherspoon or Sampey declared to the church that "Ichabod" should be written on its door—a biblical lament that the spirit of God has departed. Sampey certainly had the temperament for such an outburst, but there is no documentation of it. Moreover, with Highland's renovation project and its acquisition of the Cooper house, the church did show a willingness to expand.

Both Sampey and Weatherspoon did retain cordial ties with Highland and returned as guest preachers through the years. But it's safe to say that Weatherspoon left deeply disappointed over the church's failure to expand on the scale of Crescent Hill, where he transferred his membership.[42]

Some of Weatherspoon's attitude may have been reflected by his associate, J. Floyd Morris. Nearly fifty years after the fact, Morris looked back on a congregation that he perceived as a group of tight-fisted social climbers.

> The Highland church as I knew it when I first came there . . . considered itself an upper middle class church, though I think in reality it was more of what we would consider a middle class church. They considered themselves a people above the natural means of most Baptist churches. They were not, in my opinion. They had no really wealthy men, and they were not great givers. It was not a typically tithing church. . . . Likewise, they considered themselves above normal social level, and I wouldn't say they were that, either. They had a very small percentage of young people who attended college.[43]

On the eve of the 1929 stock market crash, however, Highland probably dodged a bullet when it resisted the more ambitious expansion. As it was, the church borrowed $16,000 to fund the Cooper purchase and the educational building renovations. It planned to pay it off in three years, but with the Depression it took far longer than that. Buying the Pope property would have burdened the church with greater debt when it could least manage it.

A dynamic era had come to a close at Highland with the 1920s. Along with J. B. Weatherspoon and John Sampey, the church bade farewell to J. Floyd Morris. The youth

minister who had long nurtured "The Church of Tomorrow," married the Sunday School superintendent's daughter, Louise Beck, and left in April 1929 for the pastorate of First Baptist Church of Des Moines. He said he hoped someday to read of his young Highland charges working "on mission fields, in important pastorates, and as priceless laymen." The church bulletin gives us a final picture of the Morrises, married on a Tuesday at Highland, motoring north in their new Oldsmobile.

Seminary professor F. M. Powell served as supply pastor after Weatherspoon's departure, reprising the role he took in Bagby's absence several years earlier.

Seminary professor F. M. Powell served twice as a supply preacher at Highland during the 1920s.

Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Highland and Its Times

Highland was both in tune and out of tune with the spirit of the 1920s. In its soaring membership and grand ambitions, it shared the boom-time optimism with a society that was marveling at new skyscrapers and celebrating the first trans-Atlantic flight. Automobiles became affordable for many citizens who used them to drive to church at least as much as to the parties for which the decade is remembered.

At times Highland made an explicit connection with the modern ethos. "When Better BYPUs are built, Highland will build them," went one motto. The Buick Motor Division sent a letter to the church, flattered by the imitation: "We wish to congratulate you on the adoption of the very fine slogan and to express the hope that it will be as successful in building up the BYPUs as the original has been in building up the Buick business."[44]

The 1920s hold a legendary role in American society as a loose-living Jazz Age filled with postwar cynicism. Louisville's Fourth Street became the center of theaters, jazz clubs and young flappers.

But Highland left little record of how it responded to the changing social mores. The records indicate that some members, including scions and namesakes of prominent leaders, were occasionally taken to task for unnamed offenses. But there is no record of Weatherspoon matching the rhetoric of colleagues such as Walnut Street Baptist's Finley F. Gibson, who railed against contemporary decadence with calls for "God's Judgment on a Wicked City." Most citizens lived ordinary, even devout lives.[45]

Highland for decades had fervently advocated for Prohibition, and in the 1920s it had its wish. Prohibition is now regarded as a failed social experiment, but one would never know this from the pages of Highland's bulletins, such as this one promoting a guest speaker from the Anti-Saloon League of Kentucky:

> The results of prohibition in America are beyond measure. Ask the bankers of America if prohibition is a success and they will point you to the enormous increase of savings accounts. It is said that the Jerry McAuley mission in N.Y. City, which ministered largely to drunkards and the down-and-outs, has closed its doors. . . . The problem now is with the "lawless respectability" and their friends the bootleggers.[46]

Actually that was just part of the problem, but church members had to read their daily newspaper to learn of the gangland violence and blinding bathtub gin.

Wider Baptist Relations

In the postwar era, Southern Baptists launched a unified funding campaign. Highland joined with other Southern Baptists in early enthusiasm for the five-year Seventy-Five Million Campaign, launched in 1919 to raise that many dollars for state and national causes. "Great happiness prevailed" as Highland pledged $81,188, higher than its assigned share of $77,500, though the church reserved the right to use some of its proceeds on "certain interests dear to the heart" of Highland that weren't among the designated beneficiaries.[47] Such interests included the Shawnee mission.

Baptists originally oversubscribed the $75 million goal, but as economic troubles swept the South, they only fulfilled $58 million in pledges. Highland's own reports to the Long Run Association indicate it fulfilled only $63,095 of its commitment. There is no tally of what it gave to "certain interests dear to the heart." The shortfall left a legacy of debts in many state and national Baptist agencies. "The failure to deal generously with individuals who subscribed more than they could pay, and the failure of denominational executives to adjust themselves to the slump in receipts as soon as it began to show itself, led to tragic results," Sampey observed.[48]

Even more damaging was the revelation in 1928 that the treasurer of the Home Mission Board, Clinton S. Carnes, had embezzled $909,461. Highland fired off a letter demanding the resignation of the entire Home Mission Board in protest "against the spirit in influential quarters that would minimize the enormity of this grave problem and would fail to confide to the denomination all its important, though ugly, disclosures."[49] An indignant L. R. Christie, president of the board, wrote back personally to Highland, saying the demand made no sense as he had only come on the board as the crisis broke. "I should be only too happy to get out from under this terrific load," he wrote, if "you can only tell me some way I can do it honorably, without appearing to be a quitter."[50] Highland refused to participate in a special offering on Baptist Honor Day but it was assuaged by actions taken to repair the board's accounting system, and it began giving again during the following year.

Still, Southern Baptists had grasped the potential for a unified budget. They launched the Cooperative Program, in which Baptists collected a pool of funds for state conventions and the national convention to distribute to a variety of mission, educational and other causes. Churches such as Highland took it as a point of pride to contribute as much as possible to the Cooperative Program as well as to the increasingly popular Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

This shared funding was advantageous when giver trusted recipient, but it also made denominational institutions vulnerable when churches threatened to cut funding if they were unhappy with something.

That became evident for Southern Seminary in the raging controversy over evolution in the 1920s. Many fundamentalists saw the

teachings of Charles Darwin as undercutting the biblical account of God's creation of humanity. Highland's records are disappointingly silent on the subject, though it probably took its cue from E. Y. Mullins, who believed there was no contradiction between religion and science and saw evolution as unproven but also unthreatening. But fundamentalists continued to attack Mullins and the seminary as soft on Darwin. Texas fundamentalist leader J. Frank Norris accused Sampey of embracing evolution and liberalism and challenged him to a debate. Sampey fired off a withering letter dismissing both the accusation and the accuser: "I never attend vaudeville."[51]

Most moderate Baptists, however, closed ranks with reactionaries in opposing the Democratic presidential candidacy of Al Smith, the first major-party Catholic nominee for the office. Most Highland members probably opposed Smith for either his Catholicism or his anti-Prohibitionism, though twenty-two-year-old Wilson Wyatt bucked the trend. "Despite the approaching landslide for Herbert Hoover . . . I strode jauntily down Fourth Street with Al Smith at the head of the Young Democratic Club parade—all four hundred of us sporting our brown derbies, the emblem of the Smith Campaign," he later recalled.[52]

Controversies aside, Highland continued working cooperatively in local Baptist causes that included the Louisville Baptist Orphans' Home and the new Kentucky Baptist Hospital, built on Barret Avenue in the Highlands. Many nursing students attended Highland, and the church supported the hospital financially and through volunteer efforts such as sewing circles.

Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

Highland continued to work with other Christian denominations to promote evangelism and other social causes. In the early 1920s, it helped sponsor revivals by evangelists Billy Sunday and Gypsy Smith that drew thousands each night. Highland also endorsed the moral crusading of the Anti-Saloon League and Louisville Churchmen's Federation.

Interfaith relations were more complex. Sampey and Bagby cooperated in supporting a mission that operated between 1914 and 1916 to evangelize Jews in the city. Sampey raised funds from—of all places—his hospital bed at Jewish Hospital during treatment for gallstones. The effort netted some conversions before fizzling amid financial problems. At the same time, Sampey spoke at least twice at a local synagogue and was well received.[53] In an era when Islam was an abstraction to most Louisvillians, Weatherspoon could breezily dismiss the "Mohammedan" as following a "false religion" while commending the Muslim example of dedicated daily prayer.[54] Highland, with its strong missionary impulse, largely viewed the non-Christian world as a field ripe unto harvest, though young Wilson Wyatt again presented a minority report. As an assistant superintendent of the Sunday School, he held discussions on world religions "to help enlarge the views of the members." He recalled:

> I wanted to counter some of the narrow talks I had heard on how bad smoking was, how bad alcohol was, how bad the Catholics were, how bad the Jews were. I wanted to emphasize that although we are Christians we could learn from other religions because they all

have something good to teach us. I wanted them to consider how cruel it was to believe that anyone who had not heard of Jesus Christ would be automatically condemned to hell. I was gratified to find that there was no objection to my talks.[55]

It is telling of Highland's magnanimous conservatism that it could engage Wyatt's questions without accepting his conclusions. The church evangelized without apology. Yet a church bulletin in 1928 reprinted an anonymous poem that shows it balanced its missionary impulse with civic tolerance.

Don't hate your neighbor if his creed
With your own doctrine fails to fit;
The chances that you both are wrong
You know are well-nigh infinite.
Don't fancy, mid a million worlds,
That fill the silent dome of night,
The gleams of all pure truth converge
Within the focus of your sight;
For this my friend, is not the work for you:
So leave all this for smaller men to do.[56]

Emma Leachman: Home Missionary

Emma Leachman joined Highland in 1944 and remained a member until her death on August 5, 1952, residing nearby on Morton Avenue. But she was well-known to Highland for decades before that. Although her years of service were behind her by then, Highland honored her at her death for her extensive work as a home missionary in Louisville's worst neighborhoods on behalf of state and national Baptist organizations.

Emma Leachman worked tirelessly as a missionary in Louisville's urban neighborhoods.[1]

The Washington County native began work at the Louisville Baptist Orphans' Home, leaving in 1898 to do city mission work under the support of the Kentucky State Mission Board. For many years, Leachman chaperoned and trained students at the Women's Missionary Union Training School—which had close ties to Highland—in field work among Louisville's poor. She also directed the Good Will Center, an urban mission formed by the school in 1912, and taught classes in practical missions.

"There were always some students who loved her devotedly and some who feared her, but . . . they all admired her and remembered her with growing appreciation as they tried to put into practice what they had learned," recalled the school's historian. Always reading on streetcars and at transfer stations, "she had no patience with a worker who would not keep up with world affairs by reading current books and magazines."

In 1917, her report to the Long Run Baptist Association recorded the breadth of her work:

265 visits to institutions
876 visits to poor families
211 visits to the sick
81 prayer services in homes
119 prayers with individuals

97 jobs secured for girls and women
1,829 garments distributed
36 professed conversions
1,049 applications for help
140 prescriptions filled
103 physicians called for the poor

She returned to Louisville after years of work in Atlanta, keeping her humor even as her health failed. "I thought I was going to die this morning," she told a visitor, "but I told the Lord not to take me today. I wasn't ready to meet him, for I had been in a bad humor all morning."

After she did meet her Lord, Highland honored her with a resolution: "She became known and loved in every sin-saddened street in Louisville's slum districts, for her loving work, by day and night. . . . Frail in health from her youth, the answer to her life of tireless service must be found in her indomitable courage, her grim determination, her unfaltering faith and her never failing humor."

Highland Women in the 1920s

For many women at Highland, the route to service and leadership was through the Women's Missionary Union and Sunday School classes. Members of the Philathea class, formed by adult women in 1908, made a priority of visiting shut-ins and other outreaches, raising money for their ventures by selling chocolates and cakes outside a nearby Piggly Wiggly market. As Southern Baptists became infatuated with corporate efficiency, the class historian wryly notes in 1924 that the Philathea dutifully "organized to the nth degree with the three vice presidents." The women in particular adopted the cause of a penniless, handicapped "mountain girl" named Addie, who was in Louisville for medical treatment. Fearing for her life if she returned to the impoverished mountains, they negotiated her admission into the nearby King's Daughters Home.[57]

As many as six WMU circles met during the day. They brought box lunches and sewed for the hospital or the orphanage, or they heard missionary speakers and studied books about them under the leadership of women like Ada Weatherspoon, Gertrude Tucker and Ellen Sampey (John's second wife). A seventh group, the Business & Professional Women's Circle, became the first such group in Kentucky to meet in the evenings to accommodate working women. It rose to more than fifty members and gave more than $1,000 to annual missions by the late 1920s. It consisted of teachers, stenographers, bookkeepers, librarians and other working women; most but not all of them were single. The circle started a long tradition of holding special programs to promote missionary endeavors such as the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The programs included dramas, music, a recounting of WMU history and, in 1928, a pantomime performed by several women to the song "Send the Light." Among the many circle members on the program was a young Daisy Hicks, who took the message to heart. She soon

married seminary graduate William Jester, and they sailed to Tanganyika in July 1928 for service with the African Inland Mission, she in hospital work, he in education. "Both are superbly equipped for their work and both have won the warmest places in Highland's Heart," said the bulletin announcing their engagement. In 1959 the circle would rename itself after Daisy Jester, and it continued operating until 2001.

Parr's Rest, a nursing home for elderly Baptist women, opened in 1914 on Cherokee Road, one block north of Highland Baptist. Many of its residents joined the church, which also brought communion to those who couldn't attend, starting a ministry that endured until the home relocated in 2003 to a modern facility on Hurstbourne Parkway.

Though the highest offices in the church were reserved for men, women made their presence felt. Women's suffrage came not only to the political ballot but to the Long Run Association and the Southern Baptist Convention, and by 1926 at the latest, Highland women were serving as messengers. They served on building committees, oversaw improvements to the sanctuary and, at times, boldly asserted an opposing viewpoint when men had made up their minds, as when the Homemakers Class put the brakes on the ambitious building program planned in the late 1920s.

Church Discipline at Highland

In its first decades, Highland monitored the behavior of its members and occasionally disciplined them for offenses. Highland dropped at least seventy people from its rolls by 1925. Occasionally, church deacons intervened in a member's personal conduct, though such incidents were less common than the numbers might suggest. Most of those dropped from membership had become inactive or lost touch with the church, and the church usually sent them earnest appeals before removing them from rolls.

A group of sixteen, for example, were dropped in 1918 after proving "impervious to all entreaties," the records say. Among the names excluded was a Phelps and a Tucker, indicating that even Highland's first families were subject to scrutiny.

The church excluded two men for unspecified "objectionable statements" they made in 1920.[58]

In 1923, after a year of trying to mediate a family dispute, the church voted that a man "be excluded from its [the church's] membership on the ground of malicious lying with the purpose and effect of breaking up his own home, according to his own admission."[59] Fortunately, the church did not hold this against his wife and children, who remained stalwart members.

But most of time, the church dropped names from its rolls as a matter of housekeeping. A form letter in 1915, sent to inactive members, put it in pastoral terms:

> One of the most difficult things in church life is that of keeping the roll of membership correct. We do not wish to omit a name which should be upon our roll. It is just as essential that the names of only those who care for church membership should appear. No one should be forced to remain a church member against his or her will. We would and do desire to have you one of our members in reality, but so far as we can find out, for the past year and more you have shown no desire to be one of us. . . . Let us hear from you at

> once about this matter. Remember, we want you. Do you want church membership still?[60]

The following year, however, the warning letter was sterner. "It gives your church genuine sorrow to thus learn that you have lost interest in the church and its work; but we recognize that you are a free moral agent and can render Christian service or not as you may choose. . . . We deeply deplore your seeming indifference and earnestly pray the Father to awaken you before it is too late."[61]

Those who failed to respond to that letter receive a second one informing them they were dropped from the roll.

> . . . Your neglect of the duties of the Christian life and of the obligations of church membership together with your failure to respond to all our overtures and efforts to reclaim you to active Christian living left us no other course. . . . Nevertheless we shall continue to hope that you may repent and turn unto the Lord before it is everlastingly too late.[62]

Not all investigations led to discipline. In 1926, deacons met with a man regarding some domestic trouble and concluded he was "entirely blameless in the matter and should not be subject to discipline on the part of the church, but should have the sympathy of the Board and the Church."[63]

Church discipline was typical for Baptists of this time but became less formalized as the twentieth century wore on. Partly out of a greater culture of individual autonomy and partly out of a recognition that such proceedings drove people away from the church when they needed it most, such processes went largely by the wayside after Highland's first decades.

Highland Personalities in Its Second Generation

As Highland grew in numbers, its members included a spirited lay leadership with considerable political and business experience.

Dr. Byron Rivers, a dentist, served as a deacon for more than thirty years at Highland and often regaled members with tales of his native Mississippi. A volunteer with Boy Scouts and orphans, he "temporarily" became Sunday School superintendent in 1910 and stayed on for sixteen years, during which attendance nearly doubled to 321. "For many years one will not be able to think of the School without associating that name with it," the church said at his retirement in 1926.[64]

M. M. Logan, a former Kentucky Attorney General and future U.S. senator, served as trustee and deacon in his short membership at Highland between 1919 and 1922, as well as on the pulpit and Shawnee mission committees. His son Ralph, later a stalwart Highland member, recalled his father was most proud of his regular Sunday School attendance.

Another former attorney general, Jefferson Circuit Judge James Garnett, also served for years as a trustee and on various committees, living close by at 1083 Cherokee Road. He gave church member Wilson Wyatt his first job out of law school.[65]

Junius Caldwell, a member since the early 1900s, chaired the building committee for the new sanctuary in 1915, coordinated Highland's contributions to the Seventy-Five Million Campaign and served as church trustee, purchasing agent and messenger to Baptist meetings. Longtime member Edith Hoeing

recalls Caldwell charmed her as a girl by putting cigar bands on her fingers as rings.

Fellmer and Carolyn Cleaton Hoeing served long decades in the church, he as a deacon, she as a Sunday School teacher, church historian and WMU president.

Dr. R. L. Ireland served virtually every office in the church—deacon, trustee, messenger, pulpit committee member—and was the personal physician for some members. In 1939 he succeeded where Highland had failed for sixteen years in negotiating the acquisition of the Pope property.

Lucy Short, who joined in 1905 and rarely missed a Sunday or Wednesday for the next fifty-five years, served as Sunday School teacher, a member of the Homemakers Class, WMU president and representative to the Orphans' Home. Civic involvement included thirty years on the board of managers for the WMU Training School and work with the Highland Mothers Club and a Story Tellers club. Her husband, Frank Short, chaired one of the Sunday School enlargement committees and also worked on the Orphans' Home board.

Ed and Carrie Wirotzious joined in 1917 from the German Baptist Church and remained active members for decades, enrolling all of their eight children in Sunday School at Highland. Tragically, one child died at age six and another died in combat in Korea in 1951; a daughter, Anita Dunphy, remained a member much of her life.

Fillison Speiden, a former organist and chime ringer at Walnut Street Baptist, served as deacon and Long Run messenger for Highland. He headed the Louisville Tarriff Freight Bureau and brought to Highland a businesslike ability to make "decisions so quickly that it would have required a watch recording split-seconds to time them," a colleague recalled.[66] After moving to Atlanta for business, his last act of service to Highland was to help it to its next era, conducting an on-site background check of the Georgia preacher who replaced Weatherspoon in 1930—David A. Howard.

Wilson W. Wyatt: Future Mayor from Charter Family

Born into one of Highland Baptist's most active families, Wilson W. Wyatt rose to become mayor of Louisville, lieutenant governor of Kentucky, national leader of liberal Democrats, international diplomat and philanthropist in his ninety-year life.

He was born in 1905 to Richard and Mary Wyatt and had what he later recalled as a modest but happy childhood growing up on Morton Avenue. Richard was rising into the executive ranks of the city railroad, while Mary was a school teacher. Young Wilson developed an early love of learning and regularly visited the Highland neighborhood library run by church member Mary Pratt. He adopted Benjamin Franklin as a model of diligence and self-improvement. Richard was a charter member of Highland, and family life was centered around the church. Wilson was baptized at age ten. Highland early recognized the

leadership talents of young Wilson, who became head of the Baptist Young People's Union and an assistant superintendent of the Sunday School. After Wyatt graduated from law school, he joined the law firm of Highland member James Garnett, a former Kentucky attorney general.

In 1930 Wyatt joined the Presbyterian church of his new bride, Anne, though he had other reasons to leave Highland. He had grown increasingly alienated from Baptist orthodoxy and anti-Catholicism, which so appalled him in the 1928 presidential campaign. (Many Southern Protestant Democrats turned against their party's nominee, the Catholic Al Smith of New York, whom Wyatt supported.)

Active in Democratic politics, Wyatt took office as mayor of Louisville less than a week before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and he gained national attention for his vigorous leadership on the home front. After Wyatt's term ended, President Truman appointed him administrator of an agency designed to meet the housing shortage faced by returning veterans. At least two presidents sent him overseas on diplomatic missions. Wyatt managed the 1952 presidential campaign of Adlai Stevenson, his friend and look-alike, and was elected Kentucky's lieutenant governor in 1959.

Wyatt, who built one of the city's dominant law firms in Wyatt, Tarrant and Holms, also got involved in a variety of civic activities. He served on the governing boards of the University of Louisville and Bellarmine University, and he also lent support to the interfaith Cathedral Heritage Foundation.

Wyatt valued the contributions Highland made to his character development and retained an admiration for the democratic and nonclerical traditions of the Baptists. Though a Presbyterian, he considered himself a "Unitarian Baptist," and he was troubled by passages in the Bible in which God seemed to arbitrarily punish people like Job. He came to reject virtually all religious dogma. "I believe there is a common thread in all good religions, and thus religious people should live together in harmony," he said late in life.

Wilson Wyatt gives a public address in the early 1940s.
Photo courtesy of Public Policy Archives, University of Kentucky Libraries

"It is not given to us to know God, though I do believe in Him, in some Supreme Force, call it what you will," he said. "Whatever it is, it has created us, brought us here, and will take us hence into the mysteries that are yet to unfold. I'll know all that, in the words of the old Baptist hymn we used to sing, 'in the sweet by-and-by.' "

Notes

1. Cullinane, *Walking Thru Louisville.*
2. CM, 4/28/15.
3. Sampey, "Persons."
4. CM, 7/29/17.
5. The nickname came from Marvin H. Lewis, chairman of the Louisville Four Minute Men and of the Council of National Defense Speakers Bureau for Louisville. Quoted in Sampey, "Persons," 417.
6. Quoted in Birdwhistell, 100.
7. Quoted in Birdwhistell, 100–101.
8. *Baptist World*, 9/27/17.
9. Letter to E. Y. Mullins, who was himself working at Camp Taylor, MP, 9/24/17.
10. "Epidemics," Kleber, 273.
11. CM, 11/10/18.
12. *Memoirs*, 156.
13. Ibid.
14. Evelyn Mortimore's death certificate; CM 10/8, 10/12/19.
15. Interview by Birdwhistell, 1986.
16. Ellis, 143.
17. CM, 7/2/19.
18. CM, 7/16/19.
19. Bagby to Sampey, SP, 3/16/20.
20. SP, 3/25/16.
21. CM, 9/26/20.
22. CM, 10/3/20.
23. CM, 10/13/20.
24. SP, 1/19/20.
25. SP, 11/13/20.
26. CM, 4/26/33.
27. WR, 5/7/53.
28. CJ, 3/22/2003; www.shawneebaptist.org.
29. CM, 11/13/21.
30. Interview.
31. CB, 3/1/25.
32. CB, 8/5/28.
33. CB, 2/13/27.
34. CB, 3/15/25.
35. CB, 10/7/28.
36. Interview, Edith Hocing.
37. CB, 8/16/25.
38. CB, 3/8/25.
39. CB, 11/21/26.
40. CB, 5/6/28.
41. Sermon during HBC's centennial celebration, 1/31/93.
42. Interview, Don Burke, who heard such stories into the 1970s.
43. Interview. In his 1975 interview with a Southern Seminary student researching Weatherspoon's life, Morris disappointingly asked that the tape recorder be turned off after promising to tell "the real low-down." It seems as if the entire historical record has conspired to obscure the building debate of 1929.
44. CB, 9/18/27.
45. Yater, *Flappers.* "Prof" Johnson recalls that female students at the WMU Training School (some of whom attended Highland) were required to wear dresses that touched their shoes and forbidden to bob their hair. *Of Parsons,* 15.
46. CB, 3/15/25.
47. CM, 11/5/19, 11/30/19.
48. *Memoirs*, 161.
49. CM, 10/24/28.
50. CM, 10/30/28.
51. Norris to Sampey, 4/20/26. Sampey to Norris, undated, SP.
52. *Whistle Stops,* 5.
53. Sampey to George C. Norton, 2/27/14; Sampey to F. M. Thomas, 12/21/15; Temple Adath Israel to Sampey, SP, 2/11/19.
54. CB, 9/19/26.
55. Quoted in Hall, 247.
56. CB, 5/27/28.
57. Philathea class history.
58. CM, 3/10/20.
59. CM, 5/9/23.
60. CM, 12/15/15.
61. DM, 12/16.
62. Ibid.
63. DM, 11/8/26.
64. CB, 2/13/27.
65. CM, 11/14/39.
66. WR, 1/3/33. The funeral for Speiden—whose son Hart was later involved with the church—was held at Highland.

CHAPTER THREE

1930–1945

"Our Day of Tension"

Economic catastrophe, natural disaster and war were the hallmarks of this period of Highland's life. The Great Depression forced the church to cut salaries and positions and frustrated its programming efforts for years. The great flood of 1937 spared the Highlands direct damage, but members were active sheltering refugees from inundated areas of the city. World War II drew 120 members into military service as those who stayed behind did their duty on the home front. Through it all, Highland continued to grow, acquired a neighboring property, launched two mission congregations and entered the post-war period with ambitions for further expansion.

Depression and the Howard Years

Highland hired the Rev. David A. Howard of Harwell, Georgia, in January 1930 to fill the pulpit left vacant by Weatherspoon eight months earlier. Howard, a father of three, had attended Southern Seminary and completed his theological training at Mercer University. He came from a family of preachers; during his time at Highland, he joined his father and three brothers for a grand family-led revival in Georgia.

David Howard led Highland during the worst years of the Depresson.

The church enthusiastically selected Howard after its two-man search subcommittee, which included former Highland member Fillison Speiden, who had moved to Atlanta, scouted out the pastor in his native state and heard glowing recommendations from "ministers and laymen, Baptist and non-Baptist, in Hartwell and in Atlanta." They described Howard as "one of the foremost young virile ministers of Georgia, a 'prince,' a 'splendid organizer,' a civic (Kiwanis) worker, a preacher, a pastor, a Christian, which any church would be fortunate to secure—and Mrs. Howard matches her husband 50–50."[1]

Howard arrived intending to make good on that reputation at Highland. Early on, he organized a series of five-minute talks by members on the role played by Sunday School, the Women's Missionary Union and other groups in church growth. But the onset of the Great Depression frustrated Howard's ambitions for growth.

While most of the nation marked the beginning of the Depression on October 29, 1929, the day of the stock market crash, Kentucky had its own date of economic infamy: the November 17, 1930, failure of the National Bank of Kentucky and two other banks owned by the insolvent BancoKentucky. "The failure not only produced an instantaneous downturn locally, but it generated a conservative banking atmosphere that would impede the city's economic growth and confidence for decades to come," one historian says.[2] Highland had more than one thousand dollars tied up in the National Bank. Fortunately, it owed nearly that much to the bank as well, so it squared accounts with National and moved to a new bank. But with the growing Depression, cash was tight. Highland voted to cut the professional printing of church bulletins in 1931, saving sixty dollars per month. (Cheaper, mimeographed bulletins from that era still survive.) But when asked to put all undesignated funds toward church expenses rather than missions, members not only rejected the motion but voted to expunge it from the records.[3] The church wasn't ready to surrender its missions orientation.

The church also cut the salaries of its paid quartet by 20 percent, prompting two singers to resign. Others, evidently willing to sing for a song, took their place.

Still, the church put on a brave face. "With very few exceptions, the membership is contributing the same amount as last year," Howard wrote in January 1931. "Some are increasing the amount of their checks, which goes to show that, in spite of economic conditions, our people are remembering the work of the Church." Another sign of progress, he said, was that people were actually sitting in the front pews.[4]

The glass-half-full tenor continued through Howard's first anniversary in March 1931. "The entire Church has shown pronounced progress resulting in larger congregations, increased reverence during worship hours, and more abiding interest in the spiritual growth of the Church," said an anniversary bulletin, which added that forty-three members had joined.[5]

Highland felt confident enough to hire a full-time educational director, the Rev. Fred H. Terry. Paradoxically, Highland brought on this new employee even as it finally faced up to the financial storm. It cut the salaries of the pastor, organist and janitor by 10 percent, apparently eliminated the paid singers entirely and trimmed other expenses. Terry resigned in August 1932 "because of the financial condition of the church."[6] The church seemed to admit it had done wrong by Terry, who had moved his wife and three children to Louisville for a job it couldn't sustain. "One year ago we prophesied that financial conditions in our church, and generally, would improve very soon," the church minutes state. "Experience has shown the lack of wisdom in that prophecy."[7]

In late 1931, the church launched a deficit reduction campaign of $2,400 but raised only $933. "While the sum raised is not what we had for our goal, it does represent sacrificial giving

by many of our members," the bulletin said.[8] Howard agreed to take only a partial vacation in 1932, preaching at the morning services, saving the church the stipends for supply preachers.

Despite the hardships, the church took time in 1933 to celebrate its fortieth anniversary with special services and sermons by Howard titled "Hitherto" and "Henceforth." Former pastors Doolan, Bagby and Weatherspoon sent magnanimous letters of congratulations, with Weatherspoon commending Howard and the church for their steadiness when "our entire nation and the whole world faced economic collapse, moral lassitude and spiritual discouragement." Members recited church histories, and someone calculated the following church statistics from the previous forty years:

Received into the church: 2,609
by baptism: 778
by letter: 1,831
Present membership: 871
Total contributions: $530,750.93
to local causes: $305,198.26
to missions: $225,552.67

The church honored the charter members in attendance—Mary Tucker Gould, Florence Tucker and Richard H. Wyatt—and it also gave special recognition to Ernest Horn, who attended Highland's organizational meeting in 1893 and joined soon afterward. Another charter member, missionary Louise Tucker, sent greetings from China.[9] "God has guided this Church up to the present and He is equal to all occasions whatever may be its future," secretary Nettie Horn wrote, concluding her narrative of the celebrations.

Later in 1933, Howard resigned to take the pulpit at First Baptist Church in Gaffney, South Carolina, a college town in heavily Baptist territory with over 1,100 members. Howard had brought in about 150 new members to Highland in his tenure. (Net membership actually decreased from nearly 900 to nearly 800, but much of that can be explained by a purge of inactive members from the rolls in 1933.) Howard wrote in his resignation letter that during his pastorate,

> economic conditions have forced us to give much of our time and ability to righting ourselves in the storm. These years will likely be recorded in history as unusual and meaningful. Few of us have approached normalcy during the last three years. Fear, worry, and anxiety have been noticeable characteristics of the majority of the people everywhere. During this period, it has been a privilege to proclaim the love of God, Christ as the Savior, and the Spirit as the dependable guide.[10]

This group photo of deacons was taken in the 1940s.

Whether the stress of the Depression had a role in Howard's departure is unclear, but people evidently didn't blame him for conditions beyond his control. Highland retained a fond relationship with Howard, who spoke nostalgically of the church when he visited ten years later for its jubilee.

Older members told John Ewing Roberts, who grew up in the church in the 1930s and 1940s, that Howard was "a very humble man and a very generous man," he recalled. "During the Depression he gave his overcoat to a needy person. This made a big impression on people."[11]

Not only Highland but individual members endured distress in the Depression, according to hints in church records. Mr. C. C. Leonard donated auditing services in lieu of his financial contribution to the church. T. J. Cunning submitted his resignation as deacon on the stationary of his clothier and haberdashery store, saying his "nerves are right at the breaking point."[12]

But the church also reached out to the poor in its congregation and beyond. In 1932 it took up a collection of goods for the needy, a program promoted with the Scripture "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Highland regularly supported the Community Chest, a faith-based forerunner to today's Metro United Way. The Women's Missionary Society collected warm clothes for the needy. And for Christmas 1932 the church delivered "36 well filled baskets of food and 7 baskets of fruit to worthy homes," plus additional food, clothing and toys.[13] The baskets of bread, celery, chicken and other items were intended "to bring sunshine and cheer into homes where the sting of hunger is felt."[14]

It was Howard's bad fortune to be pastor during the worst years of the Depression. Though the economic catastrophe raged on for several more years, it began to ease in Louisville after the early 1930s. The church's total operating and missions budget had sunk from $26,854 in 1931 to a low of $16,964 in 1934, but it rose to the mid-20s thereafter.

Prohibition's Repeal

Part of Highland's recovery was doubtless due to a stabilizing economic climate in Louisville, made possible partly by a development not to Baptists' liking—the repeal of Prohibition in 1933.

Incredibly, the Women's Christian Temperance Union held a Victory Luncheon in January 1933 to celebrate the thirteenth anniversary of the Eighteenth Amendment, an event Highland promoted and at which member Henry Noble Sherwood spoke. But within months, the nation repealed Prohibition and Louisville's distilleries went back to work.

By June the church was reprinting a Southern Baptist resolution protesting the newly legalized sale of liquor, "sought to be popularized by faithless and corrupt politicians and by the vicious and vice-breathing elements of the public press."

It urged Baptists to continue to abstain and to patronize only businesses that didn't sell alcohol. "We believe that prohibition at its worst is better than the legalized sale of intoxicating liquor for beverage purposes at its best," the resolution stated. Highland turned its effort toward upholding Kentucky's own version of Prohibition. It took up a collection to aid the

cause, and the Highland Baptist Training Union adopted the slogan "Make and Keep Kentucky Dry for Kentucky Youth." But in 1935, Kentucky authorized alcohol sales based on local option.

Thomas D. Brown

After Howard's departure, seminary professor Kyle M. Yates served as an interim minister. In July 1934, Highland hired Thomas D. Brown as its next pastor. Brown brought formidable credentials as pastor of St. Charles Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, which had a membership of over one thousand and led its association in gifts, benevolences and baptisms. Brown envisioned similar things for Highland, pledging "to engage in the highest and holiest undertaking under heaven, the growing of a great church in a great city."[15]

A native of Mississippi, Brown graduated from Mississippi College in 1908 and earned a master's at Southern Seminary in 1911 and a doctorate from Ouachita College in Arkansas. He had previously held pastorates in Arkansas, taught Bible and religion at Ouachita and was executive secretary of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. His wife had graduated from the WMU Training School. They had four children.

Highland knew it was hiring an exacting pastor, for Brown's letter of application stressed a program of four Es: evangelism, education, enlargement and enlistment. In that spirit, the church held a homecoming service in September 1934, designed in part to bring less active members back to church and encourage their regular involvement. "The torch has been thrown to us," Brown proclaimed.

> Its light was beaming far when we received it. . . . The ministry of your yesterdays who taught, inspired, developed, and directed you up to this good hour, are no longer with you. All your growth and development, every failure and mistake, should now be turned toward meeting the appeal of the present. . . . On-the-fence members never win victories for Christ. This is the time for Highland Baptist Church to face her challenge and do something worth while about it. The present membership is equal to the task in many ways, but not all. There must be study, training, personal work, dedication of life to Christ and the program of the church, a larger financial support of the work, and a more determined effort on the part of the church as a whole to major on the mightiest ministry for the Master which the church has ever undertaken.[16]

Brown lived up to his motto of "Gospelize or Fossilize," hosting a series of revivals that resulted in as many as fourteen baptisms on a single night.[17] Longtime member Edith Hoeing recalled how everyone in the church promoted upcoming revivals. "People would go out and visit the unsaved. We'd go out two by two and knock on doors and visit the unsaved people and pack the pew."[18]

Pastor T. D. Brown was "very much the scholar, but the scholarship—he didn't wear it on his sleeve," recalled Duke McCall, a member at the time.

Brown blended traditional theology with a Socratic method, encouraging members to submit questions in the offering plate and addressing them in sermons. Many sermon titles and outlines, in fact, took the form of questions and are preserved in church bulletins—though the answers he gave are not:

Herschel H. Hobbs: "Old-Time Southern Baptist"

On November 6, 1935, Highland voted to hire a seminary doctoral student as part-time director of education at the church for $80 a month.

"The church is fortunate in being able to secure this fine young man for that work," the church bulletin proclaimed. ". . . We are sure that his services will be of far-reaching value and influence."

Herschel Hobbs, a future Southern Baptist Convention president, served as director of education at Highland.

Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Indeed they were. The eleven short months Herschel H. Hobbs spent at Highland gave the church a meaningful connection with a pastor who went on to become one of the most prominent Southern Baptist statesmen of his generation.

A graduate of Howard College in Birmingham, Hobbs had already served as pastor of churches in Alabama and Indiana when he came to Highland.

Hobbs remembered his Highland experience fondly. In fact, he was so certain his coming to Highland was a result of divine intervention that he later considered including it in a book (never written) challenging the "God is dead" theological fad.

Highland found Hobbs only after a comedy of errors. Pastor T. D. Brown, seeking a student educational minister, was advised to get a recommendation from a seminary student named Gohr. Brown misunderstood the pronunciation and contacted a student with a similar name, who referred Brown to Hobbs. Hobbs and his wife concluded they would need a salary of $80 a month but didn't tell Highland. As it turned out, the deacons offered exactly that amount. "An accident? Not on your life!" Hobbs recalled. The episode proves that "God works in mischievous ways," Hobbs added, quoting a popular malaprop.

When Crestwood Baptist Church offered Hobbs its pastorate in 1936, Brown told him, "If you choose to stay with us that will be fine. But since you have been here less than a year, you might feel that for that reason you should not leave. All I am doing is removing that obstacle." Hobbs resigned to take the Crestwood pulpit.

"Dr. Brown and the Highland people were good to and for us," Hobbs wrote in his memoir. "I learned much from him about how to be a pastor in a city church."

Hobbs later served twenty-four years as pastor of First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City and became widely known through his "Baptist Hour" broadcasts. He served as Southern Baptist Convention president from 1961 to 1963. He was called " 'the E. Y. Mullins' of the 1960s and 1970s" for adopting both the ideas and leadership style of the late seminary president, even revising and expanding an updated edition of Mullins's classic book, *The Axioms of Religion*. Both men served as convention president in turbulent times and oversaw the drafting of their respective generations' Baptist Faith and Message, the denomination's statement of belief, in an effort to find consensus amid controversy.

Hobbs tried vainly to continue in a peacemaking role in the fundamentalist-moderate controversies of the 1980s and 1990s, at one convention enduring some boos for his efforts. To the end, he refused all labels except one hard-earned one: "an old-time Southern Baptist."

- Who is a Christian?
- How may I know that I am a Christian?
- How may others know that I am a Christian?
- What is the chief Christian objective?
- Will any Christian finally be lost?
- Do you think it is possible for a person to live the Christian life and yet not be a Christian?
- Is Jesus coming soon?

He tailored one series of sermons comparing Christianity to other religions. In another geared toward youth, he promised to answer such questions as "Does God tempt us to do wrong? Can one go straight unless he thinks straight? Is it ever right to do wrong? Is a lie ever justified?"[19]

Brown was "very much the scholar, but the scholarship—he didn't wear it on his sleeve," recalled Duke McCall, who attended Highland at the time and was a friend and classmate of Brown's son Thomas Jr. at Southern Seminary. "When he preached, he preached in the language of the congregation, which was . . . not sophisticated but was definitely middle rather than lower class. It was an intelligent, educated congregation. His sermons were not heavily evangelistic, but the invitation was always there."[20]

An example of Brown's success came in his year-end report for 1939, documenting a net gain of 107 at the church and its Baxter Avenue mission. That met a goal of one hundred new members in the year, the most in any year since 1893. "It was God who caused the growth," he said.[21]

A WARM, HEARTY WELCOME AWAITS YOU
at the
HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH
A church that is "Family Conscious"
Cherokee Road and Grinstead Drive

SUNDAY SERVICES:

Bible School 9:30 A. M.
Classes for all ages.

Morning Worship, 11:00 A. M.

Baptist Training Unions, 6:30 P. M.
A place for all.

Evening Worship, 7:30 P. M.

Mid-Week Prayer Service,
Wednesday, 7:30 P. M.

Boy Scout Troops
Friday, 7:30 P. M.

Women's Missionary Unions, Girls' Auxiliary, Royal Ambassadors, Sea Scouts and Cub Pack meetings as announced in weekly bulletin.

The Greatest Path in the world is the path from your door to the Church. Are you using this path?

Highland sent out these postcards with a photo of the church on the front and a list of its activities on the back. The postcards are undated but are probably from around the 1930s.

Henry Noble Sherwood and the Georgetown Controversy

In October 1927, Highland Baptist Church received Dr. Henry Noble Sherwood, his wife and two daughters by letter from an Indiana Baptist church. It was a routine act: receiving Baptists in good standing into the fellowship. Yet probably no one in Kentucky Baptist history would have his credentials as a Baptist in good standing challenged more relentlessly than Dr. Sherwood.

His other credentials were sterling. Sherwood had come to the city as a professor of history at the University of Louisville. Educated at Harvard and Indiana universities, he had served as superintendent of public instruction for Indiana, taught at colleges, authored textbooks and pastored a Baptist church for nine years.

Henry Noble Sherwood, a deacon at Highland, was at the center of a controversy between Georgetown College and Kentucky Baptists.

Photo courtesy of Georgetown College

He became a deacon at Highland and taught classes there. He established the Baptist Student Union at the university, and he spoke throughout the city at Baptist youth meetings, temperance gatherings and church services.

So when the fifty-one-year-old Sherwood was named in 1934 as president of Georgetown College—the flagship Baptist college in Kentucky—he seemed a natural for the job.

But some Baptists protested that Sherwood had been baptized in a Disciples of Christ church, which practiced adult immersion but held different theological views on baptism.

The matter came up for debate at the annual meeting of Kentucky Baptists in Henderson in November 1934, at which Sherwood attended as a messenger from Highland. "I assure you that I have no desire to force myself on a fellowship where I am not wanted," Sherwood told them. Despite his irenic tone, he and Georgetown trustees insisted he would stay. So the General Association's State Mission Board cut off financial support for Georgetown in February 1935. A leading anti-Sherwood pastor declared: "I want to see Georgetown live, but I had rather see it dead than headed by a Campbellite and run the way the Campbellites want it."

Highland members, however, stood by Sherwood even after he transferred his membership to a Georgetown church. As soon as the state association began cutting off funds to Georgetown, Highland voted to designate 6 percent of its state mission funds to go to Georgetown, a policy it maintained through the end of the controversy in 1941. It continued to welcome Sherwood as a guest speaker.

Georgetown's trustees held firm until the college's finances reached a crisis in late 1941. Trustees then voted not to renew Sherwood's contract, enabling the school to receive a badly needed $47,000 in impounded Baptist funds.

Sherwood, unsurprisingly, dropped out of Baptist life. He went on to teach at other universities before becoming president of the board of higher education for the Disciples of Christ in Indianapolis. He returned to Louisville, where he was pastor of Parkland Christian Church and head of the Louisville Ministerial Association. He died of a heart attack in 1956 at age 73.

The Flood of 1937

In January 1937, Louisville and much of the Ohio River Valley was deluged with record floods that covered much of downtown. The Highlands and Crescent Hill—virtually the only settled areas of the city that were above water—received refugees from flooded areas.

"It just started raining," recalled Mrs. J. McKee Adams, a Highland member. "And it kept on raining, and it kept on. . . . Solidly, just pouring. . . . They had boats on that street bringing people up from the lower part of Louisville to the Highlands. And they were just pouring up here."[22]

Highland members were in the thick of relief efforts. J. McKee Adams threw on a raincoat and hat and ran out to the street in front of the church, directing traffic for hours in the cold rain. Member Bill Goodell used his boat many days to shuttle people to dry land. Women of the church, some of them trained nurses, began bringing food and other aid to the church. No services were held the last two Sundays of January as the church had become a shelter for 111 refugees. The church also had to postpone the planned January opening of a new mission on Baxter Avenue, which also sheltered refugees.

Highland organized into flood relief committees focused on personnel, transportation, housing, buying, health and sanitation, morale, scout and finance. It raised hundreds of dollars for flood relief at the church and elsewhere. Neighborhood Boy Scout leader Douglas Cramer put his young charges to work gathering up supplies from residents and evidently was so inspired by the church's relief efforts that he presented himself for baptism on February 7. (The circumstances gave new meaning to the oft-quoted baptismal passage from the Bible, "Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?") By February, when the state began to bring some control to the chaos, the refugees were sent to Kentucky Military Institute in Lyndon.

While flood victims from downtown were hit the worst, these were not easy times for Highlands residents either. Water supplies and other utilities were disrupted, and authorities finally erected an outhouse atop a manhole cover near Highland Presbyterian Church on Cherokee Road. Some in the Highlands took refugees into their homes; former member John R. Sampey's Willow Avenue home became something of an ecumenical shelter for young Baptist women from the Training School and a large Catholic family. Others in the Highlands became refugees themselves. Struggling with the intermittent water, gas and electrical service, Mrs. Adams took most of her children with her to Charlotte, North Carolina, where her arrival was photographed and displayed on the front page of a newspaper seeking a local angle to the great crisis in the Ohio Valley.[23]

As the floodwaters subsided, Highland offered its facilities for flood-ravaged churches needing a place to worship while they repaired their own sanctuaries, though there is no evidence of any takers. Brown, at the request of the state general association, chaired a committee "to investigate and direct the rehabilitation of Baptist churches in flooded areas of Kentucky."

Brown also sought to reestablish the normal rhythms of church activities. "Now that life in the Highlands is more or less back to normal, and lights, heat, and water have been restored, our full church program will be resumed," he

How Did Highland Baptist Church Help Louisville Meet the Flood?

By Nettie G. Horn, Church Secretary
An Excerpt from the Church Minutes of 1937

Many people of Louisville and the neighboring states are wondering how 71,000 people were mobilized in forty-eight hours to take care of the remainder of Louisville people affected by the flood.

A story of the experiences in one refugee station will answer this question.

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Youth Work

Much of this expansion reflected the continued emphasis on youth work at Highland.

The church promoted its Sunday night Baptist Young People's Union meetings with an attractive incentive during the Kentucky summers before the arrival of air conditioning—that the church basement was the "coolest place in the Highlands."[26] Youth participated in well-produced programs that began with an orchestra prelude and included hymns, solos, recognition of new members and other activities. A typical week's program in 1935 included the performance of spirituals by a black college student singing group, while different age groups learned about everything from missionary activity in Brazil to the life of British Baptist preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon. In the 1930s, along with the rest of Southern Baptists, the church changed the group's name to the Baptist Training Union (BTU) in hopes of enlisting more adults. "All of us need training in church membership and in the work of God's Kingdom," explained director Margaret Keyes Clark.[27]

Marylynn Roberts, whose parents did not attend Highland but whose grandmother brought her to the church, found the BTU meetings a good way to get involved. "There were very warm and welcoming teachers and youth," she recalled. "We always had such a good time on Sunday nights."[28]

In 1939 the church hired a promising seminary student, Ernest Loessner, to serve as educational minister at $125 per month. Pastor Brown must have recognized the potential in Loessner, who had entered seminary despite lacking a college degree, for Brown accepted a $42 cut in his own monthly salary to help fund the position.

The church quickly saw the fruits of its decision, seeing BTU membership double from forty in just a few months. Loessner's own reports from that period show the vibrancy of the era: "The Young People's Department banquet was a howling success, with an emphasis on the howling."[29]

Sunday School classes continued to be active, virtually all of them graded meticulously on the six-point plan. Boy Scout Troop 48 also played a prominent role. One boy, Thomas Jackson, was honored in 1940 for putting his scouting skills to use and saving a man from drowning.

Vacation Bible School, now operated exclusively by Highland rather than ecumenically as in the 1920s, became a highlight of the year. A 1939 *Courier-Journal* article carried a good description of a typical VBS day at Highland, with squirming students, earnest teachers, crafts programs and the singing of songs like "Jesus Loves Me."[30] Teachers and children launched the summer sessions by parading through the neighborhood with banners and flags, evidently hoping to enroll some of the neighbors. Most parades were on foot, but in 1940 the church enlisted available cars and cruised through the neighborhood sounding horns and whistles. Sessions typically closed with commencement ceremonies and picnics. Patriotism served as a major part of the curriculum, particularly in wartime, with morning salutes to the Bible and the American and Christian flags.

In 1940 Highland also began holding Youth Week, in which teens formed essentially a

shadow slate of church officers, serving as "pastor," "director of religious education" and other roles. These officers led Sunday services and other activities. The goal fit with the BTU objective of "'training in church membership' by providing a laboratory for young folks to learn by doing."[31]

Young adults also found a home at Highland, which held annual receptions each fall for the influx of new students at the seminary, WMU school, Kentucky Baptist Hospital nursing school and the University of Louisville. Seminarians studying "church efficiency" spent time with Highland organizations, studying the church as a living laboratory.

Personalities and Leaders

New leaders and active church members emerged in the 1930–1945 era. The church boasted that its so-called Tower Class "has on its roll young men of outstanding ability, some of the finest representative young business men of our city." They included Vernon Kash, a teacher at Kentucky Baptist Hospital; William Chandler and Thomas Duncan, president and first vice president of the Junior Board of Trade; Thomas Dawson, master in the Abraham Lodge of Masons; and Bill Goodell, president of the Long Run Brotherhood.

J. McKee Adams was a prominent biblical archaeologist and active Highland member.

Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Seminary professor J. McKee Adams, his wife and daughter joined in 1929. Adams, a former assistant to seminary president E. Y. Mullins, had tried his hand at teaching theology and Bible with no great success before he was assigned to teach archaeology. He "devoted himself to it and with great diligence and increasing skill until in the course of time he came to be recognized in that field as an actual authority," recalled a seminary colleague.[32] Adams traveled regularly to Bible lands and often shared his knowledge in classes at Highland with names like "How We Got Our Bible." A reviewer of his illustrated book, *Biblical Backgrounds*, said the reader "feels instinctively that they are sitting at the feet of a great teacher."[33] Adams died suddenly at work in 1945 of a heart attack.[34]

Among other noteworthy members:

- Elma Currin became the church's first woman educational director on staff, serving for much of 1937 before going on to a teaching position.
- William A. Gardiner served as the state Sunday School secretary between 1921 and 1952, most of that time as a Highland member.
- Archibald Cree, a retired pastor from Scotland, was a member for twenty-five years until his death in 1935 at age ninety-three.

Asenath Brewster: "If I Were a Pastor, I'd Do Something about It"

Asenath Brewster launched the Baxter Avenue Mission and later worked in other urban missions, but she is best remembered by General Baptists for helping launch their missionary movement.

Photo courtesy of General Baptist Women's Ministries

Asenath Brewster joined Highland Baptist Church in 1937 and remained a member (through its Baxter Avenue mission) for the last fifteen years of a life filled with heroic home missions work. She worked as founding superintendent of the Baxter Avenue mission and later as an employee of the Long Run Baptist Association, working right up to her death at age seventy-three in some of its most difficult and dangerous urban ministries. An overflow congregation of wealthy and poor attended her funeral at Highland in 1952, conducted by pastor Hankins Parker. The congregation and choir joined "in the singing and humming of hymns" in her memory, relatives recalled in an unpublished biography.

Born on March 9, 1879, in southwestern Indiana, Brewster grew up attending a small local Baptist church. Her local association licensed her to preach in 1905. She later graduated from Oakland City College in Indiana, a General Baptist school, and received further training at the Baptist Missionary Training School in Chicago.

Brewster was named a field secretary for the Foreign Mission Board of the General Association of General Baptists, a small, predominately Midwestern denomination. She raised funds to send the denomination's first missionaries overseas and organized a Women's Missionary Society in 1911. Brewster later worked at a mission in the hills of Eastern Kentucky, serving as "nurse, teacher, missionary, diplomat and sometimes a lay preacher," relatives later recalled.

In March 1937, Highland appointed her as superintendent of its Baxter Avenue mission, located in a gritty industrial neighborhood. She led the inaugural service, organized a Sunday School and provided steady leadership in those first months before the church appointed a pastor in Frank Stagg, a student and later professor at Southern Seminary. She organized women's classes that dealt with everything from spirituality to hygiene.

"Highland Mission owes an immeasurable debt to Miss Brewster and has a genuine love for her," Stagg wrote in early 1941. More than fifty years later, Stagg was still paying tribute to "that remarkable woman."

Brewster went to live and work as religious education director at the Union Gospel Mission, run by the Long Run Association in Louisville's notorious Haymarket District.

"That was one of the worst slums in America," recalled Henlee Barnette, then a seminary student and pastor of the mission, later a renowned seminary professor. "There were ninety whiskey stores, honky tonks, nightclubs, houses of ill repute, gambling dens within a radius of three blocks." Brewster, he said, was more than capable of taking care of herself in that environment, recalling her stout physique, flaming red hair and resolute personality.

She and Barnette held worship services and classes and made visits to the poor. Brewster was also a "genius at picking good people," Barnette said, recalling one group of eleven volunteers in particular. "Every one of them became famous" as preachers, professors or missionaries, Barnette recalled.

Brewster also challenged Louisville ministers to meet the city's needs with the declaration, "If I were a pastor, I'd do something about it."

At times she clashed with male ministers over such things as her use of guitar in Sunday School. "She was a joyful person, always ready to laugh at herself," her relatives recalled. "She . . . often complained, after a 'God please forgive,' of the sour-faced, pompous people she had to work with, and why couldn't they enjoy their walk with the Lord."

During her years with Long Run, Brewster also worked in other urban ministries such as the Boyce Settlement House and Vacation Bible School programs. On April 11, 1952, Good Friday, she died of a heart blockage. After her crowded funeral on Easter Sunday at Highland, her body was taken for burial to her native Pike County, Indiana.

Her work continues in various ways. Baptists in Louisville continuing to minister to the needy on Jefferson Street. And General Baptist Women's Ministries also continues the missions work she started with that denomination. Each year since 1976, General Baptists have contributed to these projects through the Asenath Brewster Christmas Offering.

Baxter Avenue Mission

Even as it grew itself, Highland was planting as well, opening a mission congregation about a mile away in a former saloon in an apartment house at the corner of Baxter Avenue and Payne Street. A seminary student named Hopkins had surveyed the neighborhood and found many Baptist families that would support a mission, and he secured Highland's sponsorship.[35]

Highland resolved to support the mission at fifty dollars per month, stating "that it is not only within the province of Highland Baptist Church to support the State, Home and Foreign Mission Program of the denomination, but also to look after and assist in the worship of our Baptist people within the territorial limits embraced by our church. . . ." The resolution outlined the gritty territory the mission aimed to serve, bounded "on east by distilleries, the workhouse and Cave Hill, on South by Broadway and on West and North by Beargrass Creek and L&N RR tracks."

The mission—first called Highland Baptist Mission, later Baxter Avenue Chapel—was in excellent hands. Asenath Brewster, a veteran of mission work with the General Baptist denomination, served as superintendent. She taught Sunday School and read Bible stories to neighborhood children. Seminary student and future professor Frank Stagg served as its first pastor. He regularly used the mother church's baptistery in those early days to immerse new converts—twenty-two of them on one Sunday afternoon in 1939, possibly a one-day record for Highland. The church's Mission Committee was chaired by J. P. Sanford, who with his wife was long involved in urban missions.

Growth was swift enough that by 1938 the mission was renting its entire building, using the apartments and backyard for children's and other activities. The mission started a choir, a Baptist Training Union and a Boy Scout troop. It also sponsored two Vacation Bible Schools, albeit segregated ones: white children attended on-site and black children at another location. A women's missionary circle focused not only on spiritual but intellectual and physical well-being. Meeting topics ranged from a biography of Eleanor Roosevelt to a Board of Health presentation on cancer. Within eighteen months of the mission's founding, Sunday School enrollment topped 200, and worship attendance was an average of 55. Stagg and Brewster left the mission in 1941 for other work, but despite a frequent turnover in leadership, the mission continued strong. By 1942, with workers pouring into Louisville to staff the city's fast-growing defense industries, the mission had grown to where it could purchase land at Baxter and Hull for future construction of a church. By 1943 it had baptized 106 people and received another sixty-three as members.

Brent Street / Vine Street Mission

Highland decided to launch a second mission in the Brent Street area near Kentucky Baptist Hospital in 1940, a ministry that eventually evolved into Vine Street Baptist Church. A survey showed two hundred people in the immediate vicinity who did not attend church or Sunday School. Highland young adults were to take a major role, deacons said, declaring "that a great need exists there for a mission" and that "the training the members of our Young Peoples Dept. . . . will be of great value."[36] The church agreed to allocate $50 toward opening the mission in a four-room shotgun house at 743 Brent Street, $30 per month for operating costs and $60 for a fall revival.

This building was used for the Vine Street mission before it moved into its own church building.

Mary Sampson, newly graduated from Georgetown, served as Sunday School superintendent at the mission, which the church launched with a revival. Its first pastor was seminarian Ed Ham (who was nephew and biographer of the legendary evangelist Mordecai Ham, Highland's neighbor on Cherokee Road). The mission launched a mother's club, a Vacation Bible School and other activities, netting about a dozen conversions at a 1941 revival and attracting several nursing students as well. But Mission Committee chair J. P. Sanford cautioned in 1941, "The church should understand that there is perhaps not a more difficult Mission field in Louisville than Brent Street and that there will not be spectacular progress."[37] He did not elaborate, but the Rev. David Nelson, who later served as pastor of the mission and of Highland, recalled there was frequent turnover of the student leadership. It was also slow in attracting whole families who could serve as a nucleus for growth. That growth eventually came in the postwar years.

Other Urban Missions

While sponsoring its own missions, the church kept active in Baptist-wide urban missions as well. Highland women helped refurnish the

Boyce Mission, a downtown settlement house, after it was ravaged in the flood. The church donated to the Baptist Fellowship Center, a mission run by Clarence Jordan in the West End for black residents. And it also supported the Union Gospel Mission, a formerly ecumenical outreach on Jefferson Street taken over by the Long Run Baptist Association in the 1940s. Asenath Brewster left her job (but not her membership) at the Baxter Avenue mission to work full-time at Union. The tireless Sanfords were regular volunteers there as well. "They made a great contribution to the mission," recalled Henlee Barnette, superintendent of the mission in the 1940s. Mrs. Sanford directed a small choir at Union that performed once a year at Broadway Baptist Church, he recalled.

Other Missions and Outreaches

As if these missions were not enough, Highland continued other outreaches. Its members remained active with the Louisville Baptist Orphans' Home. Not only did they take Thanksgiving offerings for the home and serve on its board, but they also took children into their homes for holidays and summer vacations.

Aid to the local poor continued even as the Depression eased. Distributions from the Fellowship Fund in the early 1940s, for example, included $10.00 to help a poor family celebrate Christmas, $13.60 to help a family pay rent and still more to help a family buy coal.

The church continued to support regional evangelistic efforts and showed a particular interest in converting Jews. It funded the evangelistic activities of Jacob Gartenhous, a converted Jew, one of whose rallies featured the testimony of Highland member Herschel Smith, himself a Jewish convert. Such efforts, undertaken as anti-Semitism was rising in Germany, had the twofold purpose of seeking "the salvation of the Jews" and of promoting "A Better Understanding Between the Jew and His Neighbor," the bulletin said. A 1940 report from the Baxter Avenue mission noted that two Jewish boys were among the converts.

War Clouds and Thunderclap

Throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, Highland members watched—and sometimes witnessed—the fateful moves toward war in Europe and Asia. In 1934 Highland member J. McKee Adams attended the controversial 1934 gathering of the Baptist World Alliance in Hitler's Berlin. The assembly denounced prejudice against Jews and other groups but praised Hitler for his teetotaling habits, and individual Baptist dignitaries made conciliatory statements toward the Nazis.[38] Adams's report to the Long Run Association evidently focused on spiritual rather than political aspects of the gathering, for the association's clerk only noted that he "brought a most timely message and gave to us a vivid picture of a lost world in need of a Saviour."[39] Former member John R. Sampey, now the seminary president, published a more blunt observation that the Nazis were pressuring German Baptists to surrender the fundamental Baptist principle of separation of church and state.[40]

While rumors of war grew in Europe, Asia was experiencing the real thing. Highland's missionary in China, Louise Tucker, telegraphed home in 1932 that she was safe amid a Japanese onslaught on Shanghai. Pastor Brown's daughter

Mary and her husband, Milner Brittain, married at Highland in 1935, also set off for war-ravaged China to do missionary and relief work. Church members saw the Brittains' names in a 1937 Associated Press account of a group of Americans who made a perilous 250-mile journey from Mokanshan to Shanghai amid the fighting. The church later sent the Brittains funds to do humanitarian work. In 1940, the Brittains returned safely to Louisville for furlough and further seminary study, with two children in tow.

After full-scale war broke out in Europe in 1939, Highland and other Baptist churches responded to an urgent appeal from their British counterparts to help their 407 missionaries in Asia; Highland sent $364. The church sent more than $90 to Red Cross work in Europe and promoted a sewing program to aid the Red Cross at Douglass Boulevard Christian Church. In June 1940, the church members committed to send an amount equal to the cost of a regular Sunday dinner for war relief; some members fasted to make "it truly a sacrificial offering."[41]

Patriotic themes became more prominent in worship. Vacation Bible School students sang patriotic hymns. A Fourth of July bulletin declared, "Thank God for America and the freedom which is yours!" And Brown began preaching on such subjects as "The Christian in Time of Crisis" (followed by the singing of "Onward Christian Soldiers"). In a sermon, "Wars and Rumors of Wars," he addressed such questions as "What relation is there between the happenings of these times and the coming of Christ? Must we have wars? What is the supreme Christian duty in such times as these?"[42] The church promoted I Am an American Sunday, proclaimed by President Roosevelt, in May 1941. It also indulged in some wartime paranoia, inviting a speaker to talk on "Fifth Column Activities in Religion and Education."[43]

The growing military mobilization of America also prompted Highland to begin outreaches to area servicemen, receiving a Fort Knox soldier for baptism in 1940 and hosting activities for airmen-in-training at Bowman Field. The church formed a Soldiers Hospitality Committee and bought leather-bound New Testaments by the dozen to distribute to servicemen with their names engraved on them. (It also sent New Testaments for Russian prisoners of war held in Finland.)

No amount of war preparation, however, prepared the nation for the shock of Sunday, December 7, 1941. Highland's records say nothing of how church members reacted that day, though we can be certain the shock pervaded the Sunday evening services that followed by just a few hours the news of the attack on Pearl Harbor. By early 1942, Brown was quoting Joan of Arc to inspire the home front: "This is not the time for weeping but for action." He added: "The nation, in this time of peril, can match the enemy only as we here at home keep ourselves busy at our tasks and our men at the front play their heroic part."[44]

And indeed Highlanders played their part. Some 120 members entered military service by war's end. In early 1942, for example, James Moss, who served on the Finance Committee, and Joe Robinson, who served as clerk, Sunday School teacher and BTU leader, resigned their posts upon entering the Army. So did Chester Best, who was superintendent of the Brent Street mission. In May 1942, the church mourned the death of Pvt. Charles Howard

Gregory, a member since 1931 who had been married just the year before. Gregory died while riding in a car that struck a stalled vehicle in an early-morning car accident near Ft. Knox, where he was stationed.

Not all entering the service were men. In January 1943, Highland hosted a mid-term graduation for nursing students who expedited their training to do relief work for the Red Cross. "We congratulate these girls and commend them for their noble ambitions and response to our countries call [*sic*]," the bulletin said.[45]

On the home front, Highland sought to minister to servicemen training at Bowman Field and Fort Knox. When Broadway Baptist Church set up a soldiers' lounge where troops could stay overnight on Saturdays, Highland members took regular turns serving them breakfast on Sunday mornings and talking to them about Christ.

Some of the soldiers made faith commitments at Broadway, but volunteers from Highland, Crescent Hill and other churches deserved their share of the credit, recalled Duke McCall, the former Highland member who was the wartime pastor at Broadway. McCall said one Jewish serviceman gave a conversion testimony so moving it brought tears to the patrician faces of Broadway members; McCall said he never knew who witnessed to the serviceman, but it wasn't a Broadway member and might well have been someone from Highland.

Though war never came to Louisville, the church was prepared for it. The local Defense Council designated the church to handle air-raid evacuees, and the church started its Wednesday night services earlier to accommodate air-raid blackouts. With gas rationing, members were urged to carpool to church, and a later wartime pastor, Charles Maddry, went by bicycle to call on members. The church viewed the causes of God and country as one: Vacation Bible School was renamed Victory Bible School, and the church put thousands of dollars from a building fund into war bonds. In December 1942, the church dedicated a "service flag" at a ceremony honoring those in the service.

Charles Maddry

In January 1942, Brown submitted his resignation and took the job of pastor of First Baptist in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. His eight-year tenure was one of the most productive in Highland's history: the church launched two missions, acquired the Cherokee annex and grew in membership from 800 to 1,200. Brown also had been elected moderator of the Long Run Association and of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky. The church hired seminary professor Harold Tribble as interim for the remainder of 1942.

In December 1942, the church voted to hire a new pastor, Charles Maddry, pastor of Leigh Street Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia. The thirty-five-year-old native of North Carolina had earned his doctorate at Southern Seminary, and his wife, Kitty, was a Virginia native and alumna of the WMU training school. John Ewing Roberts, who was a boy in the church at the time, recalled Maddry as a tall man who typically dressed for church in a cutaway coat with tails, wing collar and old-fashioned tie.

Roberts said Maddry demonstrated "care in the preparation and delivery of sermons, and the importance of regular scholarship. The guy read

books unashamedly and carried his learning lightly in the pulpit, didn't beat you over the head with it."[46]

While the church was understandably preoccupied with the war effort, Maddry presided over its nuts-and-bolts decisions as well. Still tight on space despite the development of the Cherokee annex, the church voted in May to start an expansion fund. "It will mean sacrifices but the prospect of new building after the war is worth our sacrifices," said the bulletin announcement.[47] Meanwhile, the church kept busy tending its existing plant. After the Thanksgiving service in 1943, church members toured the newly renovated pastor's study on the second floor of the tower in the church auditorium building. Maddry thanked the Building and Grounds Committee for "so comfortable a place for study," including a desk with glass top, new bookcase, venetian blinds, drapes, reupholstered lounge chair and fireplace. (Today the built-in fireplace and bookshelves are all that remain in the dusty tower of the once-new office.)

The Building and Grounds Committee soon had more work to do when a two-alarm fire struck the church on January 8, 1944, destroying furnishings in classrooms in the educational building, burning organ wires and damaging the heating system. Highland was able to hold both worship services the following Sunday, but the main educational building could not be used. Firemen thought hot ashes from a fireplace ignited a wooden partition.[48] "Fire or no fire—Sunday School and Training Union go on just the same!" the following week's bulletin proclaimed in announcing the adjustments in room assignments.[49] The church ended up using the insurance money plus additional pledges to do a larger overhaul of the Sunday School building, adding acoustic ceiling tiles, a gas steam radiator to replace the coal stove, lavatory equipment, fluorescent lights, new kitchen cabinets and drinking fountains.[50]

Charles Maddry led Highland through the war years.

And Highland adapted to new technology as well, forming an Audio-Visual Education Promotional Committee. "The military training of our soldiers has demonstrated that old-fashioned techniques are sadly out-of-date," Maddry explained to the congregation. "Several visits of the Pastor to Fort Knox has further enforced the view that we are not using enough maps, charts, blackboards, movies, slides, and other such devices for impressing spiritual truth on the people."[51]

But not all the news about church facilities was welcome. At least four times between 1943 and 1947, thieves broke into the church, cracked the safe and made off with the money inside, looting as much as one thousand dollars on one occasion.[52]

Golden Anniversary

Shortly into Maddry's tenure, in May 1943, Highland celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with a series of activities, publishing its first history and receiving congratulations from neighbors and former members of the church. At a Saturday evening banquet, participants sang "God Bless America" and "My Old Kentucky Home." In the Sunday services, members sang such hymns as "Faith of Our Fathers" and

"Blest Be the Tie That Binds." They also heard talks by Maddry and former pastors Bagby, Weatherspoon, Howard and Brown. Flowers and congratulations flowed in from people associated with the church's past or present. Highland's connection to its denomination was reflected in the messages of congratulations sent

Five former and current pastors of Highland gathered to mark its fiftieth anniversary in 1943. From left are David Howard, Charles Maddry, A. Paul Bagby, T. D. Brown, and J. B. Weatherspoon.

by officials that included the presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention and Southern Seminary. The festive atmosphere, however, was tempered with wartime sobriety. Brown gave a strident sermon about boosting the morale of the "home front" to meet the military crisis. The church needed to expect that half its boys at the front wouldn't return alive, he warned. "Your backbone must stiffen and you must be the undergirding strength needed at this time," he said. Louise and Florence Tucker, the last surviving charter members, sent effusive congratulations and an exhortation: "With renewed fervor and zeal may the message of the Cross be proclaimed in word and deed by this church."

Toward Peace

Maddry was already on the task, organizing a revival earlier that spring with the injunction, "At a time when so many of the young people of earth are engaged in the destruction that is war, it is more than necessary that those who are spared should be busy at the task of building . . . the foundation upon which a better world must be built."[53] But the war was taking its psychological toll; by the following year he was preaching a sermon series on the book of Job. "This scripture has an especial appeal in these days of sweat, blood and tears," he explained.[54]

As more and more members entered the service, the church followed war news with keen interest and supported Red Cross aid drives. A bulletin board was set up in a hallway with the addresses of soldiers, and a Correspondence Committee wrote regularly to servicemen. "We are all looking forward to seeing you at Highland when it is all over," Sunday School superintendent Ralph Logan wrote in a bulletin mailed to soldiers, complete with a devotional from Maddry. "You are doing a good job. We hope we can do half as well at home."[55]

The letters were appreciated. "There have been several times over here when I stopped to think and pray and I never failed to be thankful for you and my friends for your prayers," wrote one soldier, Dan Card, after the war. "There has never been a question in my mind that prayer hasn't helped through many a tough spot. Am looking forward to the day I can once more enter those grand doors and see many friends that I often think about once more."[56]

The war also brought news from the farthest corners of the world. From Africa, the Jesters

wrote of encountering American soldiers on leave. Marine Sgt. Marcus R. Burke, back for a few days of rest after thirty-two months in the Pacific region, spoke to the Women's Missionary Society "on the Samoan religions."[57]

In 1944 deacon Tallie Gardner and his wife received the dreaded news that their son Charles had been killed on the island of Saipan. He was Highland's second and last fatality of World War II. Outgoing news was sometimes grim as well: Marine Peel Rivers received word during the war that his father, longtime deacon Byron Rivers, had died.

By Christmas 1944, Maddry and Highland's assistant pastor Ben Ussery were writing melancholic messages to the church. "In our day of tension we cannot wish you a Merry Christmas," Ussery wrote. "With the machines of war thunder-ing and guns belching destruction, our only wish for you can be the comfort and joy which comes with the assurance of Immanuel—Christ with us."[58]

In 1945 the church cheered the Allied push toward victory, even as it worried over members such as Leland Miller, Franklin Chapman and Lawrence Burnett, who had been captured by the Germans as prisoners of war. Burnett, the church learned, "reads his Bible every day and has been helping to distribute Red Cross packages to fellow camp members."[59] All were released safely, and in May 1945, the church celebrated Victory in Europe, joining in a program held by Mayor Wilson Wyatt and the Louisville Council of Churches. Highland held a reception the following Sunday for families of servicemen in Europe. On the evening of August 14, about 175 people attended a special Victory in Japan service.

"We are thankful that instead of suffering during these last several years when the world was on fire, we have prospered," Maddry wrote soon afterward. "God has been good to us for some reason. If we do not find that reason and obey it, . . . his goodness and mercy will not forever go forth toward us."[60]

This undated old photo shows the sanctuary and original educational building.

Notes

1. CB, 1/26/30.
2. Thomas, 196.
3. This wasn't accomplished, obviously, for we still have a record of it.
4. CB, 1/11/31.
5. CB, 3/1/31.
6. CM, 8/3/32.
7. CM, 8/28/32.
8. CB, 1/3/32.
9. The other surviving member, Mary Pratt, was then living in Lexington. CM, 5/33; WR, 5/18/33.
10. CM, 10/5/33.
11. Interview.
12. CM, 1/2/32.
13. CM, 1/4/33.
14. CB, 12/25/32.
15. CM, 7/8/34.
16. CM, 9/16/34.
17. CB, 3/3/35.
18. Interview, 1992.
19. CB, 1/6/35; CB, 1/27/35.
20. Interview.
21. CB, 1/7/40.
22. Interview.
23. Interview.
24. CM, 2/11/37.
25. CB, 11/19/39.
26. CB, 2/9/30.
27. CB, 10/6/40.
28. Interview.
29. CB, 11/19/39.
30. CJ, 6/21/39.
31. CB, 3/31/40.
32. Carver, "Recollections," 97.
33. WR, 9/20/34.
34. Interview, Mrs. J. McKee Adams.
35. This history comes from church minutes and bulletins as well as from a brief history written by Asenath Brewster in 1945.
36. CM, 4/10/40.
37. CM, 10/5/41.
38. Leonard, *Baptist Ways*, 382.
39. LR, 10/4/34.
40. WR, 9/6/34; 9/13/34.
41. CM, 6/2/40.
42. CB, 3/17/40; 7/7/40.
43. DM, 5/5/41.
44. CB, 1/4/42.
45. CB, 1/10/43.
46. Interview.
47. CB, 6/6/43.
48. CJ, 1/9/44.
49. CB, 1/16/44.
50. CB, 3/12/44.
51. CB, 9/2/45.
52. LT (or CJ?), 11/20/44; LT, 7/7/47.
53. CB, 3/28/44.
54. CB, 9/17/44.
55. CB, 6/25/44.
56. CB, 9/16/45.
57. CB, 8/27/44.
58. CB, 12/44.
59. CB, 3/3/45.
60. CB, 10/28/45.

CHAPTER FOUR

1946–1961

"Plugging for Building"

On a clear spring day, May 30, 1954, Highland Baptist Church dedicated a state-of-the-art educational building, one that had been years in the making and the dreaming. A home movie taken of the opening day shows hundreds of church members processing from the church into the new building, dressed in their Sunday best, from little children led along by their parents and teachers, to uniformed Boy Scouts, to the oldest of members in suits and smart dresses. The hymns sung that day speak of the triumphant mood in the air: "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," "Holy, Holy, Holy," "All Creatures of Our God and King," "Lead on, O King Eternal."[1]

With the new $250,000 building, Highland was at last solving the space crunch that had plagued it for years. The dedication also marked Highland's participation in a wider surge in organized religion, an era when Americans flocked to church in record numbers. This phenomenon paralleled national social trends such as an economic surge and a baby boom. Highland reached record levels of membership in the 1950s, with more than one thousand resident members at the mother church and hundreds more at its nearby missions on Baxter Avenue and Vine Street. Highland launched both missions as independent, self-supporting congregations, and in 1960, it began a new mission at Bashford Manor. The Revs. Hankins Parker and David Nelson gave Highland steady leadership with long pastorates.

But these were times of change and anxiety as well. The ever-tense Cold War flared in Korea, where three Highland members were killed in fighting. And change was coming to the church's own neighborhood. Many residents of the Highlands moved out to newer suburbs east of Louisville, among them many Highland Baptist members who either joined new churches or commuted to Highland from long distances. In and around Cherokee Road, once one of Louisville's most fashionable addresses, many old aristocratic mansions were converted into multiple apartments. On the eve of the 1960s, the church would face new decisions in carrying out its mission in a changing neighborhood and a changing society.

Postwar Regathering

As World War II ended, most Highland members in the military were demobilized and welcomed home to church. Some, like Marine veteran Joe Robinson, settled in for years of service to the church; others returned for brief stays before moving on with new jobs and new families. Members contributed through Southern Baptist agencies to relief efforts in a world struggling with postwar ruins and famine. One church family, the Dents, brought a "displaced person" from Latvia in 1949 to live with and work for them.

On June 26, 1946, the church dedicated a plaque that remains to this day at the rear of the sanctuary, honoring the 120 men and women of the church who "answered the call of their country to fight for the freedom of the world" during World War II. It paid tribute by name to the two who died while in service, Charles Howard Gregory and Charles Lewis Gardner.

Church leaders talked ambitiously of constructing an educational building almost as soon as the war ended, though such plans were slow to develop. Of more immediate interest was preserving the existing buildings. In April 1946, the basement of the old educational building was hit by Highland's second blaze in two years. The two-alarm blaze, which possibly spread from an open flame in a fireplace, caused an estimated $9,000 in smoke and water damage to the aptly named Fireside Room.[2] "Fire No Bar to Services Set Sunday," proclaimed an optimistic newspaper headline suggesting the church's resilience.

In July 1946, pastor Charles Maddry resigned to take the pulpit at First Baptist Church in Wilmington, North Carolina. The opportunity came "unexpectedly and unsought," he said. "The future for Highland Baptist Church is as bright as the consecration of its membership." The church accepted his resignation "with deep regret."[3]

Hankins Parker

In June 1947, Highland unanimously voted to call as its new pastor Hankins Parker, who was then pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Owensboro, Kentucky.

Parker, then twenty-nine, was a gregarious, outgoing man who brought a hands-on, detail-oriented management style and made good on his pledge to grow the church both physically and numerically.

The Alabama native and onetime veterinarian graduated from Howard College and from Southern Seminary, and he pastored other churches in Alabama and Kentucky before coming to Highland. His wife, Frances, graduated from the WMU Training School.

Frances Parker remembers her Highland Baptist experience fondly. "The educational level and the Christian level of the people in the church just made it an easy pastorate," she said. "And they accomplished so much. When they decided to do something, they did it. They didn't prolong it or fuss about it, they just did it, which is not a characteristic of most

Pastor Hankins Parker led the church during its postwar expansion.

Baptist churches." Highland was "the only church I ever cried when I left."[4]

The Parkers lived in a parsonage at 1115 Cherokee Road (next to one of the educational annexes), which the church purchased in 1946 for $12,500 from lawyer A. C. Van Winkle and his wife, Mary.[5] Frances Parker said she has fond memories of the busy church traffic passing in and out of the parsonage.

A number of young families joined the congregation, and the church was so full that members recalled they routinely needed chairs in the aisles. The church drew new members with revival meetings and an active visitation program. Current and former members like Rose Hawkins and Marylynn Roberts recalled that when they were girls, church members came to their doors in the neighborhood and urged them to come to Sunday School. Virginia and Gene Bell lived on Cherokee Road and joined when their children were small. "We liked the church because there were a lot of children in it and we could walk to church," Virginia Bell later recalled. Family memories are filled with church activities from annual revivals to visits from "Santa Claus," she said.[6]

Highland was busy enough that the church began mailing out its first newsletter, the Highland Baptist Herald, to keep members up to date. The church was a hive of activity on Wednesday nights, with various choirs and meetings of teachers. Those without such tasks formed a Loafers Club that regularly hosted seminary professors and other outside speakers. "Every Baptist church has a few members who do not work, but most churches fail to offer a program especially for those members," ran one tongue-in-cheek promotion. "HBC, with a realistic view of its membership, has a Loafers' Class for them."[7]

The New Educational Building

Even during World War II, Highland had been saving money for an eventual building project. In 1946, pastor Charles Maddry told the congregation:

Members break ground for the new educational building on May 10, 1953. With shovels are pastor Hankins Parker and charter members Louise and Florence Tucker.

> Certainly the church cannot continue indefinitely with the major education equipment consisting of two obsolete dwelling houses on two separate streets, with offices in two buildings and on three floors, with no library, with three assembly rooms when at least five are needed, when there are class rooms for only two men's classes, when four are needed, when there are not rooms for the formation of any new classes anywhere, when the nursery must meet in a room which holds twenty when there are three times that number on the roll, and in a community in which there are hundreds of people who need Christ. Some say that when the Sunday school grows, the building will come. Discernment says that when the building is made the Sunday school will be able to grow and not before.[8]

Calls for expansion became increasingly urgent as the baby boom was making its presence felt. One hundred eighteen children under the age of three were crowding the nurseries and Cradle Roll program.[9]

Top: Deacon Damon Surgener, left, with pastor Hankins Parker at the cornerstone laying for the new educational building on November 15, 1953.

Right: Highland celebrated its sixtieth anniversary at a service on May 10, 1953, the same day it broke ground for its new educational building. The speaker is member Ralph Brown.

Yet Parker recalled that, on his first Sunday, one lay leader pointed to the Cherokee Annex and stated pessimistically, "A lot of people say some day there'll be a building out here, but it will never be built." Parker said he "sunk in my shoes that day. But God let us do it."[10]

The church voted 276–11 in March 1952 to accept the Building and Expansion Committee's recommendation for a new, three-story, $125,000 educational building, measuring 50 by 125 feet. (A related recommendation to build a new, larger sanctuary never materialized.)

Members from that time said Parker, who immersed himself in the smallest details of the project, was key to bringing the project to life. "I thank God that Hankins was determined and firm, because if he had not been, we may not have had this building," deacon Damon Surgener later recalled. "Certainly we would not have had it in 1954."[11]

The church held a Building Fund Sunday on November 2, 1952, with appeals meant to loosen even the tightest pursestrings. Frieda Horn Freyman, superintendent of the beginner's

department, quoted the laments of preschoolers in one of the aging annexes. "We're all so cold this morning," said one. "It's raining," said another. "Will my daddy come and carry me over to the Big Church so my nice shoes and coat will not get wet?"[12]

Over the coming months, various other church leaders added their appeals. "My little girl received a Bible from the church last month along with fourteen other Primary Department children," said Margaret Keyes Tate, superintendent of the Young People's Department. "It's her dearest treasure because she has found Jesus here. She is a fourth generation to worship in the sanctuary which her great-grandparents helped God to build. That's why we're plugging for building!"[13]

Just a few months before the church broke ground for the new building, *The Courier-Journal's* religion reporter, Ora Spaid, visited Highland for a profile of a typical postwar Sunday School. He noted that Highland, like many public schools, was feeling a classroom space crunch. In the process, he left a snapshot of Highland's Sunday School in 1953.

> The program has outgrown the original Sunday school building, and classes are being held in two houses adjacent to the church. A larger, modern Sunday-school annex is planned; a huge architect's drawing of it hangs on one side of the altar platform in the sanctuary, to remind parishioners of the need.
>
> Even with the three buildings, the exercises at Highland Baptist must be conducted on a shift basis. Children attend opening services in a group while others hear the lesson in classrooms. At the end of the period, they switch.
>
> But in most ways, the Sunday-school follows its traditional path. Five-year-olds are still singing "Jesus Loves Me," and yesterday they pointed out their verse for the day, "Thou, Lord, has made me glad," in the "Bible book."
>
> The 5-to-7 group still clusters around a teacher at small tables to color and hear stories of Jesus. A class of 15- and 16-year old boys started their discussion with talk of sports, until the teacher found an opening to relate Christianity to their everyday life.
>
> The prim young ladies of 12 and 13 are still the best behaved, and Sunday school has not suppressed the individuality of a few ornery boys who are the object of lectures on how to be good.[14]

The church broke ground on Sunday, May 10, 1953, which also marked Highland's sixtieth anniversary. Two surviving charter members, Louise and Florence Tucker, with energetic smiles and neat Sunday dresses and hats, stood with the youthful pastor Parker as they prepared to turn the ceremonial spades of dirt. Other members, equally spiffily dressed, took their turns to the shovel. Former pastor T. D. Brown gave the church's anniversary sermon. Southern Seminary professor Ernest Loessner, Highland's once and future education director, spoke at the ground breaking.

A steel skeleton outlines the new educational building under construction.

In a home movie from the period, the Sunday ceremony gives way to weekday scenes of construction workers in dusty T-shirts, tearing down the old brick Cherokee Annex, excavating the ground and gradually raising a steel skeleton. The church laid its cornerstone on November 15 in ceremonies that included a sermon by former pastor Jesse B. Weatherspoon, who had long ago dreamed of such an expansion, and a prayer by Highland member and seminary president Duke McCall. When the building was completed, former pastors David Howard and Charles Maddry spoke at dedication services in May 1954.

Before the heavy machinery went away entirely, workers also demolished the church's Grinstead annex to make way for its upper parking lot.

The new educational building, opened in 1954, as it stands today.

Maddry wrote to the church afterward: "I hope your work will continue to prosper and soon you will be bursting through the walls of your new building."[15]

That was no idle wish. Sunday School attendance soon passed four hundred a week, compared with 317 a week the previous year. Mothers were urged to bring their children to a state-of-the-art nursery with "metal hospital cribs for easy cleaning, a toddler room, a room for each age child, educational toys, rest room with child size fixtures, germicidal lights and a paging system to call parents from the church service. . . . Nursery workers are offering a scientific child care program that equals these modern accommodations."[16]

Parker's successor, David Nelson, recalled that the finished product was a "magnificent building." Many of the planning decisions were Parker's, he said, "and they were good ones."[17]

Musical Changes

Parker oversaw significant changes in other areas as well, including the church's music program. Since 1936 Mrs. Frank Ropke had served as organist, and she and her husband were long active members. But she resigned in 1948 when the church sought to move from the high-church worship style she cultivated to a more typical Southern Baptist repertoire of gospel hymns. A congregational survey of favorite hymns in 1949 confirmed members' taste in the latter style:[18]

The Old Rugged Cross
Living for Jesus
In the Garden
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
Beneath the Cross of Jesus
Make Me a Blessing
Wherever He Leads I'll Go
Lead On, O King Eternal
Saved! Saved!
Amazing Grace

William Robinson began a long tenure as organist in 1950, pledging to lead "cold Christian hearts into a warmer fellowship with the Lord."[19] Robinson sometimes chided the

The Highland choir with director Jim Yates in 1950.

congregation on proper attitudes toward musical worship, as in this bulletin entry on his efforts to introduce the congregation to a new tune:

> We made a fairly good start with our new "All Hail the Power" last Sunday. Some of you are still rather uncooperative. As soon as the organ strikes a tune that is the least unfamiliar, shut go the books, bored go the expressions, and the organist and choir do an extra "Special," with the help of a few. Won't you join us this week and following weeks as we repeat and repeat new hymns?[20]

In 1953 Robinson began an ambitious new music program. He started six different choirs for different ages, abilities and time commitments. He played lunchtime organ meditations, hoping to inspire those living and working nearby, and he offered vocal and piano lessons.

Despite his demanding work ethic, "everybody liked Bill," Frances Parker recalled.[21] Added Marylynn Roberts: "He was very funny and wonderful with teenagers. He put up with a lot [from teenagers] but also helped steer me into music."[22]

The church also overhauled its organ, which was breaking down to the point of playing keys that weren't even depressed. The church approved a $10,000 rehabilitation, replacing the console and other moving parts while keeping most of the pipes, and rededicated the instrument in 1953.

The Korean War and Other Tragedies

The eruption of war in Korea in 1950 took its toll on Highland. The United States and other allies joined with South Koreans in repelling an invasion from the communist North. In contrast to the resolute support for World War II from all quarters, the correspondence from some soldiers and church leaders took a more melancholic tone, and Highland did what it could to help. As in the world wars, the church created a Military Service Committee and sent New Testaments to members in the service.

A soldier named William Bourne wrote to thank the church for his Testament. "I hope that soon I can return to Highland, but first, there is

a job to be done and until peace can be restored to the world, I guess millions of us will have to give up things we want," he wrote. The only benefit from the war, he said, is that it made him realize his dependence on God.[23]

Three Highland members were killed in the conflict. Lt. William H. Dean died on December 1, 1950, leaving a wife and daughter. He had been a partner with his father and brothers in the family Dean's Tire Service on Fifth Street, and he was awarded the Silver Star posthumously.[24]

Tank gunner Ted Wirotzious was killed on March 6, 1951, after his and 10 other tanks ran into a minefield. His body was returned in September for burial. The Wirotziouses were long stalwart families of Highland, and Ted had joined in 1937. He had served the Army since 1943, and had been a military police officer in Germany. His six medals included a Purple Heart as well as a Bronze and Silver Star. "He loved the Army and died for the thing he felt was important to himself and his country," the church bulletin stated. "Let us so give ourselves to our country and to the cause of the Lord, that we might secure these things for which Ted gave his life."[25]

The news of Wirotzious's death compounded an air of tragedy in the church. That same week, nine-year-old Raymond Petty was killed instantly when hit by a city bus at an intersection of Bardstown Road. The bulletin recalled a budding young Christian who "was all boy and not excelled by many in enthusiasm and energy. . . . Raymond is not only with Jesus, but many of us are closer to Him because of this which has happened. Even his parents came Sunday rededicating their lives."[26]

Yet another set of parents grieved in November 1952, when member James W. Wood was killed in Korea. As with Wirotzious, Wood had just written a letter home saying how much he hoped to see his family and church: "I would like to be there, setting down in front of you, but the Lord has a job over here for me now. Maybe it won't be long until I am back there."[27]

The war ended in stalemate, and Highland suffered another military tragedy in 1958. Eighteen-year-old Edward Matthews, a church member since 1951, was killed in a boiler fire while aboard a Navy destroyer off Florida. "While we are grieved at his death, it is a great deal of comfort for us that he was led to Christ in our Church," a church notice stated.[28]

Baxter Avenue Mission

Baxter Avenue Chapel began planning for a new building at Baxter and Hull to replace its rented quarters, where services were held in a large, bare room with folding-chair seating for only one hundred. Thomas E. Lindley, one of a series of seminarians who served as mission pastors, noted that the congregation was mainly composed of the laboring class, making it difficult for them to afford a building project. But by 1948, Highland was able to authorize a $33,500 contract to build the new chapel. The announcement caused the *Louisville Times* to reminisce about the previous life of the property—as part of a pre-Prohibition beer garden. One anonymous old-timer was quoted as saying: "The ghosts of Phoenix Hill are gentle spirits; they'll do the new church no harm."[29]

Letters from Korea

During the Korean war, Highland's newsletter included several letters from servicemen. Following are excerpts from two men subsequently killed in the war.

Letter from Pvt. William T. "Ted" Wirotzious to church member and fellow World War II veteran J. M. Robinson, published February 11, 1951, Highland Baptist Herald. Ted Wirotzious was killed March 8, 1951.

Well, how is everything down Kentucky way? I received your very nice letter, and you don't know how good it is to get mail from someone at church.

I'm sitting here in a nice warm school house drinking coffee. We got hit hard so we are waiting for tanks and replacements.

I'm in the best Division in the Army as you know. I guess you want to know if I'm going to stay in the Army. Well, I would like to stay if I get home safely. And the way people at church think about us boys, I will be coming home. The only thing I would like is to go to church one more Sunday with Mom.

* * *

Letter from James W. Wood to pastor Hankins Parker, published in October 5, 1952, Highland Baptist Herald. James Wood was killed November 1, 1952.

This is Sunday and we have the day off. We are back in reserve and only train six days and two or three nights a week. The Sabbath day is ours.

I sure would like to be there, setting down in front of you, but the Lord has a job over here for me now. Maybe it won't be long until I am back there.

The church services we have over here is a little different from the ones back home. We don't have a nice church or nice soft seats. We just sit on the ground, out in the open air, but we still have church. I guess that is all that matters.

Well, Bro. Parker, tell all the members, "Hello," and I will close for now. I am looking for a letter from you before long.

A photo display in the youth area of the old educational building honors six Highland members who died in wartime. They are, from left: Charles L. Gardner (World War II), Charles L. Coleman (Vietnam), William H. Dean (Korea), Charles Howard Gregory (World War II), James W. Wood (Korea) and Ted Wirotzious (Korea).

The one-story brick building opened in 1948. Four years later, Baxter Avenue formally achieved financial independence from Highland, and it became a separate congregation in a service on December 7, 1952. Highland transferred the deed and mortgage to Baxter and approved the transfer of 120 letters of membership to the new congregation. Somebody

The Baxter Avenue Chapel building opened in 1948, and the church became independent in 1952.

calculated that since 1937, Highland had contributed $28,145 to Baxter while Baxter itself had collected $62,476.

Vine Street Mission

Highland fostered its mission on Vine Street (formerly on Brent Street). Highland had bid $1 for an Army surplus chapel at Bowman Field after World War II (thinking the government would be happy to be rid of the structure and that the church would bear the moving costs), but the government rejected the bid. Highland had been so confident of getting the chapel that it had already begun construction of the foundation built to the Bowman chapel's dimensions. Disappointed church leaders asked Frank Shouse, Highland's resident expert in real estate, "to see if he couldn't find somebody to buy this lot with a hole in it," deacon Damon Surgener later recalled.[30] "The Lord wasn't in agreement with this." The church instead put a roof over the foundation and held services in the basement until it could afford to build the rest of the structure.

The mission had a frequent turnover of pastors until 1949, when Highland hired seminarian David Nelson. Since Nelson planned to stay a while as he studied for a master's and a doctorate, he brought stability to the mission pulpit.

"When the committee talked to me, they said, 'It's always been a mission, we just feel like it always will be a mission,'" Nelson later recalled. "But somehow it just really caught fire."[31]

He found the work so difficult at first that he offered his resignation to Sara Hadley, Highland's superintendent of the mission. "Mrs. Hadley, in her inimitable way, said, 'David, God called you to build this church, and I'm not going to let you leave until you do it,'" Nelson recalled. "Let me tell you, she put some backbone into me."

Nelson said several women were attending regularly when he started but only one man. "I made that an object of prayer," he said. "I made a list of twelve men that we had made contact with—maybe we had reached the children. . . . At the end of the year we had eleven [men attending]. And they were sort of the nucleus. . . . I think the change came when we reached quite a number of whole families."[32]

Highland approved a Vine Street building committee in 1950 and authorized construction of a $28,000 church building at Highland and Vine in 1953. By 1954 it had 170 members—up one hundred from five years earlier, the mission reported, citing "progress from a very discouraging situation in 1949 to a Church with a future in 1954."[33] It held its first services in its new building in 1955 and became independent in 1956.

Vine Street Baptist Church became independent in 1956, a year after it began meeting in this building.

With both Baxter and Vine, Highland turned over the deeds to its daughter churches on one condition—that if either ceased to be a Southern Baptist church, its property would revert back to Highland. Circumstances have not warranted such an action.

David Nelson

Hankins Parker resigned in 1955 to become pastor of First Baptist Church in Paducah. He held that post until 1962 and also served as a pastor in Florida before returning to Louisville in 1980, when he served as director of estate planning for Southern Seminary until his death in 1995 at age seventy-seven.

Highland found a replacement close to home, calling David Nelson from the Vine Street mission.

Both gentle and gentlemanly, Nelson was born in Mississippi to a Baptist preacher who died when David was fourteen, and he grew up in Birmingham, Alabama. He graduated from Howard College and earned his master's and doctorate at Southern Seminary.

Damon Surgener, chair of the Pulpit Committee, advised Nelson that if he were pastor, "you couldn't pay me enough money" to live in the parsonage right next to the church.[34] Instead, the church granted Nelson a housing allowance, enabling Nelson and his wife, Jo, to move into a home on Upland Road, putting some physical boundaries between church and home.

David Nelson led the Vine Street Mission before becoming Highland's pastor.

Nelson's main challenge at first was his own crowded life. He prepared for his first sermon the same week as his final seminary doctoral exam and the arrival of his first child. But Nelson got off to a congenial start. Week after week in the church newsletters, he drove home the importance of evangelism. He made that theme central to every aspect of church life, from the Sunday School program to his urging of

members to show friendliness to visitors. He taught "soul-winning classes," organized neighborhood surveys and had prayer meetings with deacons to revive what he felt was an inadequate evangelistic spirit in the church. "I would like to see us reach the point that we feel we have personally failed if someone does not respond to the invitation," Nelson wrote at one point. "We should not be content to waste all this good fellowship on ourselves."[35]

But Nelson also noted the changes in the neighborhood. A new, poorer and more transient population was moving in. Nelson wrote:

> We live in a changing neighborhood. Many of the larger residences on Cherokee Road have ten families in them where they were formerly residences for only one family. This has multiplied the opportunities for our church.
>
> However, we must be at the job. Many of those who move into our neighborhood are shy. They would appreciate a friendly visit. They are open to one. But they are reluctant to make the first move. They need the encouragement of a visit.[36]

Nelson recalled in an interview that this population was always "hard to reach. But I think apartment dwellers are hard to reach anywhere because by their very nature they feel like they're temporary."[37]

Nelson sought not only to bring in members but to oversee their spiritual growth. Bulletins from the era repeatedly reminded members to be on time for church, mind their worship manners, show reverence in services and pray during the invitation for positive results. Nelson urged members to visit churches when they traveled on vacations and to mail him the bulletins to show they had done so. He began 1959 with a "prayer that there shall be no cobwebs in our baptistery." There weren't. The church baptized fifty that year, a record unmatched except for years when the church included baptisms from mission congregations. Nelson was so anxious for the church to succeed that he lay awake one stormy Saturday night, worried about people's ability to get to church.[38]

Highland became one of the biggest contributors to missions among Kentucky Baptist churches. In fact, the church prospered financially with the times. For 1958, members pledged $131,000, oversubscribing a budget of $126,400.

"More people are volunteering to tithe than ever before," the Highland Baptist Herald reported. "It is also the result of an increase in membership during the past year. The spirit of unity which prevails in our membership was certainly demonstrated."[39]

The church also approved a $20,000 air conditioning unit during Nelson's tenure. A bulletin item justified the expense as "a necessity, not a luxury" in an era when many stores, office buildings and other public buildings were air-conditioned. "Let us use this modern wonder of science to reach more people with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."[40] The summer services were not only cooler but quieter, Nelson wrote in 1956.

> Before air-conditioning, I can remember giving the invitation to the background music of a back-firing motorcycle or a siren. Many a sermon was interrupted while we all listened to the screeching tires anticipating a crash. But now, with the windows and doors closed, we are insulated against the noise outside.[41]

One highlight of Nelson's tenure came in 1958 when the church paid for him to join a Holy Land tour led by a seminary archaeology

professor. This six-week adventure began in Europe, where the group toured Paris, worshiped at the Baptist seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and walked on the Appian Way in Rome where the apostle Paul walked. Nelson's travel journals, published in Highland's newsletter, described the awe-inspiring wonders of the Old World, though he also encountered the same type of Italian guides that Mark Twain wrote about a century earlier, trying to attribute everything to Michelangelo, even buildings raised a thousand years before the Renaissance artist's birth. In the Holy Land, Nelson and his group visited Jerusalem's holy sites, climbed the Mount of Temptation, floated in the Dead Sea, rode horses to Petra and slept in its mountainous tombs.

"The Bible is taking a new life," he wrote home. "I am praying for wisdom to make full use of this new knowledge without letting it become obnoxious."[42]

Back home, Nelson was rising in stature among local Baptists. He was elected moderator of the Long Run Baptist Association in 1960. The following year, one of the largest churches in the state, First Baptist Owensboro, called him as pastor, and he resigned from Highland in December 1961. He went on to serve thirty years at First Baptist in Owensboro and was elected president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention in 1965 (nominated by his successor at Highland, Nathan Brooks). Since retiring in 1991, Nelson has served as interim pastor at ten different congregations. In 2004 the Kentucky Baptist Convention honored him for his work in support of the Cooperative Program, the Southern Baptists' unified giving plan, for which he raised more than $2.6 million in Owensboro alone.[43]

Highland, meanwhile, entered a transition period after Nelson's departure. Its education minister and youth worker also resigned in late 1961. The church hired G. Willis Bennett, an associate professor of Christian ethics at the seminary, as interim to replace Nelson.

Youth

At the height of the baby boom, the church had plenty of youth ministries. A Boy Scout troop met at Highland, and church youths played in church sports leagues from baseball to basketball to bowling. The youth had annual "sweetheart banquets" in the fellowship hall, which never looked so good as in 1960 when it was decked out like a Southern plantation with hundred-foot murals, a working fountain and a colonnaded stage. The youth took trips to Butler Lake and events like the "Stephen Foster Story" musical in Bardstown.

Many of those who grew up in the era recall fondly some of the youth leaders, such as Lillian and Ralph "Brownie" Brown, who had no children of their own but routinely opened their home to the youth of the church, and Joe and Georgene Robinson. Joe Robinson was a major in World War II, "so that made him cool" to the kids, recalls John Ewing Roberts. "And he had access to chewing gum." The Baptist Training Union offered "superb training" in public speaking because all participants regularly had to take a turn leading part of the service, Roberts added.[44] The Training Union would stage attendance contests in which the youth divided into teams with names like the "Davy Crocketts" and "Daniel Boones." One episode of light-hearted fun—when Roberts and pastor Charles Maddry's son were tossing funeral fans

like Frisbees in an empty sanctuary—came to an abrupt end when an angry janitor made them clean it up.[45]

To encourage young people to go into full-time church work, pastor Hankins Parker founded a "volunteer band"—a group that met in the Fireside Room for a Saturday breakfast once a month. The program's alumni include Roberts, who had a long preaching career in Baltimore, and career missionary Grundy Janes. Parker "really had an interest in young people, and was very instrumental in the formation of a lot of us," Janes recalls.[46] Roberts agrees, adding that the group had its humorous moments. Once when Parker overslept, Frances Parker sent him and Grundy Janes to his room to wake him up. "He was mortified!" Roberts recalled.[47]

Marylynn Roberts recalled that the church enabled her to take voice lessons, and Parker guided her to Georgetown College, suggesting she seek scholarships. "Hankins Parker was probably the one who made it possible for me to go to college," she said.

Gathering at the future site of the Bashford Manor mission in 1960 are, from left, deacon Robert L. Sprau, mission pastor Daniel Holcomb, Highland pastor David Nelson and deacon James Swindler.

Young people grew up in an atmosphere of "a warm-hearted conservative theology," Roberts said. "It seemed OK to ask questions." He recalls a visiting preacher who brought an unfamiliar pulpit-pounding style. Roberts turned to his grandmother, Dora Chenault, and said, "I never heard anything like that." She replied, "It's all right to get excited every now and then, but I just don't think Jesus shouted. Look at your red-letter New Testament. Almost nothing in red letters works if you shout it."[48]

Bashford Manor Mission

With the Baxter and Vine missions leaving the nest, Highland sought to incubate a new mission in Louisville's fast-growing suburbs. It zeroed in on the new Bashford Manor neighborhood. Highland purchased a 4.2-acre parcel for $25,000 in 1960. The parcel was located next to a new elementary school on Bashford Manor Lane, where the church would meet until it could afford a new building. Seminary student Daniel H. Holcomb became the first pastor, and within its first year it attracted as many as ninety to worship and was paying its own operating expenses. At least one Highland family, that of Hugo Kottke, joined the fledgling mission, and Nelson helped by preaching a revival with modest but encouraging success. Holcomb optimistically told the church that the new neighborhood was "literally a field 'white unto harvest' and one that needs the witness of God's church."[49]

Ernest Loessner: Religious Educator

Ernest Loessner, one of his generation's leaders in the development of religious education programs, served two terms as Highland's director of religious education—from 1939 to 1942 and from 1954 to 1958.

A native of Key West, Loessner earned the equivalent of a doctorate in ministry in 1941 but received no degree because he lacked a college education. While at seminary, he served his first stint as Highland's education director, earning glowing reviews for nearly doubling attendance among young people in the Baptist Training Union and Sunday School. The church bought him a new car as a surprise gift. Pastor T. D. Brown called him a "most excellent and efficient servant of the church."

Southern Seminary professor Ernest Loessner served two terms as religious education director of Highland.

Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

After seminary, Loessner resigned from Highland and worked at churches in Arkansas and Texas. When Southern Seminary opened its new School of Religious Education, it sought Loessner as one of its charter professors—even though he was the first professor in the seminary's history to lack a college degree. "His highly successful career as a minister of education made him a 'must' for the new school," the seminary alumni magazine later recounted. While a professor, Loessner went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Georgetown College, a master's from the University of Louisville and a doctorate from Indiana University.

Upon his return to Louisville, Loessner spoke at the ground breaking of Highland's new education building, and the church hired him again as education minister, a motion that deacons supported with "unanimous Hallelujahs."

"He had so much knowledge, he could put in half a day and accomplish more than a lot of people could for a whole week," said former pastor David Nelson, who worked with Loessner.

For example, Loessner not only persuaded the church to use a grade-specific Sunday School program but offered several concrete reasons for it, from avoiding cliques and competition among classes to putting more people to work in the church.

Even after resigning as education director, Loessner remained active at Highland as a deacon and Sunday School teacher for several more years. He became dean of the religious education school at Southern in 1970. After retiring in 1973, he went on to teach in Hong Kong, Canada and other locations.

Loessner died in 1995 at age eighty-eight in his native Florida, where he had returned to live. He left his wife, Louise, and two daughters. He also left more than 1,800 former students whom he sent into ministry with this advice: "Trust the Lord, drink lots of coffee, and love the people."

William and Daisy Hicks Jester: Missionaries to Africa

Daisy Hicks and William Jester met in the 1920s while attending Highland as students. They married in 1928 and went on to work for thirty-nine years as missionaries to Africa—she as a nurse and midwife, he as an educator—while raising two children in the process.

The former Daisy Hicks, a native of Morganfield, Kentucky, earned a diploma in the first class of the Kentucky Baptist Hospital School of Nursing and later a degree at the Women's Missionary Union Training School. Daisy Hicks later recalled she "felt called to nursing" as a religious vocation and not just a job. She remembered long, grueling hours as a student at the new Kentucky Baptist Hospital on Barrett Avenue but also felt it trained her well.

William and Daisy Jester with their children, David and Betty.

"We worked on the wards all the time we weren't in class," she recalled. "We didn't think of it as being hard. It was required."

Doctors at the hospital gave her extra training in procedures she might need to do in remote locations where doctors would be scarce. She would use the training well as she served in Tanganyika for the African Inland Mission and later in Nigeria for the Southern Baptists' Foreign Mission Board. Her work involved everything from caring for lepers to stitching the scalp of a man mauled by a leopard. But her main work was in maternity. In Nigeria, where she received further midwife training, she developed the reputation as "the mother who brings live babies," supervising the maternity center at Ogbomosho Baptist Hospital, which delivered more than one thousand babies a year. When the former mud-brick center was replaced with a more modern maternity facility, the hospital named it "Aye (Mother) Jester's Maternity Center."

William Jester, a Missouri native and Southern Seminary graduate, taught at places ranging from a boy's school in Kenya to the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, where he was professor of Old Testament.

The Jesters' work had its perils. Anti-American riots in Nigeria were prompted by the reaction against Western colonialism and news of the violent white resistance to the civil rights movement in the American South. With the increasing speed of global communications, William Jester wrote in one melancholic letter that missionaries now were weighing their words carefully while on furlough, aware that anything could be transmitted back to their field and prompt an angry reaction.

Throughout their missionary tenure, Highland took a special interest in these talented and dedicated missionaries from its midst. The church named a Women's Missionary Union circle for Daisy Jester, sponsored the Jesters with regular financial contributions and provided

housing assistance during their furloughs in the United States. Those furloughs including a teaching assignment at Georgetown College for William Jester, where he helped influence a young Highland member, Grundy Janes, to follow his footsteps as a career missionary. After retiring in 1967, the Jesters returned to Louisville and kept busy in creative endeavors, he with painting, poetry, knitting and crocheting, she with embroidery and quilt-making. They later moved to Memphis, where William Jester died in 1983 at age eighty-five. Daisy Jester died in North Carolina in 1994 at age ninety.

Local and Global Outreaches

Highland also continued its outreaches to meet physical and social needs. The church financially supported the Kentucky Baptist Hospital, and several members volunteered through its auxiliary. The church continued its ties with nursing students there, conducting an on-site revival, hosting receptions and offering bus transportation for them to get to church. The church supported the Louisville Baptist Orphans' Home as it opened a new residence at Spring Meadow in Middletown in 1950. In 1956 Highland cooperated extensively in a month-long crusade by the evangelist Billy Graham, which drew nearly half a million people to the Fairgrounds. Highland had for years promoted Graham's films and publicized his crusades in other cities. Thirty Highland members volunteered at his Louisville debut, and members held cottage prayer meetings to intercede for its success.

The postwar era proved an especially active time for Highland's support and participation in world missions. The church continued to fund its longtime missionaries, William and Daisy Jester, in Nigeria. Member Mary Sampson entered mission work in China and later Taiwan. Other seminarians with Highland connections in the mission field included one couple, Mr. and Mrs. Neville Claxon, working Africa's Gold Coast, and two couples, Mr. and Mrs. Gene H. Wise and Mr. and Mrs. John Boyd Sutton, working in Brazil. Highland supported their work with continued contributions and interest. The church also sent funds to Leon Chow, a seminary graduate who did radio ministry and other work in Taiwan.

Wider Baptist Issues

The Southern Baptist Convention saw tremendous growth in the postwar period, from 6 million in 1946 to 10 million by 1962. Highland sought to do its part in meeting ambitious growth goals such as "a million more in '54."

The Southern Baptist Convention met in Louisville in 1959 to celebrate the centennial of Southern Seminary—a rare gathering for Louisville, which lacked the hotel space for the thousands of convention messengers. More than one hundred Highland families accommodated messengers in their homes.

The General Association of Baptists in Kentucky changed its name to the Kentucky Baptist Convention in 1960. The convention developed a new conference and retreat center at Cedarmore and laid plans for a new Baptist

Duke McCall: "I Saw What Religion Really Meant"

Long before it adopted the slogan, Highland proved itself to be a "thinking, feeling, healing" church for a young seminary student named Duke McCall. McCall went on to become one of the most notable Baptist statesmen of the twentieth century, but he credits Highland in the 1930s with providing a counterweight to an experience that nearly soured him on Christianity.

Duke McCall was a member of Highland in the 1930s and 1950s, and president of Southern Seminary for thirty-one years.

Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

While attending Furman College in South Carolina, McCall played on the school golf team. One time, the University of Georgia golf team played at the University of North Carolina, and on the way home, the team stopped at Furman to try out its course, where it would be playing the following week. McCall hosted the Georgia players at his fraternity house and took them to Sunday School, then to the golf course. On the way, McCall waved to his pastor, who was driving by.

The next morning, Furman president William J. McGlothlin called McCall into his office to say that the pastor—who was also a Furman trustee—was upset at his playing golf on Sunday and wanted him expelled. McCall reacted indignantly, but McGlothlin, a former Highland member, calmly changed the subject and let McCall go without further repercussions.

But "the result of that was I didn't go back to that Baptist church," McCall said. "I didn't have enough experience to isolate that incident of ministerial incompetence. . . . I thought that was dirty pool. If he called me in and fussed at me personally, I probably would have apologized. But going to the president of the university to jeopardize my student status. . . ."

After college, McCall enrolled at Southern Seminary. Still smarting from the golf experience, he "didn't know for sure just how much weight to put on this religion bit. So I thought, 'Well I'll go up to where the experts are, at the seminary.'"

McCall said he "needed the intellectual guidance that the seminary provided, but I also needed to be in an environment where intelligent people were actually living out Christian principles."

That, he said, he found at Highland Baptist, which he joined in 1936.

"I saw what religion really meant to them. Then I could say, 'Well, this is not frivolous. This is really something important, and I've got to either get in or get out. And I've got to get in.'"

McCall admired the well-prepared, dedicated Sunday School teachers. "They were not slap-happy volunteers but people who learned how to do things . . . with a professional touch," he said. And he respected Highland's pastor at the time, T. D. Brown, for his revivalist yet intellectual preaching. He befriended Brown's son, who was also a seminarian. McCall still appreciates the church for authorizing him to baptize his wife, Marguerite, who had been raised Presbyterian. He's still grateful for "those church members who took me out to eat when I had had all the seminary cooking I could stand and gave me a sense of worth."

McCall became an ordained minister in Tennessee, returned to Louisville as the youngest pastor of the prestigious Broadway Baptist Church and went on to prominent leadership roles in the Southern Baptist Convention. He returned to Louisville in 1951, served thirty-one years as president of Southern Seminary and was also elected president of the Baptist World Alliance.

McCall and his growing family rejoined Highland in the 1950s but later returned to his old church, Broadway Baptist, which had moved out to Brownsboro Road after declining due to suburban flight from a decaying downtown. "They needed help," McCall recalled. "I expect that was my number one motivation at that point. I wanted them to succeed."

Yet McCall often returned to Highland to preach and kept in contact with church members. "When you wanted to get something done in the city of Louisville, you could call on them," he said. At Highland's 110th anniversary celebration in May 2003, McCall returned to Highland yet again to provide congratulatory remarks, providing a living link in the ceremonies to the church where he had recovered his faith in the 1930s.

"You go back to Highland and you say, this feels like Highland Baptist Church," he said recently. "From 1935 when I first joined to the last time I was there, it just feels like Highland."

college in Louisville, Kentucky Southern College, which opened with a burst of enthusiasm in 1960. Highland made an initial pledge of $10,420 toward the new college, though the college's short life would show such enthusiasm to be premature.

Growth at Southern Seminary

Highland's continued ties with Southern Seminary and the wider Baptist student community were evidenced by a church bulletin published in 1949 listing all the students who were active in the church. It included 31 seminarians, many of them with wives as well, in addition to two students from the seminary's new music school. Another 23 women from the WMU Training School and 19 from the Kentucky Baptist Hospital nursing school were also listed.

Several seminary professors also joined, including Ernest Loessner, who began a second stint as Highland's religious education director in the 1950s; archaeology professor E. Jerry Vardaman, who frequently taught classes at Highland; and G. Willis Bennett, who served as interim pastor in 1962. When former Highland member Duke McCall became Southern Seminary president in 1951, he too rejoined his old church for several years, though he eventually transferred to Broadway Baptist, where he had once served as pastor. McCall knew the student traffic in and out of Highland was a mixed blessing. While students brought energy and new ideas to the church, they also consumed much of the church's time as they surveyed its members for their class projects. "It must have been an awful nuisance to be studied year after year [for material that] wasn't going to go anywhere except get those students grades," McCall said. But "Highland welcomed them, used them, put them to work."[50] Finance Committee chairman

Tallie Gardner told Nelson of his amazement that seminarians, even with low incomes, tithed so fastidiously that they gave more than some of the well-off church members.[51]

Southern itself was undergoing dramatic growth in the 1940s and 1950s. It opened new schools of music and religious education. Highland contributed to construction of Southern's signature Alumni Chapel and made a donation to its new Boyce Centennial Library in honor of Nelson. More than 60 full-time professors were teaching more than 1,300 students by the 1950s. But such expansion, bringing Southern to a university-like complexity, also brought upheavals. McCall and Southern trustees centralized more authority with the presidency, and 13 professors were fired in 1958 after their objections escalated into a major standoff. The WMU Training School, having moved from downtown to a campus adjacent to Southern's on Lexington Road in 1941, developed a social work program, was renamed the W. O. Carver School of Missions and Social Work and finally merged into the seminary in 1962. The Carver School began admitting men as Southern began admitting women to its School of Religious Education.

Ecumenical Relations

Highland continued to cooperate with like-minded churches of other denominations. It kept active with the Louisville Council of Churches, one of whose speakers visited the church Brotherhood with a rousing call for "shoe leather religion"—emphasizing care for the sick, prisoners and other neglected persons. Highland joined in such idealistic programs as National Brotherhood Week and in ecumenical sponsorships of evangelistic crusades by everyone from the traditional Billy Graham to the more liberal Charles Templeton.

Through it all, Highland tried both to stoke evangelistic fervor and tamp down sectarian pride. "To believe yours is the only true religion is the sin of pride," said one randomly-placed aphorism in a Highland Baptist Herald that also promoted an upcoming Billy Graham crusade in Nashville.[52]

Highland's ecumenical spirit still impresses Frances Parker, who saw more resistance to the idea at other churches which her husband led. "I don't know if that was the influence of the seminary or the faculty people that were in the church, but I don't think so," she said. "I think that had to do with the level of education and of what I call real Christian living."[53]

Anti-Catholicism

In one area, however, Highland showed a more reactionary attitude—in anti-Catholicism. The Roman Catholic Church, like its Protestant counterparts, was enjoying rapid growth in the postwar period.[54]

Many Protestants, including some at Highland, feared the growing influence of Catholics. Highland bulletins and newsletters from that era reprinted alarming reports from outside anti-Catholic organizations, protesting such things as President Truman's appointing a representative to the Vatican. "No American official must ever again be allowed to bend the knee before a foreign Potentate," ran one screed.[55] Particularly controversial was the funding of a public high school in heavily Catholic Marion County where many of the

teachers were nuns, though courts upheld the legality of the arrangement.

Highland's attitude toward Catholics, which depicted the Catholic Church as an "international church-state dictatorship,"[56] was a disappointing exception to Highland's generally friendly relations with its religious neighbors. To be sure, part of Highland's concern was for the traditional Baptist principle of constitutional religious liberty, evidenced by its financial support for the group Protestants And Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State.

When John F. Kennedy ran for president in 1960, many Baptists feared that a Catholic president would answer to the pope and bishops. But Kennedy sought to allay those fears in a historic speech to the Houston Ministerial Association, where he envisioned "an America where the separation of church and state is absolute" and where no one loses "their chance of being president on the day they were baptized."[57] Even after Kennedy's victory, the Long Run Baptist Association met at Highland and passed a resolution saying it is "not bigotry" for voters to take a candidate's religious beliefs into account. But the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky pledged its prayers for the new president.[58]

So did pastor Nelson in a boldly titled sermon, "Why I Now Support John F. Kennedy." He urged prayers and support for the Catholic president while holding him to his word on church-state separation.[59]

"While I had questions about him during the campaign, I could see him as the leader, and we were beyond the point of whether we would accept him or not," Nelson recalled. "He was able to say or to appear that he was independent of the hierarchy, and I guess he was."[60]

Personalities and Issues in the Congregation

The church had strong lay leaders to match its paid staff in the era. Deacons such as Joe Shearer, Tallie Gardner and Damon Surgener served for years, and their names routinely came up amid deliberations on major decisions in the period. Gardner, an Army veteran of World War I who had worked his way from traveling salesman to president of a dry-goods company, served as deacon and church treasurer. Nelson said he can still picture Gardner approaching him week after week during the offertory with the line, "Are you paid up, Preacher?" before handing the plate to the choir with the injunction, "All right, shell out!" Surgener, who had been an executive with coal and asphalt companies and had an accent and dry wit that was well preserved from his native Eastern Kentucky, also served as a trustee at Southern Seminary. Tom Duncan followed his father Scott's footsteps as an active youth leader and deacon. Margaret Keyes Tate was active in Sunday School, the Training Union and the Women's Missionary Union. Lillian Brown, in addition to her youth work, put decades of work into the WMU and numerous Kentucky Baptist causes; she served more than two decades on boards of the

Joseph Shearer (left) and Tallie Gardner were long active as deacons and in other roles.

"A Slight Distortion of the Facts"

From 1958 to 1960, church clerk Robert S. Burnett enlivened the minutes of church meetings to the entertainment, though not the benefit, of future historians. He took his role as church jester so seriously that, after typing the minutes straight, he would sometimes retype certain paragraphs, then cut and paste them (the old-fashioned literal way) on top of the original. Here are some excerpts:

November 5, 1958: (*After Pastor David Nelson announced an upcoming meeting of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky*). Whereupon Joe Robinson from the rear of the room distinctly moved that the Pastor be authorized to appoint such delegates he knows will go or he can prevail upon to go. Motion seconded and passed uproariously.

August 5, 1959: There were no recommendations from the Board of Deacons, no unfinished business, no officers' report, no committee report and no new business. In fact nothing much happened after the Finance Report, so the meeting was adjourned to prayer meeting.

September 27, 1959: After instructing the congregation to vote for 12 deacons by secret ballot, the Moderator rode roughshod over *Roberts Rules of Order* by allowing a motion to be made from the floor to elect the deacons by a voice vote.

March 16, 1960: As there was more time than reports left, the Moderator issued a statement which tended to cast a doubt on the accuracy of the minutes of the clerk and his predilection toward a slight distortion of the facts. With this touch of humor the Moderator adjourned the meeting.

September 7, 1960: As Finance Chairman [and obstetrician] Dr. Proctor Eubank was out trying to beat a stork to the hospital, Henry Huff-ed and puffed through the August financial statement, which indicated the church dropped into the red for the first time this year. While various reasons were offered for this insolvent condition, Mr. Huff boiled it all down to too little coming in, too much going out. Dr. Nelson interrupted to say that, as he was absent during the month of August, this condition could not be attributed to him. . . .

As this clerk turns his pen over to the new clerk, Mr. Paul Nelson, his only hope is that Brother Nelson will transcribe the minutes of future meetings in the same accurate and factual manner which his predecessor employed.

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, which honored her in 1990 "for outstanding support" of the program.[61]

Membership during this era remained exclusively white. With the civil rights movement beginning in earnest in the mid-1950s, church officials decided that if any black worshipers came to the door, "we'd just seat them like anybody else," Nelson recalled. But the only black person who attended with any frequency was the African wife of a seminary student, he said.[62] For the most part, Highland's only black participants were its janitors, such as Lias Vance and Noah Reese. Highland showed some interest in race relations, providing aid to a black church and incorporating Negro spirituals into worship, even as it continued using Southern Baptist literature that often used patronizing language about African Americans and their dialect. While the racial issue remained peripheral in the 1950s, Highland would have to confront changes in race relations and other social issues head-on in the 1960s.

This photo was taken in the Fellowship Hall of the new educational building in the 1950s.

Notes

1. CB, 5/30/54; home movies by Charles Chapman.
2. CJ, 4/27/46.
3. CM, 7/21/46; 9/1/46.
4. Interview.
5. The deed does not give a price. The church authorized payment of up to $14,000, but a February 1947 financial report indicates it paid $12,500.
6. Interview.
7. HBH, 11/9/62.
8. CB, 2/10/46.
9. CB, 3/12/50.
10. Seventy-fifth anniversary sermon, 5/19/68.
11. Speech given at seventy-fifth anniversary banquet, 5/18/68.
12. HBH, 11/2/52.
13. HBH, 10/12/52.
14. CJ, 1/12/53.
15. HBH, 6/20/54.
16. HBH, 6/27/54.
17. Interview.
18. CB, 2/6/49.
19. HBH, 9/24/50.
20. HBH, 12/17/50.
21. Interview.
22. Interview.
23. HBH, 3/11/51.
24. HBH, 1/7/51.
25. HBH, 9/30/51.
26. HBH, 3/25/51.
27. HBH, 10/5/52.
28. HBH, 1/31/58.
29. LT, 7/20/48.
30. Speech given at seventy-fifth anniversary banquet, 5/18/68.
31. Interview.
32. Ibid.
33. HBH, 8/1/54.
34. Interview, Nelson.
35. HBH, 1/15/60.
36. HBH, 1/22/60.
37. Interview.
38. HBH, 4/28/61.
39. HBH, 11/15/57.
40. HBH, 6/15/56.
41. HBH, 7/3/59.
42. HBH, 7/11/58.
43. KBC press release, 2/24/2002.
44. Interview.
45. HBH, 7/24/55.
46. Interview.
47. Interview.
48. Sermon, HBC, 8/31/2003.
49. HBH, 11/18/60.
50. Interview.
51. Interview, David Nelson.
52. HBH, 9/12/54.
53. Interview.
54. Crews, *An American Holy Land*.
55. HBH, 8/5/51.
56. Ibid.
57. "Address of Senator John F. Kennedy to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association," John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, www.jfklibrary.org/j091260.htm.
58. WR, 11/17/63.
59. HBH, 1/27/61.
60. Interview.
61. WR, 10/23/1990; "The Messenger," fall 1990.
62. Interview.

CHAPTER FIVE

1962–1970

"This Changing Ministry"

Beneath the religious and societal boom time of the 1950s, social changes had been quietly fermenting, and they became more conspicuous in the early 1960s. Highland Baptist Church began to see its membership numbers steadily slide below one thousand and its Sunday School attendance dip. Neighborhood changes became more pronounced as more Highlands residents moved to the suburbs and apartments replaced single-family homes. Once the vanguard of Louisville's suburbanization, the Highlands were now on its rearguard. The opening of the Mid-City Mall signaled the neighborhood's increasingly urban character, as did a rise in crime, particularly juvenile delinquency. The Cherokee Triangle Association formed to protect the neighborhood's historic architecture and residential character—a slow-building effort that bore little fruit until later decades.

The departure of pastor David Nelson to Owensboro and the arrival of his successor, Nathan Brooks, coincided aptly with changes to the church and its surroundings. As a successful church builder and promoter of direct evangelism, Nelson was well-tuned to the religious boom time of the 1950s. Brooks, a past president of the Carver School of Missions and Social Work, sought to blend direct evangelism with social outreach and with a prophetic voice on issues such as race and war, which confronted many American churches in the 1960s.

"We really didn't have the know-how to change our ministration to this particular area," deacon Damon Surgener later recalled. Brooks "led us in this changing ministry. Our Mission Committee . . . became a committee to seek out and find areas to minister to individuals and institutions where the church must go to them, instead of them coming to the church."[1]

In a lengthy report to the congregation early in his pastorate, Brooks cited the declining numbers at Highland and issued an appeal for an evangelism that met both spiritual and physical needs.

> Downtown churches everywhere face problems of this kind. Some decided that the wise thing to do is move to the suburbs. Others decide to follow the Lord's leading in offering

> a vital ministry to the immediate neighborhood. . . . A defeatist attitude is certainly not the answer. There are lots of people in the immediate vicinity of Highland. Our plans and efforts as the Lord leads us must concentrate on reaching the needs of men. . . .
>
> [By establishing mission churches on Baxter Avenue and Vine Street], Highland has deliberately chosen to limit its own potential to some extent. . . . This does not change the fact that in members we are retreating. I'm ready and willing to do something about this. Are you?[2]

For much of the turbulent, crowded decade of the 1960s, Highland would try, try and try again to figure out what that ministry should be. It was difficult to reach consensus when the church, like society, was sharply divided over the Vietnam War, slow to integrate racially and mixed about how much the church should adapt to or react against a youth-driven counterculture. By the end of the decade, after an unhappy experience with Brooks's successor, the church was divided, demoralized and as far from answering these questions as when the decade began.

Nathan Cohen Brooks

At the start of the 1960s, Highland was increasingly shaped by the progressive wing of Southern Seminary, as represented by ethics professor G. Willis Bennett, an active Highland member who published widely on the need for churches to pursue ministries in urban areas and among racial and ethnic minorities. The church named Bennett as its interim pastor after Nelson left in late 1961.

The church continued in that tradition by hiring Nathan Cohen Brooks as pastor in mid-1962. Brooks, then fifty and the father of five, was the last president of the Carver School of Missions and Social Work, which was in the process of merging with Southern Seminary. He moved in with his family at 1252 Cherokee Road, near the church.

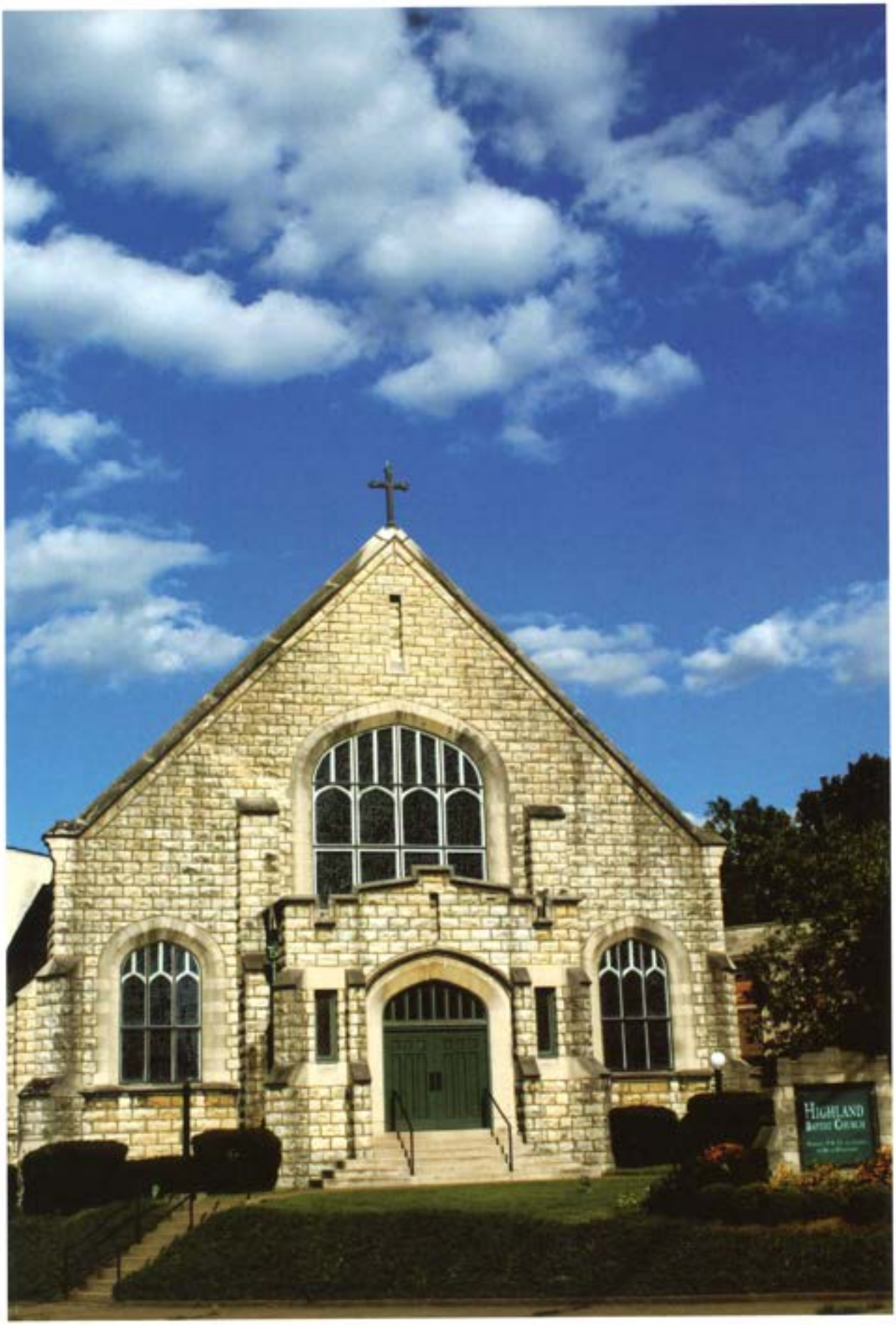
The North Carolina native and Southern Seminary graduate had served seventeen years as pastor at churches in four other states and five years as a Baptist Training Union secretary for North Carolina before coming to the Carver School in 1958. He also prepared worship and teaching materials for the Baptist Sunday School Board.

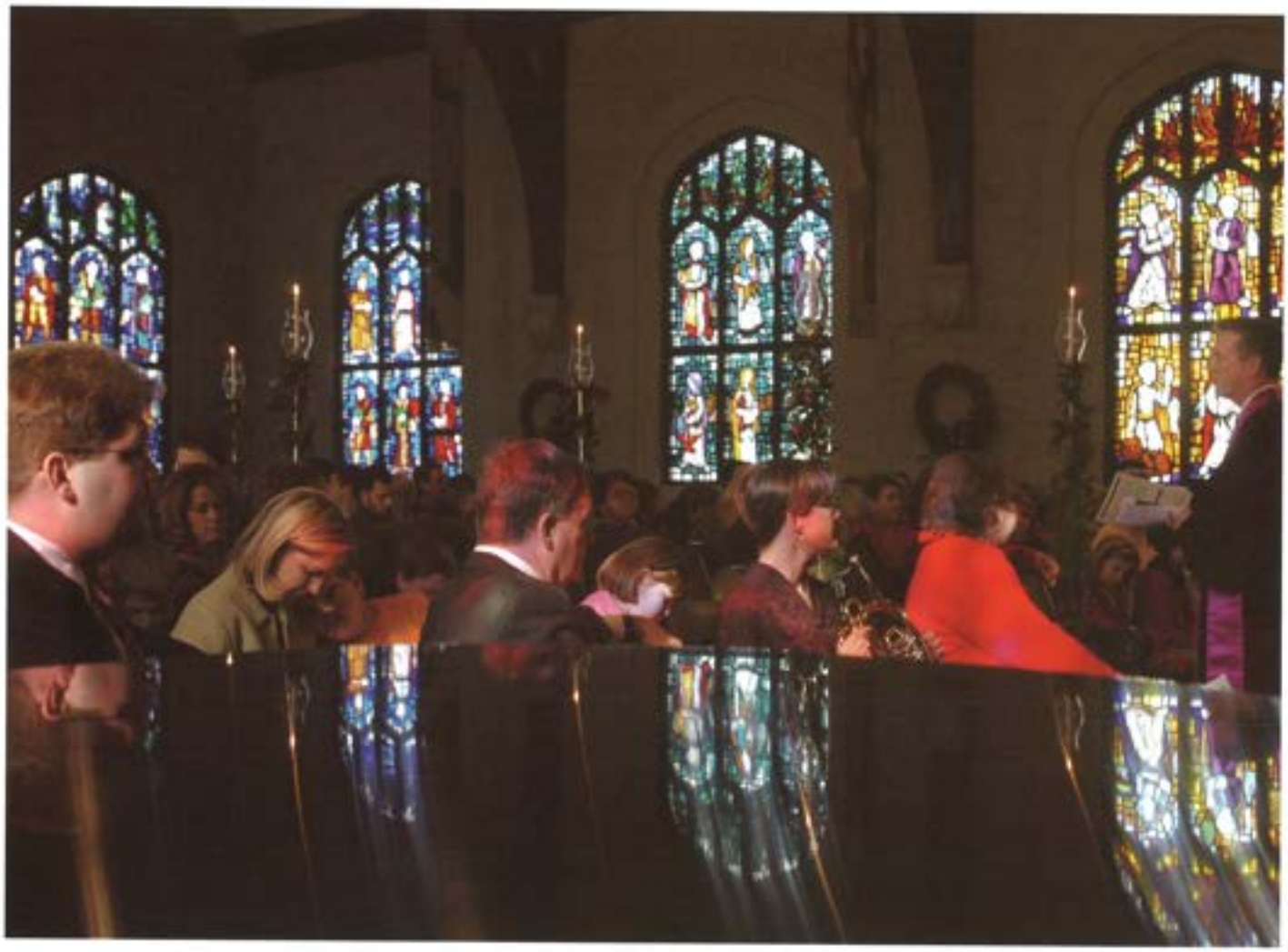
Unsurprisingly, a church with such strong seminary connections continued to draw many seminarians as members, five of whom were recruited by Brooks to do field work at Highland. A church report noted that the church benefited from the regular influx of seminarians in its Sunday School and other programs, noting that they bring "their training, their fresh ideas, their willingness to work," but that one drawback was their high turnover rate.[3]

Brooks maintained the tradition of regular revivals at Highland, including one that brought thirty-one additions to the church in October 1963. "I'll never forget the experience of baptizing a 73-year-old woman and seeing a junior girl make profession of faith on the same Sunday," Brooks wrote.[4]

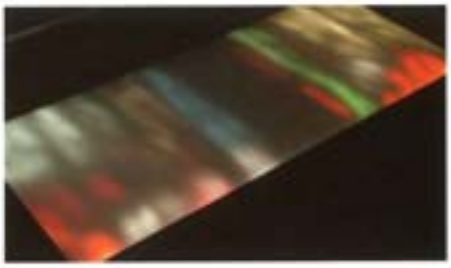
During Brooks's tenure, Highland acquired two vacant lots off Everett Avenue, which it used to expand its meager parking. It also paid off its mortgage for the educational building, celebrating with a note-burning ceremony at its Thanksgiving service in 1964.

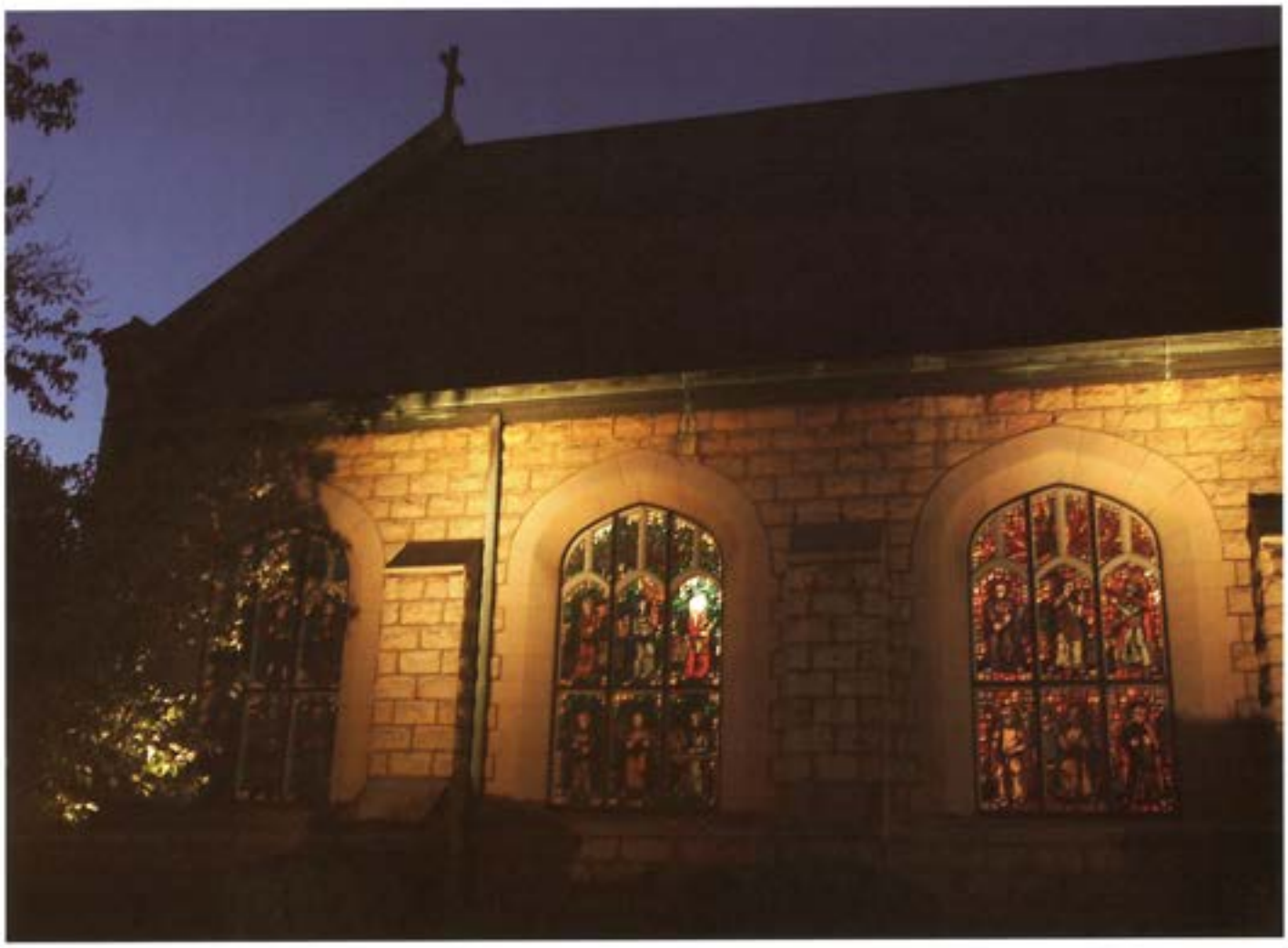
Highland also launched the Bashford Manor mission as an independent congregation. Unlike the Baxter Avenue and Vine Street


HIGHLAND

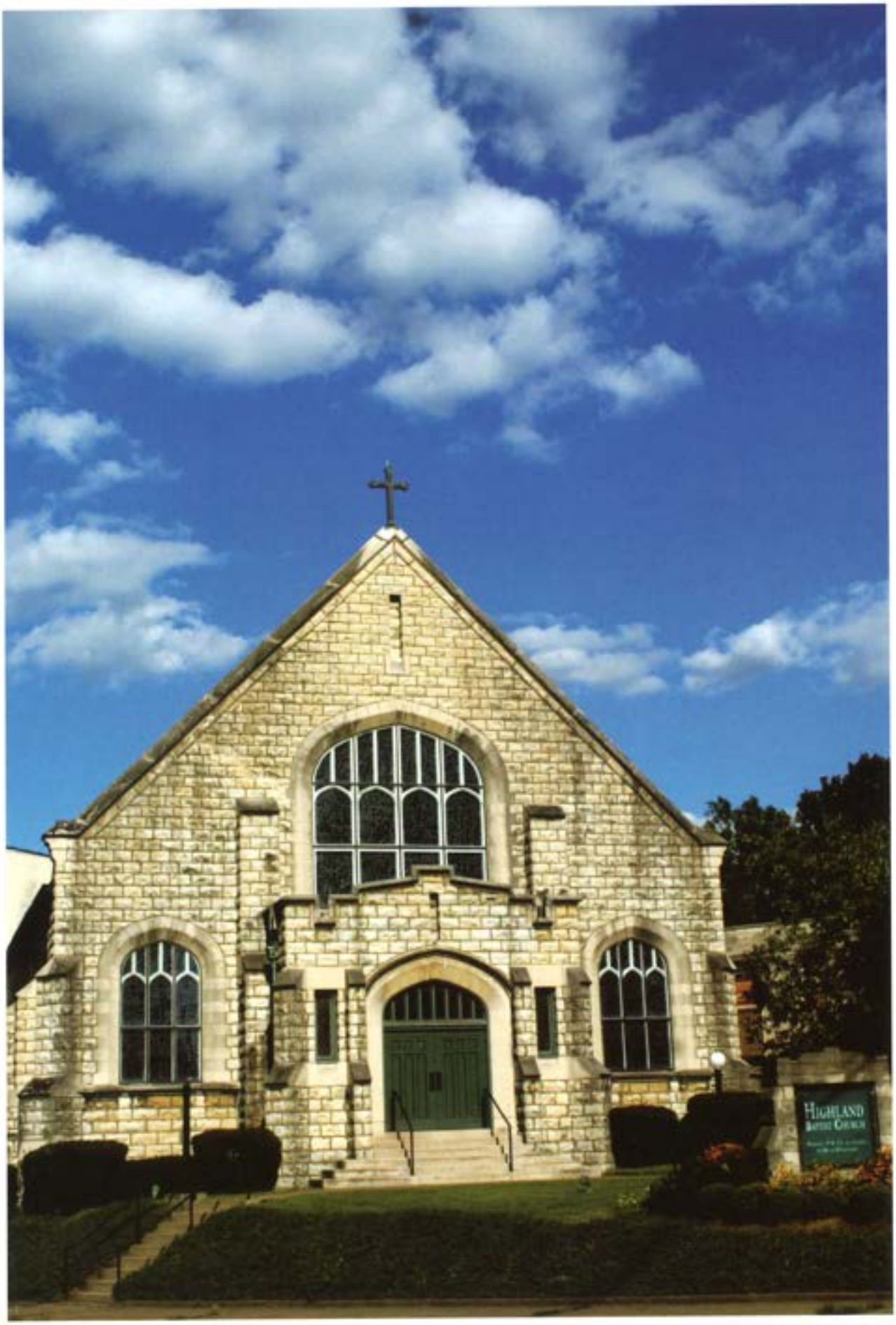


"Join these saints, the cloud of witness; God's redeemed shall claim the prize."





"The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord."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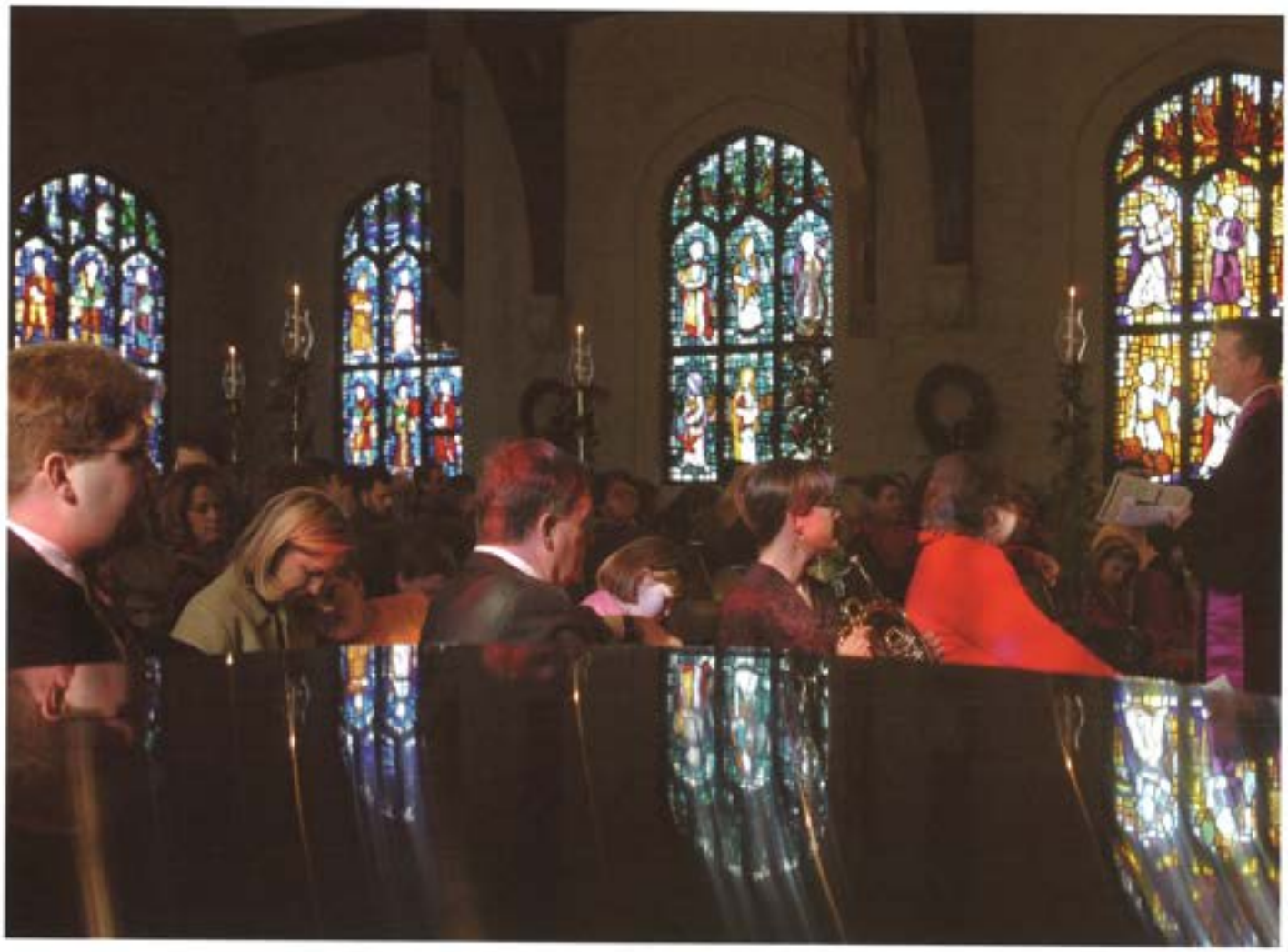
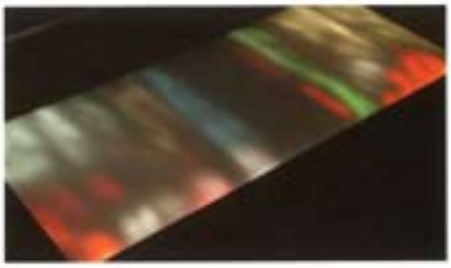
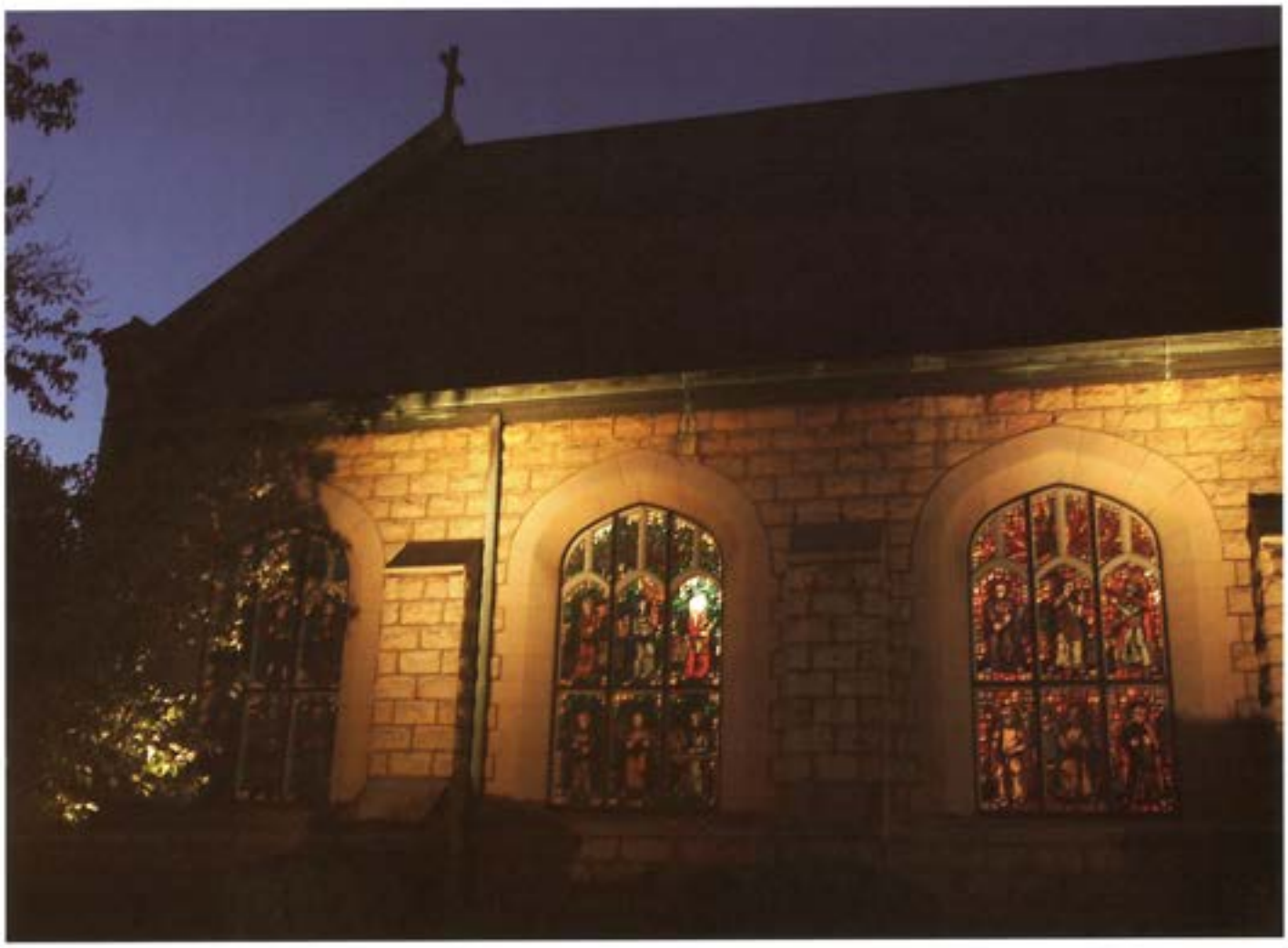


"Join these saints, the cloud of witness; God's redeemed shall claim the prize."





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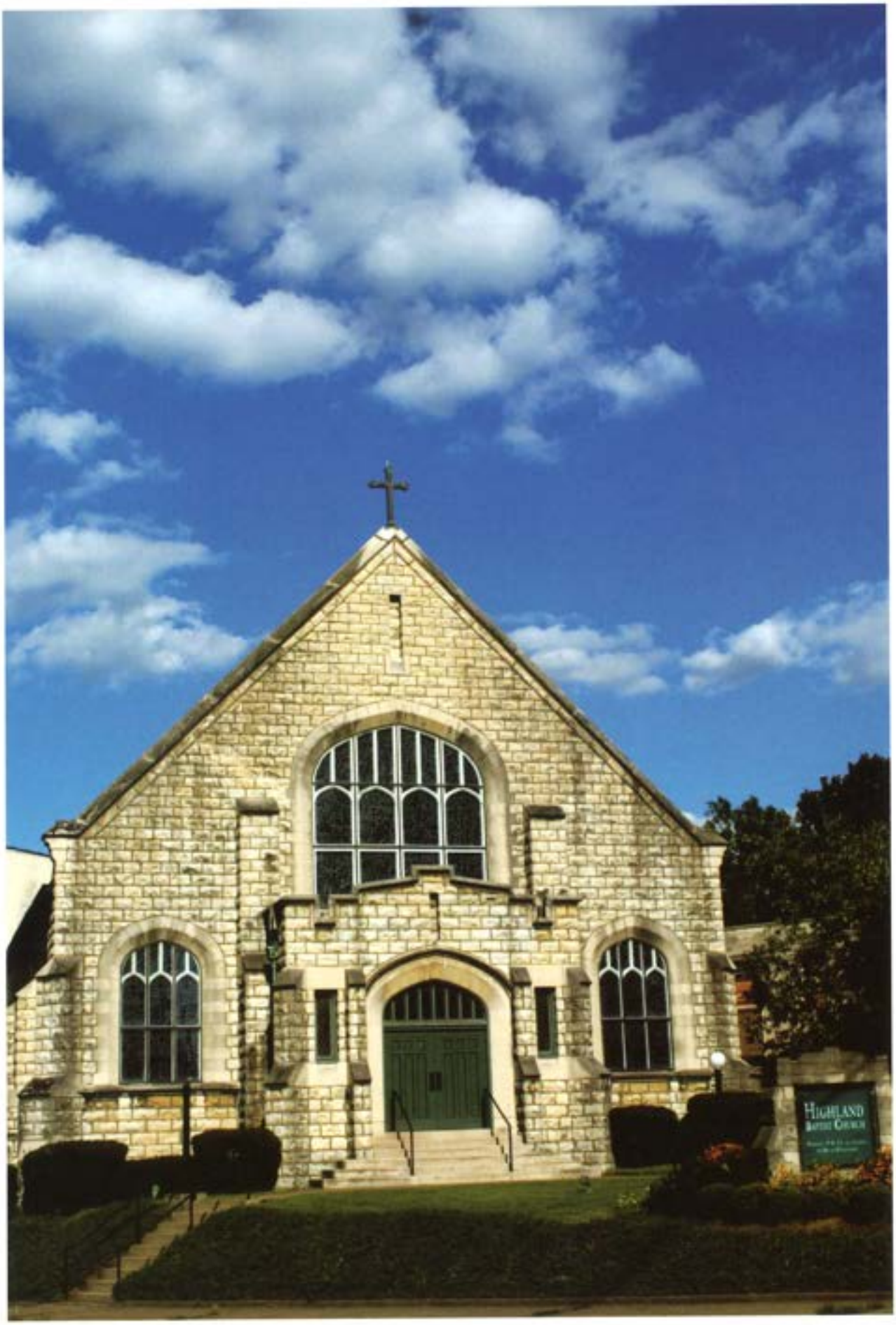
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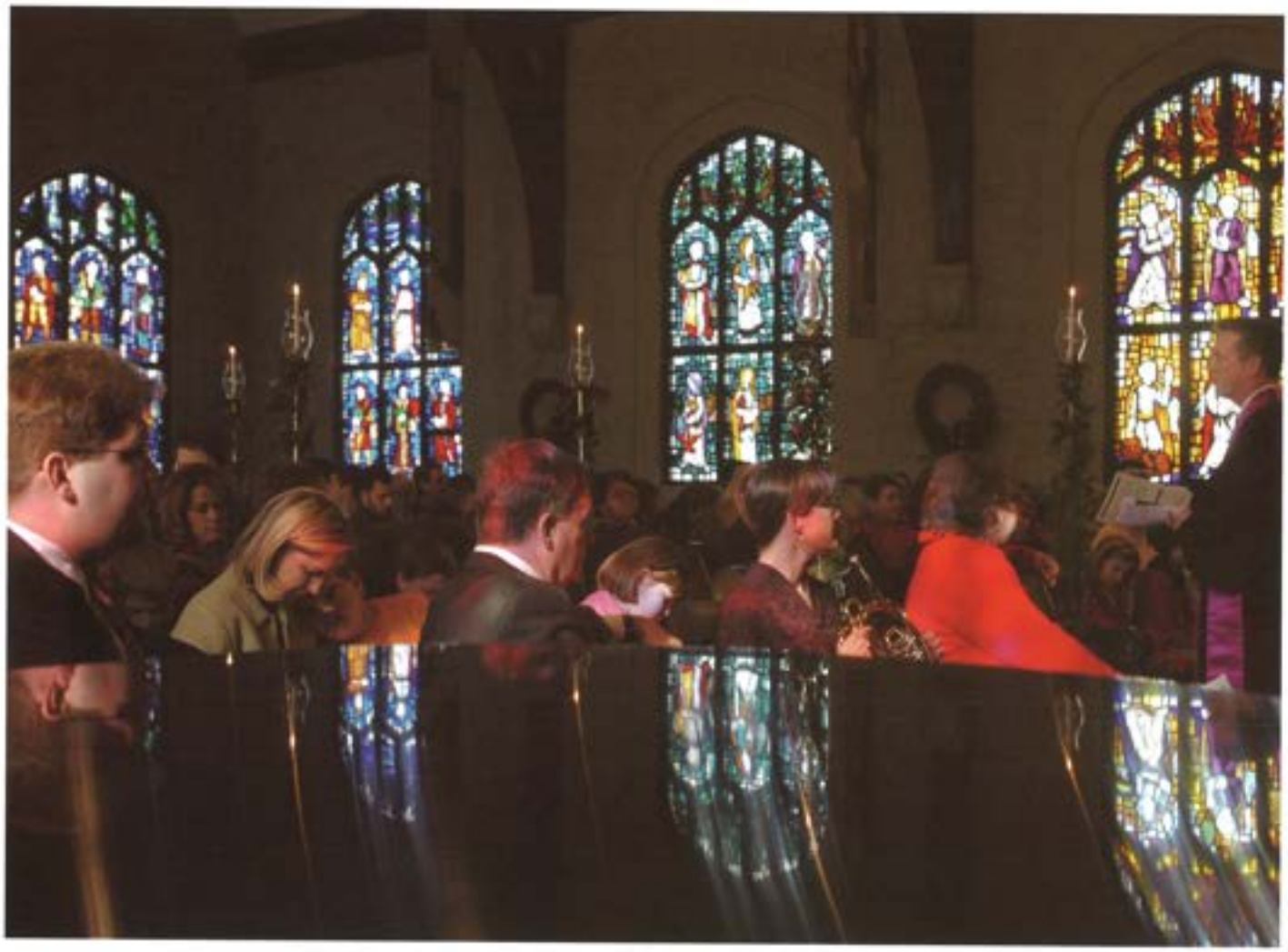
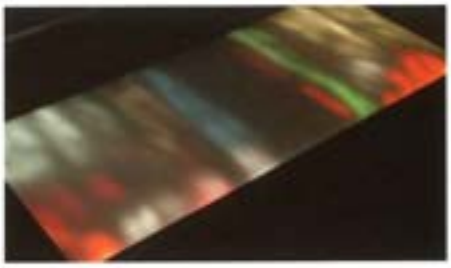
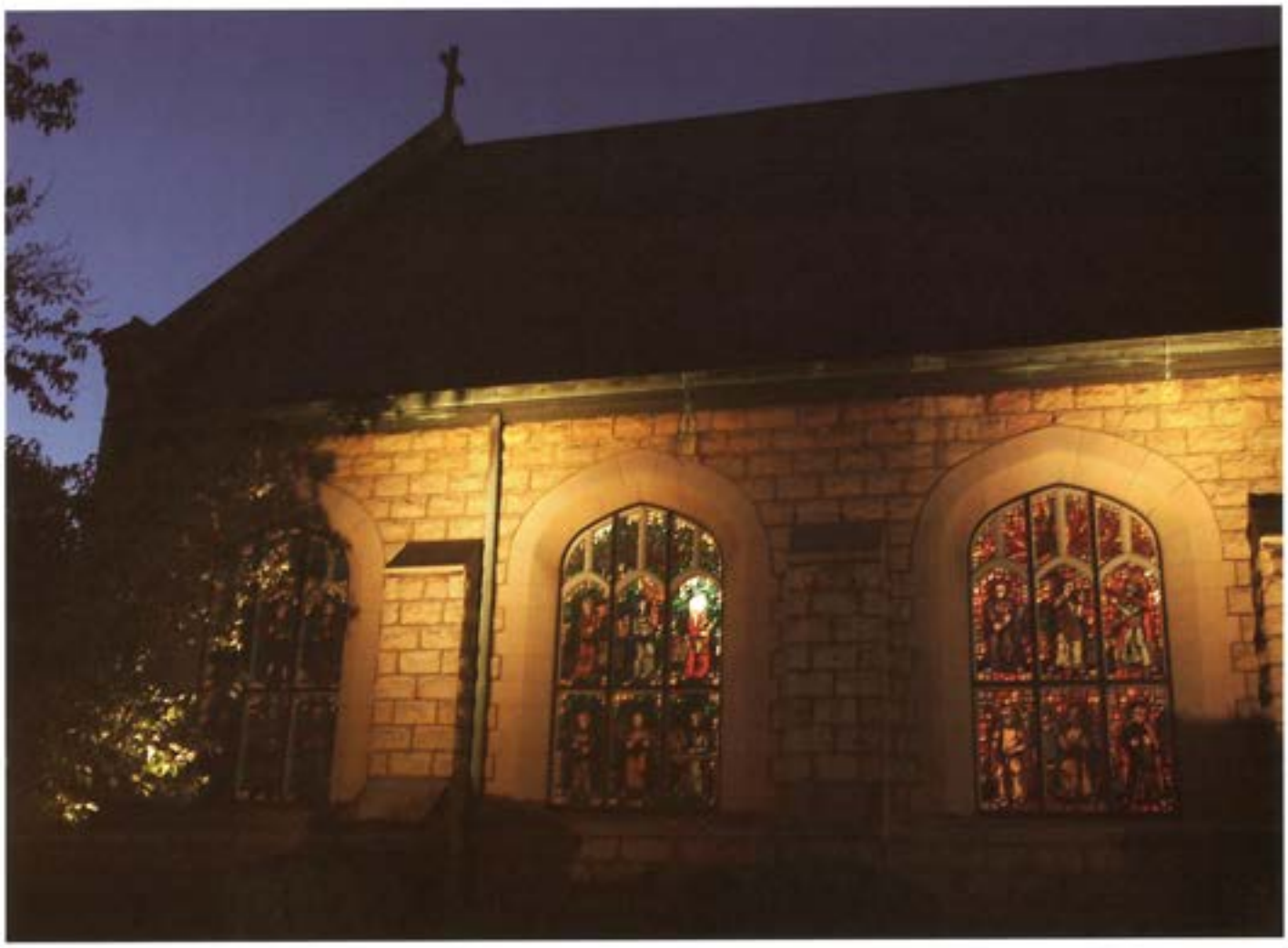


"Join these saints, the cloud of witness; God's redeemed shall claim the prize."



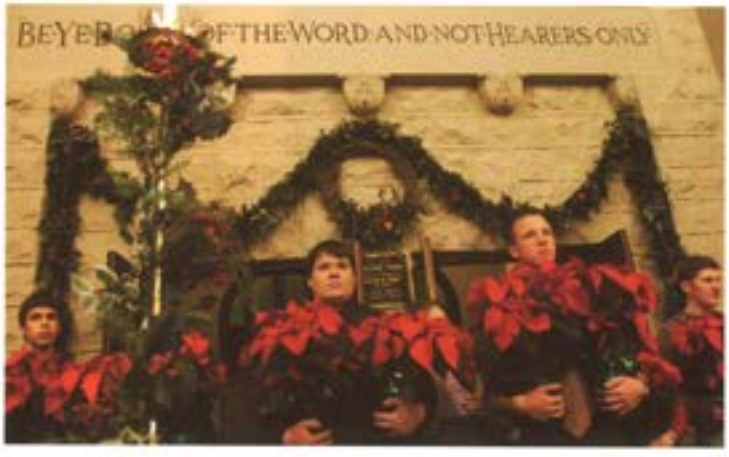


"The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord."

"He has risen, he has risen indeed!"

"O sinners let's go down
Down in the river to pray."

"Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings."



"Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright."

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

churches, each of which incubated for about fifteen years before independence, Bashford Manor grew quickly in that new suburb of Louisville. The mission broke ground on its first building—an educational building rather than a sanctuary—in 1962, dedicated it in 1963 and became independent in 1964.

Despite such positive signs, Highland's statistics told a sobering story. Resident membership declined from 929 to 831 during Brooks's four-year tenure. As much as anything, this was due to changes in the Highlands. Many young families moved out of the neighborhood, leaving behind a population increasingly characterized by elderly residents and younger, unattached apartment dwellers.

These changing surroundings necessitated changing ministries. At the request of the Long Run Baptist Association, Highland began regular outreaches to the Parr's Rest nursing home. Charles Chapman, an ever-vigorous octogenarian, began years of service as leader of a Tuesday worship service at the home, attended by about thirty to forty-five people. This outreach sparked the church's interest in other elder issues.

An internal report in 1964 found that 251 Highland members were over sixty and that about eighty people were at least partly shut in.[5] Already long-time member Elsie Kottke had led an outreach program to such persons. But the statistics, plus a recognition that the population of the neighborhood overall was aging, also prompted Highland to hire a part-time social worker in 1964. Highland is believed to be the first church in Louisville to take such a step. The job went to Nancy Lee True, a Carver School graduate whose work included making visits to homes and nursing homes, supervising volunteers and making sure seniors' physical and spiritual needs were being met. True said her goal was to "get beyond obvious needs to some that aren't known about."[6] Within six months, Highland had set up programs at four neighboring nursing homes, and many youth and adult members were involved. After True left the position in 1965, Catherine Brown Martin, a professor of social work at the University of Louisville, carried on the work. The social work program continued until 1967, when the church terminated it without leaving any explanation in its records.

Nathan Brooks served as president of the Carver School of Missions and Social Work before becoming pastor of Highland Baptist Church.

Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In another outreach, Highland began sponsoring a music ministry at LaGrange Reformatory, and the mixed-race choir performed at the church even before the congregation formally integrated its membership. The choir would return many times over the years, and Highland would continue sponsoring ministries at LaGrange well into the 1980s.

In an effort to reach younger people, Highland joined with area churches in November 1965 to form the Open Dialogue coffee house at 1124 Bardstown Road. Formed as the 1960s counterculture was about to take off, the organizers sought to meet teens and young adults in a comfortable setting. The coffee house "opened with adequate confusion" to an overflow crowd of students.[7] Whether it succeeded in anything more than wholesome entertainment is uncertain, but an articulate student at Barret Junior High School left this vivid if mixed account in the school newspaper:

It's not a "go-go" room; it's the kind of a place you'd like to find in the old Greenwich Village.

Open Dialogue was created by seven churches in the Highland area, with the hope of making a pleasant atmosphere that was not stiflingly wholesome. It is open 8 to 12 p.m. Friday and Saturday nights.

The entertainment is generally different on the two nights. On Friday nights there is a program varied from week to week: poetry, readings, actors, folk music. On Saturday nights the program consists of folk music and jazz. . . . The place is very small—only a few tables and chairs. There is a second room in back where one can buy coffee, soft drinks, and snacks. The front room is lighted only by candles—there is a tiny corner where those entertaining stand. The entertainers come voluntarily and are usually quite talented.

Open Dialogue extends an invitation to all those who want to come providing they are there to listen and not to pass the time away on a boring night. It's a great place—if it's the kind of entertainment you want.[8]

A less sanguine view came from some of Highland's older members. At a budget meeting late in 1966, Hart Speiden moved to delete funding for the Louisville Area Council of Churches "on grounds that the Council of Churches was following the Communist line." That motion "was seconded and supported by Mr. F. A. Sampson who also attacked the Coffee House as being tainted with Communistic tendencies." Professor Bennett, a trustee of the Coffee House, defended both organizations, adding that "he would support neither Communist nor John Birch members in programs in the Coffee House." Several others also defended the council—whose national counterpart was facing similar red-baiting charges over such things as its support for civil rights—and funding ultimately remained the same.[9]

Like the social work program, however, the coffee house was short-lived. By the late 1960s, the church would yet again be rethinking how to minister to its wider community.

Highland celebrated the paying off of its debt on the new Educational Building with a note-burning ceremony on Thanksgiving in 1964. William Costel, left, and Frank Shouse do the honors.

Mary Sampson: Missionary to China

Mary Sampson served as a missionary to the Chinese.

When she was seven years old in the 1920s, Mary Sampson learned to sing "Jesus Loves Me" in Mandarin, instructed by Chinese students at Southern Seminary who visited her family. "I began reading everything about China I could," she later recalled, and when seminarians returned home and sent her letters in Mandarin, she went to a local Chinese laundry for help in translating them. She sensed God telling her, "I want you to go to China," and she formally "surrendered" to the missionary call at age thirteen.

The daughter of longtime Highland members, Sampson attended Georgetown College and the Women's Missionary Union Training School in Louisville. She worked as a secretary in various churches and helped Highland launch a mission that became Vine Street Baptist Church.

In 1945 the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appointed her a missionary to China. She went to work at North Gate Baptist Church in Shanghai, the same church where Highland member Louise Tucker began serving more than three decades earlier. Sampson taught Sunday School and led choirs. During the turbulent period between World War II and the communist takeover, she shared spartan, unheated quarters with eight other women in a missionary compound, and inflation grew so rapidly that her salary increased from 112,000 Chinese dollars to 8 million. But she counted herself fortunate compared with the plight of many refugees huddled outdoors in Shanghai in the bitter winter, recalling one morning when she helped bury two infants who had frozen to death and whose bodies were left by the missionary compound gate.

Sampson returned to the United States on furlough in 1948 to nurse her ailing mother. She frequently gave speeches wearing a tailored Chinese blue brocade dress and displaying various embroidered artifacts from China.

Sampson went to Yale and then the Philippines to further study the Chinese language, but by then Chinese communists had barred foreign missionaries from the mainland. She instead worked in Taiwan, where many refugees from the mainland had huddled in hillside slums. She worked with college students in the city of Taichung.

She retired after thirty-five years on the mission field and worked at the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Virginia. Sampson returned to mainland China as a tourist in the late 1980s. She visited her old neighborhood in Shanghai and saw that the former North Gate Church had become a girls school. By this time, China was opening some doors to foreign church workers, allowing them to teach English.

"I'm deadly envious that I'm 77 years old and I'm not able to volunteer," she told Baptist Press in 1995. "I would love to be able—as an American woman—to stand in a communist classroom and just by my life give some kind of a witness to Jesus, though I could never mention his name in the classroom."

She died at age eighty-three in Richmond, Virginia, in 2001, the same year as the final meeting of a long-running Women's Missionary Union circle at Highland that bore the name Mary Sampson.

Racial Integration

If social work ministry was a novel step, focusing it on senior services was hardly unconventional. But Brooks tested the bounds of the church's tolerance in other areas. He got involved in discussion groups with Catholics and even boldly asked the congregation to pray for the success of the ongoing Second Vatican Council, which sought to reform a religion that many Baptists traditionally regarded as apostate. "Baptists are not Roman Catholics," Brooks wrote. ". . . This does not mean that Baptists can not pray for their Catholic friends in this hour when their eyes are turned upon Rome."[10]

Brooks began taking part in interracial and interreligious discussions held at the Catholic Bellarmine College and participants' homes, discussing racism and civil rights. Brooks wrote:

> This grass roots opportunity for peoples to talk over mutual problems is a far better way to arrive at understanding and answers than court orders and armed military might. Some people will not approve of the pastor sitting down socially in a private home with Negro and Catholic friends to discuss better ways of living together. Is it too much to ask your tolerance if you do not approve? . . . Whites and Negroes, Catholics and Baptists are going to continue to live in this land. Either we will have to live together with mutual respect, or we will find the tensions of trying to live together increasingly violent. [11]

In 1965 Brooks broached the issue of an integrated membership, noting that there is nothing in the Bible allowing for a whites-only church, nor any criteria in Highland's bylaws for membership other than that a prospective member be a converted Christian and willing to abide by the church covenant. He noted that Negroes had often visited the church, including La Grange choir members, and integration was already occurring at Southern Seminary and neighboring Crescent Hill and Deer Park Baptist churches.

"There is some division of feeling within the congregation about the matter," Brooks acknowledged. "A few people have expressed themselves to the pastor as questioning the wisdom of admitting Negroes as regular members. A much larger group has voiced a favorable attitude." Brooks urged the church to accept any Negro applicants for membership but also sought "where there are differences of opinion to prayerfully seek the Lord's help in keeping relationships to others under the control of the Holy Spirit."[12]

The test came when a young Highland member, Donna Westray, invited Nigerian seminarian William Ojo to visit Highland. Ojo sought membership and was received in September 1965. If there was any debate, church records are silent on the subject. Ojo was among a group of seminarians who went on to assist Brooks in his ministry, and though Ojo left Louisville the following year, he rejoined Highland in 1973 when he returned to Southern for more studies.

These developments came amid the peak of the civil rights movement from 1963 to 1965, including such events as the March on Washington, the protests in Birmingham and Selma, Alabama, and the passage of landmark federal civil rights legislation. In Louisville, such developments were mirrored with protests and with desegregation in public accommodations, housing and employment. By all indications,

Brooks and other Highland members were not marchers in these movements, but the pastor went to great lengths to get the church used to integration and to participate in biracial events. The church observed Race Relations Sunday annually, with pulpit and choir exchanges with black churches such as Mt. Lebanon and West Chestnut Street Baptist. (One guest speaker at Highland in 1968 was Garland Offutt, who was the first black Southern Seminary graduate years earlier.) Brooks regularly sprinkled the Highland Baptist Herald newsletter with pointed observations on race. For example, when President Johnson called on Baptist leaders in the South to support civil rights, Brooks took up the challenge: "Not for political reasons, not even because of the President's challenge, but because Baptists ought always to lead in what is right."[13]

Personalities

A number of competent and dedicated members kept Highland steady during these tumultuous times. W. Procter Eubank, an obstetrician and World War II veteran, served regularly as a deacon and Finance Committee chairman. Deacon Frank Shouse, a member since 1916 and an Army veteran, was a real estate agent and land speculator who was proud of always voting Republican; he served as deacon and chairman of Highland's trustees and handled real-estate transactions for the church as needed.[14] Attorney Henry Huff, an Army Corps of Engineers veteran of World War II, served as Highland's Sunday School superintendent and in several other church offices; he also served as president of the Louisville Area Council of Churches and trustee of Clear Creek Baptist School in Pineville, Kentucky.

Bill and Gladys Goodell continued their long service to the church; he served as deacon and director of Highland's Brotherhood and was manufacturing president of National Products.

Badgett Dillard, vice president for business affairs at the seminary, was general superintendent of the church Sunday school and organized many of its activities for youth and young adults. Polly Dillard, an assistant professor of education, was the first woman on the seminary's faculty and authored articles and books on religious education for children. At Highland, she taught Sunday school and organized other children's activities. Jim Mahanes, a professor of sociology at Jefferson Community College, served as a deacon and member of the Mission Committee seeking ways to reach the wider community.

Charlie Westray, president of a laminating services company, and his wife, Foreman, also gave decades of service to the church. Charlie, who served as deacon, trustee and a member of various committees, "would challenge whoever the pastor was," recalled one of his fellow deacons, Dave Nakdimen. "[He had] strong opinions and . . . lots of pretty tough questions, too. But I think people like that are extremely valuable to a church. [They] don't just sit back and take whatever somebody says or wants to do."[15] The Westrays attended Baptist World Alliance meetings, and he served on boards with the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children.

Thelma Baisch served three terms as president of the Daisy Jester Circle of the WMU, and her husband, Louis, served as deacon.

Sisters Willie and Stella Carrico were active for many years in the Women's Missionary

Union. They provided leadership to the evening missionary circle while also caring for a frail, homebound brother.

In 1964 the church mourned the death of Mrs. Frieda Freyman, daughter of early member Ernest Horn. Someone calculated that she taught 499 children in the beginner's department during her forty-one years of service to the Sunday School. Her sister Elsie Kottke, long the leader of outreach to the church's shut-ins, died in 1967. A memorial tribute stated:

> For forty-eight years she was a devoted and faithful member of our church. Many small children received the benefit of her leadership. . . . She saw that contacts were maintained with shut-ins and that at times of sickness or death these persons and their families were remembered. Thanks be to God for "Mrs. Elsie" for her faithful witness.[16]

Mrs. H. E. Kloss, a member from 1934 until her death in 1968, served as Sunday School president and was active in the Women's Missionary Union, the Baptist Training Union, social activities and ministry to shut-ins, and she gave flowers "lavishly from her garden to beautify the sanctuary, and the dining tables, and the homes of her friends."[17]

Lamar Neblett, who died in 1963, was long active as a deacon at Highland.

Particularly poignant was the death of twenty-seven-year-old Keith Grigsby, who grew up in Highland and who, despite a worsening muscular dystrophy, had determinedly earned his degree at Georgetown College. Grigsby's funeral "was a time of remembering the great faith of a young man," Brooks wrote.

Grigsby's death came in a larger season of congregational and national grief. The assassination of John F. Kennedy traumatized the country and came within weeks of the deaths of former pastor Charles Maddry, charter member and missionary Louise Tucker, longtime deacon Dr. Lamar Neblett and others.

"Kennedy, Maddry, Grigsby, Neblett—these and other names call us to faithful service," Brooks wrote. "'I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.'"[18]

Wider Baptist Issues

Baptist news in Kentucky was marked in the 1960s by the rise and fall of a dream. Organizers enthusiastically established a Baptist liberal-arts school in the southeast of Jefferson County, known as Kentucky Southern College. Through donations and borrowing, Highland made an initial pledge of $33,333 toward the new college in order to meet a deadline on a philanthropist's offer for matching funds. Among Highland members, Wade Hall taught English, Jim Hawkins recruited students, and Pat Ramsey graduated from the college. The church continued to support the school through the decade. In hindsight, however, it was clear Kentucky Baptists could not support a fourth college. After financial failures, the school closed in 1969. Its facilities were transferred to the University of Louisville to become its Shelby Campus.

In the Southern Baptist Convention, the decade began and ended with controversies over books published by seminary professors, which some criticized as interpreting the Bible as less than literally. In response, the convention in

Charles F. Chapman: Ninety-four Years of "Actually Doing Things"

Longtime deacon Charles Chapman was an inventor who kept working into his late eighties.

Charles F. Chapman belonged to Highland from 1940 until his death in 1975 at a still-active age ninety-four. The lifelong Baptist grew up in Lowell, Massachusetts, and later worked in Chicago, whose North Shore Baptist Church sent a letter to Highland praising his work as a deacon. A holder of seven patents, his inventions ranged from the first taxi-cab meter to a machine that enabled Kraft to create its Miracle Whip salad dressing. (Other ideas—such as a built-in sand dispenser for cars stuck in snow—demonstrated his conclusion that he was a better engineer than businessman.) "Many times, I've prayed, 'Oh, God, unless you help me, I'm licked,'" he said. "And it's just surprising how ideas develop in your mind when you do that."

He was a longtime deacon who for many years led devotional services for elderly women at Parr's Rest and purposely lived on Everett Avenue so he could walk to church, believing he should follow the laws of the Jewish Sabbath. "He did that without requiring everybody else" to do so, former pastor David Nelson recalled. Chapman's home movies provide the oldest existing archive of Highland members in motion.

Chapman worked until his late eighties, and on his ninetieth birthday was still keeping a daily regimen of walking a mile, exercising and reading the Bible, believing "you've got to keep active to keep the juices moving." He proclaimed that same philosophy in an early resume: "Grade school, evening lectures at Massachusetts Institute of Technology; personal efficiency course; many good technical books and 36 years experience actually doing things."

1963 adopted its first revision of its Baptist Faith and Message, which included a preamble that balanced individual conscience with responsibility to the wider group.

> Baptists emphasize the soul's competency before God, freedom in religion, and the priesthood of the believer. However, this emphasis should not be interpreted to mean that there is an absence of certain definite doctrines that Baptists believe, cherish, and with which they have been and are now closely identified.[19]

The words have remained associated with Herschel Hobbs, the former Highland associate pastor who was then president of the Southern Baptist Convention and oversaw the revisions. That consensus held for another generation before the language, and the legacy of Hobbs itself, fell into disfavor with an increasingly rightward-turning convention.

For the moment, Highland pastor Brooks applauded the 1963 revisions, though he lamented that Southern Baptists were not more forcefully engaging other issues such as war, race and poverty. After the 1966 convention, he described the denomination as "lacking in great vision and challenge, . . . blind to the major problems facing men today . . . [and] consumed

by little things." Baptists, he added, "are not aware that anyone else follows and serves the Lord except Baptists."[20]

More controversially, the denomination's public policy body defended the Supreme Court ruling in 1963 banning school-sponsored prayer. This ruling dismayed many Baptists and other Christians, who then sought a constitutional amendment to reverse the decision. Brooks, however, urged acceptance of it.

"After all, in a land where Christians, Jews and Christian Scientists are all citizens of the same state, the government has no right to prescribe any particular form of religious worship," he wrote.[21]

Robert Nelson Wallace

Brooks resigned in October 1966 to become director of the church programs division at the North Carolina Baptist State Convention. (He served there ten years, retired in 1976 and died in 1988 in Raleigh.[22])

Robert Wallace served as pastor from 1967 to 1969.

After a period led by interim pastor William Hull, a seminary professor, Highland voted to hire Robert Nelson Wallace in 1967 as its next pastor. Wallace, who had been pastor of Thalia Lynn Baptist Church in Virginia Beach, came with strong credentials. Married with three children, the Tulsa native and Southern Seminary graduate had served as a Navy chaplain from 1960 to 1963 and had led his church to a growth of about 300 new members annually, many of them new converts.[23] His tenure at Highland began with optimism, though it ended up being the shortest and one of the most troubled of any pastor's.

Also in 1967, records show that the church voted to stop employing a social worker and that the Open Dialogue coffee house had closed. Following the unwritten rule that church records say more about successes than failures, the archives give no explanation for either decision. But they also show that Highland wasn't through with such ideas. The church voted to spend $6,000 to renovate the former parsonage on Cherokee Road into a neighborhood activity center known as the Highlander. Playing off its name, the church brought in a Scottish bagpiper to play at opening ceremonies in December 1967, attended by 250 people, including top regional Baptist officials.

Mary Frances Bailey, a graduate of Southern Seminary's social work program, was hired as the first director of the center. She proclaimed its purpose "to minister to the spiritual, social, psychological needs of the people of the community

The church developed this house on Cherokee Road into a community center known as the Highlander.

as well as to our local church members. . . . The church is attempting to enter more into the life of the community in order to bring the church and the community closer together."[24] This was particularly important, she said, as two-thirds of the church's families lived outside the neighborhood, and many local residents were seeking wholesome alternatives for youth amid an alarming rise in juvenile delinquency in the Highlands. "'The Highlander' will provide us with a new avenue to express our Christians concern for the total needs of the whole man, and afford us a challenging opportunity to love as Christ loved," said its statement of purpose.[25]

The center immediately hummed with activities ranging from sewing and ceramics classes, to a senior adult group, to tutoring, to boys and girls clubs. The church also opened another coffee house at the center, called the Open Hearth, with the aim of bridging the "communication gap" between generations.[26]

Not everyone in church was enchanted with these developments, with some asking, "What do we have to show for it?" That prompted Jim Mahanes, a member of the church's Mission Committee, which oversaw the facility, to offer a spirited defense:

> We seem to live in a society that demands tangible results for all of our human investments. . . . We talk about wanting to engage in good works because that can provide us a net gain, such as an addition to our church rolls, a filled pew on Sunday morning, or the conditional work with a person who will talk with us about "our Lord" even though that person's impoverished life makes him a captive but disinterested audience. . . .
>
> We must meet people "where they are." This means avoiding the imposition of our values onto another, or our interpretation as to what may be their needs until that person has identified them as a need.
>
> A human being may not be able to understand a loving God until they have experienced the acceptance of another human. . . . We boast of our innovative creation in the Highlander Program, designed to meet community needs, in a community where we have repeatedly failed to minister in the past. Is this really an innovation? Must we continue to assess objectives based on "saved souls"? . . . It is difficult to measure success in meeting a spiritual need.[27]

The Highlander continued into the early 1970s, as did debates about its purpose.

Diamond Anniversary: Celebration and Soul Searching

Amid the turbulence in society and out, Highland took time out to celebrate its 75th anniversary. Some 433 attended a banquet where former pastor David Nelson gave a devotional talk, while 486 attended the main Sunday service and 287 the Sunday evening service, where former pastors Hankins Parker and Nathan Brooks preached, respectively.

The Brotherhood held its own celebration, at which longtime and former members such as Carolyn Hoeing, Tom Duncan, Margaret Keyes Tate and Hart Speiden recounted their memories from the church, and Jesse G. Dorsey brought photos from 1909 and displayed some new-member application forms he had printed and used while church clerk forty-three years earlier.[28]

Congratulations poured in from such Baptist dignitaries as Herschel Hobbs and F. M. Powell, long-ago members of Highland

during their seminary years, and from the daughters of Highland's second pastor, B. A. Dawes, with memories of the gaslight era. The forward-looking Mary Frances Bailey said the opening of the Highlander showed Highland could mix innovation with nostalgia. "Highland Baptist Church has always been recognized as a church interested in her community," she said.[29]

In fact, a few months after the festivities, a Long Range Planning Committee soberly stated that while the church is grateful for its heritage, it now "stands at a crossroads" and had much work to do. If Highland ever considered following the example of Broadway Baptist and other religious institutions that moved to the suburbs, this committee's report is the best documentation of the church's deliberate resolve to stay put. After surveying leaders of church committees and the Sunday School, the report concluded: "The membership sees the purpose of the Church as a group of Christian believers ministering to the spiritual welfare of the people of this community. It is our opinion that the Church made a firm decision that we must stay where we are and meet the needs here."[30]

The church had some assets, such as a central location near Interstate 64, the help of seminary students and professors, a core of loyal members and a "missionary spirit," the report said.

But adverse factors included the flight of many young adults to the suburbs, the long commutes of many members, the aging congregation and a distraction from church activities "because of general world unrest."

Numerous trends pointed down—membership, Sunday school enrollment and attendance. The Baptist Training Union, which for decades educated people on Baptist principles and the responsibilities of church membership, was on its way to extinction (as it was denomination-wide, observers said, due in part to the competing influence of television and declining Sunday night attendance[31]).

The committee recommended long-range goals of reviving the church's spiritual vitality, evangelistic spirit and commitment to missions, and improving internal church operations.

These goals were commendable, but more troubles lay ahead before the church could begin to carry them out in the 1970s.

Vietnam

Like the rest of the nation, Highland members grew increasingly drawn into the turmoil and controversy over America's involvement in the Vietnam War. As in past wars, Highland members corresponded regularly with its soldiers.

"I really don't know how to express my appreciation for the thoughtfulness you've shown towards me during my tour here," replied one, Richard Hollar, from Vietnam. "Several members of the congregation have written to me and I've been receiving the Herald regularly. . . . I hope to be able to visit Highland Baptist on my return and thank you in person."[32]

But bad news came home to Highland in June 1968 when one of its young men, Cpl. Charles L. Coleman, died of sniper wounds suffered at Quang Nam. Coleman, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Coleman, had joined the Marines after his graduation from Atherton High School in 1966. On a last visit to church before heading to Vietnam, his Sunday School

teacher, Pat Ramsey, was puzzled at his clownish behavior during class—until he confided in her afterward that he was terrified about heading to war. Some church members, many of them World War II veterans, continued to support the war resolutely, believing it was necessary in the fight against communism. Ramsey and others, however, were increasingly seeing the war as futile—and the military draft as disproportionately singling out the poor for future casualties. Calm dialogue was nearly impossible at that highly charged time, recalled Ramsey, who spent some years worshiping with the Quaker fellowship, a pacifist church, before returning to Highland.

Coleman's death came amid a series of chaotic events, such as the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy and the tumultuous riots at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Searching for meaning, Highland held an evening service in September with the title "PEACE: Involvement or Withdrawal." A drama-like liturgy read like a cross-examination of the Christian faith:

> **Modern Man:** How can you Christians sing about "sweet peace" in a world such as ours, with rioting, conflicts, fighting in Southeast Asia and in the Middle East? It looks to me as if you're blind to what's happening. . . .
>
> **ALL:** The Christian has inner peace. . . .
>
> **Modern Man:** Peace through Jesus? A man who lived two thousand years ago in a world that had never heard of Black Power, apartheid, the national Liberation Front, the Berlin Wall, napalm. . . ? How could you have peace through him?
>
> **ALL:** We pray for peace.
>
> **Modern Man:** This still sounds as if you've isolated yourself from the world. . . .
>
> **Speaker:** The Christian has been reconciled with God. Should we not seek new ways as a corporate body and as individuals to bring about reconciliation between man and his fellowman as well as man and God? In addition to our prayers for peace in the quiet of our rooms should not the very lives we live be prayers for peace?[33]

Tension and Transition

At a special meeting of the deacons in June 1969, Wallace abruptly announced his resignation. Pressed for an explanation, he "stated only that there were too many factions in the church,"[34] and then walked out of the building. Later church minutes indicate members accepted his resignation with "shock" and "regret." One member called for some soul-searching on whether the "attitudes and actions on the part of the membership" were prompting its ministers to leave after short tenures.[35] Wallace, who left the ministry entirely, refused to discuss the circumstances of his resignation the following year in a *Louisville Times* profile of him in his new position as convention coordinator for the Louisville Convention and Visitors Commission. The article described his ministry reaching a "dead end" amid "an acute personal experience," and he stated he would be more effective expressing his faith outside of organized religion, which he said was "answering questions that people aren't even asking anymore."[36]

All of these issues may have been factors. Some longtime members have spoken of other happenings during that tumultuous time, but church records say little, and soon the members

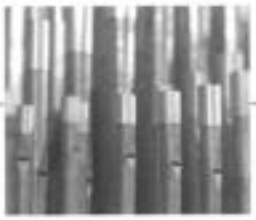
got on with the business of finding a successor. The church called seminary professor Peter Rhea Jones as interim minister, then began a long search for a permanent pastor.[37]

Amid a demoralizing time both locally and globally, Highland joined the rest of the world in taking inspiration from the most remarkable news of all from the 1960s: the first steps by humans on the moon. Jones wrote:

> Our hearts are filled with joy and awe at the initial success of Apollo 11. We have moon dust in our eyes. As man contacts the nearest celestial body he realizes more profoundly the largeness of this galaxy and of other galaxies out there beyond. It is not time to sing so much with Swinburne "Glory to man in the Highest," but rather to pay tribute to such a great creator singing "Glory to God in the Highest." It is a cosmic Christ who sustains the entire universe.[38]

Notes

1. Speech at 75th anniversary banquet, 5/18/68.
2. HBH, 5/24/63.
3. Survey Committee report, CM 1962.
4. HBH, 10/18/63.
5. CM, 8/5/64.
6. CJ, 8/10/64.
7. HBH, 11/12/65.
8. Reprinted in HBH, 1/21/66.
9. CM, 10/5/66.
10. HBH, 6/7/63.
11. HBH, 9/13/63.
12. HBH, 6/4/65.
13. HBH, 4/3/64.
14. HBH, 4/4/69; CJ archives.
15. Interview.
16. HBH, 6/23/67.
17. CM, 6/5/68.
18. HBH, 12/6/63.
19. Baptist Faith and Message, 1963.
20. HBH, 6/3/66.
21. HBH, 6/28/63.
22. *The Tie*, January–February 1989.
23. CM, 5/28/67.
24. LT, 11/30/67.
25. CM, 11/8/67.
26. HBH, 4/5/68.
27. HBH, 3/14/69.
28. HBH, 5/10/68.
29. HBH, 5/17/68.
30. CM, 11/6/68.
31. McBeth, 647.
32. HBH, 10/22/71.
33. CB, 9/1/68.
34. DM, 6/22/69.
35. CM, 6/25/69.
36. LT, 9/26/70.
37. CM, 7/9/69.
38. HBH, 7/20/69.



Chapter Six

1970–1981

"Yeasty Times"

In 1970 Canadian Baptist minister Don Burke received a call from one of his old professors at Southern Seminary. Dr. Morgan Patterson told Burke that the Pulpit Committee at Highland Baptist Church would be contacting him about becoming its pastor and urged him to hear them out. Burke had visited the church while a student in the 1950s and had fond memories of both Highland and Louisville. But he recalled telling Patterson, "'How could I even think of leaving Toronto and going to Kentucky, where there are more Baptist preachers per square foot than probably any place in North America? There must be many Southern Baptists who could really do a good job at Highland.' . . . He said, 'I'm sure there are, but we can't find that person.'"[1]

In the wake of the resignation of pastor Robert Wallace in 1969, several prominent members had left the church, and longer-term factors were also at work. The Highlands neighborhood had continued to suffer from suburban flight, and the church's membership had steadily declined from more than 1,400 in 1960 to about 1,000 by 1970. Even seminarians, one of Highland's natural constituencies, avoided the church. The church had also invested $8,627—most of a deceased member's bequest to the church—in unsuccessful organ repairs conducted by a shady company that, Burke said later, had also conned other area churches with bogus repairs. The historic church building was also in disrepair, from a worn carpet to leaky windows. Three times already, the Pulpit Committee had recommended a new pastor, and three times the candidate withdrew for various reasons. There may have been some dissension over the committee's not recommending G. Willis Bennett, the seminary professor who was popular for his advocacy of progressive social ministries; he and some other socially activist church leaders from the 1960s left the church around this time.

After some persuasion, Burke agreed to consider Highland. (One member of his Toronto church inadvertently nudged him toward the door by slipping him a note citing two grammatical errors in a recent sermon.)

Burke visited and gave a trial sermon in July 1970. He could sense the demoralization in the congregation but was won over by members such as Joe Shearer and Uhlan Rose. Discussing the church with him over lunch, "they were so wise and so kind, that really was a very influential thing for me," Burke recalled. Bernie Alwes, owner of an outdoor advertising company and a major contributor to church projects, also pledged support and "had resources to back up his warm upstanding personality. . . . Bernie said to me, 'Anything you want financially, I'll back.'" The congregation approved Burke's hiring, and he accepted the call.

That began one of the longest and most compatible pastorates in Highland's history, as Burke oversaw a program that both physically and spiritually rebuilt the ailing congregation.

Don Burke

Donald John Burke was born in Boston to Canadian parents. The family moved back to New Brunswick when he was twelve. After earning college and law degrees, Burke practiced law for six years in Regina, Saskatchewan, while serving as a deacon at the city's First Baptist Church. In 1959, he accepted a call to the ministry, was licensed to preach and went to Southern Seminary. He paid an early visit to Highland's Loafers Club—the Wednesday night discussion club—to talk about Canadian Baptist life, but he never got around to the topic because curious members peppered him with questions about Canada, from its national railroad to its relation to the queen of England. Burke often attended Wednesday night activities at Highland while pastoring a church in Indiana on Sundays. He went on to lead a growing church in Edmonton, Alberta, and then the Blythwood Road Baptist Church in Toronto, all the while continuing his education with visits to Harvard and other schools. He would continue such efforts while at Highland, making study trips to Oxford University, Union Theological Seminary and other schools—saying this extended the broadminded evangelical ethos of Southern Seminary education he had received. "I have a natural disposition as well as an intellectual commitment to being 'conservative' in theology," he explained to the congregation early in his tenure. "I, therefore, discipline myself to regularly also expose myself to the best in liberal scholarship."[2] Burke, who was single, used much of his time and energy in Highland's ministry and on the boards of various Baptist and ecumenical institutions. With a crisp Boston accent, his preaching was as formal and scholarly as his conversations were casual and earthy, and both were always spiced with humorous anecdotes.

Don Burke came to Highland from Canada and ushered in a period of liturgical renewal and ecumenical activities.

The church also attracted a corps of assistant ministers who remained as a team with Burke for a remarkable six years. J. B. Sawyer, a recently retired pastor of Beechwood Baptist Church, served Highland for the coming decade as its minister of visitation and regularly wrote inspirational columns in the church newsletter. Sawyer's visits to shut-ins and others "greatly extended the ministry of the church," the church's Mission Committee reported. "Scores of people now know and think well of Highland Baptist Church who, otherwise, may never have heard the name."[3]

Rick Chaffin became minister of Christian education and was similarly credited with achieving the "next to impossible task of rebuilding our educational program from scratch."[4] Al Washburn became minister of music and also revitalized that program, introducing a handbell choir and working out a temporary solution to the organ fiasco before arranging the purchase of the church's first new organ in sixty years.

After Burke's installation in December 1970, he reported with enthusiasm that his "date book is absolutely plugged" with appointments getting to know members. "I find Highland so very easy to love."[5]

Its building, less so. As he recalled:

> The big west window in the back was cracked and in bad shape and had leaked very badly. At night with the sun coming in from the west it turned that window into a hothouse. So they had put an ugly old curtain that was in terrible shape over the thing. The floor had battleship linoleum on it that was worn. And a green carpet down the center aisle that was really threadbare. The heating system was terribly archaic. The choir loft didn't have either of those bays. it was just the center portion. The baptistery was a hole in the floor. . . . The place was just horrible. The old organ falling to pieces.[6]

In the 1970s, Highland tackled these problems one at a time.

New Windows

At a church meeting in early 1971, Burke suggested replacing the aging windows, with their diamond-shaped amber panes, with new stained-glass windows, perhaps organized around a theme such as the Beatitudes. It would be expensive, he cautioned, but the church could gradually replace the windows over the years, noting that the cathedrals of Europe were built over many lifetimes. At that, one well-off member, Catherine Goering, jumped up and said, "I want to see those windows. I don't want to wait until after I die." Deacon Tallie Gardner was then on his feet and said, "I'll put in a window," and as Burke recalled, "turned around and embarrassed several people and said, 'You will, and you will, won't you?"[7]

Highland's original windows were replaced with stained-glass windows in the 1970s.

The enthusiasm spread. Burke first set out to raise funds to replace the large west window in the rear, panel by panel. He was discussing the project with the widow of the late Dr. Lamar Neblett, long an active deacon at Highland. She began to cry and told Burke, "I think Dr. Neblett deserves the whole window. He loved the church so much." Burke replied, "I think that would be a wonderful thing."[8] She made the entire $4,000 contribution (an especially large sum in 1971 dollars). Soon subscribers lined up to replace the side windows. Within months, the pledges came in so fast that donors had to be turned away. (It prompted Burke to

quip at one point that the Lottie Moon offering could be enhanced with pledges to install stained-glass windows on the mission field.)[9]

The church delegated window design decisions to Burke. He selected the subject of Christ in glory for the back window. For the side windows, he chose the theme of the "Cloud of Witnesses" referred to in Hebrews 12. The front windows honor apostles, prophets and women of the Bible. Moving toward the rear, the windows honor figures from church history, including Protestant Reformers such as Martin Luther and John Calvin; Baptists of Europe such as the British preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon; and Baptists of America such as religious-liberty champion Roger Williams, missionary pioneer Lottie Moon, Social Gospel advocate Walter Rauschenbusch and seminary president E. Y. Mullins. The aim—in keeping with Burke's ecumenical interests—was to honor the Baptist heritage while showing its connection to larger church history. There was some debate over whether to honor the recently martyred Martin Luther King, but the church did include another African American Baptist: the pioneer missionary Lott Carey. Burke also called for the windows to have different dominant color motifs, giving the sanctuary a rainbow glow.

The task of executing the project fell to young artist Robert Markert, whose Fenestra Studio put 1,600 hours of labor into the project and completed it in less than a year. Markert later recalled the particular challenge of the large rear window, which had the potential to let in or conceal so much of the sanctuary's light that the glass needed to be neither too dark nor too clear—and yet had to depict a complex theme. Today, the window still shines brilliantly, showing a crowned Christ the King surrounded by saints, angels, a fallen dragon and other images from the Last Judgment.

Such a narrative, a standard one for the west walls of traditional churches, was familiar to the Catholic artist Markert. But he had little background in the history of Baptists and began reading stacks of books furnished by Burke to help inform their portraits. The windows showed not only each character but also symbols and smaller background scenes that illustrated their lives. The apostle Peter, for example, is shown with the keys to the kingdom of heaven, Lottie Moon in front of a Chinese pagoda, Mullins with his classic book, *The Axioms of Religion*, and Rauschenbusch beside the New York City tenements where he forged his ideas on the Social Gospel. Markert also surrounded the characters with other motifs. The apostles, for example, are topped with biblical images of fish in nets, alluding to Jesus' command to the fishermen-turned-disciples to become fishers of people; Markert designed the fish in various colors to illustrate the diversity of God's family.

"Don was such a creative thinker, and he wanted something more than traditional Baptist windows," Markert later recalled. "It was the most challenging work I had been given to that point. I was young and brash enough to try."[10]

The church dedicated the windows on January 16, 1972, with the choir singing "For All the Saints" and praying along with a liturgy written by Burke for the occasion:

> We thank Thee that Thou hast set lights in the heaven to rule the day and the night; that Thou hast made stars also and given to man the bow of promise in its manifold colors. We bless these for the ministry of symbol and of

light to our senses and we pray that through these windows we may be prompted more often to seek out Thy beauty through the inward eye, to enquire in Thy holy temple, to follow the great cloud of witnesses with which Thou hast in love surrounded us. . . .

Above all, we pray Thee to increase in us the beauty of holiness, that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ may be seen in our lives. Grant that all those who shall behold these windows may be inspired to think on whatever is honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, excellent and worthy of praise.[11]

The windows have become central to Highland's spirituality, with implicit encouragement for new generations to become transmitters of light as well.

Other Changes to the Building

The windows weren't the only items dedicated that year. Burke was displeased with the old trapdoor baptistery in the floor, where immersions took place at such a low level that most worshipers could not see them. The whole point of being baptized publicly, he said, is to testify to one's conversion and inspire others to be baptized or remember their own baptisms. "What good is a testimony in a sinkhole?" Burke said.[12]

This stained-glass window was installed next to the new baptistery in the 1970s.

So when Nettie Horn Martin approached Burke about sponsoring a window, he had to tell her all of the windows were taken already. He recalled the feisty German woman, though stooped by osteoporosis, stamping her boot and saying, "Shoot!" But she agreed to Burke's request to sponsor the new baptistery to be built to the right of the platform. Highland dedicated it in October 1972. Later in the decade, the church added a stained-glass window to its right that provided the newly baptized with more cover as they returned soaking wet from the pool; the window depicted a dove that was artfully positioned so that it seemed to be watching all events to its right, whether baptisms, sermons or choral anthems.

The church also extended its choir loft and dedicated a new chapel in the old educational building, which was furnished with its own piano and organ.

On the advice of a decorator, the church revamped the sanctuary interior, obtaining such things as a new carpet and improved lantern-style lighting. Burke recalled heading off potential conflicts by telling a church business meeting: "Let's make a covenant. I promise not to impose my bad taste on you if you promise not to impose your bad taste on me. And let's trust our interior decorator."[13]

Unlike Highland's original baptistery, the new one installed in 1972 enables baptisms to be clearly visible to the whole congregation. This baptism took place in 2003.

This copper cross was installed on Highland's roof in 1976.

The church literally crowned its rebuilding efforts by installing a copper cross on its roof in 1976. Member Fred Nagel, whose business included roof and copper installation, custom-made the cross and, with other workers, rode a cherry picker to the roof and installed it.

Such projects indicated that Highland had some well-off members, but also that the congregation as a whole was willing to spend as needed. Capital projects in the 1970s were expensive: a $60,000 loan for various renovations in 1971, up-front payments of $18,000 for the windows and $62,000 for a new organ in 1977, and a $150,000 capital campaign in 1978.

Highland has had many bricks-and-mortar projects over its history, but these renovations in the 1970s were remarkable for the extent that they spiritually reinvigorated members. "It's getting better every Sunday!" one member told Burke in 1971. "She reflected the sentiments of all of us. God's goodness to our fellowship, so it seems, is just beginning to be sampled."[14]

Liturgical Renewal

Highland's physical renovations coincided with a liturgical renewal as well. In some ways, Highland in the 1970s returned to some of the more formal styles of its earliest decades, but Burke also introduced traditional liturgies gleaned from his more formal Canadian Baptist background and his ecumenical involvement with churches that had incorporated art, music and sacraments in their worship.

Early on, members began asking when Burke would conduct his first revival—the traditional opportunity for a new pastor to, as he put it, "strut his stuff and have a protracted meeting of hotshot preaching."[15] Burke obliged in his own way. He held services during Holy Week, including Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Tenebrae on Good Friday. In effect, he conducted a revival under the liturgical term "Passiontide." He preached sermon series each year at Holy Week around a common theme—such as the questions Pilate asked Jesus, or Bible verses beginning with the phrase "We know."

"I was always very careful to give it an evangelical understanding," Burke recalled. "Like with Advent, the true themes of Advent really lend themselves to that—Scripture, the second coming, the Incarnation and prophecy. . . . It's not fluff. It's sometimes introduced as fluff, and I don't blame the people for resisting. I never use the word Lent, I use Passiontide."[16]

Burke also introduced responsorial readings and carefully written, poetic prayers, many of them custom-written for occasions as inspiring as the national bicentennial and as prosaic as budget preparations. Word got around about his litany for the dedication of Highland's new

organ, and several neighboring churches asked to use it for their own organ dedications. Highland members appreciated the prayers enough that they published a book of them, edited by Wade Hall, entitled *Holy Boldness: Public Prayers of Donald J. Burke*. Burke regularly phrased his prayers in the eloquent cadence of the King James Version, and Highland bought a new set of Bibles using that translation in 1973. Burke lauded the "beauty and strength" of this classic translation while citing the need for modern versions for better Bible study.

Burke began to wear a black liturgical robe at special services (still wearing suits on regular occasions), and members provided liturgical stoles for him to wear on those occasions and made banners to decorate the sanctuary. The church also obtained a new communion table for use in services of the Lord's Supper. Communion was conducted so reverentially and meaningfully, accompanied by worship choruses such as the eightfold "Alleluia," that some members were moved to tears and a seminary professor recommended his students attend just to learn how to do communion.

More typically for the Baptist tradition, Burke initiated a series of annual homecoming services in the fall, when former ministers and prominent members such as Hankins Parker, Duke McCall and Jimmy Yates returned to preach. (The tradition ran its course by the early 1980s.) Even after other neighborhood churches were abandoning Sunday night and Wednesday night services, Highland continued those practices for several more years.

Highland also started a tradition known as "ArtSpring"—an annual festival of music, visual art, poetry, puppetry, interpretive dance and other traditions. "The goal of the entire thing is to show that God can be [understood] in the arts—that people can find God in other ways than just hearing the preacher talk," minister of education Rick Chaffin said.[17]

The church staff is shown in this photo from about 1977. From left are organist David Ballbach, secretary Donna Kennedy, youth minister Kent Jennings, associate pastor James Sawyer, pastor Don Burke, education minister Alman Reames, pianist Charla Greenhaw, secretary Rose Smith and music minister Douglas Smith.

Highland extended its liturgical creativity to the nation's bicentennial celebration in 1976, which it marked with lectures and reenactments of famous Baptist revivals in history. A picnic on the grounds was held in recollection of the all-day meetings of the Second Great Awakening in the early nineteenth century. On Sunday, July 4, the service included a series of patriotic readings—Wade Hall, for example, delivered a speech by Patrick Henry. The congregation sang patriotic hymns such as "America the Beautiful" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," recited the Pledge of Allegiance and read a confession of national sin that, typically, was custom-written for the occasion:

> We, who have been given great freedom
> Have turned our freedom into license.
> We have abused this land, polluted the air,
> and spoiled the waters You have given us.
> We have nurtured our biases

And maintained our prejudices.
We have exploited our free systems
Of government, of institutions
And of industry.
We have forsaken You, God of our Fathers.
Your will and ways are not ours.
The plumb line hangs beside us
and condemns us.
We are not worthy to be called Your family.
Purge us, through the Holy Spirit,
Forgive us for Jesus Christ's sake,
And set us to fulfilling your purposes
That we may be faithful stewards
Of all our inheritance.[18]

Later that year, Highland's choir performed a bicentennial musical history of the Long Run Baptist Association, "Through the Gap and Down the River," cowritten by music minister Al Washburn and Highland member Jack Birdwhistell, who went on to publish his history of the association, *Gathered at the River*.

Ecumenical Engagement

From its origins, Highland had cooperated with Presbyterians, Methodists and certain other Protestants, in contrast to the more insular wings of the Southern Baptist Convention. By the 1960s, pastor Nathan Cohen Brooks was in dialogue with Catholics, and member Henry Huff was serving as president of the Louisville Area Council of Churches.

But in the 1970s, Highland took unprecedented steps toward such cooperation and dialogue, so much so that even today one of Highland's signatures is its ecumenical and interfaith activity. These steps came amid a wider thaw in relations between churches. Catholics, following the Second Vatican Council's teachings, began worshiping in English, holding folk Masses, studying the Bible and making closer friends with Protestants. The irony was not lost on Burke that this was occurring as Highland was putting stained glass in its windows and a cross on its roof. "We're living in yeasty times," he said at the time. "It is an interesting phenomenon that while the Roman Catholic Church is getting more people-conscious with the liturgy being put in the language of the people and even the folksy idiom, Baptists are getting more high-church."[19]

Burke taught Protestant theology at the Catholic Bellarmine College, preached at the rededication of a renovated Cathedral of the Assumption and spoke at Christian unity services in Catholic churches. He made especially warm ties with the neighboring St. James Catholic Church, which invited Burke to teach a Bible study. "The Lord has given us a grand day in which to live when Baptists and Catholics are studying in love the Word of God together," Burke told his congregation.[20]

Highland also made contacts with Louisville's small Orthodox Christian community. Burke spoke at St. Michael's Antiochan Orthodox Church for the start of Orthodox Lent. Members of Assumption Greek Orthodox Church visited Highland and sang their ancient chants at a Vespers service.

Highland also made overtures to Louisville's Jewish community. The men's groups of Highland and the B'rith Shalom synagogue each hosted visits of the other. Burke regularly brought rabbis to speak at Highland and spoke at synagogues. The church hosted visiting Israeli students, and Burke joined the Jewish community in advocating for Soviet Jews.

Burke "was always bringing in something different," recalled deacon David Nakdimen. "He would bring in a rabbi to talk to us, or bring in a Catholic priest or somebody. He had friends in all those areas, and we'd go through some Hebrew or Catholic rituals and things, to show us how they did it."[21]

Burke's most high-profile ecumenical venture came when he was invited by WHAS-TV to join the panel of "Moral Side of the News," one of local television's longest-running programs. The venture included panel discussions among Protestant, Catholic and Jewish clergy about the news of the day. The clergy also allocated funds from the annual Crusade for Children.

Highland also became a charter member of the Highlands Community Ministries, an ecumenical outreach to the needy of the neighborhood, which also organized visits by members to each others' churches.

Unsurprisingly, Highland continued its long-running ties with Protestants as well, hosting Presbyterian preachers and helping fund Calvary Lutheran Church's rebuilding project after the Bardstown Road church was hit by fire.

It seemed every wall that had divided Christians was coming down—except that which divided Baptists from their closest cousins. When the Disciples of Christ were holding a convention in Louisville, Burke wanted to invite one of their leaders to speak at Highland. Burke broached the idea with deacons, as he routinely did with new initiatives, and was greeted with the remark, "You'd have a Campbellite in our pulpit?" Several men began hissing. "I could see it would not be a pleasant thing, so I just dropped that,"[22] Burke recalled. But he eventually did conduct a pulpit exchange with Dr. Jo M. Riley, pastor of First Christian Church of Louisville. "It's often true that there is more animosity between people with whom we are close than with folk that we are not alike at all," Burke explained to the congregation at the time.[23]

The Highlander Revisited

Activity periodically rose and fell at the Highlander, the church's outreach center for the neighborhood located in the former parsonage on Cherokee Road. Before Burke's arrival in 1970, deacons debated whether the program was a success and even what criteria to judge it on. One deacon noted that the program was doing some good but not adding to the membership. Another suggested it was "catering to needs that don't exist."[24]

Highlander programs for seniors and children would start, fade, then start again. Finally in 1973, the church decided to close the center and, over the objections of some neighbors, to demolish the historic house. Today it is the site of the church's playground. Burke recalled that a factor in closing the Highlander was the formation of the Highlands Community Ministries in 1970, one of the city's neighborhood organizations that have become nationally recognized models of interfaith cooperation in providing emergency assistance and other help to local needy. Highland, he said, no longer needed to go it alone in addressing such needs single-handedly.

To be sure, some members viewed the church at this time as turning inward from its social activism of the 1960s, of an old, conservative guard triumphing over the new. But Burke and other members felt Highland had been so occupied with taking care of its

neighborhood that it was neglecting its own buildings and people, ultimately hurting its ability to do any outreach at all.

"It sounds almost anti-Christian but I had to persuade the congregation that we needed to fix up our facilities," Burke recalled years later. "I'm sure the Lord was in it and he had better things for Highland than just being a Jefferson Street mission."[25]

Even as it took care of itself, however, Highland did maintain outreaches through the Highlands Community Ministries, the Jefferson Street Chapel and groups working for hunger relief both locally and abroad. And it remained concerned about local and city issues, ranging from the unhealthy environment created by loiterers at the Mid-City Mall to the growing racial tensions over school busing in Louisville.

Wider Mission Efforts

The church also made efforts to minister beyond its immediate neighborhood. Youth groups took long-distance missions trips, performing music and drama in Montreal and working in the slums of Chelsea, Massachusetts. The church continued to aid foreign missionaries with ties to its congregation—Mary Sampson in Taiwan, Grundy and Jean Janes in Chile, John Boyd Sutton and Joan Sutton in Brazil.

In the late 1970s, Houston and Charla Greenhaw became active members at the church, with Charla working with the children's choir. They were appointed missionaries to Brazil in 1980, where they have continued to work ever since (first through the Southern Baptist Convention and later through other support systems after they resigned rather than accept an ultimatum from the SBC's International Mission Board that they sign the Baptist Faith and Message as revised in 2000).[26]

Music

Pipes from the new organ that was installed in 1979.

As minister of music, Al Washburn had the task of sorting out a disheartening organ situation. The church had already wasted thousands of dollars on unsuccessful organ repairs and terminated its service agreement with an unsatisfactory contractor. A different contractor made some temporary improvements.

Finally, the church purchased and installed a new organ in 1979, replacing the worn-out Pilcher organ that had existed from the origins of Highland's current sanctuary more than six decades earlier. Burke lay out the options to the church:

> As older churches in the city have had their pipe organs wear out, some of them have panicked at the cost of new organs and installed electronic organs. I would hate to see Highland come to this. What every musician says about an electronic organ—even the best of them—is that they are artificial machines trying to reproduce the sound of the real item.[27]

The church agreed to purchase a new pipe organ for $62,000, obtaining enough pledges to pay it off debt-free. Under Washburn's guidance, the church purchased a Schantz organ with twenty-four ranks. Washburn, who left Highland

Grundy and Jean Janes: Missionaries to Chile

Grundy and Jean Janes have long viewed Highland as their home church—before, during and after the thirty years they spent as missionaries to Chile.

Coincidentally, both Grundy and Jean were influenced by the same pastor, Hankins Parker. Parker was pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Owensboro, which Jean attended when she was growing up. Parker later came to Highland, where he encouraged Grundy and other young people who were entering the ministry, gathering them for monthly breakfasts in the Fireside Room.

Jean and Grundy Janes were married at Highland and returned here after retiring from the mission field.

Grundy and Jean met while attending Georgetown College and married at Highland on a sweltering day in 1956, "about two weeks before they put in the air conditioner," Jean recalls.

Grundy earned a bachelor of divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, while Jean taught at Southern High School. They also lived in Lexington for a while, as Grundy earned a master's in education and worked as an assistant principal in Lafayette High School. The training prepared them well for their assignment under the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. They both served at a school in Temuco, Chile. Jean taught English, while Grundy worked as an administrator. Jean also led young women's groups at churches, and Grundy supplied in pulpits.

"We had many, many good experiences there," Grundy recalled. "The Lord allowed us not only to teach and work in a school, but we were active in our churches there," Grundy said.

Highland supported and corresponded with them over the years, particularly members of the Jean Janes Circle of the Women's Missionary Union.

Shortly after they retired in the late 1990s, the Janeses returned to Highland, where they both are active on numerous committees and outreaches. Grundy also consults with the Kentucky Baptist Convention on reaching the growing Hispanic population in this state, and he leads teams of Georgetown College students on short-term mission trips back to Chile.

"After a thirty year absence, it was important to come back to some place where we had roots," Jean said. While Highland has changed since they first knew it in the 1950s, she said its mission-minded spirit—now focused on such areas as the Albanian community—remains the same. "I feel like maybe we've never made the impact on our community that we're making today," Jean said.

in 1977 to become a professor of music at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, returned to play at the dedication of the new organ in 1979. Burke saluted him for his wisdom in designing an "organ just right for our sanctuary. It is large enough to get the job done beautifully for us, but it is in no way a large 'show-off' organ."[28]

The organ was further improved in 1983 when Edith Hoeing donated a cymbalstern in memory of her late mother, Carolyn. It added tones of tiny bells to the organ's repertoire.

The sanctuary renovations included an expansion of the choir loft, which Washburn put to use in developing a more active choral

program. The church expanded the sounds of its worship with the anonymous donation of a set of handbells. The church formally dedicated them in 1975 with the debut of its handbell choir.

In 1975 Highland also adopted the new *Baptist Hymnal*—the first revision of the Southern Baptist worship book in a quarter century. It added Negro spirituals and such increasingly popular hymns as "How Great Thou Art."

Douglas Smith, an associate professor of music at Southern Seminary, succeeded Washburn as music minister in 1977 and served four years; his wife Rose served as church secretary.

Youth

Through the active leadership of ministers of education Rick Chaffin and Alman Reames, Highland's young people remained busy in the 1970s. They traveled across North America on missions trips and also reached out to those closer to home, going in costume one Halloween to visit the elderly at Parr's Rest and bringing food and clothing to the Jefferson Street Chapel. Burke spoke to the youth about what it means to be a Baptist, and Chaffin led lock-ins during which children held devotionals, watched movies and held various contests.

Highland started a handbell choir in the 1970s. Young ringers are practicing in this undated photo.

A display of poems in the educational building revealed some of the religious imagination of the youngest members:

Mary and Jesus riding on the donkey
And Joseph led all three
I wish I could have been a monkey
And maybe they would have taken me.

– Bette Lee, age 7

Jesus in the crib
He didn't wear a bib
He slept in the hay
And became famous one day.

– Bobby Rehm, age 6

Finances and Facilities

Most of the physical changes described above had liturgical or decorative purposes, but the church also conducted some nuts-and-bolts renovations in the 1970s. The church revamped its office space and put a new roof on the educational building. Deacons themselves helped fix up the Fireside Room, and the church replaced some antique boilers and pipes. Highland also purchased a house at 2120 Grinstead for $20,500 from Brack M. and Nola L. Ferrill, using the building to house missionaries home on furlough and the back part of the lot for expanded parking. When building repairs figured to be expensive, Highland wanted to raze the building for parking, but the city's Landmarks Commission refused to allow this, so the church repaired the structure and began renting its apartments.

Financing these projects was difficult, particularly in the recessionary and inflationary 1970s, which also necessitated significant cost-of-living raises for staff. In 1978 the church launched a three-year Hope and Heritage capital campaign to wipe out a $95,000 debt, partly with the aim of reducing the debt-service part of the budget so the church could increase

its giving to the Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program from 9 percent of its budget to 15 percent, a goal that was met by 1981. Where there was a need for funds, Highland members consistently responded to appeals to meet it.

Neighborhood Changes

In April 1974, a tornado blazed a path through several Louisville neighborhoods, including the Highlands just south of Eastern Parkway, about a mile from the church. Casualties in Louisville were remarkably light, but damage was immense. Photos from the period show a stretch of Bardstown Road covered with a tangled mass of downed utility wires and Cherokee Park suddenly stripped of its historic oaks.[29] Minister of education Rick Chaffin, deacon John McClure and several young people in the church volunteered to help members whose property was damaged. In a message of sympathy to victims, Burke noted that the imminent Easter holiday was a reminder of "the grand news of the Gospel that—come tornadoes—come crucifixions—God is still on His throne and will bring resurrection."[30]

Even with the devastation, better things were in store for the Highlands. One reason for the church's street-level ministries of the 1960s was the increasing urbanization of the neighborhood that had originally been a suburban retreat from the city. But beginning in the 1970s, the Highlands began a slow transformation to a different type of urban neighborhood—attracting investors who wanted to live in historic homes with front porches, located within walking distance to parks and restaurants and within a short commute to downtown. The Highlands neighborhood was on the vanguard of what became known as the New Urbanism. Church members such as Wade Hall, who purchased a home on Cherokee Road, were early participants in that trend, and the church in turn attracted new members from those moving to the neighborhood. The city designated the Cherokee Triangle a preservation district in 1975 and imposed more restrictive zoning requirements. The construction of the luxury high-rise 1400 Willow in 1980, while controversial architecturally, further enhanced the neighborhood's reputation as a desirable place to live. So did the increasingly popular annual Cherokee Triangle Art Fair, for which Highland member Dottie Adams Frank played a founding role.

Wider Social, Political Issues

Like the rest of the nation, Highland members were shocked to see the Watergate scandal reach to the White House in 1974, leading to the resignation of President Nixon. "I know not what the future hath," the congregation sang the week after the resignation, and Burke responded to new President Gerald Ford's request for prayers.[31] Of more direct interest was Ford's successor, Jimmy Carter, who made much of his being a born-again Christian and a Southern Baptist—which the rest of the nation treated as something of a curiosity.

The economic slump of the 1970s, particularly its oil shocks, led to repeated prayers for members without jobs and with other struggles with their finances.[32]

Amid resurgent Cold War tensions over the nuclear arms race and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, members began participating in peace conferences and formed a World

Peacemakers Group, dedicated to prayer, contemplation and peacemaking.[33]

Church Life and Personalities

While Highland was changing, it still had an old-guard flavor. Burke said the seminary had conducted a study of congregations where the Protestant wealth was concentrated in Louisville and found that Highland ranked behind only a handful of churches such as Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral, Second Presbyterian and Broadway Baptist. Unsurprisingly, Highland members were often tapped as board members for seminary and denominational agencies. Though Highland had officially integrated, the scene outside the church on Sunday mornings represented a lingering but fading era of the old South, with white parishioners being helped from their cars by black janitors in white jackets.[34]

The growing women's movement of the 1970s made its presence known at Highland. Several women took active roles in the congregation, whether in WMU circles, artistic programs or musical performances. Members began discussing the question of women in leadership positions previously reserved for men, though they left it for the next decade to make changes. In 1975, at a service marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Daisy Jester Circle of the Women's Missionary Union, the main speaker was Marie Mathis, president of the women's department of the Baptist World Alliance. In advance of the service, according to deacons' minutes, one deacon "asked our pastor laughingly, if he was a woman's libber or not by having a woman do the preaching from the pulpit."

> After several comments, it was agreed to refer to Mrs. Mathis as the guest speaker instead of preacher. Rev. Burke then spoke very highly of Mrs. Mathis' qualifications and said that since she was coming all the way from Texas, he felt that she deserved more than just five minutes to share what she had spent hours preparing.[35]

She did so, and the fact that the "guest speaker" proclaimed her message from the pulpit added to the long progressive tradition of the Jester circle, which began in 1925 as the Business & Professional Women's Circle, the first such evening circle for working women in in the state of Kentucky.

Such a congregation naturally produced a rich mix of personalities.

George Ransdell served as a deacon, Finance Committee member and Sunday School teacher and was also active in Bible distribution with the Gideons. The wealthy owner of a surgical supply company, Ransdell was one of the most conservative members theologically and would both "argue with me and support me," Burke recalled. In 1978 his son Michael proposed to his future bride, Amy Kelley, on the steps of Highland, where they first met.

Uhlan Rose, a science teacher at Highland Middle School, served for many years in offices ranging from deacon to Sunday School teacher, and he was active on the Mission Committee, which oversaw the outreaches to the Highlands neighborhood and facilities like Parr's Rest and LaGrange Reformatory.

Uhlan Rose, a science teacher, served as deacon and Sunday School teacher and was active in various outreaches.

Bob Burnett initially headed up renovation projects before his sudden death in 1971. Melvin Harvin, a retired Kroger executive, took his place and guided the projects to completion. Melvin and Odessa Harvin were Highland members for most of their fifty-plus years of marriage.[36]

Bernie Alwes, owner of an outdoor advertising firm, was a Navy veteran of World War II and an avid artist. He served as Sunday School teacher, trustee and member of the church's Finance Committee as well as Southern Seminary's foundation; he and his wife, Janice, had seven children.

Tish Gardner, who had been singing in Highland's choir since 1962, continued to be active in various positions in church, from WMU officer to member of a pulpit committee. She contributed her artistic talents to such endeavors as creating banners for the sanctuary.

Workers at Highland also added to its personality. Zelma Augustus, a Sunday School teacher and WMU treasurer, worked for several years as church secretary. Burke recalled her as a large, friendly lady who drove a big Cadillac and knew most members' personal business but was discreet enough only to tell the pastor what he needed to know when he asked. Hazel Riley, while not a member, cooked dazzling meals for the church on Wednesday nights and other occasions, partly compensated with permission to use the church kitchen for her catering business.

Joe Shearer, who died in 1976, served Highland for decades as a leader of deacons, the Brotherhood and in other ways. His daughters Mary, Linda and Jo Ann also were involved for years. Members avidly followed the operatic career of Mary Shearer, who regularly sang in church until work took her to other cities around the world and welcomed her back in 2003 when she returned to Louisville. Linda Shearer helped coordinate Highland's new puppet ministry, aimed at providing religious education and entertainment through that art form. (Her childhood memories include two respected women Sunday School teachers arguing so fiercely over the meaning of a Bible passage that they later apologized to the astonished students.) *Courier-Journal* photographer Bill Luster, moving to Louisville from Glasgow, Kentucky, began attending Highland and met Linda in the church parking lot; they were soon married in the sanctuary. He began serving as a deacon, teacher and member of other committees. H. C. and Jo Ann Baker, as well as the Lusters, recall church lawyers and doctors helping them navigate the complex process of adopting their children.[37]

Joseph and Betty Ridge joined the church when they moved to the neighborhood in 1967 and became active in church outreaches and Sunday School, a tradition still carried on by the son who joined with them at the same time, Matt Ridge.

The church honored two longtime members in 1978 when it provided a cake for Fellmer and Carolyn Hoeing as they celebrated the sixty-fifth anniversary of their wedding, which took place in Highland's original building. Mrs. Hoeing said the cake was "more beautiful than the one we had in 1913!"[38]

Seminary Relations

Highland's seminary connections continued to play a major role in the character of the church at this time. Although President Duke McCall

had left Highland for Broadway Baptist by this time, he cooperated regularly with Burke, asking the latter to take his place on the "Moral Side of the News" panel because of McCall's growing workload. Burke also agreed to be on call to preach at seminary chapel services on short notice in case a guest speaker's flight was held up. Highland held annual receptions for seminary students that drew as many as 140 students, and Burke urged Highland's resident members to supplement the seminarians' education by modeling "the New Testament reality of a called out congregation of believers where love reigns supreme and the Gospel is producing powerful Pentecostal results."[39] Among the student members in this period was Richard Kremer, whose volunteer work ranged from cleaning the church, to teaching Sunday School, to writing a history of Highland's first decades. Ira "Jack" Birdwhistell, who also attended Highland, studied and taught history at Southern Seminary and authored a history of the Long Run Baptist Association.

The church honored longtime members Fellmer and Carolyn Hoeing on their sixty-fifth anniversary in 1978.

Perhaps coincidentally, Southern Seminary's historians and archaeologists seemed to gravitate toward Highland at this time.

Morgan Patterson, a Southern Seminary professor of church history since 1959, served in leadership roles at Highland until 1976, when he was called to become a dean at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in California. The departure of Patterson and his wife "came as a very severe shock to Highland Baptist Church," Burke wrote at the time. "The Pattersons have been woven into the fabric of the life and witness of Highland Baptist Church as much as any family in our fellowship."[40] Patterson returned to Kentucky to serve as president of Georgetown College from 1984 to 1991 (becoming the third such president with Highland connections, after founding trustee Basil Manly in the 1870s and former deacon Henry Noble Sherwood in the 1930s and 1940s).[41]

Seminary archaeology professors Jerry Vardaman and Joseph Callaway were also active. The men attended separate Sunday services and worked independently of each other, but both regularly taught classes at Highland and received support from members for their digs.[42] Callaway, an Arkansas native, had worked as a farmer, bookkeeper and International Harvester plant manager before entering the ministry, and he taught for twenty-six years at Southern Seminary. He led multiple digs in the ancient biblical city of Ai and took Burke there on one trip in 1973.[43] Vardaman's digs ranged as far away as Jordan and as near as Jefferson County, where he and students excavated the ruins of the pioneer Long Run Baptist Church, the mother church of the local Baptist association.

Vardaman left Louisville in 1973 to become founding director of the Cobb Institute of Archaeology at Mississippi State University; he died at seventy-three in 2000.[44]

Wider Baptist Relations

Highland remained as active as ever with its Southern Baptist connections, both locally and globally. Members volunteered at the neighboring Highland Baptist Hospital, as the former Kentucky Baptist Hospital was then known. Burke and members such as Charlie and Foreman Westray attended meetings of the Baptist World Alliance; in fact, Burke led a Highland delegation of eleven to an alliance gathering in 1975 in Stockholm, Sweden. Some members attended the 1980 meeting in Toronto as well. When the alliance held executive meetings in Louisville in 1974, Highland invited Baptist leaders from Sweden and the Soviet Union to speak.

Southern Baptists also recall 1976 as when they approved an audacious plan known as Bold Mission Thrust, designed to literally preach the Gospel to every human on the planet by the year 2000. So infectious was this idea that an explicit goal of Highland's capital campaign of that time was to reduce church debt payments so that more money could go to missions. Burke noted an "apostolic" excitement over Bold Mission Thrust at an ensuing Kentucky Baptist Convention meeting.[45]

"Our denomination, nationally and locally is at a place where she could burst into effective witness, the like of which has never been seen since Pentecost," Burke wrote in September 1979 as he prepared to give the annual sermon to the Long Run Baptist Association, meeting at Highland. "Or she could turn on herself and allow divisive minorities to erode if not destroy her."[46] Major divisions, however, were already erupting in the Southern Baptist Convention and would worsen in the coming years.

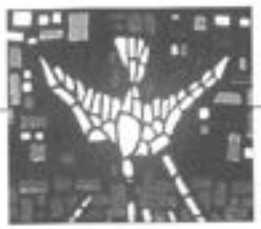
Transition

The revolution in the convention would become a major preoccupation for Highland in the coming years as it came under new leadership. After more than ten years on the job, Burke resigned in 1981 to take the pulpit of Greenwich Baptist Church in Connecticut, located in one of the wealthiest suburbs of New York City. The church represented one of the first forays by Southern Baptists into this largest of the nation's metropolitan areas. It was formed to minister to transplanted Southern Baptists but also "to become a great deal more indigenous," Burke wrote. "The congregation has felt keenly it would be best for the pastor to have a New England background and to speak with a 'northern' accent."[47] Given the need, Burke said he felt he couldn't refuse. As a parting gift, Highland gave him a stained-glass panel. In his note of thanks, he wrote: "Its rich colors and the thoughts behind it will constantly remind me of the goodness of God and the goodness of God's people at Highland."[48]

After retiring from the full-time ministry, Burke returned to live in Louisville part of each year and took an active role at Highland. In 2005, the church officially named him its first-ever pastor emeritus.

Notes

1. Interview.
2. HBH, 7/23/71.
3. CM, 4/11/73.
4. HBH, 7/2/76.
5. HBH, 1/8/71.
6. Interview.
7. Interview, Burke.
8. Interview.
9. Interview.
10. WRH, 9/16/97.
11. CB, 1/16/72.
12. Interview.
13. Interview.
14. HBH, 10/8/71.
15. Interview.
16. Interview.
17. CJ, 4/28/74.
18. CB, 7/4/76.
19. CJ, 1/16/72.
20. HBH, 5/24/74.
21. Interview.
22. Interview.
23. HBH, 2/13/76.
24. DM, 2/2/70.
25. Interview.
26. "Twenty years ago, when [we] were appointed, we had to write our own confession of faith and the board reviewed it. I've grown a lot spiritually and in understanding since then, but my convictions haven't changed. If they do, I'll let them know. But I won't sign someone else's confession."—Charla Greenhaw, "Missionaries Explain Why They Won't Affirm the 2000 BF&M," Associated Baptist Press, www.mainstreambaptists.org/mob/why_missionaries_refuse.htm.
27. HBH, 5/6/77.
28. WRH, 7/4/79.
29. Highland member Bill Luster, a photographer for *The Courier-Journal*, was among those recording these fateful images.
30. HBH, 4/12/74.
31. HBH, 8/9/74, 8/16/74.
32. DM, 2/10/75.
33. WRH, 11/11/81.
34. Interview, Burke.
35. DM, 9/15/75.
36. HBH, 5/17/68; Interview, Burke.
37. Interview.
38. DM, 10/78.
39. HBH, 8/24/73.
40. HBH, 2/6/76.
41. CJ, 4/7/90.
42. Interview, Burke.
43. *The Tie*, November–December 1990; CJ, 4/3/66.
44. CJ, 11/21/2000.
45. HBH, 11/25/77.
46. WRH, 9/26/79.
47. WRH, 5/27/81.
48. WRH, 6/10/81.



CHAPTER SEVEN

1982–1996

"Thinking, Feeling and Healing"

In the 1980s and 1990s, Highland sought to expand its connections to its surrounding neighborhood and community. It hired two young fathers as ministers, Paul Duke and Phil Christopher, who had different styles but common goals for church growth. At the same time, the church was buffeted by the acrimony over the rightward shift of the Southern Baptist Convention and Southern Seminary. This forced a battle-weary church to reexamine its identity, reaffirm some existing principles, and make new associations with other Baptists and missions organizations. Internally, the church had its own share of controversies, with its decision to ordain women deacons and a failed vote on the man nominated to be Christopher's successor. Some members left over the controversies, but most resolved to stay committed, working and praying together and finding unity in new forms of liturgical and artistic expression. High points include the church's centennial anniversary in 1993, which it celebrated with a series of events.

Paul Duke

After an interim period led by seminary professor Raymond H. Bailey, Highland voted unanimously to call Paul Duke, twenty-eight, as its next pastor. Members were drawn to Duke's already-growing reputation as a preacher and his role as a good listener and a "healer" when working at a previous, divided congregation. They hoped that the young father would attract more young people and families to the church. Duke, a pastor's son, grew up in Alabama and Missouri and graduated from Samford University in Alabama before earning master's and doctorate degrees at Southern Seminary. He had served on staff at Crescent Hill and other Baptist churches and as pastor of one in Shelbyville. He came well recommended, with one educator predicting he would be "one of the major voices in Southern Baptist life."[1]

Highland was soon "enjoying a crisis of crowding," as Duke once put it, gently urging members to come early and move toward the

middle of pews to make room for latecomers. Ushers routinely had to put out folding chairs to accommodate the overflow.[2] Many seminarians were drawn to Highland at this time, partly because they identified with its ethos as the Southern Baptist battles were heating up, and partly out of attraction to Duke's preaching.

Paul Duke drew many to Highland with his preaching.

Duke, with a strong voice naturally suited for the pulpit, preached in a conversational style. He drew from his wide reading of authors like C. S. Lewis and Annie Dillard—who blended a rich theological and literary sensibility—and he could also quote pop-culture references from musicians ranging from Hank Williams to Boy George.[3]

More than just sprinkling a sermon with someone else's quotes, Duke crafted his sermons with his own literary imagination, blending word and image to enable his hearers to understand Scriptures in new ways. One example is this excerpt from the sermon he preached at Highland as part of its centennial observances in 1993:

> Isaiah said God is moving in front of you. What images, what pictures come to mind? A scout riding ahead to see where the next water is, where the next dangers are. A grizzled guide hacking a path in the jungle for our sakes. Maybe the picture of a child running and laughing ahead of us, waving, disappearing over the next hill as we try to catch our breath and keep up. . . . To say that God is ahead of us is to say God is calling us to come ahead. We don't belong where we've been. . . . There's a pilgrimage to be made, and God is ahead of us in that pilgrimage, calling us to move on.[4]

Duke had "the great ability to speak to the heart, the hurt, and the intellect," said his successor, Phil Christopher. He said Duke's sermons reflected the church's later motto of being a "thinking, feeling, healing church."[5]

His popularity with students took a toll, recalls member Pat Ramsey. Many of them, forging their ministries in turbulent times, sought his counsel. "I think he was just so open and it just really burned him out," she recalled.

Some longtime members had misgivings—not about Duke personally as about what they perceived as the church's focus on newer members at the expense of the older ones. One elderly member, Ada Hofmann, said a friend told Duke, "'Paul, I know you do appeal to the younger people, but don't ever overlook the fact that we older ones are really the backbone of the church, and you needed us then and you need us now.' Not in an unkind way. She felt as I did that Paul was too young."[6] Actually, though, Duke was no younger than two other recent ministers, Hankins Parker and David Nelson, when they started their acclaimed pastorates at Highland.

In October 1982, Highland approved the following Statement of Purpose:

> Highland Baptist Church is a community of persons who have been found and forgiven by God's love and who are being changed by God's power. Our purpose is to live our lives together praising God's goodness, strengthening each other toward our fullest potential as God's children, bearing witness everywhere to the redemptive power of Jesus Christ, and demonstrating to our community and our world the compassion of God toward every human need.[7]

From left, Bill Ewing, Gladys Goodell, Sarah Ewing and Bill Goodell were long active at Highland. The Goodells were Sarah Ewing's parents.

In an accompanying statement of direction, the church resolved to focus anew on worship and evangelism, to honor diversity by reaching out to single adults, senior citizens and families and to promote religious education, financial giving and contributions to missions through the Cooperative Program.

One of the more unusual developments occurred in 1986 when Duke baptized Bryan Eastes, an autistic man. Though Bryan could not articulate his faith in words, the church concluded that his faith was genuine and agreed to his parents' request to baptize him. (In a similar situation in 1995, the church baptized a disabled man, Bryce Clemmons, who could not speak or be completely immersed but had clearly expressed his faith.)[8]

Women Deacons

In 1984 Highland confronted the question of ordaining women as deacons—a role traditionally held only by men. The vote came as women were increasingly taking leadership roles in secular society and being ordained as ministers in some other churches. That same year, however, the Southern Baptist Convention had passed a resolution opposing women's ordination, in part on the grounds that Eve sinned before Adam.

The issue came to a head when the deacons' nominating committee started the annual process of receiving nominations for new deacons. More than thirty of the eighty nominees were women, three of whom had been nominated by many members. Nothing in the church bylaws limited deacons by gender. A committee that included Duke, deacon chair Dave Nakdimen and others began studying the issue. Nakdimen recalled:

> We started meeting for breakfast weekly or even more often, and in the meantime reading Scripture that had anything to do with it. . . . We wrestled over that and finally agreed to recommend to the deacons that we ordain women, if they had the support and were appropriate for it. We didn't tell them who had been named, because we didn't want it to be a personal issue.[9]

Nakdimen recalled that one of the women nominees approached him during the controversy and asked, "'You think I oughta just withdraw? Just save all this trouble?' I said, 'Well, it's up to you. Do you feel called to be a deacon?' She said yes. 'Well,' I said, 'hang in there.' So she did."[10]

Meanwhile, church leaders organized dialogues throughout the congregation. All adult Sunday schools devoted October 7, 1984, to studying the Scriptures and discussing the issue. Some saw the Bible as teaching that church leadership be reserved for men, as illustrated by Jesus' appointment of twelve male apostles and certain teachings of the apostle Paul. Others said the words and actions of Jesus and Paul demonstrated that men and women

are equal before God, and they provided examples of early Christian women leaders.

Duke urged a careful dialogue.

> My own concern at this moment is less with our final decision than with the way we move toward that decision as the Body of Christ. This is a rare opportunity for us to learn how to be church. On the one hand, we can fuss and vote and go home, as is so often the Baptist way. On the other hand, we can lay aside prior opinions, study the Scriptures together, pray together, listen to each other and seek to reach a common understanding of God's desire for us. I am not so naïve as to believe we will all agree when we're done. But our deacons and I are committed to making this discussion less like combat and more like communion.[11]

Deacons voted twelve to nine with one abstention on October 8 in favor of ordaining women, while acknowledging that "sincere differences of opinion and of interpretation of Scripture" remained. They then presented the proposal to a church business meeting. After a lengthy discussion, with more speaking for than against, the church voted 176–23 to ordain women deacons. Longtime member Bill Goodell then stood and told the members that while he opposed the vote, he was committed to staying with the congregation, which he then led in a singing of "Blest Be the Tie that Binds."[12] Later that month, Lillian Brown, Linnie Edwards and Fay Jeffries were elected deacons along with seven men.[13]

Goodell's reaction was typical for many, though a handful of longtime members left at that time. Others remained but were uncomfortable not only with the decision but with the rapid pace in which the board filled with women.

"I just think it looks better for the men to be taking communion and to pass the plate," member Virginia Bell said in an interview a few years before her death. However, "we may not approve of a lot of things in the church, but it's not going to drive us away from the church. Not when we've been members as long as we have."

Nakdimen, after chairing the deacons during the sensitive discussions, rotated off the board and returned a year later.

> When I walked in, there were these women sitting there. It was culture shock. I worked on the issue, but I'd never actually sat down at a deacons meeting, and there they were. [I'm] pretty certain it's worked out and I don't know what the deacons would have done without women.[14]

With less controversy, the church also began to ordain deacons who were divorced. Nakdimen recalled talking to one nominee whose wife had left him. He was deeply moved about being nominated. "After church one Sunday, I sat down and asked him [about being a deacon], and he cried. I'll never forget that."[15]

Phil Christopher

Duke resigned in 1986 to become pastor of Kirkwood Baptist Church in St. Louis. Seminary professors Bill Leonard, Estil Jones and Raymond Bailey served in various interim roles at Highland, though some members were unhappy that the church was operating without a clear leader during a vacancy that lasted more than a year.

A profile of the church, compiled for prospective pastors, depicted a congregation with about 800 members that continued to hold

Sunday morning and evening services and a Wednesday night prayer meeting, with a variety of worship experiences and strong music, education and Women's Missionary Union programs. The profile admitted: "We are a warm and loving fellowship, but many of us find it difficult to practice the kind of personal evangelism that the Gospel demands, and thereby miss the opportunity to bring others into the warmth of God's love."[16] During the interim, the church revised its bylaws to require a 90 percent vote to approve hiring a new pastor, up from 75 percent. This change set the church up for a major controversy a decade later.[17]

In September 1987, the church voted to hire Phil Christopher, a Southern Seminary graduate. Christopher already bore scars from the growing Southern Baptist battles. His previous church, Northwest Baptist of Ardmore, Oklahoma, had been kicked out of its local Baptist association and lost several members for ordaining a woman minister.

Christopher guided the church effectively through years of transition. As the Southern Baptist controversy continued on the outside, Highland itself was undergoing a transition with newer lay members taking leadership positions and deacons assuming more of a ministerial role in the church, even as the church sought to evolve in the way it reached out to its changing Highlands neighborhood.

Christopher said his early years at Highland had their challenges. Shortly after arriving, he found some old tapes of sermons delivered by his predecessor. "I didn't know what kind of preacher Paul Duke was," he recalled. "I wish I would have known, and I wouldn't have come." He became anxious and depressed, feeling he could never live up to the standard of preaching that the church had grown accustomed to.

"I guess I've always seen my gifts as being a good generalist," he said. "I'm not a star necessarily at anything. I can do several things well."[18]

Phil Christopher guided Highland through a period of transition.

Christopher said he found Highland to be in transition in its lay leadership. Many of the older, longtime church leaders had been commuting from suburbs farther east, and their adult children were moving away or joining other churches closer to home. Younger leadership was forming as people such as Phil and Kathy Collier, Tracy Holladay, Keith Eiken and Dottie Frank took on new roles. Yet many members still felt like outsiders. On top of that, some were still mourning Duke's departure, and some even hoped Don Burke would return to Highland after Duke left.

All these factors affected the start of Christopher's ministry. He recalls a balmy August evening in 1989, when deacons had a short agenda and expected to get home early enough to enjoy the remaining daylight. Instead, the tensions became too great to ignore. "I think it was the prompting of the Spirit," Christopher recalled. "At that point, I just said, 'Something seems to be wrong, and I don't know what it is. But there's an underlying turmoil within our church. I don't know if it is me. I don't know what's going on.'"[19]

That prompted the first of a series of lengthy discussions. Deacons gathered for several subsequent Saturday mornings over coffee

and doughnuts, talking and praying. The issues were legion: false rumors; a feeling among many members that they were outsiders; a sense that the gains in attendance under Duke were short-lived, fueled mostly by seminary students who had moved on. Some criticized Christopher's preaching; others felt he was blamed for problems that were not his fault and being unfairly compared to Duke. Some were still upset over ordaining women deacons, and there was lingering displeasure over the lack of anyone clearly in charge during the interim period before Christopher arrived. Records of these deacons' discussions show the tenor of the conversation shifting from problems to solutions—not so much for concrete reforms as a resolve to make a fresh start, to communicate better, pray together more and try to cut down on destructive gossip and backbiting.

"That's when we really turned a corner," Christopher said. "It was kind of like identifying a problem. . . . So it was out of that meeting, then, that we started looking at doing some really in-depth strategic planning."[20]

One result was an effort to broaden the church's reach beyond its seminary constituency to the larger community—including an immediate neighborhood that was rebounding with an influx of new investment and new, often younger residents eager to renovate the historic houses of the Cherokee Triangle area.

In 1994 the church launched Express Worship: A New Expression of an Old Tradition. This brief, contemporary-style service replaced the traditional Sunday morning early service. The aim was to attract marginally involved members and unchurched people. The word "express" had a double meaning, referring both to the service's brevity and to its use of artistic creativity. Casual dress was common, with Christopher leading worship in Dockers and a rugby shirt. Christopher wrote at the time that the service "is not necessarily for everyone and it doesn't have to be. What we are doing is offering people choices as well as recognizing that if we are to reach the large unchurched audience we must adapt to their needs. . . . We can lose touch with the 'average' seeker in our Baptist and Seminary 'bubble.'"[21] Early returns were positive, with one attendee saying she had "stagnated a little bit on the typical hour to hour-and-a-half service, a lot of which we felt was repetition."[22] A *Courier-Journal* article on the service's popularity was carried by The Associated Press, enabling readers of *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and even the *Daily Ardmorite* of Oklahoma (the hometown paper of Christopher's former church). Thus it was that member Bob Belcher's quote about the casual atmosphere went national: "I probably would not have come, but I'm favorable to something less formal—neckties strangle me."[23]

Casual attire became increasingly common at the late service, too, but Highland also drew people who appreciated its vibrant use of traditional and even ancient worship styles. Music director John Dickson and organists such as Jonathan Crutchfield and John Hollins worked with a robust choir that integrated classical sacred music into the worship. Responsorial readings drew from or were inspired by traditional liturgies, and observances of Lent and Advent became routine.

The church made an important change in its historic worship routine in 1991, when it

ended its weekly Sunday night services. This decision was a bow to the inevitable: attendance for worship and youth activities had been dwindling for years. A study by the church Worship Committee noted that Sunday night services were rooted in an agrarian setting when travel was difficult, pastors were scarce and church was an all-day affair. The church decided to use Sunday nights for periodic, special services, using the time for "purposeful, not ritual" gatherings. Highland has kept this policy in place ever since, using Sunday nights for concerts, lectures, discussions and other gatherings. Religious education that previously took place at that time was folded into Sunday morning and Wednesday evening classes.

Highland adopted a still-current purpose statement in 1992: "We believe Jesus Christ is the source of new life and that we have been called to share the story of how Christ's love is changing the direction of our lives."[24] In its centennial year of 1993, it unveiled its new slogan, "A thinking, feeling and healing community of faith." Member Sheryl Nelson Lauder designed a new logo for the church in the shape of a cross composed of numerous squares, with other squares arrayed nearby, indicating Highland's drawing in and sending out of people in the wider community.

The church adopted this logo in 1993, symbolizing a community of faith drawing in and sending out people.

A Changing Diaconate

Under Christopher, the deacons also underwent a shift in their role that continued to evolve after his departure. Deacons, hearkening back to the biblical model, began to focus on their roles as spiritual leaders and ministers—through visitation and other outreaches—and move away from their traditional role as a board of directors for the church. Other committees dedicated to finance and other matters took on more of the business decisions, many of which were ultimately decided on at business meetings of the full church. In the past, deacon Dave Nakdimen recalled, if "something didn't get through the deacons, it didn't get through, period." Nevertheless, given that the management of a church is often a spiritual as well as a practical matter, the deacons retained a crucial oversight role. Christopher regularly consulted with deacons on spiritual and other important congregational matters, as does his successor, Joe Phelps.

Christopher recalled his first meeting of deacons: "We sat in a circle, everybody was in coats and ties. It was predominantly, I would say, sixty and over. I felt like I was at a board meeting of First National Bank in a way. And it was a little intimidating." Part of the goal was to create a more intimate environment. "Still there was business, quote, 'transacted,' but . . . [the board began] to talk about ministry, to talk about vision."[25]

Phelps said Christopher led "one of the most significant pastorates in the history of our church":

> He led the church to minister to our larger Louisville community. He revived the idea of

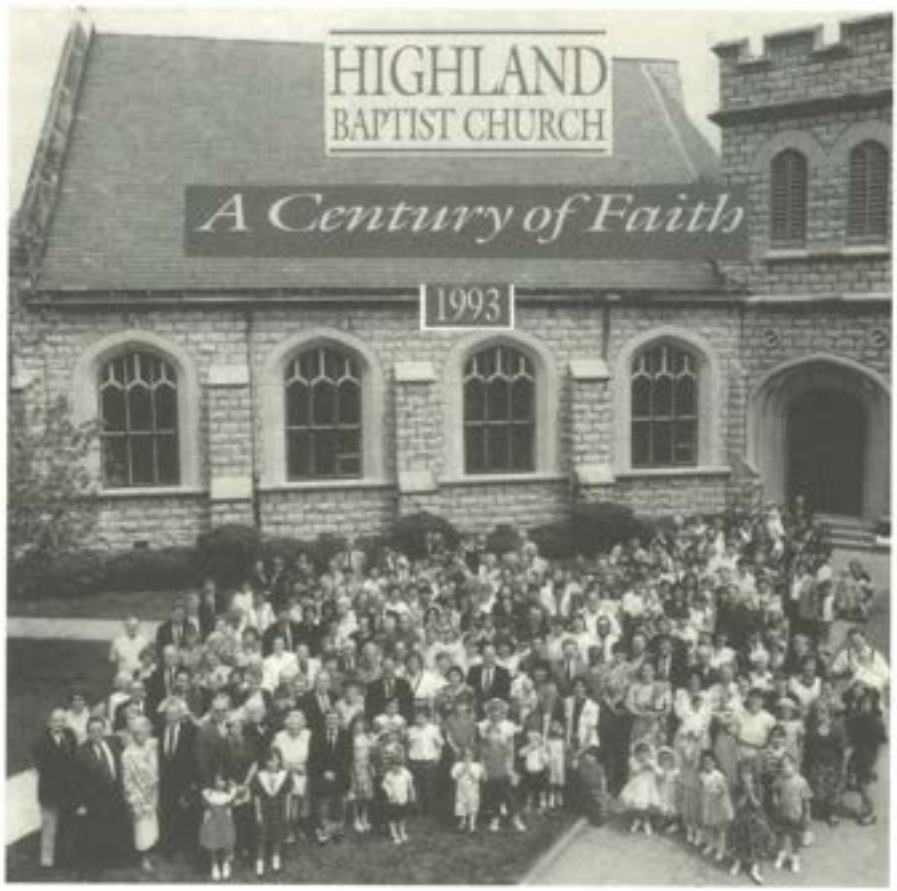
outreach without reviving the idea of [traditional] revivals—which are no longer effective for the culture Highland is called to reach. He deepened the church's sense of community. He brought in key members who have shaped the future of the church. He led them to the mission statement that focuses our work even today.[26]

Four pastors gathered for Highland's centennial celebration in May 1993. From left are then-pastor Phil Christopher and former pastors Hankins Parker, David Nelson and Don Burke.

Centennial Anniversary

Such changes allowed Highland to celebrate its centennial on an upbeat note in 1993, inviting former pastors Hankins Parker, David Nelson, Don Burke and Paul Duke for a series of services culminating with a banquet and service on the first full weekend in May, exactly one hundred years after the founding band of twenty-seven people first worshiped on the site with their supporters and friends.

Members said they were celebrating the centennial for a variety of reasons. They told *The Courier-Journal* the church was large

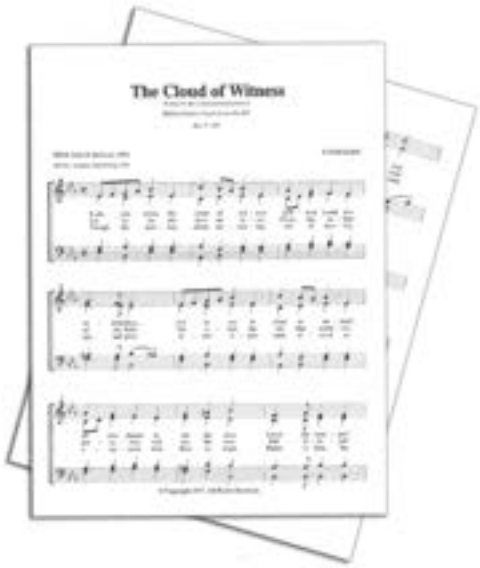


Members gathered outside Highland for this photo marking its centennial.

enough to provide a variety of programs for children, families and adults, yet small enough to maintain a family atmosphere. "It's a fairly small church, and I have gotten to know a lot of people," said Dorothy Moore, who joined Highland in 1985. "There's a family feel to it." Keith Eiken said he liked Highland's community atmosphere, in "sharp contrast to the megachurch notion in current society." As part of the festivities, the church held a Fourth of July party for residents of the surrounding Cherokee Triangle. "We want to get to know our neighbors, whether they join our church or not," Christopher said. "And we want them to know who we are and that we are part of this community."[27]

Members also paid tribute to Highland's founders. Eiken noted that women had a leading role in the church's origins: "That's a kind of interesting irony considering all the discussion of women in ministry in Southern Baptist life today."[28] Christopher took a lesson from founding trustee Basil Manly, who organized the church in the early 1890s even as his health failed as the result of a mugging. "His future was cut short, but he seized the moment," Christopher said. "He was faithful in the present. . . . One day we will be remembered for how we seized the opportunities that are before us."[29]

The church also unveiled its official centennial hymn, "The Cloud of Witness." Music minister John Dickson, then on sabbatical leave in England, wrote the text to the hymn, while interim music minister and organist Jonathan Crutchfield composed the music. They communicated at long distance to assemble the hymn. Built on the same passage from Hebrews 12 that inspired Highland's windows, the majestic hymn urged worshipers to emulate the saints who had gone on before and look to the ultimate reunion in heaven. The church has sung the hymn on major occasions ever since.



The anniversary came amid a three-year, $540,00 capital campaign aimed at making the church more accessible by widening the sanctuary door, adding an elevator, upgrading educational space, improving lighting, and other measures.[30] The chapel in the old educational building, which had been created in the 1970s out of an old Sunday School assembly room, was converted yet again, this time into the more utilitarian Commons meeting room. The elevator was dedicated to the memory of Jennifer Ridge, daughter of Matt and Mary Ann Ridge, who had died as an infant in the 1980s. The Ridges, in gratitude for the support given by the church in that time, had started the elevator fund in her memory to improve people's access to church.

Southern Baptist Battles

All of these internal events at Highland took place amid a longstanding controversy within the Southern Baptist Convention and Southern Seminary. The controversy particularly hit home for Highland, with historically close ties to the convention and seminary; many members were students or employees of the seminary or other Baptist agencies.

The history of the controversy is complex and has been written from many perspectives; a brief summary here will have to suffice. A faction on the right, known as fundamentalists or conservatives, contended the denomination needed to eradicate in what they perceived as unchecked liberalism in Southern Baptist seminaries, agencies and publications. They accused seminary professors of doublespeak—saying liberal things in the classroom while toeing a conservative line in the pulpits they visited. They insisted on a literalist view of the Bible as "inerrant," were more open to church-state collaboration than their Baptist forebears and insisted on male authority in churches and families. They preached against those they perceived as liberal, denouncing them as "cancer," "snakes" and "walking corpses."[31] Their campaign began with a roar with a series of sermons and votes at the SBC's annual gathering in 1979. "We must not only elect a president who believes the Bible is the infallible, inerrant word of the living God, but we must elect a president who is totally committed to the removal from this denomination of any teacher, any educator who does not believe the Bible is the infallible, inerrant word of the living God," evangelist James Robison presciently declared at the 1979 Pastor's Conference in Houston.[32]

Beginning that year, the convention elected a series of presidents who used their powers of appointment to shift denominational boards of trustees and their agencies to the right. In 1984, the convention formally opposed ordaining women. A 1988 convention in San Antonio targeted the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer, claiming to endorse it without ever defining it and instead admonishing Baptists to obey the "authority of the pastor which is seen in the command of the local church."[33] Moderates staged an impromptu protest rally at the Alamo, and one critic later said the resolution "virtually debaptistified the SBC," and "was presented by and voted for by people who simply did not know the Baptist heritage."[34]

With an unbroken string of victories, inerrantist presidents routed moderate opposition by 1990. With new boards of trustees firmly in place, Southern Seminary and other seminaries and agencies underwent their own purges in the 1990s.

The SBC also pulled funding from joint ventures with other Baptist bodies considered liberal, such as the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

Moderates criticized these moves on a number of levels. They said fundamentalists were using wedge issues as a pretext to grab control of the SBC and its massive wealth. Moderates affirmed the authority of the Bible but viewed the inerrantist approach as making literalistic claims that the Bible doesn't make for itself. They emphasized biblical themes such as God's grace and redemption rather than what they saw as a restrictive, legalistic reading. On the issue of women ministers, they cited a whole vein of Scripture that speaks to the equality of male and female in Christ. Moreover, they objected to the convention's pressuring of employees and churches to declare allegiance to specific statements of faith (such as the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message). They believed this was trampling on Baptist traditions of freedom of conscience and the right of each congregation to govern itself. Moreover, they objected to the tendency

of leaders on the right to use terms like "skunk" and "pickle" and "enemies of the Bible" to describe opponents. Even Herschel H. Hobbs, a venerable former convention president (and former Highland education minister), received some boos when he tried to quell a fierce debate in 1980 with an appeal for unity in the cause of missions and against "creeping creedalism." In the old days, Hobbs lamented in a later interview, such an appeal would have reconciled even the bitterest debates. "Now I can't even remember what the old days were like."[35]

Highland members, like other moderates, were slow to recognize the determination of this fundamentalist movement, believing at first it was a temporary swing of the pendulum to the right. Highland's visitation minister, J. B. Sawyer, attending his fortieth SBC convention in 1979, concluded magnanimously that, whether conservative or liberal, all Southern Baptists "believe in God, the Bible as the inspired Word, and the church as a fellowship of baptized believers."[36]

By the early 1980s, however, it was clear that these battles were different. Duke was warning of "power playing" and "theological witch hunts."[37] "The crisis is real. Our integrity, our institutions, and most of all our missions effort in the world are at stake," he wrote.[38] Highland members eagerly volunteered to be messengers at convention meetings, where they routinely wound up on the losing side of crucial votes. Up to twenty-five people wanted to fill one of the church's ten slots for the last-ditch showdown in 1985 in Dallas, when an astounding 45,000 messengers showed up and, once again, elected a conservative president. Duke called the Dallas meeting "the 'Big D' . . . the big Disappointment." Despite some hopeful signs of reconciliation, the breach was inevitable. Bill Leonard, Highland's interim minister in 1987 and a leading historian of the crisis, lamented that "instead of a purified denomination we are a distracted people wasting energy on how many inerrantists can dance on the head of a pin, while the world turns elsewhere for some small ray of hope."[39]

Highland sent off a letter in 1990 protesting the Southern Baptists' defunding of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, but mainly the church began looking for new connections outside of the convention. A Denominational Relations Committee formed in 1990. The church approved its recommendation to temporarily escrow most funds to the SBC—saying it would not be "taxed without representation"[40]—while designating funds to specific Southern Baptist causes it supported as well as the Kentucky Baptist Convention. A resolution stated:

> Highland Baptist Church reaffirms its commitment to humble cooperation with other Baptist churches. We also affirm our commitment to the equally important competing values of the priesthood of the believer and the autonomy of the local church. Because the current takeover leadership leaves us "locked out" of decision making, we must consider new forms of cooperation.[41]

Highland members began meeting nationally with other alienated Southern Baptists and became early participants in the new Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. This alternative network, while not declaring itself a separate denomination, developed missionary programs, funded a new crop of divinity schools and

provided a forum for moderate Baptists to meet and try to move on from the controversy.

Highland was "seeking new ideas and solidarity with like-minded churches," wrote Chris Sanders, chair of the Denominational Relations Committee. " . . . Let us mourn what has been, but also celebrate what is to come, for the best is yet to come."[42]

The church began designating mission funding through the CBF and contributed directly to entities such as the Ruschlikon seminary and Jefferson Street Chapel—which also lost funding from the Long Run Baptist Association when it named a woman pastor.[43] Highland continued for a time to designate funds to Southern Seminary, which it supported. But the scene was changing there as well.

Traumatic Changes at Seminary

By the late 1980s, an increasingly conservative board of trustees at Southern Seminary began targeting some professors for their theological writings, starting an exodus of early retirements, resignations and firings. When a young trustee began criticizing seminary president Roy Honeycutt, Highland issued a letter in Honeycutt's support. Deacon and newsman Dave Nakdimen gave this commentary on a WAVE-3 broadcast.

> The Bible places a lot of importance on the concept of "Love." God is love. Love one another. Love your neighbor. Love your enemies. With that in mind, conservative trustees this week moved in on Southern Baptist Seminary and loved every minute of it. The new majority also would love to can a lot of the faculty, but think there's still hope for the President. Many conservatives love but don't appreciate professors whose ideas don't conform to their own. They would love for them to go some place else, although they might keep a few around just to condemn at annual meetings. A 24-year-old trustee . . . circulated a document accusing some professors of profanity, insensitively, political demagoguery and hereticism. He figures he understands the Bible better than seminary president Roy Lee Honeycutt. Just think how smart he'll be when he grows up. Southern Baptists will surely stop fussing if all professors and preachers think the same way. Preachers can deliver standardized sermons and wear the same style of suit. Churchgoers will never argue, except for an occasional flare-up over the menu for Wednesday night suppers. And I'm sure it will be easier to go to sleep during the sermons. That's my opinion. I'm Dave Nakdimen, and I'm a Baptist.[44]

The pace of change accelerated with Honeycutt's retirement in 1993 and his replacement by R. Albert Mohler Jr., viewed by supporters as a hero for turning the seminary back from a deviant course and by critics as a shrewd denominational politician who turned it in a fundamentalist direction. He took particular criticism for pressuring feminist professor Molly Marshall to resign.

What especially hurt for Highland was the seminary's decision in 1995 to close the W. O. Carver School of Missions and Social Work and to fire its dean. Not only had many members attended or supported the school, but Highland had a long history of connections to it, from Annie Eager's founding role in the early 1900s to former pastor Nathan Brooks's tenure as president. Moreover, the seminary's social work program gave students and graduates an entree

into various nonreligious agencies around Louisville providing health care and social services. To many at Highland, closing the school seemed to send a message that Southern Baptists cared more about harvesting souls than caring for whole persons. Highland hosted a candlelight vigil of protesting Carver students, and late in 1995, it held a funeral-like service for the seminary as it once was—celebrating its past while mourning its demise.

"We all know it was never Camelot," said former pastor Paul Duke, who returned to Highland from St. Louis to speak at the occasion. "It was, however, a place of learning, a place of freedom, a place of laughter."

Duke fondly recalled the discussions between students and professors, "when clusters of men and women would talk, engaging the world, asking questions, daring dissent." That has been replaced by an "oppressive system." He added:

> As the name seminary implies, it has always been a place for planting the seeds of the ministry, but somebody has put a bull in the greenhouse. He can knock down that greenhouse; he can set fire to the fields . . . [but the] good seed that's been sown will grow wild and free and shout joyfully at the harvest.[45]

Highland's education minister, Anne Smith, said Duke "was able to say the things many still connected with the seminary are afraid to say." Smith and music minister John Dickson both taught at the seminary, but the church's connections to the seminary grew steadily thinner.

Missions and Outreaches

While the SBC controversy was raging, Highland strove to continue to go about the business of missions and outreach. The church opened the Fireside Room for recreation nights for youths who had been loitering in the parking lot in the evenings, easing what had become a worrisome problem for neighbors. The church began hosting residents of Central State Hospital for Wednesday night dinners and worship sessions as well as for special retreats. Outreach ministers Edgardo Mansilla and Carlos de la Barra started Hispanic ministries at Highland in 1993 that drew numerous Spanish speakers to worship services, Bible studies and other events. The church's contacts with Hispanic ministries continued for years, even to 2001 when some Highland members attended the opening of a Spencer County church led by de la Barra.

Highland's youth took "World Changers" missions trips to places such as Montana, in addition to enjoying trips to the Ichthus Christian music conference in Wilmore, Kentucky, and attending concerts of contem-porary Christian groups like the Second Chapter of Acts.

Women's Missionary Union circles named for Mary Sampson and Daisy Jester merged in 1994, their members pooling resources to continue aiding missions. A circle of younger women named for missionary Jean Janes, a missionary who was serving in Chile, provided help for children there and aided other causes, funded in part by a yard sale that became a staple in the church's annual calendar.

Special Needs Ministry Touches Many Lives

The following is adapted from an article in the May 11, 1999, publication of Highland's edition of the Western Recorder. *Though some of the participants may have changed since 1999, the program continues to thrive.*

Highland Baptist Church's Wednesday night special needs ministry was born when Keitha Brasler went to Central State Hospital in the summer of 1989 to do a basic unit of Clinical Pastoral Education as part of her seminary training. She chose Central State because she wanted to study with Clarence Barton, a legendary chaplain who served there for thirty years and supervised hundreds of CPE students.

For ten weeks, Keitha worked forty hours a week as a student chaplain assigned to the Bingham Unit's B-2 and B-4 floors. The Bingham Unit was a fifty-bed intermediate care facility for residents with mental retardation. Keitha had contact with the residents every day and planned and conducted worship services there every Sunday.

"I just fell in love with those folks," she reminisced. "I got to know them, and they befriended me and taught me so much about what it meant to be a minister. They are so full of grace, so loving and kind. Each one is such a wonderful, unique person with their own special gifts.

"Two weeks into the program I went to my supervisor, Clarence Barton, and said, 'I've absolutely fallen in love with these people. I want to be their chaplain full time. I want to stay here. I don't want to leave.'"

Mr. Barton replied, "Maybe you can find other ways to continue your relationship with them. You're a student. You'll have to leave, because the next group has to come in."

Keitha told Highland associate pastor Anne Smith, "We've got to find a way to involve these folks in the life of the church. People are missing a wonderful gift if they don't get to know these people." At that time, Keitha lived only five minutes from Central State. With Anne's blessing and encouragement, Keitha began to bring a few of the residents with her to Highland for Sunday morning worship.

Years later, they are still coming to Highland to break bread and worship. From a charter group of five, the group has grown to fifteen to twenty. Several dedicated staff members accompany them each week on Wednesday evenings. After eating supper, the group and leaders go to the Fireside Room to sing hymns, pray and listen to a Bible story. Pianist Connie Campbell leads a spirited time of singing, followed by prayer time led by Keitha. The worship time concludes with Paul Whiteley's Bible story, a follow-up to the story, then closing prayer.

Every year since 1992, the group has gone on an overnight retreat. Most of the Friday night to Saturday afternoon retreats have been at Cedarmore. Other excursions included a trip to Huber's Farm in Southern Indiana to get pumpkins. Another time the group picnicked at Sawyer Park.

The annual Christmas parties have been held at Keitha's house and at the church. A very special Christmas party occurred in December 1997. Phyllis and Chet Watson invited the special needs group to their lovely home that year, and the Jean Janes missions group brought gifts.

Keitha believes the special needs ministry benefits both the Central State residents and the church members.

She says, "Their coming to Highland on Wednesdays gives them the opportunity to leave the hospital. They've come to know Highland as their church, a place where they belong. Their being here has possibly helped our members better understand the reality of what it means to be the body of Christ. To be the body of Christ means to embrace everyone, not just people who are like you and me."

Over the years, Highland members have befriended the Central State residents in numerous ways. There have been many warm smiles and gentle greetings. John makes it a point every week during supper to sit at the table with the Sanders family. Ken Campbell noticed that Bill always wears a University of Kentucky baseball cap. Bill was thrilled when Ken gave him a T-shirt that hailed Kentucky's winning the 1998 NCAA basketball tournament. The residents are very appreciative of every kindness shown them.

Members of Highland join in song with members of its special needs class during a typical Wednesday night gathering in 2005.

Julie says, "I like this church. I like everybody here. 'Amazing Grace' is my favorite hymn." Central State staff member Carolyn comments, "It means a lot for the residents to be able to get out in the community to socialize and worship. They really look forward to coming here on Wednesdays. They talk a lot about it during the week." Pianist Connie Campbell says, "Worshiping with our friends on Wednesday nights feeds my soul. I receive many blessings from being here. I wouldn't miss it." Paul Whitely remarks, "Singing along with Phyllis as she leads us each week in singing 'If You're Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands' fills my heart with joy."

What Keitha Brasler, the church and Central State started in 1989 has blessed many lives.

Personalities

Newcomers joined longtime members as leaders in the church. Staff members, such as music minister John Dickson, youth minister Lamar Helms and associate minister Anne Smith, all played significant roles in the lives of members. The church rallied behind Smith when she underwent major kidney surgery.

Jim Hawkins, an executive with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, stayed active on pulpit and other committees and in teaching Sunday School. Lawyer Phil Collier served regularly as a deacon and his wife, music teacher Kathy Collier, as a music leader in church.

The church also said farewell to longtime deacons such as Frank Shouse and Bill Goodell. Goodell's funeral in 1990 left enduring memories

Highland's performance of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat *mobilized the entire congregation and helped heal a split following a vote not to accept a pastoral candidate.*

of the numerous members who lined the church walk outdoors as his coffin was removed from the building. One longtime friend, Charlie Westray, gave the coffin an atta-boy rap with his hand on its way out.[46]

Bob and Mary O'Connor were long active in meal ministries and other outreaches to the Jeff Street Baptist Church at Liberty and also followed spiritual disciplines such as those found in the books of Thomas Merton. Keith Eiken, a retired principal who was active as a deacon and in other roles, also took a wider role in the city as a member of the Cathedral Heritage Foundation, which began an annual Festival of Faiths designed to foster dialogue between different religions.

Rough Transition

Early in 1995, Christopher resigned at Highland to begin a long and successful tenure at First Baptist Church in Abilene, Texas.

Seminary professor Carey Newman began serving as interim pastor. The Search Committee recommended the hiring of Robert W. Guffey Jr., but in a stunning vote, only 80 percent of members approved him, below the required 90 percent threshold. The event plunged the church into a period of doubt and soul-searching, prompting dialogues that were "helpful for the most part, painful at times," wrote Search Committee member Jim Hawkins at the time. "But families have to talk. I trust it was the beginning of a renewal of spirit among us and a beneficial look in the congregational mirror."[47] Guffey, too, sent Highland a gracious note. "May the brilliance of God render your path clear as you go, knowing that, when Highland is ready for a pastor, God will provide."[48]

Jim England, former pastor of Deer Park Baptist Church, began as interim at the start of 1996 and sought to lift Highland's spirits with a pep talk about its strengths.

> I see creative and fulfilling worship with many people sharing their talents in worship leadership. I hear wonderful music from the choir, individuals and instrumentalists. I feel your desire to press on to the things that lie ahead. I have sat in a couple of Sunday school classes and heard discussion that stimulates. I have been with the deacons at prayer and heard their concern and I am delighted.[49]

As has happened in the past, the church also found healing in an artistic expression—putting on a performance of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.* The production, viewed as an outreach tool to the community, mobilized the entire congregation—some as actors and singers, others in set construction, costume design, fund-raising, ticket taking and publicity. The performance helping play a role in the "subsequent healing process" following the Guffey vote, said longtime member Kathy Belcher.

Notes

1. CM, 12/9/81.
2. WRH, 3/21/84.
3. WRH, 3/14/84; interview, Pat Ramsey.
4. Sermon, 2/7/93.
5. Interview.
6. Interview.
7. CM, 10/82.
8. CM, 6/25/86.
9. Interview.
10. Interview.
11. WRH, 10/3/84.
12. CM, 10/17/84.
13. WRH, 10/31/84.
14. Interview.
15. Interview.
16. "A Profile of Highland Baptist Church, Louisville, Kentucky," 1987.
17. CM, 6/24/87.
18. Interview.
19. Interview.
20. Interview.
21. WRH, 6/21/94.
22. CJ, 7/20/94.
23. CJ, 11/27/94.
24. CM, 1/22/92.
25. Interview.
26. Interview.
27. CJ, 5/5/93.
28. CJ, 5/5/93.
29. WR, 5/25/93.
30. WR, 5/25/93; CM, 12/8/93.
31. Shurden, 27.
32. Shurden, 31.
33. Shurden, 237.
34. Shurden, 230.
35. Leonard, *God's Last and Only Hope,* 52–53.
36. WRH, 6/13/79.
37. WRH, 6/16/82.
38. WRH, 5/15/85.
39. WRH, 6/17/87.
40. WRH, 10/24/90.
41. CM, 10/10/90, WRH, 10/3/90.
42. WRH, 10/24/90.
43. That congregation eventually moved to Liberty Street and became Jeff Street Baptist Community at Liberty, while the Jefferson Street Baptist Center focused on providing housing to people struggling with multiple addictions or mental illnesses. Highland maintained ties with both groups.
44. WRH, 5/2/90.
45. CJ, 5/12/95.
46. Interview, Dave Nakdimen.
47. WRH, 12/19/95.
48. WRH, 1/16/96.
49. WRH, 3/96.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1997–2003

"This Work of Love"

Early in 1997, Highland voted to hire forty-two-year-old Joe Phelps of Austin, Texas, as its sixteenth pastor, with a refreshing consensus of a more than 99 percent favorable vote. Though the church was rigorous in its search process—hosting Phelps for a trial sermon and numerous discussion groups—it was eager to avoid another contentious vote and to find a positive match with a like-minded pastor. Phelps recalled that interim pastor Jim England showed him a "warmth and Christ-like presence [that was] evident from our first handshake. As I entered the den of lions (aka the deacons' meeting) for an evening of questions, Jim whispered, 'Relax, you're among friends.' Throughout the evening he smiled reassuringly as I answered the thorny questions that any church needs to ask a potential pastor."[1] Phelps told the congregation later that his father-in-law was not eager to see his grandchildren move from Austin, asking him that he stay unless the match was perfect.[2]

Pastor Joe Phelps cultivated the church's spiritual traditions while also speaking out on social issues.

"Sorry, Dad, this is perfect," Phelps said he told him.

> There are many things about Highland that qualify for the label "perfect." The worship. The music. The programs. The sanctuary. Yet . . . more importantly in what will be. Together we want to be God's people, to see what God will do with a church with Highland's unique strengths when it is firmly dedicated to carrying its unique cross. I look forward to the journey with you.[3]

Joseph Owen Phelps, a father of four, was a native of Ohio and studied at Southern Seminary from 1976 to 1978. He then went to Austin to serve for six years as associate pastor of

Highland Park Baptist Church, then for another twelve years as founding pastor of the Church of the Savior, a suburban Baptist congregation affiliated with the American Baptist Churches.

Returning to Louisville was difficult for Phelps, he said, precisely because his memories of it had been so good.

> Driving by the seminary where I went to school and where I was "born again, *again*," was very painful. The place looked exactly as it did when I was a seminarian eighteen years earlier, and yet it was a totally different place, no longer the place of grace and academic inclusiveness that it once was. One of the gifts God gave Highland was to process that change, to grieve that change and to pick up its head and move on, asking, "Where is God leading us now?"[4]

As part of that quest, the church has become known for what Phelps calls a "regional, public voice for a more moderate, evangelical message." While having a strong base of Highland residents, it also attracts members from as far away as Southern Indiana and Oldham County, with more than thirty zip codes represented in its directory.

In 1998 the church adopted a vision statement aiming "to move people forward in Jesus Christ" through practicing spiritual disciplines, performing ministries of justice and evangelism and becoming a comprehensive "university" for spiritual formation through such things as small groups, retreats, Bible studies and worship.

The church continued to develop a rich liturgical tradition. Members such as Linda Gray and Lou Ann Iler painstakingly created banners reflecting the changing liturgical seasons. Highland regularly observed seasons such as Lent and Advent, from the stark Ash Wednesday and Tenebrae services to the festive Hanging of the Greens, when the sanctuary was decorated with Christmas greenery and members donated food, gifts and money to the needy. Ministers, who formerly wore liturgical robes on special occasions, began wearing them every week in an effort to put more focus on their roles during worship rather than individual wardrobes, and they wrote responsorial readings and prayers of confession. While any church history is bound to focus on the actions of the church, less easy to document is the inner life of a church. Both staff and members practiced devotional disciplines such as spiritual direction and centering prayer. Deacons met regularly for prayer and offered prayer for individuals after church.

The church made a policy change in 1999 when Highland chose to accept as members those who were baptized as believers in other churches, whether or not by immersion. The change came in response to a regular participant's desire to join the church but not to undergo what he felt would have been an impossibility, a second baptism. Under the new (still-current policy) Highland still did not recognize infant baptisms, but it did recognize the baptisms in other churches of those old enough to profess faith in Jesus and to seek baptism, regardless of the quantity of water involved. (Part of this decision reflected a study of early English Baptists and their Swiss Anabaptist forebears, who also did not immerse at first.) At the same time, the church resolved to continue baptizing only by immersion while allowing exceptions for those with physical or psychological barriers to immersion.

The church also conducted a three-year capital campaign, concluded in 2001, titled

"Celebrate the Past, Claim the Future." Members gave $366,936 toward such nuts-and-bolts projects as debt retirement, a new air conditioner, roof repair, computer purchases and other items.

Dialogue and Social Issues

Phelps and many members agreed on a goal of speaking out in areas of social justice, though not always agreeing on the details. Phelps has often spoken out against rampant gun violence, capital punishment, war, and economic inequalities in an era of multinational corporations. In the interview process, he recalled,

> I tried to be clear that part of my calling was to stand with those who are marginalized, those who don't have a voice and to raise what I consider to be Bible issues that are largely ignored by much of right-wing or evangelical Christianity—questions of social justice and war and peace, caring for the poor. Those to me are at the center of the Gospel. I think evangelical churches believe that, but they're focused so much on sexual issues, on easily identified moral issues—drinking, gambling. I understand and appreciate the contribution they make in those areas. I think if we stop there, though, we've sold the Gospel far short. . . . I want Highland to be a leader among the other voices.[5]

Other members shared these views; members participated in peace rallies, prayer vigils for murder victims and programs for distributing gun locks to prevent accidental shootings.

But Phelps also recognized his effort to speak out on controversial issues was a risk—particularly if he took positions with which many in the church disagreed, as happened when he sharply questioned the United States' decision to go to war in Afghanistan in a sermon after the September 11 terrorist attacks. That sermon was followed by a series of discussions in which people shared divergent views yet remained committed to the church.

Another test came when the church decided to move a display of photos of the six Highland members killed in past wars from a seldom-used stairway to a more prominent location in the youth area. A committee originally planned to accompany the display with a plaque quoting Isaiah's prophecy of a world without war. Some deacons, however, said at a meeting that the plaque amounted to a pacifist indictment that servicemen had gone to their deaths in an unjust cause. Proponents said that was not the intent. "A wonderful dialogue broke out, just very spontaneously," Phelps recalled. After a while, deacon Tracy Holladay suggested a change in wording that, as it turned out, reflected a consensus of all those involved. The plaque now states:

> In remembering all those who have died in the tragedy of war, we work toward God's promise that: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."

"It was an example for me [that] if we'll listen to each other carefully, often times the adversarial, polarized positions that we're prone to take can become the catalyst for the spirit of God to work, to help us say something better than we ever would have initially," said Phelps. Particularly inspiring, he said, was that his just-published doctoral dissertation, *More Light, Less Heat,* proclaimed the possibilities of exactly that sort of dialogue. Such dialogues have continued in other areas, such as discussions on homosexuality and other contemporary controversies.

Other efforts have received broader consensus. In 1997 Highland began its tradition of placing crosses on its lawn at the end of its services on the first Sunday of Advent, one for each victim of violence in that year in Louisville. The stark ritual, accompanied by the harsh hammering of the crosses into the cold ground, contrasts with the joyful, musical celebration of the upcoming Christmas holiday, but there is a connection: to show solidarity with victims and to challenge "violence as contrary to the Prince of Peace, whose birth we celebrate."[6] The service has often drawn news coverage, and the cemetery-like display accompanied with an explanatory sign is seen by thousands of passing motorists each day in December. Some residents of Louisville have come to know Highland as the church with the crosses on the lawn, recognizing it for its concern for social justice.

Yet as a church in one of the safest neighborhoods of the city, Highland has had to explore more deeply what it means to be in solidarity with the victims of violence. In 2003 it began a partnership with Forest Missionary Baptist Church in Newburg, which had dealt with a rash of violence that affected its own members. Forest members came to Highland one November day to build crosses similar to those Highland uses, and on the same Sunday in December, both churches put out displays of crosses. In 2004 both churches helped launch a "No Murders Metro campaign," holding prayer vigils at often-dangerous murder scenes in yet another effort to proclaim the message of the Prince of Peace. The Interdenominational Ministerial Coalition soon became a regular sponsor of such vigils. Phelps and coalition president Clay Calloway received the Cathedral Heritage Foundation's Hearts in Harmony Award in 2004 for their ecumenical solidarity in this endeavor, and the coalition similarly honored Phelps for the work at its 2005 Emancipation Day service.

On Mission

Former Highland member Conway Stone organized a Baptist Habitat for Humanity project, in which several Baptist churches helped construct affordable housing.

On September 4, 2001, nine members of the Daisy Jester–Mary Sampson circle of the Women's Missionary Union gathered for their final meeting, more than seventy-five years after the group's founding as separate circles. Participation had been declining as members aged and found driving more difficult. Longtime member Virginia Bell presided at the meeting, attended by eleven guests, including retired missionaries Grundy and Jean Janes. Phelps spoke about the history and work of "Highland's missions champions through the years." To the end, members kept informed about the mission field, with Dr. Marilyn Sanders presenting a talk on her medical mission trip to Tanzania. Members closed with prayer and with the note that other WMU circles continued to thrive in the church.

And in fact, many in the church kept busy with mission activities close to home and far away. Residents of Central State Hospital—

Investigating One's Own Prejudices

By Ken Campbell

This article was printed in Highland's edition of the Western Recorder *on January 11, 2000.*

A philosopher once wrote, "There is a principle that is a barrier to all information, proof against all argument, and guaranteed to keep a man in everlasting ignorance. That principle is, contempt prior to investigation."

Sometimes my gut reaction to something or someone is to automatically judge their position or action against my own prejudices. Forgetting the above principle and giving in to my baser instinct, when members of our church started the white crosses on the lawn and a candlelight vigil to remember people killed by gun violence, my first thought was a misguided, liberal bunch of do-gooders engaging in an exercise of symbolism over substance. Probably a group of gun control nuts who want to subvert the U.S. Constitution which I believe is the second greatest piece of writing after the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

I am baptist, conservative and republican (the lower case is intended and also note that I sometimes forget to include Christian) and guns are a political issue. The church should not be involved in political issues.

Heidi Stoll adds a cross in Highland's lawn in December 2003.

But this year I started thinking about my grandchildren and the fact that they live in the homes of gun owners. Responsible gun owners, but gun owners none the less. I thought about the fact that I have not been on the giving and receiving end of gun violence. I thought about my friend who shot his wife and then killed himself. I thought about "contempt prior to investigation."

So I went to the service this year to "investigate." What I heard were people from both church and government who believed the commandment "Thou shalt not kill," that believed the New Testament commandment "Love thy neighbor," and who thought that if we follow Christ's admonition to do the latter, we might accomplish the former. The only way to do that is to also follow Christ's commission to spread the Gospel. What I didn't hear was any plan to shred the Second Amendment.

I already knew the Bible and the Constitution were compatible. What I realized was that contempt and love are not. So if you weren't there, for whatever reason . . . there will be a service next year. I'll be there both because I believe the Bible and love the Constitution. But I'll also be there because this year I learned a little more about myself, and none of us are beyond that.

adults with mental retardation—became a regular part of Highland's Wednesday night gatherings, joining the church for supper and holding a worship service as part of a ministry led by the Rev. Keitha Brasler.

Former Highland member Conway Stone organized a Baptist Habitat for Humanity project, seeking not only to provide affordable housing but to find a common bond between Baptist churches whether black or white, moderate or conservative. To date, seven "Baptist houses" have been built. Highland volunteers regularly worked at the Jeff Street Baptist Community at Liberty and supported the related Jefferson Street Baptist Center, which provides housing for people with multiple diagnoses of mental illness or addictions. Members volunteered in a variety of ways—helping to staff Louisville's homeless shelters on bitter nights, ushering at a 2001 Billy Graham crusade, raising funds for the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's pregnancy/adoption program and aiding a new Hispanic congregation in Spencer County started by former Highland outreach minister Carlos de la Barra. Church youth did social outreaches at a homeless shelter and spent a week in Nada, Kentucky, as part of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's program to aid the poorest rural counties in the United States.

The church renovated a house next to the sanctuary at 2120 Grinstead (which it had purchased in the 1970s, sold in the 1980s, then repurchased in 1992) and leased it for four years as a transitional home for residents under the care of the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, who were preparing for independent lives. The building was formally dedicated as the "Jeanne Foree House," in honor of a late member whose bequest to Highland was used to fund renovations to the house.

In 2001, Highland and numerous other churches in Louisville sponsored the arrival of 125 Sudanese refugees known as the "Lost Boys." They had survived a harrowing journey on foot across their war-torn homeland before spending much of their childhood in refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya. Highland sponsored four of the men: Abraham Angol, James Mangui, John Nyieth and William Ruei. Highland members spent many hours helping set up an apartment for them in the South End, teaching them amenities from house keys to stoves that were foreign to their experience but to which they adapted quickly. Their transition was difficult at times, but their determination to succeed in the United States led them to further their education even as they worked full-time jobs. All of them took General Educational Development classes and some took other classes. After working for a few months in a manufacturing plant, the four got jobs transporting patients at Norton Hospital. Amid worries about their safety in their neighborhood, Highland arranged for them to move to the Foree House after the KBHC lease expired. The men worked long hours and developed friendships outside of church, but one or two would often attend services on a typical Sunday morning. Soon after they arrived, they and many other Sudanese

Highland welcomed four Sudanese refugees in 2001. Clockwise from left: William Ruei, John Nyieth, James Mangui, and Abraham Angol. In 2004, the church mourned when Mangui was murdered in Louisville.

refugees visited Highland as a group and joyfully sang hymns in English and their native Dinka language.

Several Highland members also undertook individual efforts in the fields of missions and humanitarian care. Ginny Sims made regular, lengthy trips to Romania to work as a nurse. John and Marilyn Sanders, retired doctors working for the Baptist Medical Dental Fellowship, visited places as diverse as Tanzania, Yemen and China, providing training and giving missionary doctors some much-needed rest. Their reports to the church from refugee camps and other places underscored the depth of medical needs throughout the world, while John Sanders's watercolors of foreign scenes emphasized his keen respect for these people groups. Grundy Janes regularly took Georgetown College students to Chile for short-term mission trips.

In 2002 Sara Belcher, a student at Wheaton College who grew up attending Highland, spent six months in Kenya. She worked as a teacher and learned to adjust to a radically simpler lifestyle in which running water was unavailable and children had so little to play with that even a discarded pen could become a toy. The goal of the program that sent her was to challenge young Christians to consider what their faith demands of them in response to a world of inequality and need. Sara was especially moved by the plight of AIDS orphans and chose a concrete goal—to raise funds to enable two orphaned girls to pay the tuition needed to complete their high school education. She gave such a moving presentation to a Wednesday night gathering that the normally fidgety elementary school children were transfixed, with one asking, "What can we do to help these children right now?" The boy began contributing out of his own savings. Such efforts prompted this feigned alarm in one newsletter:

WARNING!
TEACHING CHILDREN TO LOVE AND FOLLOW JESUS MAY ACTUALLY RESULT IN THEM DOING SO![7]

The newsletter included articles on Sara Belcher's work and on member Kristen Connolly, newly commissioned as a missionary by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, to serve in Highland's latest area of mission focus, the Balkans.

A Partnership with Albanians

Encouraged by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) to concentrate missions efforts on a particular people group, Highland chose in 2001 to form partnerships with the Albanian people, a mostly Muslim and secular group in an impoverished part of the Balkans. Highland began working closely with CBF missionaries Rick and Martha Shaw, who were based in Macedonia, where Albanians were a large minority, and worked regularly in Kosova, where Albanians had been targeted by a brutal Serb campaign of ethnic cleansing that was halted by NATO intervention in 1999.

One focus of the work was the Way of Salvation Baptist Church of Rahovec, Kosova, founded by Eliza Durguti, an Albanian woman who accepted Jesus at a refugee camp during the 1999 war. "It is a sapling in a scorched forest," wrote Phil Collier, a task force member who has studied the Albanian language and visited the

site. Groups of Highland members such as Matt Ridge, Geoff Hale, John Bell and Bob and Scott Belcher traveled to Kosova to help build the church; others such as Terri Connolly and Angela Dennison brought textbooks (purchased with $40,000 raised by Highland and other churches), warm clothes and other aid to Albanians in Macedonia. In 2004 hospice chaplains Jim England and Kirk Hall joined other Louisville hospice workers in helping train medical professionals in Macedonia to do home hospice care.

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fanatically religious government taking power in Iraq. Some members took part in peace vigils that regularly lined Bardstown Road. Others, however, saw the case for war to overthrow a brutal dictator who had used weapons of mass destruction on his own and other people.[19]

People on all sides came together for a service at Highland on the night the war started. A large magazine photo of Iraqi Christians was displayed at the front entrance. They sang hymns that included "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," normally sung at Christmas, with its plea

"He Is Risen"

By Pat Ramsey

The following article was published in Highland's edition of the Western Recorder on November 13, 2001, as the church and the nation were still processing the trauma of the September 11 terrorist attacks.

This past week, at the prayer service on Tuesday evening, I made one of the most atheistic statements of my life. Standing at the back door talking to Rick and Joe, I said, "Evil is stronger than love." Perhaps at one of the lowest moments in my life, I meant it. I felt like John the Baptist, when he was imprisoned and depressed, sending word to Jesus. "Are you the Christ?" . . .

In the deepest part of my soul I know nothing is as strong as love. Anyone who thinks evil is stronger does not believe in the resurrection.

This week I remembered another time when I had similar thoughts. I was at the ballpark watching the Highland Baptist boys playing softball. "Did you hear about Larry Coleman? He died this week." I was stunned. My prayers, said with such faith, were to keep him alive. I remembered standing with Larry months before, trying to calm his fears as he got ready to leave for Vietnam. He had been in my youth class and he had been acting crazy and so unlike himself.

When we were alone he said, "I am so afraid." I saw the fear and recognized his clowning around as a way to deal with it. We talked a long time. I could not forget the fear in his eyes. Every time I prayed for him I saw his eyes.

The weekend I found out about his death my family and I were going to a folk music festival at a state park. The nation in a few short years had experienced many assassinations: our president, Dr. King and then on June 5, 1968, Robert Kennedy, 10 days before Larry died. I felt the world was in total chaos. I knew many young men and women who had gone to war but I knew Larry personally. My family went swimming and hiking but I could not get out of bed. I was so depressed.

We returned home on Sunday and on Monday morning I arose very early, before daylight. I was the only person awake in my house, as my family slept soundly upstairs.

I took my coffee to the living room. I was passing the stairwell and looked up into it. It was very dark and suddenly I heard, as if for the first time, "He is not here. He is risen."

The resurrection was new again to me in a healing way. I was treating the entire situation as if God were dead, as if evil were stronger than love. It is not and never will be.

for peace. "I have other things I need to be doing, but I just wanted to be with the community," said one member, Beth Hedges.[20]

Ecumenical and Interfaith Efforts

These global events, in which religious extremism was such a factor, underscored the growing need for understanding between members of different faiths. Highland became active in the Kentuckiana Interfaith Community, a coalition of Christians, Jews, Muslims and Baha'is that was a successor to the old Louisville Area Council of Churches. The church also participated with a booth at the Cathedral Heritage Foundation's annual Festival of Faiths. Members who were already experienced in such dialogues helped foster these programs, including Keith Eiken, long active with the Cathedral Heritage Foundation, and Roy Fuller, a religion professor at area colleges who also served for a time as executive director of the Kentuckiana Interfaith Community.

One expression of this concern came with the choral performance in October 2001 of *Songs of Wisdom from Old Turtle*, based on a children's book in which various parts of creation insist that God is like them—a wind, a rock, a star, a sound. The message, said music director John Hollins, is "that we humans only see the vast beauty of God when we join together to articulate what we each see separately."[21]

Highland held a summer education program about various religions, hosting speakers who explained their faiths and then holding discussion groups in which members discussed the proper Christian response to them. In 2002, when former Southern Baptist president Jerry Vines declared that Islam was founded by a "demon-possessed pedophile" to the full approval of current Southern Baptist leaders, Highland staff and deacons issued a public statement to "renounce and reject" such comments, urging "respectful dialogue with other people of faith."[22]

Phelps said the goal fit with Highland's historic effort to both proclaim the Christian faith and foster tolerance.

> To have a conversation with a rabbi or with a Muslim, respectfully—and to learn from them and to have an opportunity to hear their witness to how God is revealed to them and then also to bear our witness—is absolutely essential in this day and age. I will never be one who ends up with the moral relativism that says, "Hey, it's all the same." Of course it's not the same. But there are elements we can respect and we can bear our witness to the Gospel without having to criticize others, and that to me is essential.[23]

New Baptist Relations

By the late 1990s, virtually no Southern Seminary students were attending Highland—down from a figure of about 200 in the Paul Duke era of the mid-1980s—and John Dickson was the last professor remaining at the church. By then, however, Highland was working to forge new Baptist partnerships. The church increased its involvement with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, through which it sent most of its mission-support dollars. Members regularly attended CBF conventions, including one that met in Louisville in 1997, and they were inspired by former President Jimmy Carter's admonition at the 2001 convention that "it is time to move on as Christians and Baptists, just following Jesus."[24] Highland also became a

charter supporter of the new Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, a small but growing school meeting in Lexington that had ties to the CBF and its state chapter.

Highland also remained active with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, which continued to be hospitable to both conservatives and moderates into the early years of the new century, although some saw it as aligning ever closer to the Southern Baptist Convention. The church also supported specific causes such as Georgetown College. By belonging to the state convention, Highland also remained technically a member of the Southern Baptist Convention. But Highland symbolically cut its ties to the convention in 2003 by replacing the only explicit reference to it in its bylaws—a section on the procedure for electing messengers to its annual meeting—with more general language. The bylaw now reads:

> HBC is affiliated in mission and ministry with various local, state, and national Baptist organizations. HBC may also network in specific ways with other faith-based organizations to fulfill its mission of evangelism, peacemaking and social justice. The views of any of these larger bodies with which HBC is affiliated should not be construed to represent the views of HBC or its members.

Highland members did still keep track of developments in the Southern Baptist Convention and voiced their dissent when the denomination adopted an article of faith in 1998 that wives should "submit graciously" to their husbands. Margie Brown told *The Courier-Journal* that those who disagree with such stances almost "have to give a disclaimer every time you say you're Baptist," while Kathy Belcher worried about the implications of such a policy. "There are women in the church who've taken that so literally that they've stayed with an abusive relationship because they feel like . . . that's what they're supposed to do. There are limits."[25]

The SBC revolution culminated in 2000 with the adoption of a revised Baptist Faith and Message that also enshrined opposition to women ministers as an article of faith, to the chagrin of many at Highland. "Jesus was always supportive of women," commented Nina Maples at the time. "There were women who prophesied, women who were deaconesses."[26] In other notable revisions, the convention removed a clause stating that "the criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ," saying it had been misused to justify any belief by claiming Jesus would have endorsed it; opponents argued vainly that such changes were replacing a worship of the living God with a fundamentalist worship of a book. The convention also defined religious freedom in more plural than individual terms, citing the need for "doctrinal accountability," while critics saw the effort as an un-Baptist tilt toward group control and away from freedom of conscience. Highland was hardly alone in its criticizing such changes, which were also opposed by former president Jimmy Carter and the Baptist General Convention in Texas.

That same summer, Highland launched an educational series entitled "Will the Real Baptist Please Stand Up?" The series featured scholars such as E. Glenn Hinson on Baptist history, Nancy Ammerman on Baptists in America and Mark Whitten on what he called the "Myth of Christian America." Daniel Vestal presented the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's vision of Baptist cooperation in a post-denominational age.

What most members remember, however, was the talk given by seminary president R. Albert Mohler Jr., chief architect of Southern's rightward shift. While some members declined to attend, opposed to his actions as president, the fellowship hall was packed with those who heard Mohler tell of his Christian testimony and of his view of the Baptist controversy as a battle between those who valued truth above freedom and those who valued freedom above truth.

Phelps said afterward he appreciated the courteous exchange on both sides and that he agreed with much of Mohler's talk but disagreed on its main point, which he said was a caricature "of moderate thinking when interpreted by a fundamentalist. No Baptist, however 'liberal,' believes liberty to be more foundational than truth. For me, the 'faith divide' happens at the point of understanding what truth is, and the limits with which humans can appropriate this truth."[27]

Phelps maintained a dialogue with Mohler and spoke at a seminary forum in the wake of September 11, where he was the only member of the panel to question the war in Afghanistan.

110th Anniversary

On May 17, 2003, Highland marked its 110th anniversary with a banquet in which longtime member Edith Hoeing answered questions on church history and her own life from master of ceremonies Steve Brown. At worship the next morning, former seminary president Duke McCall spoke fondly of his student years at Highland in the 1930s. He recounted how he was invited by the pastor's son and later was authorized by the church to conduct his first baptism—of his Presbyterian wife. McCall, at age 88, walked haltingly to the pulpit but spoke resolutely in his refined South Carolina accent as he recounted later memories of bringing his sometimes-rambunctious sons to church in the 1950s. "I thank God for Highland Baptist Church," he concluded. "You'll never know the crowds of people whose lives have been changed and enriched by this church."

Pastor Phelps, in his sermon, cited the changes that have taken place over the years since the church first gathered at the dusty intersection in 1893. The Gospel reading for that Sunday from John 15, Phelps said, was perfect for a church seeking to recognize its history and go forward purposefully—Jesus's injunction to abide in him as a branch in a vine.

> For 110 years, people have come to this place and they have been "abiders." They have found in Jesus that intimate connection. The styles have changed, the wording has changed, the programming has changed, the buildings have changed over the years, but one thing has remained constant. "I am the vine, you are the branches, abide in me. . . ."
>
> Over the years when Highland has been most alive, most fulfilled, most complete, have been the times when we have been abiding with the risen, active, risking Jesus, who goes on to Galilee before us and says, "Come on, come on." Times when we've acted on our relationship with Jesus, when we've pounded crosses on the front lawn to remind the community about acts of violence, when we've sung the faith clearly in the presentation of *Old Turtle*, times when we've adopted the Albanian people and have found ways to connect ever more intimately with these people in a land far, far away. Times here in Louisville when we took on the four Sudanese people who have become so intimately a part of our

faith community. Times when we've done things that are far less spectacular and obvious, when deacons have cared for inactive members, when folks have shown up for the funeral of a member who's been inactive for many years and who has no family. Times when we've welcomed the stranger, the neo-Nazi who walks in our door or the African-American man who's acting in strange ways or people who behave differently than we might want them to behave, people bearing loads of scars and wounds. Wednesday nights when in the midst of our meals, one of the folks from Central State becomes out of hand, begins to call out in a loud voice, I see us as a faith community jerk a bit in surprise at first and then smile. They're part of our faith community. Only at Highland. . . .

This work of love is not only our calling, it's been our connection to Jesus. You cannot really be connected to Jesus and not love, any more than a branch can be connected to a tree and not bear fruit. It's just who we are. . . .

What will keep us in our primary business, not merely existing, but flourishing, continuing to be a thinking, feeling, healing community of faith that tells the story of how God's love is changing the direction of our lives? What will keep us relevant and redemptive in this community? "I am the vine, you are the branches. Abide in me, and I in you."

Epilogue

Highland has continued these efforts beyond the anniversary year. One illustration came in a mission project spending report in January 2004, which included:

- assisting an African-American church (Temple of Faith) with an organ purchase
- constructing new peace signs
- hosting mission speakers
- funding Wayside Christian Mission
- aiding Sara Belcher's work in Kenya
- working with the Sudanese refugees
- taking a global missions offering
- serving meals at Jeff Street Baptist Community at Liberty
- volunteering at homeless shelters
- supporting such organizations as the Baptist World Alliance (after the SBC voted to cut back support), the Baptist Center for Ethics, and the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America
- volunteering with the CBF's Rural Poverty Initiative
- and contributing to Cabbage Patch Settlement House, Kentuckiana Interfaith Community, medical missions, Habitat for Humanity, and the Christian Motorcycle Association

Seeking to engage the wider community on issues of faith and culture, the church held well-attended forums on *The Da Vinci Code*, a popular novel purporting to challenge the Gospel accounts; the controversial movie *The Passion of the Christ*; and the role of religion in the 2004 presidential election.

Bruce Rogers presents plans for the Making a Place capital campaign.

Left: Members clean out the Fellowship Hall in preparation for renovations in 2005.
Right: Children write on soon-to-be demolished walls during celebrations marking the start of Fellowship Hall renovations in 2005.

Highland began holding a nontraditional Friday Church service in 2004 with informal, guitar-led worship and short devotional talks. Regular participants included both Highland members and participants in a Twelve-Step recovery program at Wayside Christian Mission.

Late in 2004, the church also launched a new capital campaign, titled "Making a Place," with a fund-raising goal of $1.04 million. Plans include various renovations to the sanctuary, classrooms, fellowship hall and other areas.

Tragically, Highland was shaken in August 2004 with news that James Mangui, one of the Sudanese men it sponsored, was brutally shot and killed while visiting a friend, having inadvertently been caught in a conflict between a menacing group of men and another Sudanese man over an earlier traffic accident. The congregation was gripped with grief that a man who had survived so much—separation from family, a grueling long march as a boy across the desert, years of living in refugee camps and then the struggle to adapt to American life—could have been cut down so senselessly at age twenty-four. Highland members who had been especially active in their resettlement were particularly grief-stricken, and the church worked with police and the Sudanese community in trying to seek justice.

On Tuesday evening, August 31, the building was packed with members, dozens of Sudanese, community supporters and many of Mangui's co-workers at Norton Hospital, who recalled his feisty spirit, his love of music and dance, his faith in Jesus and his stern response to someone who demanded to know where he was from: "I am an American." Highland's choir turned out in force and sang spirituals such as "Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal" and "Take My Hand, Precious Lord." The Sudanese sang hymns in their native Dinka language, such as "Yecu ee ya matheda (Jesus Is Our Friend)," accompanied by African drums, and the congregation sang "Amazing Grace" in both languages. Pastor Phelps recounted how, during visitation

hours held earlier in the day at the church, the sun had streamed through the Revelation window in the back wall, depicting the coming reign of Jesus when peace and justice reign. The sunlight bathed James's body with stained-glass dapples, a hopeful reminder that in a world of violence and injustice, in the end, "God's way will win."

Notes

1. WRH, 3/18/97.
2. WRH, 2/25/97.
3. Interview.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. WRH, 11/25/97.
7. WRH, 6/10/2003.
8. WRH, 10/8/2002.
9. WRH, 5/16/2000.
10. WRH, 5/16/2000.
11. CM, 11/6/2002.
12. CJ, 1/10/2003.
13. Interview.
14. HBH, 3/24/98; CJ, 12/28/99.
15. Ibid.
16. WHAS-TV news report, 9/16/2001.
17. WRH, 9/18/2001.
18. WRH, 10/23/2001.
19. WRH, 2/4/2003.
20. CJ, 03/21/2003.
21. WRH, 10/2/2001.
22. WRH, 6/25/2002.
23. Interview.
24. WRH, 7/10/2001.
25. CJ, 6/11/98.
26. CJ, 5/18/2000.
27. WRH, 8/8/2000.

My Cloud of Witnesses

The following is an excerpt from a Sunday morning presentation on stewardship given by Kathey Golightly-Sanders and reprinted in Highland's October 22, 2002, edition of the Western Recorder.

Allow me a moment to reflect on the cloud of witnesses that surround us here. You probably think of our windows, and yes, as I sit in choir every Sunday I reflect on those and the people they represent. But I want to share some stories of a few people who have been my cloud of witnesses in my 20 years at Highland. . . .

Thank you, Bill Goodell, for staying with this church even when we did things you disagreed with. The church voted to ordain women, but you dissented. When we finished the business meeting, you told us that even though you didn't agree with it, this was your church and you loved us, so "let's all stand and hold hands and sing 'Blest Be the Tie.'" You taught us to be faithful to one another, to be *stewards of our community.*

Thank you, Linnie Edwards, for being the "Queen of the WMU." For never letting us forget that church goes beyond these walls and our arms can and should extend to hurting and needy people around the world. You taught us to care for those outside our own little world, to be *stewards of the Great Commission.*

Thank you, Charlie Westray, for always asking the hard questions and being a bottom-line kind of person when it came to the budget. You would say, "We don't have enough money for that!"— and then give more to make sure we did. Thank you for teaching us to be good *stewards of your money.*

Thank you, Uhlan Rose, for countless Thanksgiving breakfasts, for Sunday morning hugs, warm handshakes and a constant, welcoming presence within our church. You taught us to be faithful to fellowship—to be *stewards of grace.*

Ten, twenty or thirty years from now, there will be another member of HBC standing in this place giving a stewardship testimony—this is, after all, a Baptist church and some things never change. Who will be their cloud of witnesses? What will they say about me, about each of us? Will they have a church facility that has been cared for and maintained for generations to follow? Will they have a tradition of service to stand on and step out from into new avenues of ministry? Will there be a Highland Baptist Church on the corner of Grinstead and Cherokee, reaching out to the neighborhood, the city and the world?

Bill, Linnie, Charlie and Uhlan didn't do "church" just so there would be a church tomorrow. They planted themselves here and they ministered in the day-in-and-day-out life of this community so there would be a witness for Christ in the here and now. They knew that if they were faithful to what God had provided for the present, God would provide a future.

Appendix

Timeline of Events during Highland Baptist Church's History

Events within Highland Baptist Church
Pastors' terms listed in boldface
Outside events that affected Highland listed in italics

1801	*Cane Ridge, Kentucky, revival at center of Second Great Awakening.*
1803	*Long Run Baptist Association formed.*
1829	*Georgetown College founded.*
1837	*General Association of Baptists in Kentucky founded (later becomes Kentucky Baptist Convention).*
1845	*Kentucky Baptists join new Southern Baptist Convention, which splits from Northern counterparts over slavery.*
1861–65	*Civil War and divisions of black, white Baptists.*
1869	*Louisville Baptist Orphans' Home founded.*
1870s	*Development of residential subdivisions in Cherokee Triangle.*
1877	*Southern Baptist Theological Seminary moves from South Carolina to Louisville.*
1891	*Cherokee Park created.*
	Organizers of Highland Baptist Church purchase property, launch Sunday School.
1892	HBC founding trustee Basil Manly dies.
1893	HBC formally organized, begins services in new church.
	George H. Simmons becomes first pastor (1893–1894).
1894	**B. A. Dawes becomes pastor (1894–1907).**
1898	*Spanish-American War.*
1899	*Southern Seminary president William H. Whitsitt resigns amid controversy, replaced by E. Y. Mullins.*
1900	HBC starts fellowship offering on communion Sundays.
	Kentucky Governor Goebbel assassinated.
	Baptists open downtown Hope Rescue Mission.
1904	*Kentucky approves segregationist Day Law.*
1905	Pastor Dawes attends inaugural meeting of Baptist World Alliance in England.

1907 *Court overturns corrupt Louisville elections of 1905.*
Women's Missionary Union Training School formed in Louisville.
Walter Rauschenbusch publishes Christianity and the Social Crisis.
Leonard W. Doolan becomes pastor (1907–1911).

1908 *E. Y. Mullins publishes* The Axioms of Religion.
HBC, Walnut Street Baptist Church jointly support mission that becomes Deer Park Baptist Church.
Philathea adult women's class started.
Original HBC educational building dedicated.

1909 Seminary professor John R. Sampey joins HBC, takes leadership roles.
HBC replaces gas fixtures, is wired for electricity.

1910 Louise Tucker leaves for China; first foreign missionary from Highland.

1911 **A. Paul Bagby becomes pastor (1911–1921).**

1913 *HBC patroness Juliette Norton Marvin killed in Connecticut train crash along with husband, daughter and 18 others.*
Equestrian statue of John B. Castleman unveiled on Cherokee Road.

1914 *Parr's Rest nursing home for Baptist women opens on Cherokee Road.*
Original church building razed.

1915 New church building dedicated.

1916 *Baptists open downtown Boyce Settlement House.*

1917–18 *World War I draws many church members into military service or related ministries.*

1918 *Influenza kills hundreds in Louisville and Camp Taylor. Church closed for one month.*
Pastor Bagby, member Sampey care for stricken soldiers.
Women messengers allowed at Long Run Baptist Association, SBC meetings.

1919–24 HBC raises funds toward Southern Baptists' Seventy-five Million Campaign.

1919 *Kentucky Baptist newspapers consolidated into* Western Recorder.

1920 *Prohibition of alcohol sales begins with enactment of Eighteenth Amendment.*

1920s Boy Scout Troop 48 forms at HBC.

1922 **J. B. Weatherspoon becomes pastor (1922–1929).**

1923 HBC's mission at 38th and Market is organized as independent Shawnee Baptist Church.

1924 *Kentucky Baptist Hospital, School of Nursing open in Highlands.*

1924–27 Three revival services each bring in more than 50 members to HBC.

1925 Children's meetings closed around November because of polio threat.
SBC launches Cooperative Program, approves first Baptist Faith and Message.
Scopes trial in Tennessee. Kentucky rejects ban on teaching evolution.

1926 *Southern Seminary moves to Crescent Hill.*

1928 Deacon board expands from 16 to 24.
Church membership at 895.
Highland members William, Daisy Jester begin missionary career in Africa.

1929 Church purchases Cooper property on Grinstead Drive for expansion, votes to expand classroom space in original educational building.
John R. Sampey becomes seminary president, leaves HBC.

1930 **David A. Howard becomes pastor (1930–1933).**
BancoKentucky crash of November 17 plunges Kentucky deeper into Depression.

1933 *Repeal of Prohibition; bourbon distilleries in Kentucky back in business.*
Church marks fortieth anniversary.

1934 **Thomas D. Brown becomes pastor (1934–1942).**
Highland member Henry Noble Sherwood begins controversial presidency of Georgetown College.

1935 Future SBC president Herschel H. Hobbs begins eleven-month term as HBC director of religious education.

1937 HBC shelters refugees from Ohio River flood.
HBC founds Baxter Avenue mission.

1939 HBC acquires Pope property on Cherokee Road for Sunday School expansion.
Frank Stagg, pastor of Baxter Avenue mission, baptizes twenty-two converts in one service in HBC's baptistery, an apparent one-day church record.
Long Run, Central District Baptist associations begin rare white-black partnership in sponsoring Fellowship Center in the West End.

1940 HBC launches Brent Street mission.

1941 *WMU Training School moves from downtown to Lexington Road.*
Long Run takes over Union Gospel Mission on East Jefferson. HBC's Asenath Brewster works there while other members volunteer.
Founding of Rubbertown as part of Louisville's wartime industrial expansion.

1941–45 *U.S. enters World War II. Some 120 HBC members serve. Two die while in service.*

1943 **Charles A. Maddry becomes pastor (1943–1946).**
HBC marks fiftieth anniversary with services, visits by former pastors, publication of first history book.

1944 Membership at 1,140 (including two missions).

1945 Mary Sampson sent as missionary to China.
HBC forms Audio Visual Committee.
World War II ends.

1946 Second fire in three years damages educational building.
HBC purchases Van Winkle property, renovates it for parsonage.

1947 **Hankins F. Parker becomes pastor (1947–1955).**

1949 Deacon board expanded from 24 to 32.

1950s *Interstate 64 built, providing easy access to HBC from longer distances. Many houses in Highlands divided into apartments as many residents move east to newer suburbs.*

1950–53 *Korean War; three HBC members killed.*

1950 *Repeal of much of Kentucky's segregationist Day Law.*
Highland Baptist Herald newsletter publishes first edition on January 8.

1951 *Duke McCall becomes seminary president, rejoins HBC.*

1952 *WHAS launches "Moral Side of the News," long-running talk show in which HBC pastors have participated.*
WMU Training School becomes W. O. Carver School of Missions and Social Work.
Former mission launched as independent Baxter Avenue Baptist Church.

1953 Ground breaking for new HBC educational building. Cherokee Road annex demolished.
Refurbished organ dedicated amid growing music program.
HBC grants preaching licenses to future missionary Grundy Janes, future Maryland pastor John Ewing Roberts.

1954 *Polio inoculations begin in earnest in response to new outbreak of disease.*
Brown v. Board of Education *outlaws school segregation.*
New educational building dedicated. Sunday School attendance at 483. Grinstead annex demolished to make way for parking lot.

1955 HBC installs air conditioning.
David Nelson becomes pastor (1955–1961).

1956 HBC members heavily involved in month-long Billy Graham crusade.

1956 Former mission becomes Vine Street Baptist Church.

1958 HBC member and Navy sailor Edward Matthews dies in explosion at sea.

1959 Highland members house messengers to SBC meeting in Louisville.
Church at all-time peak membership of 1,426.
John Boyd Sutton and Joan Sutton sent as missionaries to Brazil.

1960 HBC launches Bashford Manor mission.
John F. Kennedy elected first-ever Catholic president, overcoming Protestant suspicions.

1962 **Nathan C. Brooks becomes pastor (1962–1966).**
Baptists open Kentucky Southern College in Louisville.
Cuban Missile Crisis.
Cherokee Triangle Association formed.

1963 *Supreme Court bars school-sponsored prayer.*
Carver School of Social Work merges into seminary.
SBC revises Baptist Faith and Message.
President Kennedy assassinated.

1964 Former mission launched as Bashford Manor Baptist Church.
HBC becomes first church in Louisville to employ a social worker.
Vietnam War rapidly expands.

1964–5 *President Johnson signs landmark civil rights legislation.*

1965 *Louisville approves equal employment ordinance.*

1966 Grundy, Jean Janes begin missionary work in Chile.
HBC acquires two vacant lots off Everett Avenue for parking.

1967 **Robert N. Wallace becomes pastor (1967–1969).**
Former parsonage on Cherokee Road renovated into the Highlander community center.
1968 *Riots in Louisville, elsewhere amid a year of turmoil, assassinations nationwide.*
1969 *Kentucky Southern College fails; assets turned over to University of Louisville.*
1970 **Don Burke becomes pastor (1970–1981).**
1971 HBC observes Passiontide, begins move to traditional liturgical worship.
Annual Cherokee Triangle Art Fair launched.
1972 New stained-glass windows, baptistery dedicated.
1973 HBC closes, demolishes Highlander building.
1974 *Tornado ravages Highlands, other parts of Louisville.*
President Nixon resigns.
1975 *Controversial school desegregation begins in Louisville.*
Cherokee Triangle designated a historic preservation district.
1976 *SBC approves Bold Mission Thrust, a global missions plan.*
Election of President Jimmy Carter focuses national attention on Southern Baptist identity.
1979 *Start of conservative takeover of SBC.*
Highland Baptist Herald replaced with newsletter printed on back of *Western Recorder.*
New organ dedicated.
1980 *Construction of 1400 Willow symbolizes renewed investment in Highlands.*
1982 *Roy Honeycutt succeeds retiring Duke McCall as seminary president.*
Paul Duke becomes pastor (1982–1986).
1984 HBC approves first women deacons.
1984 Renovation of new educational building.
1987 **Phil Christopher becomes pastor (1987–1995).**
1989 *Fall of Berlin Wall marks end of Cold War.*
1990 HBC takes early role in organizing Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.
1992 HBC purchases house at 2120 Grinstead (which it previously had owned in 1970s), renting it for transitional housing for young adults and later for Sudanese refugees.
1993 HBC marks one hundredth anniversary with sermons by former pastors, banquet, neighborhood picnic.
New president R. Albert Mohler Jr. begins consolidating conservative takeover of Southern Seminary.
1994 HBC begins ExpressWorship early service.
1995 *Seminary closes Carver School of Social Work.*
HBC hosts service celebrating seminary's past, lamenting changes.
1996 HBC produces *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.*
1997 **Joe Phelps becomes pastor.**
1998 *President Clinton acquitted in impeachment trial.*
SBC approves measure calling on wives to "submit gracefully" to husbands.

1999 *NATO war turns back Serbian military in Kosova.*

2000 HBC hosts Mohler, other visitors in series on Baptist identity.

SBC approves revised Baptist Faith and Message, symbolizing completion of conservative takeover. Jimmy Carter formally cuts ties with denomination. Baptist General Convention of Texas votes to cut funding to SBC seminaries.

2001 *Billy Graham holds crusade in Louisville.*

September 11 terrorist attacks, war in Afghanistan.

HBC approves outreach to Albanian people.

HBC sponsors four Sudanese refugees.

2002 Dedication of 2120 Grinstead as the "Jeanne Foree House."

2003 *Louisville, Jefferson County governments merge.*

HBC eliminates reference to Southern Baptist Convention in its bylaws.

HBC celebrates 110th anniversary with banquet, service.

U.S. launches controversial Iraq war.

2004 "Making a Place" capital campaign launched.

"Friday Church" services begun.

Highland helps organize No Murders Metro vigils at homicide scenes.

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CHAPTER 1

Preaching "The Gospel of Danger"

CJ, 5/8/1893.

John R. Sampey

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CHAPTER 6

Grundy and Jean Janes

Interview, Grundy and Jean Janes.

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