



The Weekly Newsletter of Highland Baptist Church October 20, 2026

The Commons

Like you, I am watching our country as artificial intelligence and other advanced technologies expand their reach at a pace that governmental leaders, university researchers, school systems, industries, and even tech leaders struggle to manage or comprehend. The existential crisis I'm hearing from some of these leaders verges on the religious and theological, as technology prompts all of us to wrestle with what it means to be human, the purpose of human life, and humanity's fragility.

Just this weekend at an elementary school cross-country meet, small talk with a man at the entrance led to his sharing serious concerns about how AI is affecting warfare and threatening future generations. Last week, The Daily's podcast interview with Steven Strogatz, a professor of mathematics at Cornell University, ended with both the interviewer, Rachel Abrams, and Strogatz in tears as Strogatz shared how he's turned to Ecclesiastes to help him process and cope ("[When A.I. Comes for Your Purpose in Life](#)," October 13, 2026). If the above link does not work for you, search your favorite podcast source for "The Daily" and then "When A.I. Comes For Your Purpose In Life."

I'm curious how you're living in this moment of human history, thinking about faith and what it means to be a Christian. If enough people are interested, I'd be happy to schedule a time to reflect together, as people of faith, on AI, and the existential crisis growing in our country. [Let me know here if you are interested.](#)

May God grant us wisdom and courage for the living of these days.

~ Carol Harston



2027 Operating Budget Pledge Update: Generosity Takes Root

This fall, we've been learning what it means to be rooted - grounded in faith, deeply planted in God's love, and drawing life from something far greater than ourselves. A tree with deep roots weathers every storm. It doesn't just survive; it flourishes, bears fruit, and offers shade and shelter to others.

We want to thank everyone who has taken part in our pledge season, and we are excited to share that we

have received 141 pledges totaling \$826,236.04, an increase over last year, when we received 124 pledges totaling \$733,323.00.

If you are interested in making a pledge, there is still time. Please reach out to [Leslie Morris](#), Highland's Financial Secretary. Pledges are tangible acts of faith that put down roots for our congregation's future. When each of us commits, our leadership can plan faithfully and boldly, knowing the ground beneath us is firm.

Thank you,

~ *The Faithful Giving Ministry Group*

Thomas Bolton, Kelsey Grizzle, Drew Harston,
Tracy Holladay, Hollie Spade

Fall Night at the Farm

Families with children and youth enjoyed a gorgeous night on the farm this past Saturday evening roasting hot dogs, making s'mores, playing kickball, having fun on a wagon ride through the fields, and time enjoying one another's company on a cool, fall night. We're deeply grateful for the hospitality of Esther and Jesse McClain and their family as they hosted us on their farm in Mt. Eden, KY!



New Partnership with Byck Elementary: Opportunities to Get Involved

Our new partnership with Byck Elementary is off to a wonderful start! Many Highland members have already expressed interest in getting involved, and we are grateful for your enthusiasm and willingness to serve. We encourage everyone involved to join the HBCxByck Partnership GroupMe, where we'll share updates, volunteer opportunities, and ways to stay connected. [Join the GroupMe here.](#)

Whether you have a few hours to give or are interested in an ongoing commitment, here are several ways to participate:

1. Byck Fall Festival — Thursday, October 29, 5:30–7:00 PM

Help make Byck Elementary's Fall Festival a fun and memorable evening for students and families! We need 8–10 Highland volunteers to join Byck staff and Shawnee High School students in distributing candy to approximately 150–200 children and helping supervise games. We are also collecting an estimated 20–

30 bags of candy for the festivities. Volunteers who can stay to help with cleanup are welcome, but this is not required.

[Sign up to volunteer for the Fall Festival here.](#)

2. Become a Volunteer Tutor or Mentor - Tuesdays and/or Thursdays, 10:30–11:30 AM

A little time and encouragement can make a lasting difference in a child's life! Highland volunteers are invited to work with kindergarten, first-grade, and second-grade students, providing support in early literacy, math, and writing. This is a wonderful opportunity to build relationships with children while helping them develop foundational skills and confidence. Before volunteering, all participants must complete the [JCPS School Volunteer Records Check here](#). Once the school receives your completed check, we will schedule an orientation with Byck Principal Dr. Kim Coleman.

[Sign up to tutor or mentor here.](#)

3. Help Stock Byck's Freezers - Ongoing

Another important part of our partnership is helping ensure that Byck's food pantry is well stocked for students and families who need additional support. The school has identified a particular need for perishable foods that can be stored in its refrigerators and freezers. Ms. S'avea Carter, Byck's Family Resource Center Coordinator, has provided a list of requested items, which is available through our partnership's GroupMe. You may also reach out to [Steve Gowler here](#) for more details.



Celebrating Megan Fuller's Five Years with Highland

On Sunday, October 18, Megan Fuller was recognized for her five-year anniversary of working on Highland's staff. She began specifically as our Children and Family Ministry Assistant— coordinating our Worship Care volunteers, giving creative leadership to our children's summer camps, and generally supporting the work of this entire ministry area.

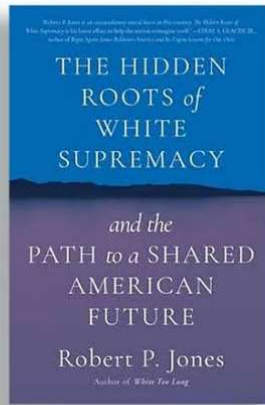


As we've moved through seasons of interim life together, Megan's experience and knowledge of Highland have allowed her to offer administrative support to our Deacons and Congregational Engagement Ministry Group, allowing them to do their connecting with people more effectively. Around the office, we find ourselves deeply grateful for her positivity, willingness to learn new things, kind spirit, and deep love for this community of faith. As you see Megan in the coming days, please thank her for the work she does!

~ Renee Purtillebaugh

Join in Our Next Community Read

The Anti-Racism Team invites you to read Robert P Jones' book *The Hidden Roots of White Supremacy and the Path to a Shared American Future*. The team will lead a discussion of the book on **Wednesdays, October 21 and October 28 at 6:00 PM**. Many of you have already engaged with Robert P Jones' work through our study of *White Too Long* and shared that your lives and perspectives were transformed. This will be a read that will help to guide our steps as we continue seeking to be an antiracist organization.



You may purchase this book at Carmichael's with a 10 percent discount. Thank you in advance for engaging this important community read prayerfully and with courage and openness.

~ Missy Smith

Help Us Strengthen Sunday Morning Adult Faith Formation

We are taking a closer look at our Sunday morning Bible Study offerings at Highland, and we'd love your input! Our goal is to better understand the unique strengths of each class, the people who participate, and the ways we might create additional opportunities for faith formation and community.

This Sunday, October 25, adult Bible Study classes will be invited to complete a brief Bible Study Class Inventory Survey as part of our evaluation process. Class teachers or leaders may turn in the completed survey with their attendance reports.

In addition, [this link is an Individual Survey for members and regular visitors](#) to share what they're looking for in a Sunday morning learning experience, as well as ideas for Wednesday nights and other small-group opportunities.

Your feedback will help us celebrate what is already happening, identify gaps or opportunities, and consider ways classes might grow, welcome new people, connect across generations, or develop new offerings. We hope to make recommendations to the Ministry Counsel before the end of the year.

Thank you for helping us imagine what faith formation at Highland can look like in this next season!

~ Adult Education Task Force

Highlights Class Continues This Sunday



Our fall edition of the Highlights Class began last Sunday! Two classes in the three-week series remain (October 25 and November 1), and we hope you will join us at 10:00 AM in the Commons if you are a recent new member or are visiting with us and want to learn more about Highland.

Help Us Reach Our Offering Goal for Global Missions

John 15:5 says “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit.”



Planting, tending, and harvesting take time and effort. Building relationships takes time and effort, too. CBF believes that long-term presence is essential to making a meaningful impact in the lives of the people among whom our field personnel serve. Your generosity to the Offering for Global Missions ensures the long-term presence of CBF field personnel like Alicia and Jeff Lee. The Lee's serve in North Macedonia. Working with local organizations and ministries, they support sustainable farming projects, provide counseling and educational support for families and students, care for refugees, and help distribute food to families living in extreme poverty and people neglected by society.

Prayerfully consider how you can support the Offering for Global Missions this year that will ensure the long-term presence of our field personnel – those who are the hands and feet of Christ for us around the globe. What is God leading you to give this year? **Highland's goal for this year is \$10,000.** We are vital partners in sharing love and hospitality around the world.

You may contribute to the Offering for Global Missions by using the QR code on the back of the order of worship, using an offering envelope found in the pews (identifying your contribution for Global Missions),

or via the [Highland website](#).

~ Global Partnership Team

Senior Adult October Outing



Our activity this month is lunch at Claudia Sanders Dinner House in Shelbyville. There will be great food and time for catching up with our church friends!

Who: Senior Adults and all their friends

What: Lunch fellowship

When: Thursday, October 22, 12:00 noon

Where: Claudia Sanders Dinner House - 3202 Shelbyville Rd, Shelbyville, KY

Why: Cause we're fun!

[Please let me know here](#) (or by calling me at 502-451-3735) if you plan to attend. Additionally, please let me know if you would like to ride the church bus. Our limit is 29 and we are currently more than halfway to that number. [Here is the link to Claudia Sanders](#) if you've never been before so you can get a look at the menu and a feel for the place.

~ Paul Henderson

November 4: An Evening of Prayer and Song

When we gather on November 4, regardless of what happened the day before as the election results came in, we know our country's future will weigh on our hearts and minds. We plan to meet in the sanctuary to pray, read Scripture, and sing our faith, speaking to God what weighs on us, listening for God's voice, and opening ourselves to the Spirit's care.

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!

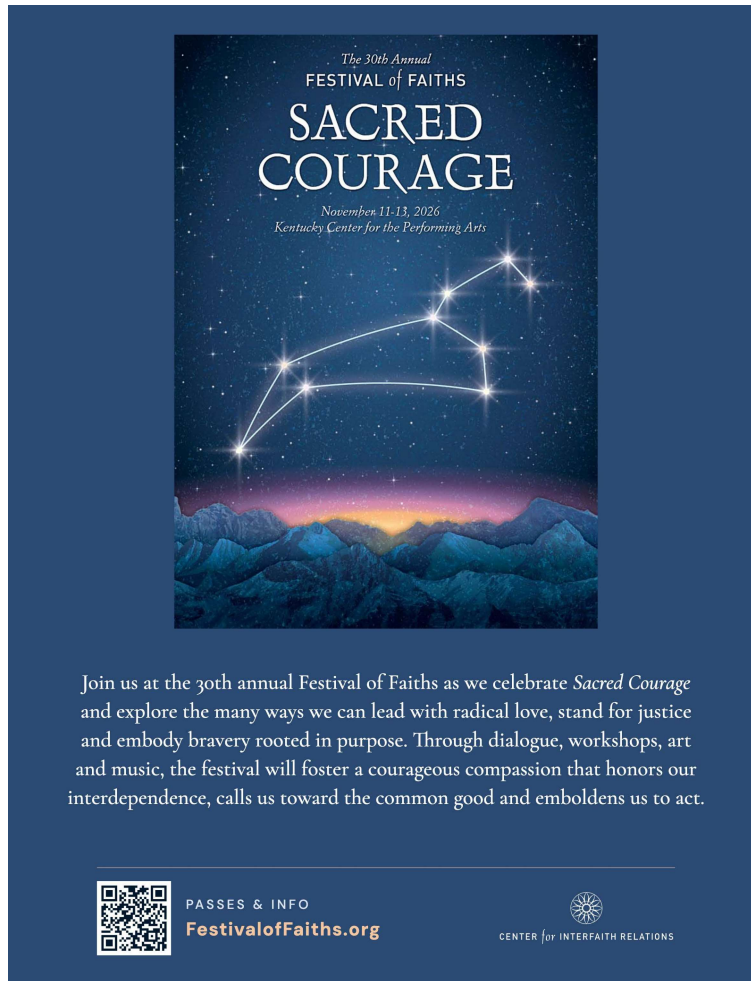


October Menus:

October 21: Baked Ziti, Steamed Veggies, Salad, Bread, Dessert

October 28: Mexican Casserole, Steamed Veggies, Salad, Chips & Salsa, Dessert

Festival of Faiths



You are cordially invited to attend the 2026 Festival of Faiths, hosted by the Center for Interfaith Relations. Please reach out to lauren@interfaithrelations.org for more information, scan the QR code to learn more at www.festivaloffaiths.org, or follow Festival of Faiths on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

Thank You from the West End School

Your continuing generosity to the West End School has enabled our 240 students to have a rich educational experience. Thank you!

A few years ago a pre-teen boy found his way to West End School. He had been dismissed from JCPS for disruptive behavior. His home life was chaotic, and many nights he had to sleep on friends' couches. Once he landed at West End and became acclimated to its structure, expectations, and to its unwavering support, a different boy began to emerge. His math and reading skills steadily improved, and he gradually became recognized as a class leader. As one of his teachers remarked, "West End School changed him, and he changed West End School."

Your support makes transformations such as this possible. We cannot thank you enough.

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**



October 21 & 28: Exploring Robert P. Jones' *The Hidden Roots of White Supremacy*

October 25: Highlights Class continues, 10:00 AM, Commons

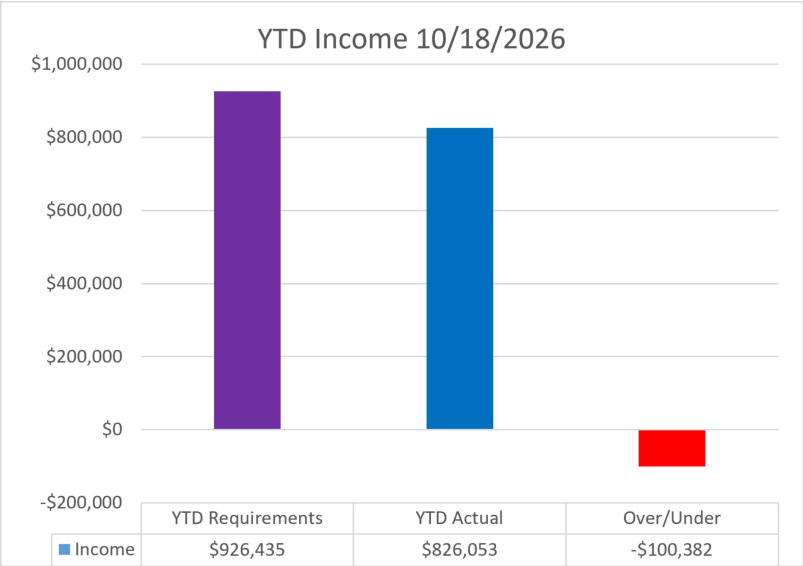
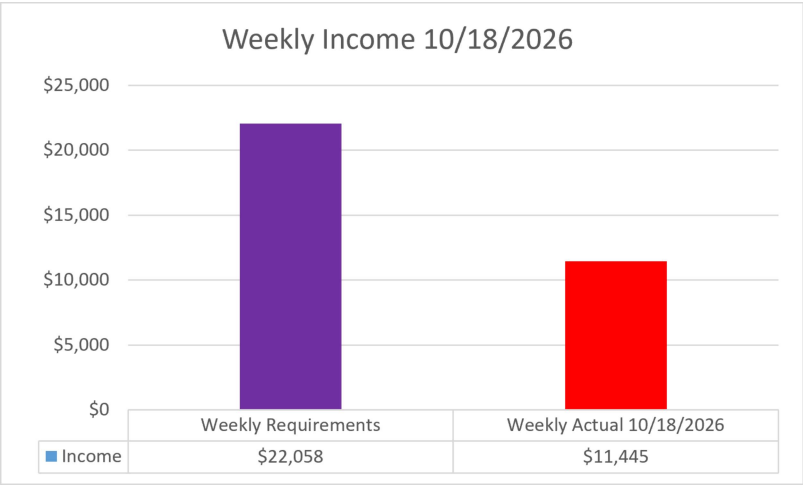
October 29: Byck Elementary Fall Festival, 5:30-7:00 PM

November 4: An Evening of Prayer and Song, 6:00 PM, Sanctuary

November 22: Thanksgiving Brunch, 10:00 AM, Fellowship Hall (stay tuned for details)



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.

- Michael Simmons, 41, killed September 28
- Isaiah Cleveland, 15, killed September 29



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