



The Weekly Newsletter of Highland Baptist Church September 1, 2026

The church offices will be closed on Monday, September 7 for the Labor Day Holiday.
The newsletter will be published on Wednesday, September 9.

Rooted for What's Next: A Faithful Giving Story



Because I grew up in Eastern Kentucky, my faith journey is rooted in mountain Southern Baptist tradition with some Holy Ghost Pentecostal sprinkled in. Raised hands in praise and shouts of “Amen” were simply expected parts of Sunday morning. Regular giving was just as much an expected part of worship. Obligation may be the least inspiring word ever used in a testimony about faithful giving, but it is the honest word for me. Giving regularly taught me that faith makes a claim on how I use what I have. I understand obligation as a decision made in advance about how I will live out my beliefs. Routine keeps me from renegotiating that decision every month.

While my faith journey is rooted in eastern Kentucky, my life's journey has been rooted in the high school classroom, where I learned that obligation and routine belong together. A classroom depends on shared obligations. I owe students preparation, fairness, and consistency. Students owe effort and respect for one another's opportunity to learn. Routines give those obligations daily shape. When everyone knows what comes next, we spend less time renegotiating decisions, leaving more room for learning, relationships, curiosity, and sometimes controlled chaos.

Faithful giving works the same way. Obligation becomes routine, and routine keeps me from renegotiating generosity each month.

The rhythm is deeply biblical. Scripture calls God's people to give, care for those in need, and sustain the community. Jesus says, "**when you give,**" treating generosity as part of discipleship. Paul teaches that giving should be purposeful and willing. Belonging to a congregation creates obligations. Because we belong to God and to one another, we accept responsibility for our neighbors, our shared life, and the world entrusted to our care.

That matters at Highland because this church is also rooted. We are rooted in a strong biblical tradition that takes these Scriptures seriously without pretending every word must be read literally or without question. We are rooted in action, often bold action. Our belonging obligates us to care for our world and our siblings. Sometimes Highland stands at the tip of the spear, acting before it is comfortable, popular, or safe.

Our giving makes that action possible. It supports study, welcome, care for our neighbors, work for justice, and bold action when bold action is required.

So yes, I give from a sense of obligation. It is an obligation rooted in faith, belonging, and hope for what this church can do. It gives structure to my intentions and helps Highland remain rooted deeply enough to keep reaching outward.

Healthy roots do more than hold a tree in place. They feed its growth. Faithful giving is one way I help tend those roots.

~ Alan Spade, spoken during Sunday Worship August 30



Why Pledge to Highland?

How it helps the Highland Baptist Church – Every financially responsible organization develops a budget and estimating income is a critical part of that process. Without a reasonable estimate of income, it becomes very difficult to determine what amount of expenses are feasible. Staffing, programs, external missions support, basic operational costs and other expenses are all dependent on projected annual income. Receiving pledges that will cover a significant amount of projected expenses helps ensure stability in all areas of our ministries.

How it helps the giver –

- Pledging is both a financial and a spiritual discipline.
- Created in the image of our generous God, we are called to reflect God's generosity.
- Pledging connects you deeper to the life and ownership of your church.

- Pledging confirms that support of God's work at Highland is a priority in your life.

~ Tracy Holladay

The Commons

This past Wednesday, we gathered in the Fellowship Hall to explore parental language for God. We discussed explicitly parental terms such as Mother and Father, as well as titles that reflect the role's function (Creator and Parent). I invited people to share at their tables: What is their personal relationship and history with parental language for God? What do we gain and what do we lose by using terms like "Creator"?

People shared their histories with these terms, which led them to draw on titles for God used in childhood during times of change, while reaching for alternative titles in a season of growth and intentional reflection. We talked about the landmines that can emerge when we identify one term as the only "correct" one for the church, turning a particular name for God into an idol itself. We also named the tension around changing language in scripture and whether that calls into question the validity and integrity of our communal response, "The Word of God for the people of God." People named other names for God they're drawn toward - Holy One, Sophia (Wisdom), God Who Sees Me and Knows Me, Loving Mystery, Sacred Conundrum. Many appreciate the New Zealand Lord's Prayer that begins, "Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven."

What I found most intriguing was the conversation about how we can be a church that empowers each of us to pray to God in a way that best reflects our personal faith journeys *and* that creates opportunities to hear about each other's religious backgrounds with curiosity and respect.

We'll explore this further in this Sunday's sermon, as Jesus encourages the disciples to hold one another accountable. How do we cultivate a church culture that takes relationships seriously enough to risk difficult conversations? Can we commit to approaching one another with curiosity and respect when we disagree? With courage and hope, we give thanks for God's presence, which makes life in this community possible. *Thanks be to God.*

~ Carol Harston

You Are Invited!



You are invited to join us September 13 at 4:00 PM as Carol Harston is installed as our Senior Pastor. It will be a momentous occasion, as all the living Senior Pastors in Highland's history plan to return for this joyous day: Paul Duke, Phil Christopher, Joe Phelps, and Mary Alice Birdwhistell. After the service, we'll conclude the afternoon's festivities with a reception in Fellowship Hall.

If you cannot attend, we invite you to send Carol a note of encouragement or a word of affirmation by Wednesday, September 9, 2026. We'll assemble and give them to her on the day of her installation. Please send to: Rev. Dr. Carol Harston, c/o Highland Baptist Church, 1101 Cherokee Road, Louisville, KY 40204 or drop your card by the church office.

*Care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers will be provided during the installation service **by reservation**. [Contact Megan Fuller](#) to reserve care for your child(ren) by Wednesday, September 9.

Embracing the Dream of Being Doers of the Word

Major events in history often seem like foregone conclusions when recalled years later. Without a doubt, humans would walk on the moon, right? Yet, that feat seemed nearly impossible less than ten years before it first happened.

Though the pastorate of a medium-sized church in Louisville does not reach the level of lunar exploration, we are in our own way shooting for the stars. There will be those who look back at this time at Highland years from now and say *I always knew we could do it*. However, just like America's once-fledgling space program, this church's success requires dreamers, risk-takers, and heavy lifters.

The installation a senior pastor is one the important moments in the life of a healthy church. A strong senior pastor does not dictate the church's future. Rather, they shepherd the congregation, daring to dream and to take risks while walking arm-in-arm with us. Carol's installation symbolizes the congregation's commitment to do likewise. It is essential for the Highland community to be present at the September 13th installation, in body or spirit, as witnesses, but also as a congregation fully committed to this new chapter in the church's long history. Our presence shows we embrace the dream, the audacity, and the effort required to keep Highland vibrant and to continue being doers of the Word. Then, someday, we can look back and say we always knew we could do it.

~ Ron Smith

Wall Crew Appreciation

This past Sunday, we had the honor of expressing our deep appreciation to everyone who has served on our Wall Crews over the past two decades.



Please pick up your gift sometime this month (located in Cheryl's office) if you were unable to be here this past Sunday.

Wednesday Night Adult Class Schedule

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.

- September 2: Immigration in our City with Immigration Team (Mission & Justice)
- September 9: Navigating HBC Finances with Finance Ministry Group (Congregational Life)
- September 16: Seeing with Bill Campbell (Faith and the Arts)
- September 23: Family Roots - More Than an Origin Story with Phil Collier (Faith Formation)
- September 30: No Wednesday Night Programming due to JCPS Fall Break

Upcoming Wednesday Night Adult Classes



September 2: Immigrants in Louisville Today with Immigration Team

How are immigrants in Louisville faring these days? What is being done to support them? What can we do to support them? Join the Immigrant Support subgroup of the Anti Racism Team on Wednesday, September 2, as state representative and immigration attorney Nima Kulkarni joins us to discuss the current legal landscape surrounding immigration and how ICE is currently operating in our community. She will speak specifically to recently detained community member Armelle Bondonga.

September 9: Navigating Highland's Finances with Finance Ministry Group Come learn about our HBC finances – income, expenses, and everything in between.

New Deacons Ordained and Installed Last Sunday

Deacon Ordination and Installation



Faith When You're Feeling Out of Sorts

Just as we've brought together our veterans and those caring for aging parents, Carol Harston is facilitating a conversation with those who are feeling out of sorts with faith - those who find themselves in a new life season where they don't "feel" faith as they used to, or who are frustrated that it doesn't come easily to them (compared to how they perceive it does for others).

While this group could eventually become a place to share resources, the initial gathering will be to get to know one another and hear about people's experiences with faith feeling out of sorts. To find the time that works best, [please fill out this poll to let Carol know what works best for you.](#)

Wednesday Night Fellowship 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 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!



September Menus:

September 2: Roast Pork Loin, Roasted Potatoes, Steamed Veggies, Salad, Rolls, Dessert

September 9: Lasagna, Steamed Vegetables, Salad, Bread Sticks, Dessert

September 16: Meatloaf, Hash Brown Casserole, Steamed Veggies, Salad, Rolls, Dessert

September 23: BBQ Pork, Mac & Cheese, Baked Beans, Salad Dessert

September 30: Fall Break - no Wednesday evening activities

Volunteers still needed:

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

5 dish dryers needed from approximately 5:45 to 6:45PM

- 2 for 1st week of each month
- 1 for 3rd week of each month
- 2 for 4th week of each month



Join the Youth in Collecting Donations for HCM

MAKING KITS FOR HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

TRAVEL SIZE ITEMS NEEDED:

- Small bottles of water
- peanut butter crackers
- granola bars
- fruit snacks
- hand sanitizer
- toothpaste
- Kleenex/wipes

**BRING YOUR DONATIONS TO
THE YOUTH ROOM NOW
THROUGH SEPTEMBER 23**

Painting Crew!



Many thanks to the crew that recently painted the chair rail in Fellowship Hall. It looks great! The team included Margaret Pennington, Sun Pacyga, James Harston, Bob Belcher, Rhonda Hanson, Drew Harston, Troy Burden, Justin Boldt, Liz Cull (not pictured), John Pacyga, and Mark Golightly Sanders.

Deacon Retreat Last Weekend



Highland's deacons gathered for their annual retreat at General Butler State Park to begin their new year of service. We are grateful for Roy Fuller (chair) and Diane Brewer (vice chair) for their willingness to lead our deacons this year. We gathered for fellowship on Friday night and then met on Saturday to explore servant leadership and prepare for the year of service.

~ Carol Harston

Interfaith Vigil in Jeffersonville



A group from Highland attended a Statewide Day of Community in Jeffersonville, Indiana, this past

Sunday afternoon for an interfaith vigil, standing together for justice and peace for our immigrant neighbors.

Beer and Hymns

Around 30 of Highland's community had a great time of singing "the old hymns" and fellowshiping Sunday at Trellis Brewery. \$307 was raised for La Casita, one of our mission partners. Stay tuned for another similar event, which will likely occur in December and will include the singing of beloved Christmas carols!



Senior Adult Potluck Luncheon Next Week

Join us on Tuesday, September 8 at 12:00 Noon in the Fellowship Hall for a potluck luncheon! Bring a side dish or dessert to share and Highland will provide the meat. Entertainment will be provided by Ron Creager (see his bio below). [Please email](#) or call Paul Henderson at 502-451-3735 to let him know you're planning to attend.



Ron Creager is an American pianist, composer, and musical director with a career spanning over five decades. Based near Louisville, Kentucky, he is well known for his work as a cruise ship pianist, a hotel lounge performer, and a long-time musical director for cabaret artist Toni Lamond and her sister, pop artist Helen Reddy.

Caring for Aging Parents Support Group

"You are so lucky to still have your parents." Many people have said that to me. Sometimes I do not feel lucky and then I start feeling guilty. How do I manage to take care of my parents and still find time to take care of grandchildren and me? It has been a balancing act and most days I feel very unbalanced.

During the season of life when taking care of aging parents is not in our game plan, it may be time to reach out for help. Most of the time, help comes from someone who is experiencing the same feelings. Our church has many folks that are in the season where taking care of our aging parents is a daily balancing act. Some can only rely on phone calls because parents are many miles away while others try to make face to face contact several times a week, if not daily.

If you are struggling with how to take care of your aging parents while also taking care of yourself, consider joining us for the Caring for Aging Parents support group. We meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:15 PM. It is a comfortable place to share your experiences, frustrations, and hear from others. You are not alone. There are other folks struggling with you. [Please email Dawn Burke](#) if you are planning to attend so we will have enough chairs. **Join us next Tuesday, September 8 at 5:15 PM in the Commons** and park in the main church parking lot. Please enter through the Fellowship Hall. Hope to see you soon!

~ Patty Martin

Louisville Pride Festival



Join *True Colors*, Highland's LGBTQ+ ministry group, as we celebrate love, inclusion, and community at this year's Louisville Pride Festival on Saturday, September 12, from 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM. Highland's booth will be open until 8:00 PM.

We're looking for friendly, welcoming volunteers to help staff Highland's booth throughout the day. Volunteer duties are fun and meaningful—you might be offering glitter blessings, chatting with festival-goers, or helping folks create their own custom buttons with our popular button maker!

Can't volunteer? No problem—come by, say hello, and show your support. Let's show up loud and proud for our LGBTQ+ family and help make this year's Louisville Pride celebration unforgettable!

[Sign up to volunteer here!](#)



Johnson Lecture Series September 19

William M. Johnson Lecture Series

COURAGE AND FAITH IN A TIME OF AUTHORITARIANISM



KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

**REV. PAUL
BRANDEIS
RAUSHENBUSH**

President of Interfaith Alliance

 **SEPTEMBER 19**

 **2:00 PM – 6:00 PM**

 **CRESCENT HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
2800 FRANKFORT AVE., LOUISVILLE, KY**

WITH GUEST PANELISTS



**MARK WINGFIELD,
MODERATOR**
Executive Director and
Publisher, Baptist News
Global.



**REV. DR. LAUREN
JONES MAYFIELD**
Executive Director,
Center for Interfaith
Relations.



DR. DARVIN ADAMS
Author and Professor
of Theology, Simmons
College of Kentucky
and Turner Theological
Seminary.

REGISTER
HERE



HON. GREG FISCHER
Entrepreneur and
Former Louisville
Mayor, 2010-2023.



PROF. DAN CANON
Civil rights lawyer,
educator, and writer.
Professor of civil
procedure, Louis D.
Brandeis School of Law.

Mission & Justice Meeting for All Teams and Interested Individuals

On Friday, September 25, from 5:00 to 6:30 PM, we will gather in the Children's Commons to (1) hear from those already plugged into Mission Teams, (2) hear from those interested in getting involved in new mission efforts, and (3) wonder together about what it looks like for Highland to engage in hopeful action in our city, state, and world. We encourage all those already active in a Mission Team, as well as those interested in getting plugged in, to attend. If you can attend Friday Church at 7:00 PM, we'll order dinner for 6:30 PM before we worship together. To RSVP for the meeting, [please email Carol Harston](#).

Trivia Night Coming Soon!



TRIVIA NIGHT

WITH DESSERT AUCTION

FUNDRAISER



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2026 7:00 PM

Highland Baptist Church
1101 Cherokee Road

\$20 per person at the door or
\$120 for a table of up to 8, paid by Sept 21 at Venmo QR code below.
(please use this code rather than the 'events' one in the church newsletter)

Steven Brown
@Steven-Brown-1625



PLEASE PRE-REGISTER AT
hbctrivianight@gmail.com

HAVE A SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS
OR OTHER GROUP TEAM;
BRING YOUR FRIENDS; BRING YOUR
TEAM; COME HAVE FUN.

Contact Steve or Margie Brown with questions;
Contact Marilyn Whistler to donate a dessert.



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>

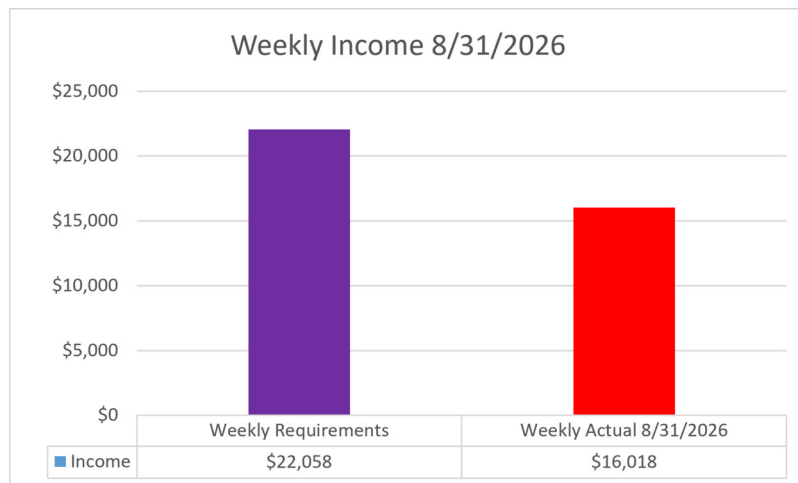
**Streaming
Worship
Links**

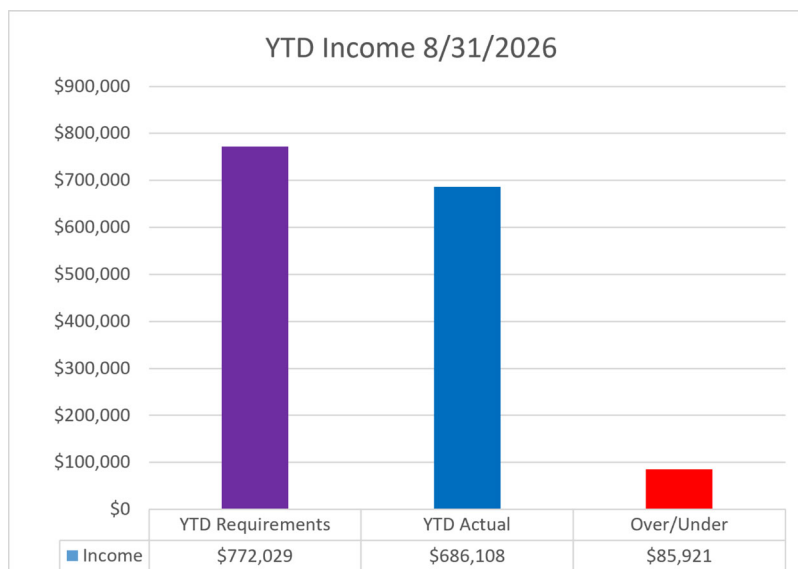




- September 8: Senior Adult Potluck Luncheon, 12:00 Noon, Fellowship Hall
Caring for Aging Parents Support Group, 5:15 PM, Commons
- September 9: Navigating HBC Finances with Finance Ministry Group
- September 13: Installation Service for Senior Pastor, Rev. Dr. Carol Harston, 4:00 PM, Sanctuary
- September 19: Veterans Group Gathering, 10:00 AM, Gary & Margaret Pennington's Home
- September 20: Pledge Sunday
- September 25: Missions and Justice Meeting, 5:00-6:30 PM, Children's Commons
- September 26: Trivia Night Fundraiser for Sacred Space, 7:00 PM, Fellowship Hall
- October 9-11: Women's Fall Retreat, contact Ginger Miller to sign up - 502-599-6569
-

Financial Update



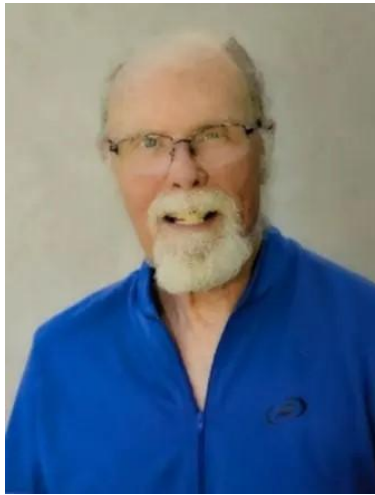


To make a donation from your phone, text "give2hbc" to 502-747-1212 and open the link or use the QR code below.



Mourning the Recent Loss of Highland Member

We recently learned of the passing of a Highland member late last year: Jim Williamson.



August 26, 1944 - November 1, 2025

[Here is Jim's obituary.](#)

We pray for Jim's family members and friends as they grieve, celebrate, and remember Jim. We mourn the loss of this beloved member of our Highland family who has joined the cloud of witness gathered 'round this sacred place.



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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