



A Christmas people  
are not particularly interested  
in a distant or regal God.  
Instead, the emphasis is on  
“with-ness.” The Incarnation  
draws the heart toward finding  
the divine everywhere and at all times.  
Those formed in this spirit trust that  
the everyday world is sacred.

~ Diana Butler Bass  
*Miracle on 10th Street And Other  
Christmas Writings*

**HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS**

**DECEMBER 29, 2024**

**10:00 A.M.**

Invitation to Worship

Justin Sizemore

**GOOD CHRISTIAN FRIENDS, REJOICE  
WITH HEART AND SOUL AND VOICE**

Prelude

David Schelat

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

Call to Worship

Justin Sizemore

Glory to God in the highest!

***And hope to every discouraged heart.***

Glory to God in the highest!

***And peace to every conflicted soul.***

Glory to God in the highest!

***And joy to every downcast spirit.***

Glory to God in the highest!

***And love to everyone.***

***Let us sing praises to our God this Christmas!***

Opening Hymn (122) †

IN DULCI JUBILO

*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

Prayer of Praise †

Justin Sizemore

Hymn (106)

IL EST NÉ

*He Is Born*

Hymn (107)

ST. LOUIS

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

Exchange of Peace †

Mary Alice Birdwhistell

Hymn (127) †

MENDELSSOHN

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

**GIVE YE HEED TO WHAT WE SAY:  
JESUS CHRIST WAS BORN TODAY**

Vocal Offering

arr. Dan Forrest

*Cradle Carol*

Richard Ryan, baritone

Lord Jesus, Savior, infant weak,  
Why come to earth as one so meek?  
A newborn babe, helpless and small;  
And yet Creator of us all.

Thou hast no beauty, form, nor grace;  
No fortune, rank, no fame, no place  
That men should see Thee and adore  
A babe so humble and so poor.

But to the soul whose eyes are healed,  
To whom the Truth has been revealed,  
Thy glory challenges the sun;  
Thou art a thousand joys in One.

Though strangers see a babe in straw,  
Thy children see the Lord of all  
Who laid aside His rightful reign  
To take away our sin and shame.

This sacrifice of love divine,  
This condescension to mankind  
With beauty robes Thy lowly frame,  
And sanctifies Thy simple name.

O aid my worship, Mighty King,  
That I might with the angels sing,  
“Glory to God on high!”  
Now crowned again beyond the sky!

Oh, help me see Thee and adore  
This little child, my God and Lord.

The Gospel Lesson †

Matthew 1:18-25 (Pew Bible page 1 – NT)

Mary Alice Birdwhistell

Sermon

*We Are a Christmas People*

**HE HAS OPENED HEAVEN'S DOOR  
AND WE ARE BLESSED FOREVERMORE**

Hymn of Response (102) †

*Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come*

ANTIOCH

Offertory Prayer

Offertory

*Coventry Carol*

arr. Howard Helvey

News for the Community

Mary Alice Birdwhistell

In response to your decision, *we welcome you! We covenant to be the family of God for you in this place. We hope to learn from you, give to you, and receive from you, as we journey in faith together.*

For the ministries that shape the life of our community, *thanks be to God.*

Doxology †

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God for all that love has done;  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One, Amen.*

Benediction †

Mary Alice Birdwhistell

Postlude

*Rustic Serenade to the Madonna*

Hector Berlioz

† *For those who are able, we invite you to stand.*

## Today in Worship

Phrases from today's opening hymn, *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*, will guide us toward images that embody segments of our worship service — praise, proclamation and response.

Highland is grateful to Sharon Sanders and Richard and Cathy Ryan for their leadership in worship today.

Listening Assist Devices are available. Please see our sound technician or an usher for assistance. Large print hymn sheets are also available upon request for visually impaired persons. An usher can provide a copy for you.

Worship care is available for infants, toddlers and preschoolers during worship. Our greeters are available to help you navigate our building. A Worship Cart with activities to engage children in the pew is located in the Commons. Children's Worship, for K-2nd graders during the sermon, has paused for Advent/Christmas season and will return on January 12.

Nearly 65% of people at Highland use online giving to make financial gifts to the church. We invite you to be one of them! Scan the QR code in the section below to be directed to our online giving page.

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### Notes and News for the Community of Faith

- **Work with Center for Congregational Health** — Please reserve Sunday, January 19 for church-wide conversations with our consultants from the Center for Congregational Health. The first conversation will be from 9:30-11:00 AM, with children's and youth Bible studies meeting during this time. Following worship and a break for lunch, there will be a second church-wide conversation from 2:00-3:30 PM. Please make every effort to attend at least one of the sessions, if not both, as they will foster important dialogue as we begin this interim season.
- **Worship in January** — We will continue to have Bible study at 10:00 AM and one Sunday morning worship service at 11:15 AM on Sundays in January. This will allow all of us to worship together on Mary Alice's last Sunday, and it will accommodate our schedule when the Center for Congregational Health is in town. Our proclaimers in January will be Bob Cunningham (Jan. 12), Carol Harston (Jan. 19), and Brian Henderson (Jan. 26).
- **Wednesday Nights in January: Moving Faith Forward** — On Wednesdays January 8, 15, and 22, Carol Harston will be leading us in her latest work on Moving Faith Forward. Since leaving Highland's ministerial staff in 2021, Carol has been deepening her traumatizing theology research by wondering what it looks like for people to move past their beliefs and grow into spiritual maturity. Carol's vision is a future in which people can live at peace with the past, confident in their ability to face whatever life brings, and open to a revived spirituality that evolves as life changes. We will meet shortly after 6:00 PM each week in the Fellowship Hall.
- **Upcoming Events:**
  - Sunday, January 5: Mary Alice Birdwhistell's last Sunday at Highland— **a reception to honor Mary Alice following 11:15 AM worship**
  - Wednesday, January 8: Wednesday Night Supper and activities resume
  - January 18-20: Weekend with Center for Congregational Health
  - Sunday, February 2: Regular Sunday schedule resumes; QCC at 4:00 PM on Zoom



**HIGHLAND  
BAPTIST CHURCH**  
*A thinking, feeling, healing  
community of faith*

*Our Mission...* God's Love compels us to cultivate a safe, welcoming community of faith where all are challenged to discover, grow, and serve, as together we boldly live out the worship that is our very lives.

**Jerre and Frank Bassett**  
CUSTODIANS

**Bob Cunningham**  
INTERIM ASSOCIATE PASTOR

**Kathleen Gordon**  
FINANCIAL SECRETARY

**Joseph Parr**  
ORGANIST AND MUSIC ASSOCIATE

**Mary Alice Birdwhistell**  
PASTOR

**Cheryl Davis**  
OFFICE MANAGER

**Paul Henderson**  
ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF MUSIC  
AND WORSHIP

**Renee Purtlebaugh**  
ASSOCIATE PASTOR TO CHILDREN  
AND THEIR FAMILIES

**Lauren Blackwell**  
INTERIM MINISTRY COORDINATOR  
MINISTRY COUNCIL CHAIR

**Megan Fuller**  
CHILDREN AND FAMILY  
MINISTRY ASSISTANT

**Robin Ramsay Lee**  
DEACON CHAIR

**Justin Sizemore**  
ASSOCIATE PASTOR TO YOUTH  
AND YOUNG ADULTS

**Walter McWhorter**  
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR