



HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH

*A thinking, feeling, healing
community of faith*



The Weekly Newsletter of Highland Baptist Church January 21, 2026



Highland's Strategic Plan Summary, 2026-2028

Under the direction of the Ministry Council, the Strategic Planning Committee convened a year-long planning process that included: two church-wide Congregational Conversations, interviews with current and former staff and lay leaders, surveys, ministry group feedback, as well as expert counsel from the Center for Congregational Health and Reputation US.

Many positive attributes of Highland Baptist Church were affirmed through this process:

- *outstanding worship experience and music programs*
- *vibrant Bible study opportunities for children, youth, and adults*
- *welcoming, inclusive congregation that serves as a healing haven for many*
- *variety of ministry groups that offer opportunities for service within and outside the congregation*
- *a wealth of knowledgeable, passionate, talented members looking for ways to serve*
- *history of showing up for social justice*

The three-year plan identifies goals in five strategic areas. Responsible parties and timelines are included where possible. The Ministry Council has approved the plan and will provide oversight of the ongoing implementation.

The over-reaching goal of the plan is to ensure that Highland has the leadership, financial stability, and processes to continue to thrive as a progressive voice as we follow the teachings of Jesus and express a faith that brings healing and affirmation for vulnerable people in our community and within our

congregation.

Thank you to the Ministry Council, the Strategic Planning Committee, staff, and the congregation for all the work that went into this.

Please [click on this link](#) to view the strategic plan summary.

Please [click on this link](#) to review the full strategic plan.

~ *Strategic Planning Committee (Troy Burden, Casey Boggs, Angela Dennison, Jim England, Carolyn King, Margaret Pennington, Erin Phelps, Sam Potter, and Scott Schaflein)*





Quarterly Church Conference This Sunday

Plan to join us this Sunday afternoon, January 25, at 4:00 PM on Zoom for our Quarterly Church Conference. Topics to be covered include a report from the Pastor Search Committee, a report from the Finance Ministry Group, and an update on the Strategic Plan. Check your email on Friday for the Zoom link and meeting agenda.



Confidentiality of Donor Giving

For the past two years or so, the Finance Ministry Group has been researching and discussing the issue of internal donor confidentiality. This has been mentioned at previous Quarterly Church Conferences (QCC). For decades, the practice of the church has been that the amount of a donor's gifts has been strictly confidential (with the exception of the church's financial secretary).

However, research has revealed that this practice is significantly "out of step" with like-minded churches. It appears that many churches have a practice of "restricted access" to donor records. For example, some staff members (senior pastor, church administrator, etc.) have access to giving information. Generally, this is on a need-to-know basis and often may be in aggregate form, such as a list of donors who give between \$5K – \$10K annually. Such information is helpful to certain staff in a variety of ways.

It is the feeling of the Finance Ministry Group that Highland would benefit from this more up-to-date practice, and we plan to implement it later in 2026. To be clear, here are some specific examples of how this is anticipated to be implemented at Highland:

- Only the Senior Pastor will have this information, and any change in practice or need-to-know request will be first communicated to the Finance Ministry Group for transparency and their discernment.
- The information will not be specific numbers, but rather broad categories of households in ranges of \$5,000, up to \$25,000.
- The Financial Secretary will begin informing the Senior Pastor whenever someone makes a first-time contribution to the church (but will not disclose the amount), so that the pastor can send a note of thanks.

Our outgoing Financial Secretary (Kathleen Gordon) has attended the monthly Finance Ministry Group meetings and has been a part of this discussion as well. [See this letter](#) for her thoughts and words of support.

Donors will still have the option of requesting that their contributions be strictly confidential and such requests will be honored. Those wishing to "opt out" and remain strictly confidential can email the Financial Secretary ([Accounting](#)) and Comptroller ([Lauren Swim](#)) at any time, and in future pledge seasons there will be a way to express this on the form. Please reach out to any member of the Finance

Ministry Group with any questions or concerns. We also plan to share this information again at the QCC on January 25.

~ *Finance Ministry Group (Justin Boldt, Robert Davis, Lauren Swim, Rick Holtmeier, Tracy Holladay, Susan Pierce, and staff liaison Chris Caldwell)*

Highland's Got Talent Sunday, February 22 at 6:00 PM

Next month *Highland's Got Talent* returns after a six year hiatus, better than ever! Formerly known as HBC Got Skillz, this fundraising event truly emphasizes **FUN** and aims to encourage connection between various groups at Highland including but not limited to new members, not so new members, folks from different services, the young and the young at heart. The winner of Highland's Got Talent will be awarded a trophy and bragging rights for at least a year! And by talent, we mean anything from shadow puppets to bird calls to Sunday School class dance offs.

Highland's got Talent

If you or your group would like to take the stage, please complete [THIS SIGN UP FORM](#) by Wednesday, February 11. We ask that you fit all the goodness of your act into 3-5 minutes. Group acts are encouraged! In the coming weeks, stay tuned for upcoming opportunities to volunteer and contribute to the awesome Chili Dinner. Tickets to attend are \$5 each and the event will take place at Highland Community Ministries, 1228 E. Breckinridge. All proceeds go toward our Capital Campaign. Come to laugh! Come to perform! Stay for the culinary delights!

Questions? Feel free to ask a member of the planning team including Sally Evans, Troy Burden, Emily Edwards, or Kim Fritschi.

Spiritual Exercises from Sunday's Sermon

For those who heard Sunday's sermon, here is a seven-day spiritual exercise you can try.

Philippians 4:8-9

"Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise,

think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you."

- Day One: Consider and be mindful of what is "true."
 - So, for example, when told you "have to have the new Bel Air," you can say to yourself, True or False?
- Day two: Consider and be mindful of what is "honorable."
 - Is the way I am speaking to the assistant or the convenience store clerk "honorable"?
- Day three: Consider and be mindful of what is "just."
 - Am I treating people fairly today?
- Day four: Consider and be mindful of what is "pure."
 - Is what I'm watching, reading, listening to, something I would want God or my mother to see or hear?
- Day five: Consider and be mindful of what is "pleasing."
 - Does this bring me joy?
- Day six: Consider and be mindful of what is "commendable."
 - Does this build me up?
- Day seven: Consider and be mindful of what is "excellent and worthy of praise."
 - Am I doing anything to set my sights higher?
 - Is what I'm doing today taking me any closer to God and the person God wants me to be?

~ Chris Caldwell

Youth Winter Retreat Registration

Camp LouCon, February 6-8

Join us for a weekend away at Camp LouCon as we explore what it means to be "Linked by Love". Through worship, small groups, and time outdoors, we'll discover how God's love connects us to one another through compassion, acceptance, and grace. In between moments of reflection and prayer, we'll have plenty of fun, from ziplining to late-night campfires and laughter with friends. This weekend is about growing closer to God, to one another, and to the kind of love that holds everything together. More details can be found in the registration link.

Deadline to register: February 1

[REGISTER HERE](#)

~ John Kupar



Save the Dates for Highland's Summer Camps for Children!

2026 SUMMER CAMPS

June
8-11

Discovery Camp

Completed Grades K-2nd

June
22-25

Passport Kids

Completed Grades 3rd-5th

July
13-16

Advocacy Camp

Completed Grades 3rd-5th



Cream of the Crop Invitation to Drag Bingo

Our Cream of the Crop group invites all adults to join them on Thursday, February 19 at 12:00 Noon in the Fellowship Hall for Drag Bingo! Our special guest is Louisville's own (and Highland's) May O'Nays! We'll have a carry-in luncheon (the main dish, ham, will be provided) and May O'Nays will lead us in five fun-filled games of bingo. May is an amazing entertainer and there will be prizes for the winners, so bring a salad, side, or dessert and join us for a fun afternoon! For our preparation and planning, please let [Paul Henderson](#) know you plan to attend by Monday, February 16. It's a don't miss event!



Wednesday Night Dinners



We hope you can join us for **Wednesday Night Fellowship Dinners!** We ask everyone to make a reservation so that we have an accurate count for meal preparation. **Please make your reservations by Monday at 12:00 Noon for each week's meal.** You can either make standing reservations or make them weekly by emailing [Accounting](#) or calling the church office, 502-451-3735. Meal costs are \$10 per person, \$5 for children, with a maximum of \$25 per family. Dinners can be [paid online here](#), by check, or cash at the door. We encourage you to take advantage of this great opportunity for intergenerational fellowship!

January Menus:

January 21: Soup, Salad, Cornbread, Dessert

January 28: Mexican Casserole, Steamed Veggies, Salad, Chips & Salsa



A Taste of the Highlands



MARDI GRAS ♦ 21+

A TASTE OF THE HIGHLANDS

1228 E. Breckinridge St

FEBRUARY 17, 2026 | 5:30 - 7:30 PM

\$60 GEN
Open Bar!
Unlimited Food Tastings!

BENEFITING
Highlands Community Ministries
grow. heal. play.

\$75 VIP
Live Music!
VIP Bourbon Experience!

Sponsored By:

King + Company
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

PEOPLES BANK

HIGHLAND COMMERCIAL GUILD

GIVIAN & MITCHELL REALTORS

[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 25: Quarterly Church Conference, 4:00 PM on Zoom
January 29: Memorial Service for Roz Heinz, 1:00 PM
February 18: Ash Wednesday
February 22: Highland's Got Talent, 6:00 PM, HCM Campus, 1228 E. Breckinridge
March 6-8: Spring Women's Retreat - Contact [Ginger Miller](#) for questions or to reserve a spot.
Phone: 502-599-6569

Offering Envelopes and Contributions

On behalf of the Finance Ministry and Faithful Giving, thank you for your generosity and continued commitment to Highland Baptist Church. If you requested offering envelopes, they are available in the Commons through January 31. Any envelopes not picked up by that date will be mailed to you.

As we move into 2026, we would also like to remind you that contributions may be made through automatic draft from a checking or savings account, or by using a credit or debit card. If you are enrolled in automatic giving, please take a moment to review your account activity. Should you notice any discrepancies or have questions, feel free to contact the church office at 502-451-3735 or [send an email here](#).

Thank you again for your faithful support.

~ Kathleen Gordon

Staff Luncheon for Kathleen



Highland's staff enjoyed lunch together to honor Kathleen Gordon before she begins her new role with the Center for Interfaith Relations.



Highland Seeks Financial Secretary

With Kathleen Gordon's departure, the church is seeking applications to fill the job of Financial Secretary. By longstanding tradition, the person who fills this position may not be a member of the church.

Job Description:

Highland Baptist Church is seeking a detail-oriented, trustworthy, and organized Financial Secretary to provide bookkeeping, payroll, donor contribution management, and financial reporting support to our church staff and volunteer leadership teams. This role is ideal for someone who values accuracy, confidentiality, and teamwork, and who feels comfortable working in a faith-based office environment.

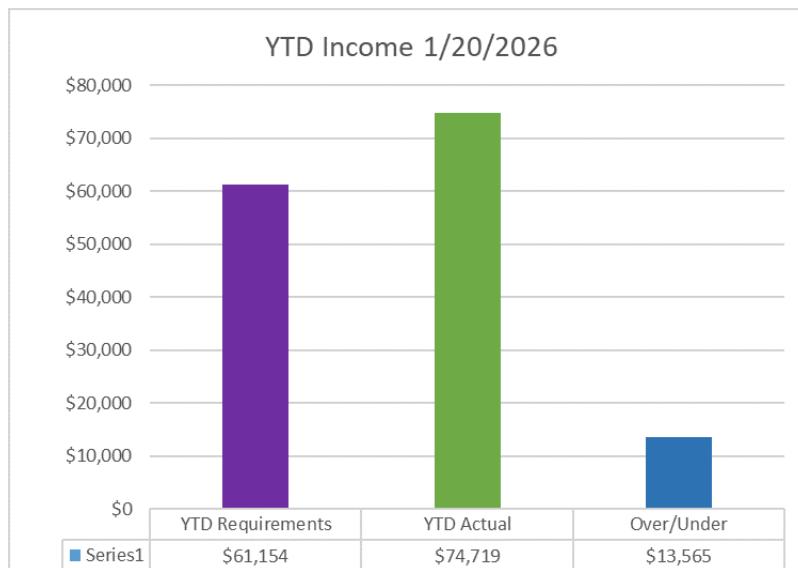
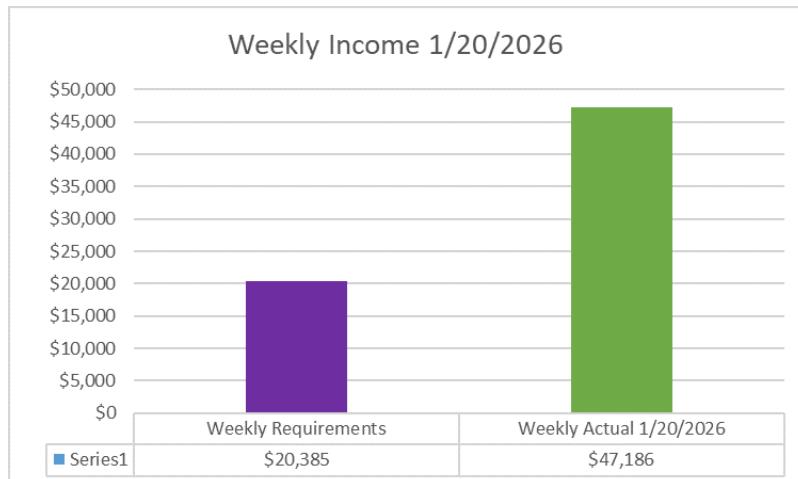
The successful candidate must be proficient in Microsoft Word and Excel and familiar with accounting software. Knowledge of bookkeeping functions, basic double-entry accounting principles, and strong time-management skills are required.

Additional duties, information, and necessary qualifications can be obtained by emailing accounting@hbc Louisville.org

~ Walter McWhorter



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.

- Mayra Alejandra Rodriguez Monoz, 27, killed December 31
- Iman Taneal Freeman, 37, killed January 9



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