



The Weekly Newsletter of Highland Baptist Church December 3, 2024

Dear Highland Family,

Preaching at Highland has been one of the biggest gifts and greatest joys of my time with you. From imagining the sermon to crafting it throughout the week to sharing it with you in worship to seeing the sermon come to life among us outside the walls of the church – these have been such holy moments for me!



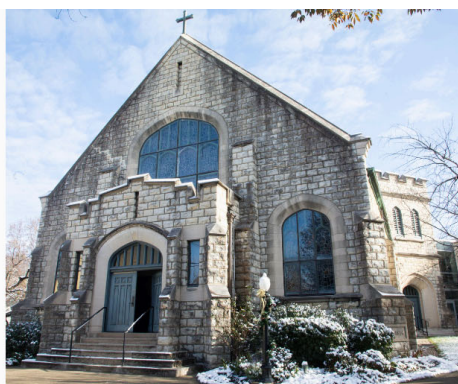
My sincere hope is that sermons preached from our Sacred Space will inspire God-sized imaginations among us for generations to come. Would you consider honoring my work and ministry among you these past 4 ½ years by making a special gift to Highland's Sacred Space Campaign to help bring this hope to life?

I have preached roughly *200 sermons* throughout my time at Highland. Would you consider a **\$200 gift** to support Highland's pastoral and prophetic preaching for years to come?

Preaching 200 sermons means I have engaged in about *2,000 hours of sermon preparation*. Would you consider a **\$2,000 gift** to inspire future generations in this Sacred Space? Or maybe \$20,000? Or more? We still need almost \$800,000 in additional pledges to meet our expenses for this crucial project.

I love Highland, I believe wholeheartedly in the kind of community God is calling us to be, and I want Highland to thrive for years to come. Would you join me in this work of HOPE this Advent season?

With love,
Mary Alice



Around Highland
on Dec. 1, 2024



The Watch of Wondering Love: Advent 2024



Wednesday, December 4

On our last Wednesday night of regularly scheduled activities for the year, join Mary Alice and John Dickson for a dramatic reading of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, shortly after 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall.



Sunday, December 8 ~ Peace Sunday

Second Sunday of Advent Worship Services with Crosses on the Lawn at 11:15 AM

Peace Sunday is our time to remember those who have been killed in our city by acts of violence. We will read each name and place crosses on the front lawn as an act of remembrance and a call to action in our community.

Children's Advent Service at 6:00 PM

Children's voices and the ringing of bells are a highlight of the season! Join us for an evening of music from Highland's Carol Choir, Chorister Choir, and Children & Youth Handbell Choir—ages 3 through youth. *Childcare provided for infants, toddlers, and 2s.*

Wednesday, December 11

Families with Children are invited to gather for an **indoor** hot chocolate bar and Christmas party at Highland from **6:00-7:15 PM**. Please note change in venue.

Sunday, December 15 ~ Joy Sunday

Third Sunday of Advent Worship Service at 11:15 AM

Join us for a morning of music and celebration with the Sanctuary Choir and Brass presenting Rutter's *Gloria* at 11:15 AM, with special music from the Brass of Highland's Orchestra.

Orchestra Christmas Concert at 6:00 PM

This delightful concert featuring fun and festive music includes special solos, duets, and Highland's Handbell Choir. *Childcare provided for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.*



Wednesday, December 18

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 loved one, a job, a relationship, a life transition - all are welcome to this quiet and reflective worship service on one of the longest nights of the year. *Childcare available [by reservation only](#) for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.*

Fridays, December 20 and 27

Join us as we sing the carols of Christmas at Friday Church at 7:00 PM! We will end the service on the 20th with candlelight.

Sunday, December 22 ~ Love Sunday

Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship Service at 11:15 AM

Justin Sizemore is our proclaimer.

Tuesday, December 24 ~ Christmas Eve

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 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! *Childcare provided for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.*

Sunday, December 29

Sunday Morning Worship at 10:00 AM - no Bible study classes that morning.

Joyful Gratitude for Billy Arnold Estate Gift

Last week, Highland received a generous estate gift from Billy Arnold, a faithful member of our Friday Church family, who passed away unexpectedly in the spring of 2023.



Billy would often come to Friday Church straight from work, wearing his dark blue Volvo dealership shirt, with "Billy" stitched proudly above the pocket. And when Billy greeted you, you *knew* that you were welcome. He had an enthusiastic smile that stretched from ear to ear, and a deep laugh – almost a cackle - that couldn't contain his joy. His arms were always thrown wide, offering hugs with cheerful insistence. Roz Heinz once called Billy "God's self-appointed greeter." She says, "He knew God's house was his house and he wanted you to know -- with absolute certainty -- it was your house, too."

Billy actually started out sitting on the back pew at Friday Church. He had recently begun the recovery program at Wayside Christian Mission after drug and alcohol addiction had taken almost everything and everyone from his life. One day, Sylvia Rhodes, our Friday Church pastor at the time, encouraged him to move to the front and participate with others. Billy began to take brave

steps forward, in more ways than one. He began to meet others who cared deeply about him. Before long, Billy began to look forward to Fridays and continued to attend regularly, even after he completed the Wayside Recovery Program. He said Friday Church “recharged his batteries” each week.

It wasn't until after Billy passed away last year that we learned the depth of his love for our community. **Billy left his entire estate to our church.** He felt so loved and cared for here that he wanted to share everything he had, so that others could feel that love, too.

Today, we offer our wholehearted gratitude for Billy Arnold. May we follow his example of such joyful and extravagant generosity! And may his gift continue to offer welcome, hospitality, and love in this place for years to come.

~ Mary Alice Birdwhistell and Becky Smith

Highland Welcomes New Member



Sam Johnson joined on November 24, 2024

Longest Night Service on December 18 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 loved one, a job, a relationship, a life transition - all are welcome to this quiet and reflective worship service on one of the longest nights of the year. *Childcare available [by reservation only](#) for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.*

Voting on the 2025 Budget

We will vote on the proposed 2025 budget **of \$1,341,000** during the weekend of December 6-8. **To see more specifics about the budget, [please see this packet of materials](#) from our Quarterly Church Conference.** Voting will take place online via a link that will be emailed on Friday, December 6. For those who wish, votes may also be cast by calling the church office on Friday between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM. Online voting will be accepted through 5:00 PM Sunday evening, December 8.

The budget was discussed previously at our Quarterly Church Conference. We are grateful to the Finance Ministry Group, Personnel Ministry Group, staff, and lay leaders who have worked diligently on the proposed budget for next year.



2025 Commitment Season Update

This weekend, we will be voting on the 2025 Budget. In preparation for that the Faithful Giving Ministry Group wanted to give an update on our pledged commitments to date. Unfortunately, we are still short on pledges of our budgeted target of \$775,000 in pledged gifts. As of this past Sunday, we had 123 pledges made toward our 2025 Ministry Fund totaling \$659,112. In addition, we are up to \$1,850,436 in pledges to the Sacred Space campaign. As always, thank you to all who have already pledged.

We still have a goal of 100% participation, so if you haven't made your pledge yet please either:

- Electronically [make your pledge here](#)
- Contact Kathleen Gordon, our Financial Secretary by phone (451-3735) or [by email here](#)
- Turn in your pledge card in the offering plate or mailing it to the church

Thank you for all your generosity. Each of us doing our part makes it possible to do God's transforming work of love!

~ The Faithful Giving Ministry Group



Meal costs are \$10 per person, \$5 for children, with a maximum of \$25 per family. We encourage you to take advantage of this great opportunity for intergenerational fellowship! **We are still in need of *one* more person each week to help dry dishes.** Volunteers serve one week per month. **Contact [Kathy Belcher](#) if you can help.**

Please make your reservations by Monday at 12:00 Noon for that week's meal. You can either make standing reservations or make them weekly by emailing [Kathleen Gordon](#) or calling her at the church office, 502-451-3735.

December Menu (final Wednesday meal for this year):

December 4: Taco Bar, Black Beans, Mexican Street Corn, Chips, Salsa & Guacamole, Dessert

[Click Here for Church Signup Links](#)

Sunday, 11:15 AM

<https://www.facebook.com/hbclouisville.org>
<https://www.youtube.com/@highlandbaptist>

Friday, 7:00 PM

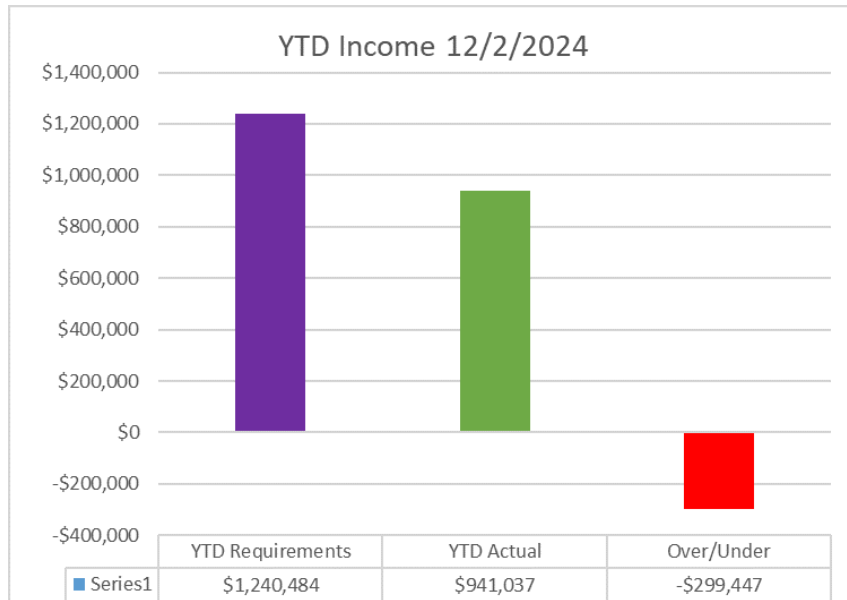
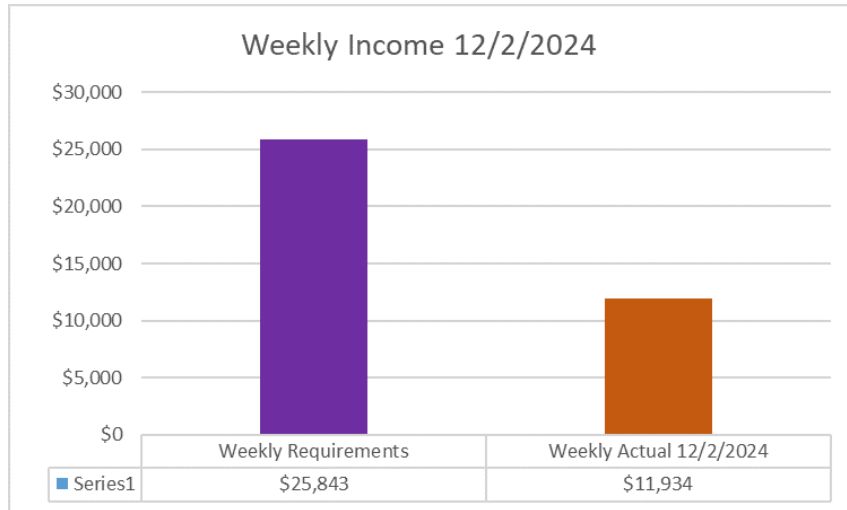
<https://www.facebook.com/hbclouisville.org>



Looking Ahead

- December 4: Mary Alice and John Dickson share *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, 6:00 PM
- December 8: Peace Sunday and Crosses on the Lawn, 11:15 AM
Children's Advent Service, 6:00 PM
- December 11: Families w/Children Hot Chocolate **at Highland**, 6:00-7:15 PM
- December 13: Young Adult Christmas Parties (see Justin Sizemore for more info)
- December 14: Youth Christmas Party, 6:00-8:00 PM
- December 15: Joy Sunday - Sanctuary Choir and Highland's Brass
present Rutter's *Gloria*, 11:15 AM
Orchestra and Handbell Christmas Concert, 6:00 PM
- December 18: Longest Night Service, 6:00 PM
- December 22: Love Sunday - Justin Sizemore, guest proclaimer
- December 24: Christmas Eve Services, 4:00 and 6:00 PM
- December 29: One worship service at 10:00 AM
- January 5: Mary Alice's last Sunday at Highland
- January 18-19: Weekend with Center for Congregational Health

Financial Reports



To make a donation from your phone, text "give2hbc" to 502-747-1212 and open the link or use the QR code below.





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.



Facebook



YouTube



Website



Instagram

Copyright © 2024 Highland Baptist Church, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).