



The Weekly Newsletter of Highland Baptist Church August 4, 2026

The Commons

As you read last week, we are excited for St. John United Church of Christ, which has called John Kupar as its next pastor. We will certainly miss John's pastoral leadership on Sunday mornings. He has been a great gift to our congregation, having served nearly one year as Highland's Interim Youth Minister. Since the position at St. John is part-time, we will continue to benefit from John's leadership with our youth on Wednesday nights and at other youth events until we hire our next Associate Pastor.

We lean into our unwavering faith during these seasons, trusting that we are all one Body of Christ, not divided by denomination or by the 1.7 miles between St. John's sanctuary and our own. Therefore, we rejoice in the sacred ways John's ministry at St. John will be impactful for that congregation, the gospel we share, and the city we serve together.

John's final Sunday will be August 23, when we will offer our prayers of blessing as he begins his worship at St. John on August 30. We will hold a reception for John at a later date, once he has completed his interim work with our youth. We appreciate your prayers as our youth community continues in this interim period. The Personnel Ministry Group, Ministry Council, and Staff are already exploring a job description for our next Associate Pastor and brainstorming names for the search committee, which will come to the church for a vote soon. Youth parents are meeting this coming Sunday morning during the Bible Study hour to hear from John about his plans for the year. I look forward to being there as we begin actively

dreaming about the youth ministry God is calling Highland to help create for the future!

~ Carol Harston



2026-2027 Highland Theme: Rooted. Remembering. Restless. Rising

This school year, we will explore how faith shapes us through life's changing seasons.

Fall: We are rooted in the love that sustains us and in all that has been given to us.

Advent: We remember the stories we carry and God's steadfast accompaniment.

Winter: We are restless with holy longing for the world God calls us to create.

Spring: We are rising together into new life through resurrection hope.

Throughout the fall, you will be invited to join us in recognizing how we feast on the faithfulness of past generations, sow seeds for the generations to come, and establish deep connections by participating in small acts of faithfulness together. Look for opportunities to connect with our theme in various ways throughout the year.

*“Blessed are those who trust in God, whose hope is the Lord.
They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream.
It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought, it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit.”
~ Jeremiah 17:7-8*

Join Us for Gather Round on Sunday!



Back-to-school energy is in the air, and it's already the 4th day of August. Our thoughts have inevitably turned to bus apps and carpool arrangements, meet the teacher events, and school supply lists. We're rolling back those late summer bedtimes, waking up a little earlier each day, and dusting off our school morning routines.

In the flurry of preparations, I wonder how our back-to-church energy might be faring? After a summer scattered with travel and camps, this approaching season also holds so many possibilities for the rhythms

of our faith to take root too—both in our homes and in our community of faith. I wonder how we might draw near to God, and how God might draw near to us in the every-day-ness of our lives this year?

While I don't know exactly how God will meet you, there are spaces and places carved out for the possibility of that nearness to unfold here at Highland. We hope you'll join us!

Gather Round with us this Sunday, August 9 as we kick off our new year of rhythms and activities!

Our Sunday morning schedule will look the same as usual, with some added elements.

- We'll recognize our rising Kindergarteners in worship, presenting them with a special gift.
- We'll offer a blessing for the school year and anyone who works in our schools.
- We'll have new backpack tags to share with all ages of students.
- We'll have a picnic lunch on the lawn together ([sign up here](#) or bring your own picnic lunch). [You may pay online here](#) or by cash or check at the event. Meals are \$7.00 each with a family maximum of \$21.00.

What's Happening on Sundays?	
Worship Service + Worship Care	8:45 am
Bible Study	10-11 am
Worship Service + Worship Care + Children's Worship	11:15 am

Worship Service + Worship Care: 8:45 AM

During worship, we provide care for children ages infant through pre-kindergarten on the first floor of the education building. If your child is 3+ years old, and will be participating in Bible study after worship, we ask for you to pick your child up and transition them upstairs to class.

Bible Study: 10:00-11:00 AM

Bible study is for all ages! This year, we have some shifts in classroom configuration due to weekly attendance and the number of children in each age group.

- The Infant room is back! Children who are not yet walking will gather in RM 114.
- Toddlers & 2s – RM 116
- 3s and PreK – RM 203 & 204 (Godly Play)
- Kindergarten thru 3rd grade – RM 202
- 4th and 5th grade – RM 200

If you are a parent of a child in any of these age groups and have questions, [please reach out to me](#). I'm happy to answer them!

Worship Service + Worship Care + Children's Worship: 11:15 AM

During this worship service, we provide care for children ages infant through pre-kindergarten. However, the age groupings are divided into the three classrooms from the Bible study hour.

- Infants – RM 114
- Toddlers & 2s – RM 116
- 3s and PreK – RM 203

Also, during this worship service, Children's Worship takes place during the second half of worship, near the sermon, each week. We will meet in RM 201 (note: this is a room shift from previous years).

Children's Worship is for children in grades Kindergarten – 2nd grade, and explores the elements of worship and a scripture from the Revised Common Lectionary focused on in worship that day.

~ Renee Purtlebaugh

Children's Choirs Resume August 12



It's time to fill Highland's second floor with the sounds of children *playing*! From walking toddlers holding the hand of a parent to the confidence of a fifth grader remembering past music skills, our top floor holds the high energy, movement, noise, and music making from both children and adults each Wednesday, 6:00-7:15 p.m. Come and join in the fun!

Fliers have been sent to families but if you didn't receive yours, please contact [Kathy Collier](#), Children's Choir Coordinator, for all the important information and mark your calendars for Wednesday, August 12, 6:00 p.m. All are welcome!

Wednesday Night Fellowship Dinners Begin Next Week

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 make standing reservations or make them weekly by emailing [Leslie Morris here](#) or calling her at 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](#) anytime or by check or cash at the door. We encourage everyone to take advantage of this great opportunity for intergenerational fellowship!



August Menus:

August 12: BBQ Pork, Mac & Cheese, Baked Beans, Salad, Dessert

August 19: Fried Chicken/Baked Chicken, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Salad, Dessert

August 26: Mexican Casserole, Steamed Veggies, Salad, Chips & Salsa, Dessert

Volunteers still needed:

Please contact [Kathy Belcher here](#) if you can help!

- **Bring Dessert (1 more volunteer needed)** Provide 3-4 dozen servings of dessert. They can be prepared at church in our new convection oven (coming soon!) or brought to church by 4:30 PM on Wednesday.
- **Dry Dishes (4 more volunteers needed)** Help with dish drying and cleanup. Work begins around 5:45 PM.

Wednesday Night Adult Classes for the Fall

We look forward to gathering with adults of all ages in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday nights, 6:00-7:15 p.m., for community prayer, faith formation, and faith expression. Join us on August 12 for our first adult class, led by Carol Harston: **Small Acts. Deep Roots. Shared Life.**

What's To Come this Fall:

While we're still developing our fall class schedule, we're excited about what we're exploring now, including learning from Robert P. Jones' "The Hidden Roots of White Supremacy: and a Path to a Shared American Future" alongside our Anti-Racism Team; digging deeper into our church's finances with the Finance Ministry Group; discussing the current state of immigration enforcement in our community with our Immigration Team; and "Faith and the Arts" evenings, including an exploration of Light with Bill Campbell, alongside our regular Cloud of Witness series. In addition, our staff plan to deepen our initial prayer time by praying for those in our community, ministries in the church, areas of need in the world, and various spiritual practices.

Friday Church Happenings

Please join us at 7:00 PM on Fridays! Here is our preaching schedule for August:

- Aug 7: George Mayes, formerly of Quinn Chapel
- Aug 14: Richard Lockette, St. Stephen Baptist Church
- Aug 21: Carol Harston



Morocco in the News

As we have learned over the years with our partnership with the Protestant church in Morocco, Morocco is a jumping off point for refugees and migrants who are seeking a better life and desire to get to Europe. This desire for a better life often leads to individuals taking extreme risks in their pursuit of their goals. In the days leading up to last Thursday, July 30, social media shared misleading posts suggesting that the border between Spain and Morocco at the Spanish enclave of Ceuta was opening. As a result, young Moroccans and migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa were convinced that Europe was suddenly within reach. With this information, young people headed toward the border and by the time authorities reacted, an estimated 60,000 people had surged into Ceuta, a Spanish enclave which has a population of 85,000 people. It is estimated that more than 80 migrants died in the attempt to enter Ceuta. As of the end of the weekend, Spanish authorities state that nearly 50,000 individuals have been returned to Morocco and the return process will continue.

This event continues to highlight the desire of individuals around the globe to better their lives as they leave their homelands. It is in this context that our partners in the Protestant Church in Morocco minister daily. In light of the events of this past weekend I share with you this prayer from an unknown author:

*Loving creator, You see every journey, every step taken in hope and in fear.
Bless those who leave their homes in search of safety, dignity, and a better life.
Guide their paths through uncertainty, and place in their way hearts that welcome,
hands that help, and communities that embrace them as family.
Grant them courage in hardship, comfort in loneliness, and joy in moments of kindness.
May we too, be moved to act with compassion,
seeing in each traveler a reflection of your image. Amen.*

~ Robert Davis, Global Partnerships Team



Peace Walk Coming Soon



Sponsored by



Nonviolent Louisville



WALK FOR PEACE
LOUISVILLE

**JOIN THIS CITY-WIDE EVENT
TO USE OUR WORDS, OUR FEET,
AND OUR HOPE TO DECLARE
THAT LOVE TRANSFORMS!**

**Saturday,
Aug 22
9 – 11 am**

Gathering outside
PCUSA
100 Witherspoon St.
Louisville, KY 40202

Bible Study Members Invited to Participate in Survey

Dr. Robert Priest is conducting research on “Contemporary Images of Jesus in the Experience of Louisville Christians” and has become intrigued by Highland’s stained-glass windows. All Bible Study Class members are invited to complete a short, anonymous survey about your image of Jesus to support Dr. Priest’s research. Printed surveys will be available on Sunday morning. Retired now, Robert J. Priest formerly served at seminaries, working in mission and anthropology.

[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**





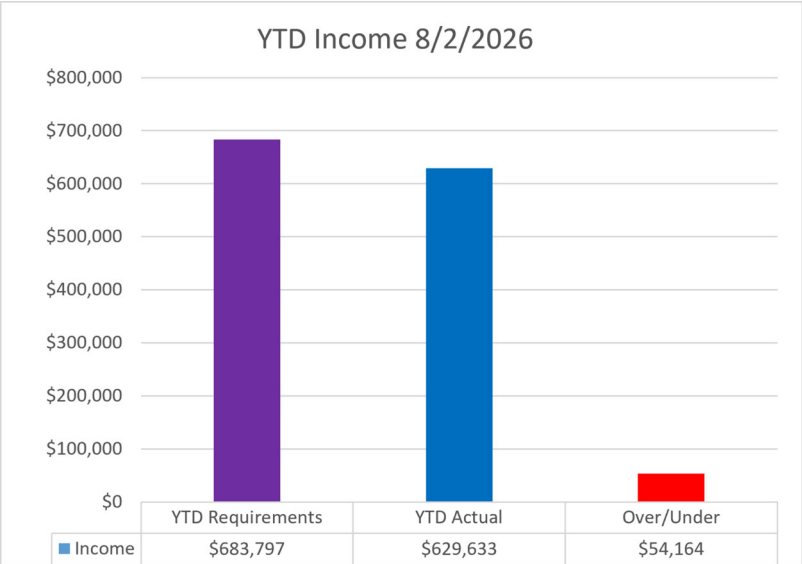
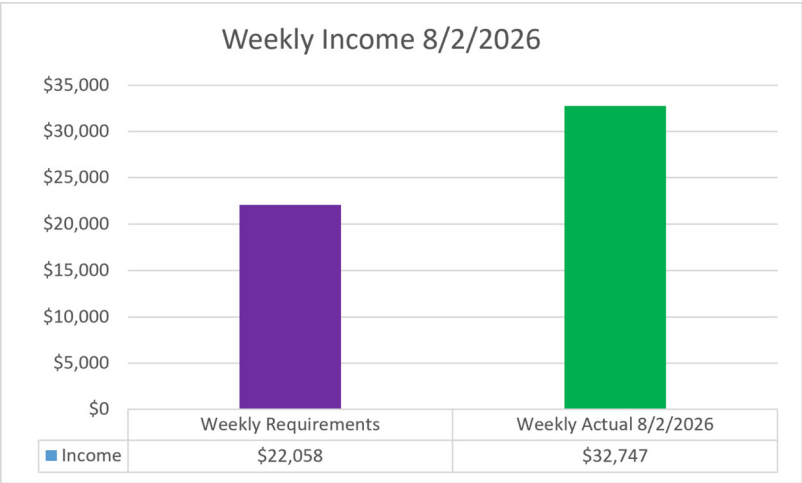
- August 9: **Gather Round Sunday!**
August 12: **Wednesday Night Fellowship Dinner and Programming resumes!**
August 15: Highland Veterans Group, 10:00 AM in the Commons
August 28-29: Deacon Retreat, General Butler State Park
August 30: Deacon Ordination Service, 4:00 PM, Sanctuary
September 13: Installation Service for Senior Pastor Carol Harston
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Thank You, Highland!

Words cannot express our feeling of gratitude for the outpouring of messages, prayers, food, and words of comfort during Reece's passing. He fought a long, difficult battle and felt your love and prayers along the way. We are forever grateful for our loving friends, who are like family, at Highland Baptist Church. May God bless each of you.

~ The Family of Reece Little

Financial Update



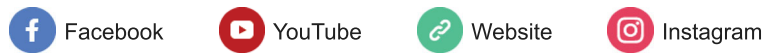
To make a donation from your phone, text "give2hbc" to 502-747-1212
and open the link or use the QR code below.





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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