



The Weekly Newsletter of Highland Baptist Church January 14, 2025

**Please note: the church office is closed on Monday, January 20,
in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

Join Us for Wednesday Night Supper and Activities!



We are thrilled that we can gather together once again tomorrow evening and hope you can join us! Please note there are still challenges related to parking in our lots and on the roads surrounding the church. There are still icy and slushy spots, especially in the back lower lot, so you will need to be cautious when walking into the building. For those parking in the upper lot, please note that there is room for regular parking on the side nearest the Fellowship Hall. On the Foree House side of the upper lot, only parallel parking will be possible. This will allow cars parking on the Fellowship Hall side to back up and exit their parking spots. There are several handicapped spots available and clear nearest the Fellowship Hall. Please feel free to call the church office (502-451-3735) if you need any further information or clarification about parking.

Coming Up in January and February

Mary Alice's Final Sunday

With last Sunday's cancellation, Mary Alice's final Sunday in the pulpit will now be Sunday, February 2 at 11:15 AM. We will have a farewell reception for her following the worship service.

Worship in January and February

We will continue to have one Sunday morning worship service at 11:15 AM on Sundays though February 2. This will allow all of us to worship together on Mary Alice's last Sunday, and it accommodates our schedule when the Center for Congregational Health is in town this weekend. **Our regular Sunday schedule will now resume on February 9 with 8:45 AM Worship, 10:00 Bible Study, 11:15 AM Worship.**

Upcoming Proclaimers

January 19: Carol Harston, Former Associate Pastor, [Moving Faith Forward](#)

January 26: Brian Henderson, Executive Director of the [Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists](#)

February 2: Mary Alice Birdwhistell

February 9: Bob Cunningham, Interim Associate Pastor

February 16: Justin Sizemore, Associate Pastor for Youth and Young Adults

February 23: Sally Evans, Former Interim Associate Pastor

March 2: Jim England, Former Interim Pastor

Wednesday Nights

January 15, 22, and February 5: Moving Faith Forward

Since leaving Highland's ministerial staff in 2021, Carol Harston has been deepening her traumatizing theology research by wondering what it looks like for people to move past their beliefs and grow into spiritual maturity. Carol's vision is a future in which people can live at peace with the past, confident in their ability to face whatever life brings, and open to a revived spirituality that evolves as life changes. To get there, Carol offers a three-step process of working through beliefs: (1) placing former beliefs in the context of what was happening when we received them, (2) putting words to beliefs that have stood the test of time, and (3) learning to accept what has been, integrate core beliefs, and engage in spiritual practice tailored to our real lives (you can read case studies that apply the three steps at www.carolharston.com). Catch up with Carol in this Wednesday night class to learn more about the three-step process and explore what it looks like to move faith forward.

January 29: Cloud of Witness - Justin Boldt, Greg Bunten, Linda Waller

Work with the Center for Congregational Health THIS WEEKEND

Please join us for our church-wide conversations with the Center for Congregational Health. Your voice is important!

This is a unique opportunity for Highland members to connect in intentional conversations at this important time of transition in the life of the church. Facilitated by church leaders, we will reflect together on our journey as a congregation, remember where we have been and express our hope for the future. These conversations will give clarity to future planning and will help set a direction that will affirm who we are and inspire the path we need to create to thrive together.

Sunday's schedule is listed below. **Please note the 9:30 starting time for Sunday morning. You may choose either session to attend (9:30 AM or 2:00 PM).**

1. Sunday morning, January 19, 9:30 AM to 11:00 (No Adult Bible Study)

All adults will meet in Fellowship Hall for a time of Connection and Congregational Conversation led by the Center for Congregational Health. Children's Bible studies will still meet that morning to allow parents to participate but will begin a half hour earlier. Youth are encouraged to join the conversations.

- OR -

2. Sunday afternoon, January 19, 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM

A second Congregational Conversation will be held in the Fellowship Hall for those unable to attend the morning session. Childcare for infants through 5th grade will be available during the afternoon session with a reservation. Please contact [Megan Fuller](#) no later than Wednesday, January 15.

We are in a season of spiritual discernment for the congregation. Having this time together to reflect on the past and hope for the future allows everyone's voice to be heard as the congregation and leadership prayerfully ponder our next steps.

A Reflection from Mary Alice

It's a weird feeling to have a prolonged goodbye without being together with your beloved congregation, but one that is strangely familiar (and somewhat traumatic) from COVID. Robert

Davis introduced me to the word “recrudescence” which is “the return of something terrible after a time of reprieve.” What a timely word for this moment.

However, the past 4.5 years have been so rich and full that I refuse to close this chapter in a cruddy way. As Mary Oliver reminds us, “Joy was not made to be a crumb!” And so, today, I’m reflecting on the past few years with joy and gratitude for this chapter of life and ministry.



The word that comes to mind when I think of my time at Highland is “expansive.” When I said goodbye to my church in Texas in 2020, I couldn’t imagine loving another church or community the way I loved this one, but someone reminded me that love is never limited. It doesn’t contract or divide; it widens and deepens. That kind of expansive love has been true for me in more ways than I could have imagined.



My friendships and relationships expanded at Highland as I met so many people who will forever be part of “the family of God for me in this place.” It’s impossible to name everyone: beloved staff members, ministry group leaders and deacons, the beautiful folks in the pews who make Highland

the community that it is, and the behind-the-scenes folks who show up each week with such love and care.

But not only did my love for people expand at Highland – so did my theology, and I am wildly grateful for this. From my fellow pastors to the people in the pew, the questions you were asking, people you were reading, and ideas you were forming challenged and expanded my own. And I was given a freedom few pastors experience: to preach with true authenticity, curiosity, and imagination. It unlocked something within my soul that has changed my spiritual life, and it's perhaps the biggest gift Highland could have given me. I hope to continue to nurture this gift for the rest of my life.



And our beloved church expanded, too! We welcomed so many new people coming in with curiosity, doubts, and questions -- who just couldn't imagine a church (and a God) who might welcome them for who they are. Highland is a better, richer, and fuller community because of each and every person among us who helps to reflect the expansiveness of God's love.

On my call weekend at Highland, I preached on Sarah's laughter at the thought that she and Abraham might have a baby (Genesis 18). Frederick Buechner puts it beautifully, that "Sarah and her husband had plenty of hard knocks in their time, and there were plenty more of them still to come, but at that moment when the angel told them they'd better start dipping into their old age pensions for cash to build a nursery, the reason they laughed was that it suddenly dawned on them that the wildest dreams they'd ever had hadn't been half wild enough." As I was cleaning out my office last week, I actually found a painting that Clara Boldt made me with these words inscribed (thanks to some great parents, Elizabeth and Justin): "Not half wild enough."

My time at Highland has truly been beyond my wildest dreams of what it might look like. Sure, there have been plenty of hard knocks, and there may be difficult ones ahead. But, as we close

this chapter and begin a new one, let's do it with the bold and audacious hope that our dreams for our lives, our church, and God's world still aren't "half wild enough."

I can't wait to see you all on February 2. I love you all so much.

~ Mary Alice Birdwhistell

Update on Heat in the Church

Some people have asked about last Sunday's cancellation of services due to lack of heat in the building. The brains of the new HVAC system, the Building Automation System, is working as designed even as it is still being tested and configured. But on Tuesday of last week we discovered that two of the new heat pumps, which provide heating and cooling to different parts of the building, were not functioning properly. One of these units provides heat to Fellowship Hall and the other is one of a twinned pair for the Sanctuary. (The other heat pumps that were installed as part of the project are functioning properly.) The sub-contractor that installed the systems worked diligently last week to get these two pieces of the system working but with no success. They continue working on those units this week. Monday at our weekly HVAC project meeting we came up with temporary solutions for both of those spaces which will allow us to resume regular weekday and Sunday activities within comfortable, heated spaces.

I share the frustration of the congregation at the loss of last week's times together, and I feel confident that a solution will be found soon, and that the new hardware will function properly.

~ Walter McWhorter

Pastoral Interim Committee

Our first weekly meeting was Sunday, January 12. HBC's bylaws charge us with, "securing an interim pastor and/or supply preachers until a permanent pastor is employed. An interim pastor must be approved by the church." We are: Kathy Belcher, John Gulden, Elizabeth Howell, Mark Golightly Sanders, Scott Schaftlein, Kim Shippey, and [Jim Shelton](#), chair. We will report to the congregation regularly. Please feel free to email me with questions or suggestions. We appreciate your prayers for our work.

~ Jim Shelton

Children's Choirs



***Children's Choirs are resuming for a winter and spring semester.
Please join us!***

When? Wednesday, January 15

What time? 6:00 – 7:15 p.m.

Cherub Choir: Walking toddlers – age 3 with a parent.

Music activities 6:00-6:30 with childcare provided 6:30-7:15 PM

Carol Choir: 3's – young 5's

Chorister Choir: Kindergarten through Fifth Grade

The Children's Handbell Choir is for 4th & 5th graders who participate in Chorister Choir.

Their weekly rehearsal is part of the 6:00-7:15 PM time.

Fabulous teachers cannot wait to begin a new season of making music together again!

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact:

Kathy Collier, Children's Choir Coordinator

kathyh.collier@gmail.com



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.

January Menus:

Jan. 15: Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Salad, Rolls, Dessert

Jan. 22: BBQ Pork, Macaroni & Cheese, Baked Beans, Salad, Dessert

Jan. 29: Soup, Salad, Corn Bread, Dessert

Jean Janes Yard Sale March 15

Please start collecting all the household items you would like to get rid of! The long delayed yard sale will be held Saturday, March 15th. More information to come on when you can bring items to church.

[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>

**Streaming
Worship
Links**



Looking Ahead

- January 15: Wednesday Night Supper and activities resume
- January 18-19: Weekend with Center for Congregational Health
- January 29: Cloud of Witness: Justin Boldt, Greg Buntten, and Linda Waller
- February 2: Mary Alice's last Sunday with reception to follow; QCC at 4:00 PM on Zoom
- February 9: Regular Sunday schedule resumes

Giving to Highland

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.



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