



## The Weekly Newsletter of Highland Baptist Church June 16, 2026

**Please note: the church offices will be closed on Friday, June 19  
in observance of Juneteenth.**

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### The Commons

This past week, my family took in the miraculous sights of Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons. This week's Psalm has felt even more moving as the images take me back to Wyoming. "We stand fearless at the cliff-edge of doom, courageous in seastorm and earthquake, before the rush and roar of oceans, the tremors that shift mountains" (Psalm 46). Above a spot known as The Grand Canyon of Yellowstone, I felt plenty of fear and caution as I watched my kids admire the view while standing so close to the 1,200-foot drop.



Yet isn't this the life of faith with our God? We behold the ridiculous, mind-bending beauty created not by our own hands, and we become aware of how mortal, how finite our lives really are. I think this is the kind of sober, awake stance that scripture calls "fear of the Lord." We stand in awe and wonder, taking in all we can see. In our minds, we begin to grasp that there is so much more than what is visible to us.



Once back among you, I've felt the same awe and wonder at the glory of God - in the baptismal waters with Melissa, in the pulpit where David, Abbi, and Roan shared their faith so beautifully, among the stone walls as the *Voices of Kentuckiana* and our Sanctuary Choir filled the sanctuary, in the Fellowship Hall as your deacons shared their eagerness to offer tangible care to the congregation, and in the office where my colleagues work diligently to help make ministry accessible to the church God is gathering and shaping for the living of these days.

Wherever you are as you read our newsletter, may you feel surrounded and supported by our living, loving God, who invites you into courage, awe, and wonder. Know that we, as staff and church leaders, carry you in our hearts.

~ Carol Harston



## Deacon Nominees

Beginning in July, we will have the opportunity in worship to hear from those who have been nominated to serve as deacons this coming year as they share their faith stories. In addition, we will learn more about them each week in the newsletter.

We are excited about the gifts each of these individuals bring and grateful for their willingness to serve in this capacity. We will vote on the full slate of folks on June 28 by paper ballot.



KATHY BELCHER

Bob and I came to Highland in 1979 when we were Young Adults and now we've graduated to Senior Adults! We raised our children at Highland and learned first hand the benefit of community and our treasured church family. We will soon celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary and all but a few of those years have been at Highland.

Over the decades, I've helped care for a couple generations of children, have served multiple terms as a deacon, been on many different ministry groups, several search committees and have been active at Friday Church.

I am looking forward to serving as a deacon again, because I love being part of the lifeblood of the church and I appreciate the servant leader model deacons use to provide congregational care. I appreciate the opportunity to return to this vital ministry.



BROOKE HASL

I first came to HBC in early 2023 at the invitation of a friend, a decision that truly set my life on a different (and much more authentic!) trajectory. It was largely due to Highland that I moved home to Louisville after graduating with my MA in Mental Health Counseling from Asbury Seminary and started my career as a school-based therapist with elementary students. During this time, I also began my journey of discovering a more expansive, more inclusive faith than I previously knew was possible.

I officially joined the church in October 2023 and am part of the Good Trouble Club bible study class, help teach the kindergarten/1st grade Sunday School class, and serve as a worship care volunteer. I am also part of the Congregational Engagement Ministry Group and chair the Young Adults Ministry Group. One of my favorite things about HBC has been building community through my bible study and opportunities such as the women's retreats.

I'm excited to serve as a deacon, continue to build relationships, and give back to the church that has given me more than I can say.



CASEY BOGGS

My family relocated from the West Coast to Louisville in July 2022. As we searched for a faith community that reflected our values and commitment to service, we promptly found a home at Highland Baptist Church.

I am a cradle Catholic, born in Central Illinois and later shaped by faith communities in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Portland, OR. Those experiences broadened my understanding of Jesus' teachings and strengthened my commitment to serving others.

Throughout my spiritual journey, I have been actively involved in church leadership and ministry, including serving as a youth leader, participating in young adult ministries, and leading a pastoral council. These experiences have deepened my faith and reinforced the importance of community, compassion and service.

I am honored by the opportunity to serve as a Deacon at Highland Baptist Church and look forward to growing in faith while supporting this extraordinary congregation and its mission.



LARRY DAVIS

I grew up in Highland Park, a south-end Louisville neighborhood. I became a Christian at 12, joined my church choir at 16, and my faith has guided me ever since.

I'm married to Frances, and we'll celebrate our 45th anniversary this July. We have two grown children, Lydia and Jacob, and four adorable grandsons. We joined HBC in 1983 and immediately fell in love with its beautiful stained-glass windows and architecture.

I was ordained as a deacon in the early 1980s and have served in that role several times. After joining HBC, I helped coach men's and women's softball, men's basketball, and played on the coed volleyball team. I'm currently active in property & space, the adult sanctuary choir, adult handbells, and church orchestra, and I volunteer as a greeter monthly.

I recently retired and now enjoy gardening, golf, playing trombone in several Louisville community bands, and traveling. I am honored to serve this beautiful congregation as a deacon.

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 Celebrate Pride with Highland!

# Pride Month

JUNE  
17



## DRAG REVIVAL

A family friendly spiritual night of music and joy at Highlands Community Ministries, 7-9 PM.

JUNE  
20



## KENTUCKIANA PRIDE PARADE

Highland will walk in the Pride Parade this Saturday! Sign up below

**See below for Drag Revival Tickets!**  
**[Click here to join us for the Pride Parade!](#)**

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## Highland Hangouts

We're trying something new this summer: lay-led, informal social gatherings to create connections through play. To learn more about hosting a gathering or activity, [click here](#).



### **Croquet on the Lawn - June 25**

Hosted by Norma Pendleton, enjoy some fun playing croquet or cornhole on the front lawn at Highland! Thursday, June 25 from 6:30-8:00 PM. Norma will bring a cold treat to share with everyone. Sign up and bring a friend! [Click here to sign up.](#)

### **Pickleball - June 28**

Friends of all ages, if you love to play pickleball or if you've ever thought about learning, come out and join us! Hosted by Mary Cooksey and Tanya Cornely on Sunday, June 28 from 6:00-8:00 PM at Charlie Vettiner Park (5550 Charlie Vettiner Park Rd, 40299). If you have an extra paddle bring that along for any new players. The alternate rain date is Tuesday, June 30 (same time and location). [Click here to sign up.](#)

### **SALT on Tap - July 10**

Join the SALT Bible study class for SALT on Tap! We will get together for fun and fellowship on Friday, July 10 at Noble Funk, located at 922 S 2nd St, from 6:00-8:00 PM. They have a nice food menu and there is plenty of parking. This hangout is hosted by Jennifer Baker. Please bring money and ID - they have food and drinks. Everyone welcome! (Parents must accompany children). [Click here to sign up.](#)

### **Indiana Backyard Potluck/Pool Party - July 10**

Join host Carolyn King for an Indiana Backyard Potluck and Pool Party on Friday, July 10 from 6:00-9:00 PM. Location is 615 E. Maple in Jeffersonville. Bring a dish to share. Swimming is optional. [Click here to sign up.](#)

### **Sunday Afternoon High Tea - July 12**

Enjoy an afternoon High Tea at the home of Troy Burden & Mike Mayo on Sunday, July 12 from 3:00-5:00

PM. Hot and iced tea options will be available as well as a selection of finger sandwiches and sweets. [Click here to sign up.](#)

### **Dungeons and Dragons - July 13**

Steve Brown will host D&D **for beginners** on Monday, July 13, from 6:00 - 10:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall for six to seven players. Come explore the world of the grandfather of fantasy role-playing games. Participate in a short adventure with characters provided. [Click here to sign up.](#)

### **Dungeon and Dragons - July 15**

Steve Brown will host D&D **for experienced players** on Wednesday, July 15, from 6:00 - 10:00 PM in Fellowship Hall for six to seven players. We will use the 2024 rules system in the world of Grayhawk setting. The forest of Vesve needs adventurers - will you answer the call? [Click here to sign up.](#)

### **Capoeira - July 16**

Join us for Capoeira on Thursday, July 16 from 6:00-8:00 PM at the Gazebo at Baringer Hill in Cherokee Park, hosted by Jessa Henry. Capoeira is a Brazilian martial art with elements of dance & gymnastics that utilizes kicks & dodges. It's done to music and in addition to learning some movements, we will spend time learning some call and response songs in Portuguese and playing the different instruments. There's little something for everybody! 100% beginner friendly! [Click here to sign up.](#)

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## Summer Fun Crawl for Families with Children



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## Discovery Camp Reflections

If you asked the children who attended Discovery Camp last week about their favorite part, they would absolutely say the "shows." We had the great privilege as adults leading to witness creativity through musical theater at its finest - straight from the imaginations of 6, 7, and 8 year olds! Whether it was the pet show, the tooth fairy show, the pirate show, or the princess show, each one was filled with great wonder, giggles, and the kind of story-line that only emerges through improvisation. That said, it was only about 10-20 minutes of our camp days, usually during free time, and yet it seems to have become a core memory.



If you ask the adults though, particularly Megan and myself, our favorite moments were less loud in nature. One afternoon, we came inside to get some relief from the oppressive heat and humidity. We created calm jars filled with glitter and corn syrup to coincide with our lesson about wondering about ourselves, our emotions, and how we can calm our spirits when our feelings feel larger than life. These calm jars were an amazing experience to make - they also took about 5 minutes. As I looked around the room, I wondered what might engage the children next in this unaccounted for time that had suddenly appeared. In a cabinet long unopened, I keep a bin of rugs, battery-operated candles, labyrinths, stone hearts, and other objects that might slow our bodies and allow us to be still and sit with God. Each day, we'd been adding something to our "Wonder Corner" and in the moment, I offered to the children a chance to add these items into that space however they saw fit. What unfolded next was the stuff teaching dreams are made of.

Our children carefully chose a rug, found a space all their own, and chose objects to help ground them as they stilled. They arranged them just so. They shared with those who didn't have any objects. They asked if we could turn the lights down. And they rested, carefully and lovingly in the quiet. They colored, drew, and reflected in their Wonder Journals. Brooke Hasl led us through a beautiful guided meditation to relax our bodies wherever we were. We all breathed.

As the time wound down, our children came back to other activities. But the spirit of the stillness lingered in the room. Voices were quieter. Lights stayed low. Interactions moved with more intention and far less speed. Children connected to one another in ways they had not yet.

Isn't it lovely when wondering what to do with an extra 20 minutes suddenly becomes an unexpected space of Divine surprise and presence? Thanks be to God.

Many thanks to Megan Fuller, Brooke Hasl, and Ainsley Braun who joined me in leading camp last week!

~ Renee Purtlebaugh

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## Walls: Celebrating What Has Been, Preparing for Years to Come

A few years ago, my family started setting up Bible study walls on the second Sunday of each month. Since then, my boys have become well acquainted with how our spacious Fellowship Hall can transform into many classrooms by moving giant walls, dropping pins, and turning levers. Each person has found their role: James sends the walls down, Walt makes sure the pins are in place, and Collier turns the levers, while Drew orchestrates and problem-solves when the walls get stuck. The greatest bonus has been getting to know Becca Jagers, our fellow wall volunteer, and grabbing donuts at Jeff Donuts before Bible study starts.

We are indebted to so many folks who have given years of service in putting up the walls. For over two decades, you have been so faithful in volunteering your time to help make our adult Bible study hour possible each and every Sunday. Seven classes (Generations, Seekers, Nomads, Challengers, SALT, Messengers, Transformers) are able to gather in that space because of your work.

**Have you been a wall helper?** We would love to celebrate everyone who has helped set up walls over the years. We have a list, but we want to make sure it includes everyone. [Please email us if you have helped with walls](#), as we are planning a little celebration.

**Would you be willing to learn more?** As we enter another decade of adult Bible Study, we need new folks who are willing to learn how to put up walls and sign up for service. We're going to host a wall-interest session soon. [Please email us if you would be interested in attending so we can send you the invite.](#)

For the many meaningful moments made possible by all of you, we say, "Thanks be to God!"

~ Carol Harston

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 Drag Revival Hosted by May O'Nays



The 5th annual Drag Revival is a night celebrating diversity, inclusion, and LGBTQIA+ community support through performance and art. Now in its fifth year, the event will raise funds for PRISM Performing Arts and Camp Beacon, organizations that empower LGBTQIA+ folks and promote self-expression. Join us for this family friendly spiritual night of music and joy on June 17 at Highlands Community Ministries, 7:00-9:00 PM. Tickets are \$6.89 each. [You can purchase tickets here.](#)

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## Children Travel to PassportKids!

Next week, 14 children and 5 adults will travel to Berea, KY for our annual summer trip to PassportKids! Together, we will explore the theme *Vamos! Let's Go!* Together, we will be exploring how to follow God when something stirs deep in our heart and we feel compelled to take the next step forward. Within this, we'll explore how there is space to show up, prepare, listen for God's direction, and build strength through every challenge. Please pray for our children as we go—that we will experience connection with God in new and creative ways, that we will build deeper friendships within our group, and that each child will return home with a meaningful God-moment to carry with them from our experience together.

~ Renee Purtlebaugh

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[Click Here for Church Signup Links](#)

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**Sunday, 11:15 AM**

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

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

**Friday, 7:00 PM**

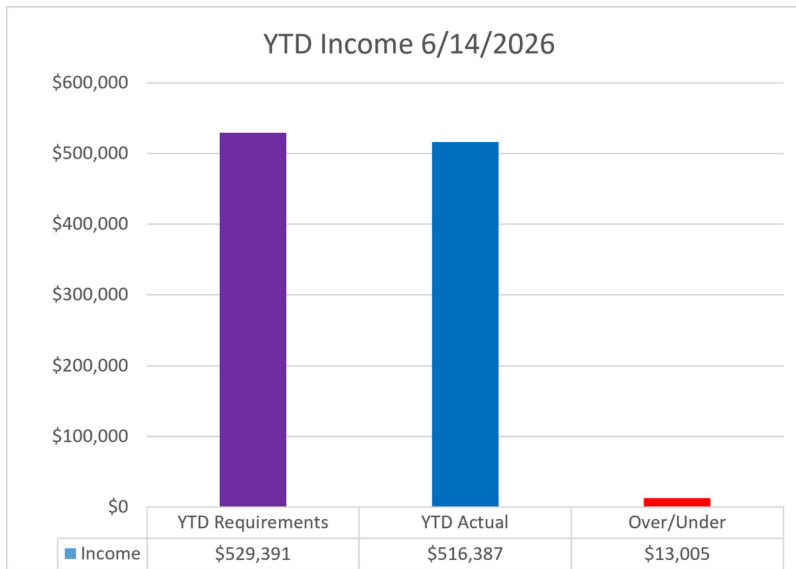
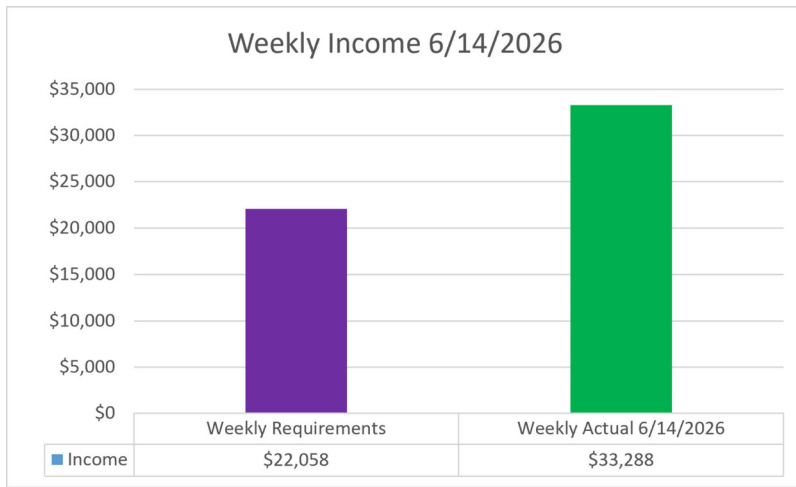
<https://www.facebook.com/hbclouisville.org>



## Looking Ahead

- June 17: Summer Fun Crawl, Robsion Park Sprayground, 6:00-7:00 PM  
Drag Revival at Highlands Community Ministries, 7:00-9:00 PM
- June 20: Pride Parade and Festival
- June 25: Highland Hangout - Croquet/Cornhole on the Lawn, 6:30-8:00 PM
- June 28: Highland Hangout - Pickleball, 6:00-8:00 PM
- July 10: Highland Hangout - SALT on Tap, 6:00-8:00 PM
- July 10: Highland Hangout - Indiana Backyard Potluck/Pool Party, 6:00-9:00 PM
- July 12: Highland Hangout - Afternoon High Tea, 3:00-5:00 PM
- July 13: Highland Hangout - Dungeons and Dragons for Beginners, 6:00-10:00 PM
- July 15: Highland Hangout - Dungeons and Dragons for Experienced Players, 6:00-10:00 PM
- July 16: Highland Hangout - Capoeira, 6:00-8:00 PM
- July 19: Quarterly Church Conference, 4:00 PM via Zoom
- August 12: Wednesday night activities resume

## 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.

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