



The Weekly Newsletter of Highland Baptist Church April 21, 2026

The Commons

Over the past week, I've been talking about tools - anything that helps extend our capacity to do something. We've talked about the variety of tangible and intangible things that help us when we're solving problems, preparing for an event, or taking on a new hobby. As I shared in worship on Friday and Sunday, if we need help in all these areas of life, why would our faith life be any different? To be Easter people living in a Good Friday reality, we know that God knows we need help. Through the church, we are gathering the tools we need for faith through all the changing seasons of life.

This Wednesday at 6:15 PM, we're going to build our own Easter Toolbox by brainstorming and sharing what helps us live as Easter people. We'll ask each other: *What ideas, values, and beliefs help us? What practices and habits make it possible? What people offer us examples and inspiration? What places inspire and ground you?*

I've had several people reach out with specific tool-related questions. *What's a good book on forgiveness? What book helps develop a personal spiritual life at home?* I'd love to brainstorm a way to build a "library," of sorts, of tools that help us be Easter people. Interested in thinking that through? [Email me!](#)

I've had a few sneak peeks of Children's Sabbath coming up on Sunday morning at 11:15. You won't want

to miss it. I look forward to worshipping alongside you as our children lead the way!

~ Pastor Carol



Around Highland
April 19, 2026



 Highland Welcomes New Member



Peggy Holthaus joined Highland on February 15, 2026.

Highlights Class Series Begins May 3

If you are new to Highland, whether through membership or visiting, please join us on May 3, 10, and 17 for our Highlights Class—a time to learn more about our congregation and its ministries while meeting other visitors and new members. Please plan to attend all three sessions, if possible. We'll gather in the Commons, just outside the sanctuary, at 10:00 am each week. You can let us know you plan to join us by [emailing Cheryl Davis](mailto:Cheryl.Davis@highlandcenterchurch.org) by Wednesday, April 29.

~ Renee Purtlebaugh

Highland Celebrates Children's Sabbath This Sunday



*Each child belongs to all of us, and they will bring us a tomorrow
in direct relation to the responsibility we have shown to them.*

~ Maya Angelou



Join us for the 11:15 worship service on Sunday, April 26, as we shed light and love on Highland's youngest – our children ranging in age from birth through the fifth grade. Beginning with a lively and joy-filled processional to the final choral benediction, our children will lead us through music, prayers, and the well-loved Psalm 23. Come to celebrate and support, but also to learn and be changed by seeing God's love through their eyes and action. Highland, they are our future!

~ Kathy Collier

Quarterly Church Conference Sunday, May 3

Plan to join us Sunday afternoon, May 3, at 4:00 PM on Zoom for our Quarterly Church Conference. Topics to be covered include reports from the Sacred Space project, the Finance Ministry Group, the Personnel Ministry Group, and the Congregational Engagement Ministry Group. Check your email on Friday, May 1, for the Zoom link and meeting agenda.

Deacon Nominations Open Until April 26

Who will serve our church this year?

Each year, our congregation nominates members to serve as Deacons — not as an administrative board, but as servant leaders who invest themselves in the life and care of our congregation. Deacons serve a three-year term. Our deacon body is intentionally diverse: new members and longtime Highland families, younger voices and seasoned ones. **The deadline for nominations is this Sunday, April 26.**



How nominations work: You nominate up to 10 people using the online form or paper forms in upcoming orders of worship. A subgroup of current deacons reviews all nominations and then brings a proposed list to the full congregation for approval.

[Submit your nominations here by April 26!](#) Need help or want to submit your nominations by phone? Call the church office at 502-451-3735.

~ Paige Harlow, Deacon Chair

Safe Passage Initiative Update and Opportunity

Since the return to power of the Taliban in Afghanistan in the fall of 2021, Highland Baptist Church has been a partner in the Safe Passage Initiative (SPI), a project which first grew out of a request from our friend Karen Thomas Smith. Beginning in 2019, Karen Thomas Smith accompanied 10 Afghan women scholars who were students at Al Akhawayn University, where Karen is the Christian chaplain. When the Taliban resumed control in 2021, the families of these students were all at risk due to their connection to the US Embassy and support for women's education. Over the past 5 years, the Safe Passage Initiative, with initial support from Highland's Global Partnerships Team and ongoing support from Highland members, has assisted these families. The request found below is from Karen Thomas Smith:

"All of the families escaped to Pakistan, and all but one family ultimately made it to safety as refugees in the US, Italy, Germany, and France. The Sultani family was awaiting travel papers to the USA when President Trump shut down all refugee resettlement, leaving them stranded. They stayed in Pakistan almost a year but were forced by the Pakistan government to return to Afghanistan in November 2025.

The Sultani family are not only targeted because of their association with the US Embassy but are also members of the Hazara ethnic minority who are actively persecuted in Afghanistan. They returned to a home in Herat badly damaged by the 2023 earthquake and remain at enormous risk.

Now our dream is to get at least two of the family members out of Afghanistan safely to be able to pursue

their studies, which is illegal for women there. Maryam (26) and Motahera (15) Sultani were both excellent students in Afghanistan. Motahera continued to be an excellent student in the AB Academy while she was in Islamabad. Both of them had already been accepted into Al Akhawayn University and the Al Akhawayn School of Ifrane, respectively, when they were forced to leave Pakistan. They can complete their education in Morocco AND apply again for refugee status in Morocco.

We need to raise \$15,000 to get them new six-month tourist visas to Pakistan, plane tickets from Herat (on the Iranian border) to Islamabad, and a place to stay while waiting for their visas for Morocco.

If you are devastated over the fate of Afghan women and the injustice of abandoning refugees in dangerous situations, I want to let you know that there IS something you can do for these two young women. You cannot change conditions for all Afghan women and girls, but your contribution can give these two a future that was stolen from them. My husband and I are committed to fully supporting them through their educational careers here in Morocco. We are asking your help just to get them out of Afghanistan to get their visas. We'll take it from there."

For anyone interested in supporting this effort, a GoFundMe page has been established to make contributions. If you have been making contributions to the Safe Passage Initiative through Highland, you can now give directly through the GoFundMe page. [This link will take you to the GoFundMe website.](#)

On behalf of the Global Partnerships Team

~ Roy Fuller

Highland is Headed Back to Racing Louisville!

Join Highland and 22 other welcoming and affirming congregations as we fill a section of Lynn Family Stadium in a powerful show of love and support for our LGBTQIA+ siblings.



LET'S MAKE 500 VOICES OF AFFIRMATION AND LOVE UNMISSABLE.

Use the link below to sit with the other congregations. Tickets are purchased individually. Tickets are approximately \$19. If you have a group that wants to sit together, its best to have one person make the order. Also, I can give an email and or phone number to the ticket folks to make that process super easy.

GET YOUR TICKETS HERE: [PRIDE NIGHT TICKETS](#)

Questions? [Contact Alan Spade here.](#)

Adult Education Task Force

Highland's Ministry Council has approved the formation of an Adult Education Task Force to make recommendations focused on growing and supporting adult education at Highland Baptist Church. The task force is looking to bring together members from a variety of ages and Bible study backgrounds. If you are interested in serving on the task force or would like to learn more, [please reach out to Elizabeth Howell](#) before May 1.

Make a Difference: Become a Wall Volunteer!

Do you enjoy volunteering but also have a busy schedule?

We are looking for dedicated individuals to join our team of "Wall Volunteers"—a vital group that serves just once per month to help set up and take down the walls that are used on Sunday mornings for adult Bible study classes in the Fellowship Hall.



We need folks who can commit to a regular schedule, but we also understand your time is valuable. By serving once a month for one hour, you can help us offer space for Bible study without the demand of a weekly commitment.

What the Role Involves

- **Time Commitment:** Monthly for one hour, with options for early or late Sunday morning volunteers. We also have a need for once quarterly volunteers.
- **Role:** Setting up or taking down the walls as part of a team.

- **Impact:** Your consistent service ensures that our community has space for Bible study classes each week.

How to Get Started

1. **Contact:** Cheryl Davis, Office Manager - phone her at 502-451-3735 or [email her here](#). Cheryl will be glad to work with you to determine the best Sunday and time for your service.
2. **Learn on the Job:** our experienced volunteers will help you "learn the ropes" to be a wall volunteer.

Join us in serving our community, one hour at a time!

~ Cheryl Davis

An Invitation to the Roots Bible Study Class

The Roots class is a creative, intimate space for learning deeply from each other while exploring the connections between our faith and the social, ecological, and economic systems in which we live. We value cultivating community engagement, healing, deep connection, and fun.

Age: 30's-40's

Where: The room to the left of the stage in Fellowship Hall.

What's Next: We will start a 4-5 week series based on Robin Wall Kimmerer's [The Serviceberry](#) this coming Sunday! Our discussions will center on how nature can influence our systems, values, and faith. Join us!

~ Natalie and Nathan Rider

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!

April Menus:

April 22: Mexican Casserole, Steamed Veggies, Salad, Chips & Salsa

April 29: Pizza, Salad, Steamed Veggies, Dessert

 **Spring Supplies Needed for HCM**



Highlands
Community
Ministries
grow. heal. play.

Spring Cleaning Checklist

- Bar Soap
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes
- Deoderant
- Toilet Paper
- Laundry Pods
- Dish Soap (small bottles)

Wed - Friday · 10AM - 1PM
May 13 - 15, 2026

[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>

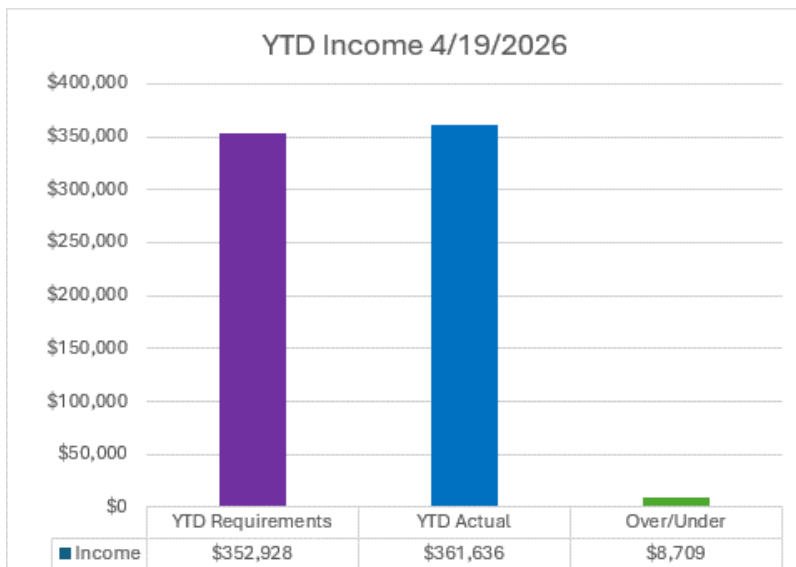
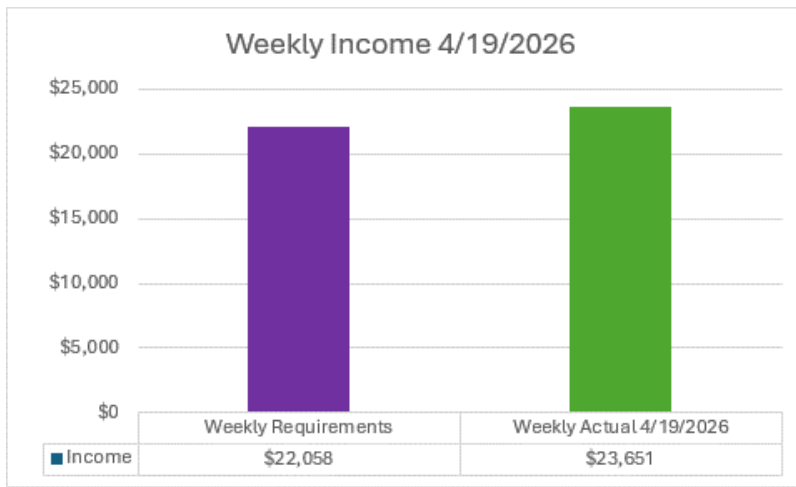
**Streaming
Worship
Links**



- April 22: *Easter Toolboxes* - Wednesday night series at 6:15 PM
- April 26: Children's Sabbath, 11:15 AM service
- April 29: Cloud of Witness at 6:15 PM in the Sanctuary - Kim Fritschi, Steve Gowler, and Kim Shippey
- May 3: Quarterly Church Conference, 4:00 PM on Zoom
- May 3, 10, 17: Highlights for new members and visitors during Bible study at 10:00 AM in the Commons
Please plan to join us for all three sessions, if at all possible.
- May 10: Youth Sunday



Financial Update



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

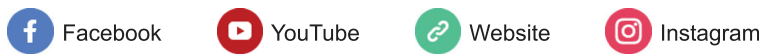




Louisville Homicides

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.

- Darren Williams, Jr., 35, killed February 14
 - A'Veion McAtee, 20, killed February 20
 - Antonio Kennedy, 35, killed March 20
 - Carlos Williams, Jr., 26, killed March 28
 - Noraa Deglow, 19, killed April 7
 - Desmond Mitchell, 37, killed April 8
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