



**HIGHLAND  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

*A thinking, feeling, healing  
community of faith*

***The Weekly Newsletter of Highland Baptist Church  
December 12, 2023***



*Advent Beyond Imagination*

**Wednesday, December 13:**

*Families with Children are invited to gather for an outdoor hot chocolate bar and to enjoy the Christmas lights at Brown Park from 5:45-7:00 PM.*

**Friday, December 15 and 22:**

*Singing the Carols of Christmas at Friday Church at 7:00 PM*

Join us as we sing our favorite Christmas carols and end each service in Candlelight.

**Sunday, December 17 ~ Joy Sunday:**

*Third Sunday of Advent Worship Services at 8:45 and 11:15 AM*

Join us for a morning of music and celebration with the Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra singing Bach's Magnificat at 8:45 and 11:15 AM, with special music from the strings of Highland's Orchestra.

*Orchestra Christmas Concert at 6:00 PM*

This delightful concert includes special solos, duets, and Highland's Handbell Choir.

**Thursday, December 21:**

*Longest Night Service at 6:00 PM*

Christmas is often characterized as the most wonderful time of the year, but it is often anything but this, especially for those who are grieving at the holidays. Whether you are reflecting on the loss of a beloved family member or friend, a job, a relationship, a life transition - all are welcome to this quiet and reflective worship service on the longest night of the year.

**Sunday, December 24 ~ Love Sunday:**

*Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship Service at 10:00 AM (No Bible Study).*

*Christmas Eve Services at 4:00 and 6:00 PM*

We will gather to sing the carols of Christmas in a more casual and family-friendly service at 4:00 PM. Lessons and Carols, the centuries-old English tradition, tells the Christmas story through Scripture, carols, and music by the Sanctuary Choir at 6:00 PM. Both services end with candlelight to mark the joy of Christ's birth!

**Sunday, December 31:**

*Online Worship.* No in-person services or activities.

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Around Highland  
on December 10



## Congratulations, Renee Purtlebaugh!

We are thrilled to share that Highland has received a grant of \$60,000 for Renee Purtlebaugh to participate in the 2023 Clergy Renewal Program! Renee and Highland are one of 177 ministers and congregations across the United States selected to participate in this competitive grant program funded by the Lilly Endowment Inc. and administered by Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. This program represents the bulk of Renee's upcoming sabbatical.



Ministers whose congregations are awarded the grant use their time away from the demands of daily ministry to engage in reflection and renewal. The approach respects the “Sabbath-time” concept, offering ministers respite that may include travel, study, rest, prayer, immersive arts and cultural experiences.

To that end, Renee will be taking vacation time from January 1-15, which will provide an opportunity for her family to travel and make memories together after an intense fall and holiday season. Renee's sabbatical will then take place for twelve weeks, from April 2-June 24. This will include immersing herself in the Reggio Emilia Approach to education, exploring ways to learn through discovery and wonder, and translating what she sees in this municipality and public approach to learning through a spiritual formation lens. The rest of her sabbatical will include marking her birthday in May and intentional time and space for rest and renewal in rhythms of life at home in May and June.

Renee's grant proposal was inspired by a quote from Cole Arthur Riley's book, *This Here Flesh*. Riley writes, “Did you know that birds do not land because they are tired? It is a *remembrance*. They know and have always known that their liberation depends on their ability to recall the ground.” Renee wondered, what does it mean to *recall the ground and remember*—both in the life of her family and in the life of our congregation?

For our congregation, this grant will give us opportunities in the new year to recall the ground we have walked thus far as Highland Baptist Church. It will also allow us to take intentional time and space to do the deep work required to be adaptive and malleable as we re-imagine our future in the ways the Spirit is inviting us. For Renee, it will allow her family time to reconnect, make memories, and remember who they are—together— with accessibility barriers removed.

You may remember that the Personnel Ministry Group, Ministry Council, and congregation approved Renee's 12-week sabbatical earlier this year. Additionally, the Personnel MG has invited her to use her regular vacation time next year for continued rest and renewal, provided that this time is taken earlier or later in the year, with ample time before or after her sabbatical. This

combination felt like the most feasible way to support Renee while also supporting our other staff and the ongoing work and flourishing of the church.

We are beyond thrilled for Renee and her family to have this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – one many ministers apply for and never receive due to the competitive nature of the grant. We also look forward to the opportunities this grant will offer to us at Highland to learn, discover, and journey alongside her. We look forward to sharing even more with you about all that the grant will empower us to do together in the new year!

~ *Mary Alice Birdwhistell*, Pastor

~ *Arlette Tinsley*, Chair of Personnel Ministry Group

~ *Renee Purtlebaugh*, Associate Pastor to Children and their Families

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## Three Paths to Generosity Follow-Up

Dear Church,

Your generosity this Advent season proved meaningful and robust!

### 1. Common Goods Holiday Market

We supported five organizations at our Common Good Holiday Market and raised upwards of \$4000 for refugee and migrant women living here in Louisville. Further we packed 50 bags for congregants to keep in their cars to disburse to houseless folks when we meet them.

### 2. Highlands Community Ministries

We collected and donated more than 100 winter blankets for nearby senior residents and 92 Kroger gift cards for local families, which equates to \$2300.

### 3. La Casita Center

With your donations at Hanging of the Green, and a few support trips to Costco, this past Friday night Highland families packed 200 food bags and 100 hygiene packs, which will be distributed to clients at La Casita's Resource Day, happening today. This translates to:

- a. 200 Walmart gift cards = \$2000
- b. 400 lbs of rice
- c. 400 lbs of black beans
- d. 400 Latinx holiday treat packs
- e. 200 rolls of paper towels
- f. 400 rolls of toilet paper
- g. 50 boxes of diapers and pull-ups
- h. 800+ canned goods
- i. 200 boxes of spaghetti
- j. 200 jars of marinara sauce
- k. 200 toothbrushes
- l. 100 toothpaste tubes
- m. 100 Hand sanitizer bottles, bar soap, chapstick, etc.
- n. Volunteers for the 2 sorting soirees, resource day, and project managers

Whew! This has been quite a beautiful opportunity to minister and serve alongside folks in our city. As we await the coming Christ child, the baby of hope, peace, joy, and love, may we continue walking together all the paths that lead to deeper generosity.

In the spirit of God's abundance,  
*Lauren Jones Mayfield*

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## *The Sanctuary Poinsettias*

The church gratefully acknowledges the following people whose generous gifts have made possible the adorning of the sanctuary with poinsettias during the Advent season. Poinsettias may be picked up anytime following the Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols.

### **Memorial Gifts**

#### Given By

Greg Bunten  
Troy Burden  
Steven Michael Carr  
Virenee Chatmon & Bruce Carroll  
Matthew Christian  
Mary Clark  
Kim & Diane Clark-Endicott  
Tara Davis  
John Dickson  
Jim & Mary Helen England  
Jan Forren  
Alexandria Glaser  
Nancy Goodhue  
Kimbrough Gossett  
David Hartley  
  
Lou Ann Iler  
Deborah Keeling  
Gloria McBee  
Wanda Nakdimen & Suzanne Harrett  
Karen Park  
Jane Parker  
Margaret & Gary Pennington  
  
Mary Ann Ramsey  
Jan Schnur  
Becky Smith  
The Swim Family

#### In Memory Of

Billie Johnson; Phoebe Delamarter  
Mae Burden  
Regina "Mammy" Vittitow & Robert "Pappy" Vittitow  
Blanche & Henry Chatmon; Marian & Tom Carroll  
Ken Christian  
Jim Clark  
Aunt Susan Queen & Nanny Marlene Clark  
Brenda & Kenneth Nally  
Lloyd Mims  
Webb & Doris Stanley; George & Dorothy England  
Johnny & Ada Pittman  
Louis & Alice Glaser  
Phoebe Delamarter  
Ernie Gossett  
Jerry Burske; Evelyn & Tom Burske;  
Sue & Clyde Hartley  
James Cleve Iler III  
Hugh & Dorothy Griffith; Leslie & Dena Keeling  
Jim McBee  
Dave Nakdimen  
Ken & Divina Park  
Phillip Oliver  
Dr. Glenn Pennington; Marie & Paul Barrett;  
David Barnes; Christine & Bill Todd  
Pat Ramsey  
Ray Schnur  
Billy Arnold  
Gerald Swim

### **Honorary Gifts**

#### Given By

Troy Burden  
Kathy Collier  
George Ann Gash  
Alexandria Glaser

#### In Honor Of

W. D. Burden  
Wednesday Evening Children's Choir Teachers  
Miriam Elliott  
Marc Dowell

### **Appreciatory Gifts**

#### Given By

Jim & Mary Helen England  
Ginger and Lewis Miller

#### In Appreciation Of

HBC Staff  
Nomads Zoomer class

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# Join us for The Longest Night

December 21 at 6:00 PM  
Highland Baptist Church

A service  
of hope  
and support  
for those  
experiencing  
loss.



Christmas is often characterized as the most wonderful time of the year, but it is often anything but this, especially for those who are grieving at the holidays. Whether you are reflecting on the loss of a beloved family member or friend, a job, a relationship, a life transition - all are welcome to this quiet and reflective worship service on the longest night of the year.

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## Travel to Frankfort, Kentucky this Friday

The [Courier-Journal recently reported](#) that Kentucky has the thirteenth highest number of gun deaths per capita, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Every sixteen hours, a Kentucky resident dies by a firearm-related suicide. And yet, Kentucky consistently has balked at passing legislation to curb gun violence.

Now a bipartisan team of Kentucky legislators is planning to bring a bill to the legislature that will

help prevent gun violence. Senators Whitney Westerfield (R) and David Yates (D) plan to bring two versions of a bill based on the concept of Crisis Aversion and Rights Retention (CARR) to the Joint Judiciary Committee on December 15 at 10:00 a.m. The bill will give family and friends a way to take a loved one's guns temporarily if they are in crisis and at risk of hurting themselves or others.



Such a law would not solve the problem of gun violence, but it is a step. Supporters of more gun control legislation, such as Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, are urging supporters to show up for the Joint Judiciary Committee meeting in Frankfort on December 15.

In addition, an 18-point anti-crime that includes expanding the use of the death penalty and stopping street camping by homeless people, but with no preventive measures, will be discussed.

If you would be interested in going with a group from Highland, please contact Lauren Jones Mayfield ([laurenjm@hbclouisville.org](mailto:laurenjm@hbclouisville.org)) or Nancy Goodhue ([nancygoodhue@gmail.com](mailto:nancygoodhue@gmail.com)).

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## La Casita Sorting Soiree December 8

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### A New Year Anti-Racism Challenge

A free, 4-week Anti-Racism Challenge (ARC) can help begin the new year with hope and action for a better world. It's sponsored by [listenlearnact.org](https://listenlearnact.org) and the Earth and Spirit Center and begins on January 5th. Once a week in January, participants in ARC will receive an email with a list of 10-12 anti-racism activities. These range from reading an article, contacting an elected official, watching a film or viewing an exhibit by Black artists, patronizing a Black business, etc.



**Listen Learn Act**  
a journey toward anti-racism

Listen.Learn.Act asks participants to choose and complete 3 of the listed activities. The purpose is to keep us all focused and active in challenging racism. This is a personal challenge -- no one needs to report back to anyone. Those who wish to participate simply provide their email address (we never share anyone's information) and that puts them on the list to receive the ARC email each week. Here is the [link to sign up](#).

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**FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN (BIRTH-5TH GRADE)  
ARE INVITED TO:**

*Outdoor Hot Chocolate Bar*

+

*Christmas Lights  
at Brown Park*



Wednesday December 13.

5:45-7:00 pm

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# Streaming Worship Links

Below are the links to stream the worship services each week at Highland.  
Please bookmark them since they remain the same from week-to-week!



## Sunday, 11:15 AM

<https://www.facebook.com/hbclouisville.org>

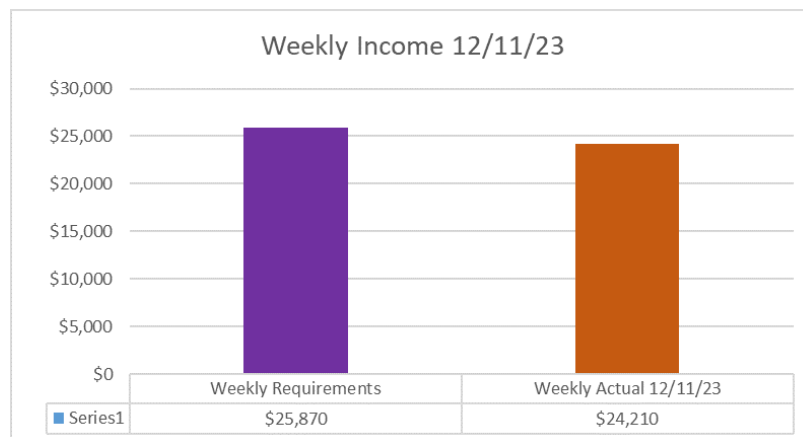
<https://www.youtube.com/@highlandbaptist>

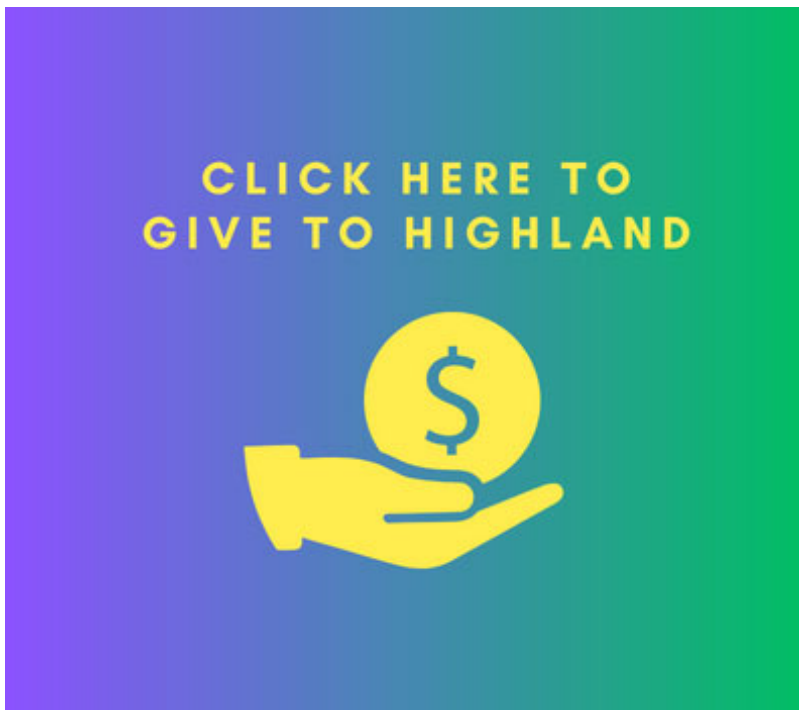
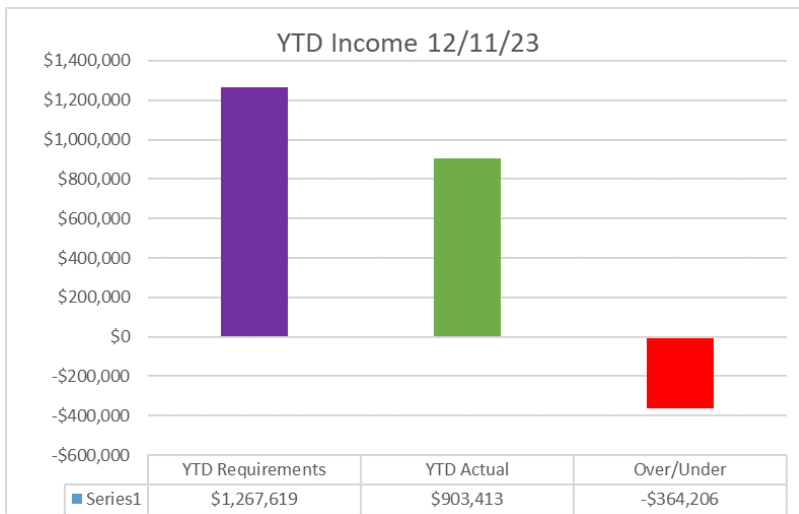
## Friday, 7:00 PM

<https://www.facebook.com/hbclouisville.org>

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## Financial Reports





**To make a donation from your phone, text "give2hbc" to 502-747-1212 and open the link.**

## **Thank You!**

Dear HBC Family,

I want to thank you for the many kind words, the meaningful gifts, the reception, and your expressions of support in so many ways as I ended my time as your interim organist.

Words are inadequate to express my gratitude. Thank you! Peace to all!



## Louisville Homicides

Please join us in prayer and action as we remember those who have been killed in recent weeks in our city. We grieve with those who mourn, while we also maintain a hope that one day, all things will be made new.

- James A. Brown, Jr., 20, Nov. 29
  - Michael A. Lige, 42, Nov. 30
  - Damion Taylor, 23, Dec. 2
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