

Where transformed people are joining the work of God.



HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH
1101 Cherokee Road
Louisville, KY 40204



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A thinking, feeling, healing community of faith

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Please note:

All *in-person* services, activities, meetings and events at Highland Baptist Church are cancelled until further notice.

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August is Global Mission Month

The Global Partnerships Mission Team welcomes you to our special emphasis on global mission work for the month of August. We partner with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) to highlight the work of field personnel around the globe, collect a special offering which supports them directly, and to celebrate our own international work here at Highland, particularly in Morocco.



If you would like to learn more about how the CBF engages international aid and mission work, visit <https://cbf.net/offering-for-global-missions>.

This year, on account of COVID-19, many churches around the country will be giving less to this important fund. So, we at Highland invite you to give as generously as possible. We will keep you updated here in the newsletter about our financial progress on this important and special effort. We have raised over \$10,000 the last few years. Would it not be wonderful if we could achieve a number close to this again, even in the midst of a pandemic?

During Sunday worship, you can expect a weekly mission moment, led by members of the Global Partnerships Team, who will showcase the work of someone receiving funds from the Offering for Global Mission.

Further, this coming Sunday—our kick-off Sunday—we will welcome to the pulpit Rev. Sam Harrell. Sam currently serves as the Associate Coordinator of Global Mission for the CBF. He facilitates the work of global field personnel in over twenty countries. He and his wife, Melody, founded Africa Exchange, a non-profit education and community development organization.

Weekday Devotion Series: Bible Studies Featured This Week

We have expanded our weekday devotions in order to welcome more voices into our online space! Ministers will still offer a devotion at 10:00 a.m. each Monday, introducing the week's participants. We will focus each week on one of Highland's Core Values.

This week, Carol Harston offered a devotion on Monday and now those who have led during our interim will have a 10:00 a.m. devotion posted Tuesday through Friday.

This week's devotions will reflect upon the following core value: "We value a deeply spiritual, Christ-centered faith that opens us to life, equips us to serve, and calls us to action."

This week's leaders include Ron Smith (the SALT Class), Anita Roper (the Nomads Class), and Tracy Holladay (the Seekers Class).

For the Living of These Days—A Word from Renee Purtlebaugh

Last night's drive thru "Thank you!" for Jim England and all the many gifts he has shared with us through these 2 ½ years of interim time was an absolute delight! It was beyond good to see your faces, to engage in conversation for a few moments about life in your world, and to celebrate Jim. Jim, for all that you have been to us in these days—we say thank you! And we are so grateful that the journey continues with you and Mary Helen in the days to come.



Remarkably, a moving moment occurred by happenstance as the final car to drive thru and thank Jim was none other than our new pastor, Mary Alice, who had been moving into her new home most of the afternoon and evening. This symbolic, socially distanced baton hand-off was not lost on any of us there to witness it.

Even in the midst of deep gratitude yesterday, we (the staff) remarked at the vast numbers of you mourning and grieving the loss of someone you love and/or dealing with the health needs of family members and your own bodies. Parents are beginning to think about navigating NTI again or making choices about hybrid, in-person or virtual learning. We're imagining what virtual church might hold for the fall. Mary Alice is settling in and will soon begin her work among us. The work of justice continues. And we continue to creatively live and love and care for others as God calls us to, even in these pandemic days. The weeks before us are full to be sure, even as we are perhaps at our weariest moments on this journey.

My prayer for each of us as we hold deep gratitude in tension with grief and anxiety and weariness is that each of us might find rest for our bodies, minds and spirits in some way this week. May this week be one where we "learn the unforced rhythms of grace" as the Message Bible reminds us in Matthew 11. May we be nourished and renewed in the ways each of us most need.

And then, with our strength renewed by the God who walks with us, we will gather our energy and begin to imagine how to mark the beginning of this next season of possibility. We'll think thoughtfully about how to create the next set of daily rhythms for our families. We'll courageously keep pressing on toward creating a world where love and justice abound. We'll embrace the next moments of wondering and imagining—with great hope—the tomorrow God has for each of us and for Highland.

May the promise of our collective God-given energy carry us into these next days with momentum and joy until we look around and realize the tomorrow that we have dreamed of is in fact our now.

**Weekend Services
Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
Global Mission Sunday**

Genesis 32:22-31
Psalm 145
Psalm 17:1-9, 15
Matthew 14:13-21

Sam Harrell, Guest Proclaimer

Four-Week Study of James: Experimenting with Online Bible Study

Many of us are beginning to recognize and accept the truth—we are facing a year ahead of us that will hold more online connections than we could have anticipated months ago. As Associate Pastor of Faith Formation, I have spent this summer wondering—What is faith? How is it formed? How do we form faith during a pandemic? Rather than keep wondering, I am ready to begin experimenting to learn our way forward together!

To start this adventure, I will host a four-week online study of the Letter of James. This new short-term class will allow us to discover what programming might sustain us and serve us this school year.

The Letter of James: Central to Highland's identity is the scripture carved into stone in our sanctuary: "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only." These words from James 1:22 send you out into the world to embody the word through your living and doing. We love this sentiment, often feeling like it distinguishes us from the Baptist stereotype of fighting over the right belief rather than getting out into the street to enact just actions. But living out the word is no easy task as it looks different for each person, unique to each life and situation.

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Highland's Word To Our Community

... on NPR: *...where our building is closed but our church has always been open. With weekday reflections, Friday worship, and Sunday worship all available on Facebook and YouTube.*

... on our marquee:



Deacon Testimonies

Each year, Highland's new deacons share their faith journey as part of our weekend worship services as we prepare to welcome them into deacon service. Our new deacons have graciously agreed to offer their deacon testimony through an online video shared with the community. These testimonies are gifts that our new deacons give to our congregation, shared by the church on our YouTube channel under an unlisted link.

Links to the videos will be available in our Saturday email with the worship bulletin and in the email version of our weekly newsletter. We encourage all Highland's people to watch these videos to get to know better those serving in this role as deacon.

In-Person Worship Plans Prepared, Church Still Waiting to Welcome into Pews

Highland's staff formed two groups in June to develop plans for welcoming people back into the pews safely, following guidance from the CDC and state requirements. Those groups included an Attendance Team (Phil Collier, chair, with David Bannister, Amber Burke, Jan Forren, and Doris Hornbuckle) and a Logistics Team (Kathy Belcher and Tyler Swim, chairs, with Vaughn Bell, Lauren Blackwell, Bruce Carroll, Jeff Grey). Those teams met throughout the summer, presenting their plans to Ministry Council in our July meeting.

With cases rising, leadership is not ready to announce any date of when we will welcome people back into the pews. The survey conducted last week supports this decision. Should cases decrease and outlook improve, church leaders (Ministry Council, these In-Person Worship groups, and staff) will explore a starting date to put these plans into action.

Our groups have done wonderful work, enabling us to be ready to return to in-person worship when the time is right with a congregational covenant for safety and an idea of what to expect when you attend. Regardless of when that day comes, welcoming people back into pews will not end our online streaming. Online worship will continue in order to ensure the safety of all people healthy at home. Thank you for your patience and support as we discern our way forward together!

Four-Week Study of James: Experimenting with Online Bible Study *(continued from page 1)*

Further, what is this "word" that we're doing? With COVID, racial injustice, and national uncertainty, we are repeatedly coming up against the fundamental question: What are we going to do? What are we going to do about school? About church? About working from home? About repentance and reconciliation? About justice? About our neighbor? James invites us to pursue these questions *through* the word. The word becomes the lens through which we wonder individually and collectively *how* we live our day-to-day lives.

We cannot promise "answers," but we do believe that asking these questions while reading scripture together allows us to receive more light and truth than we can when we read it alone. In this spirit, we invite you this August to read the Letter of James in community. James offers wisdom about faith, poverty, trials and temptations, partiality, speech, selfishness, cooperation with the system, and patience—timely subjects for our days!

Participation: To participate, fill out the sign-up link at <https://forms.gle/bbtWfLMQeGq22FMD8>. The link provides a chance for you to share your preferences for online formats. Based on feedback, we will seek to offer a few different paths (whether that is a Zoom discussion, a Facebook forum in a private group, video reflections, etc.). Each pathway will be optional, depending on your availability and preference for online connection. Since this will be an online effort, you do not have to be a Highland member or live in Louisville to participate! All are welcome to sign-up.

If you have questions, contact me via email (carol@hbclouisville.org).

In hope of more light and truth as we walk this road together, ~ Carol Harston

Staying Connected Outside These Walls

As we live through these days where we are rarely, if ever, physically connected with each other we make use of technology to bridge some of the gaps that exist between us. Below are some of the ways that you may use to stay connected to the community of Highland Baptist Church:

Worship from the sanctuary on our Facebook page at 7:00 p.m. on Friday nights and 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. These streams also appears on our YouTube page.

Bible study & children's gatherings via Zoom. Several adult Bible study classes and Pastor Renee are gathering weekly via Zoom which allows connectivity via computer or phone. If your child would like to connect, email Renee. If your Bible study class would like to begin meeting this way, email Carol at carol@hbclouisville.org or Walter at walter@hbclouisville.org.

Food Justice Team, Invitation for Volunteers

The food justice team here at Highland works in partnership with the Louisville Food Co-op. A co-op business is run and owned jointly by its members who equally share the benefits and profits, and it acts in the interest of its members and the community it serves.

We invite you to consider membership. There is more information at this website: <https://loufoodcoop.com>.

Further, the co-op is looking for volunteers, even during COVID-19 days. They state that "we want people to have the information they need to eat and survive, to eat nutritiously, and to support the farmers surrounding Louisville." If you'd like to volunteer please email Taylor Young at louisvillefoodcooperative@gmail.com.



**Missions
Corner**

Take the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge

Some of Highland Baptist Church's Bible classes are currently taking the 21-Day Challenge. The challenge is for 21 days to do one action to further your understanding of power, privilege, supremacy, oppression, and equity. The actions include reading articles, listening to podcasts, watching videos, observing, and finding ways to form and deepen community connectedness.

If you are interested in taking the challenge, are not in a class doing it, and would like to join others in a weekly Zoom meeting for encouragement and discussion, contact Missy Smith or Lauren Jones Mayfield (laurenjm@hbclouisville.org, 347-342-6450) to receive the invitation to join the Zoom meeting.

The meetings will be held Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. starting on August 4 and continuing through August 25.

You can access the challenge materials at <https://www.eddiemoorejr.com/21daychallenge> or <https://debbyirving.com/21-day-challenge>.

La Casita Needs Our Support

They have lost some donors and supports on account of the Center's support of Black Lives Matter. Would you consider donating to La Casita? If so, please visit <http://www.lacasitacenter.org>. You can also send them a message of support via their website at <http://www.lacasitacenter.org/cont-ctanos.html>.

HCM's Online Video Production Camp

Highlands Community Ministries is partnering with Beargrass Media to host a week-long camp on how to write, record, edit, produce, and publish video productions. Students will use phones and tablets to create their productions. The dates of the camp are August 10-14, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Cost is \$175 and you must sign up by August 5. For more information and to sign-up, visit www.beargrassmedia.com.

Highland Highlights



We celebrated Jim England's interim on Monday night with a drive-through expression of gratitude in the parking lot! Jim and Mary Helen England were present with staff to say hello to people as they came through the parking lot. The last car of the evening was Mary Alice Birdwhistell, who is now in Louisville and getting settled in her new home!



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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.

Our Vision

We dream of being an engaging, vibrant Christian church, where transformed people are joining the work of God, creating a world where justice and Love are abundant.

Our Values

- We value a **deeply spiritual, Christ-centered faith** that opens us to life, equips us to serve, and calls us to action.
- We value a **courageous, progressive theology** whose relevance extends from the pew to the street, that engages both the mind and the heart, and that welcomes everyone from the skeptic to the devoted.
- We value **all people**, not in spite of, but precisely because of all that makes each one unique.
- We value **being doers of the word**, living out what Jesus taught: showing hospitality to strangers, confronting injustice, giving voice to those who have been silenced.
- We value a **healthy community**, where honest relationships provide all people safety, encouragement, acceptance, and healing, and challenge us to practice gentleness, forgiveness, and continued growth.
- We value **embracing challenge and change**: naming hard things, asking questions, and leaning into tensions and ambiguity.
- We value **growing together across the lifespan**, through multi-generational and intergenerational relationships and ministries.
- We value being rooted in our **distinct and radical heritage** that compels us to breathe new life into bedrock Baptist principles.
- We value **broad and deep worship** that invites us into the mystery of a loving God.
- We value **being good stewards** of all we have been given, discerning together how best to use our financial, physical, human, and spiritual gifts to follow Jesus and carry out our mission.