

Where transformed people are joining the work of God.



HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH
1101 Cherokee Road
Louisville, KY 40204



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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Committee Recommends Mary Alice Birdwhistell as Senior Pastor; Virtual Call Weekend June 11-14

The Pastor Search Committee enthusiastically recommends Mary Alice Birdwhistell as the next pastor for Highland Baptist Church.

Mary Alice is currently serving as Senior Pastor at Calvary Baptist Church in Waco, Texas. Though she has been in Waco for 11 years, Mary Alice is from Kentucky and graduated from Georgetown College. She attended Truett Seminary at Baylor University for her Master of Divinity.

The virtual call weekend will be held June 11-14 (see below).

Schedule reminders

- **Thursday, June 11, 7:00 p.m.:** Private Zoom meeting of Mary Alice with Deacons, Ministerial Staff, and Ministry Council.
- **Friday, June 12, 10:00 a.m.:** Open Zoom meeting with congregation.
- **Friday, June 12, 12 noon:** Voting information will be emailed to all Highland Baptist Church members and voting affiliates.
- **Friday, June 12, 7:00 p.m.:** Mary Alice preaches in Friday Church (streaming on Facebook and YouTube).
- **Saturday, June 13, 10:00 a.m.:** Open Zoom meeting with congregation.
- **Saturday, June 13, 2:00 p.m.:** Open Zoom meeting with congregation.
- **Sunday, June 14, 10:00 a.m.:** Mary Alice preaches in Sunday Service (streaming on Facebook and YouTube).

Voting Process

The process for voting will be via SurveyMonkey, a secure online survey tool. *Each member and voting affiliate of Highland Baptist Church will receive an email with a link and password to cast their vote.* Members and voting affiliates with little or no access to the internet may call the church office at 502-451-3735 to cast their vote. Voting will be allowed Friday, June 12, 7:30-8:30 p.m., and Sunday, June 14, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. An announcement of the results will take place at 1:00 p.m. on June 14 (via streaming on Facebook and YouTube).

If you have any questions about the Call Weekend and/or voting process, please email interim@hbclouisville.org and one of the members of the Pastor Search Committee will reply to you.

~ *Your Pastor Search Committee:* Bob Cunningham (chair), Alecia Fuller, Kathy Belcher, Tyler Swim, Earl Shelp, Noah Cooksey, and Carolyn King



For the Living of These Days—A Word from Perry Dixon

This week, Mary Alice Birdwhistell has finally arrived. You will each have to decide for yourself if she is the one to serve as Highland's next pastor. One beauty (and risk) of Baptist life and polity, for those who have neither previously familiar, nor yet taken the 20 minute Highlights class version of Baptist history taught by yours truly, is that only you can decide. Voting for pastor is like forest fires in this way.

As one voice among many, I will say that I could not more strongly recommend Mary Alice to Highland. I also say this as someone whose life and career will depend in some ways on whether I am right in this regard. She is pastoral in a way that we each need, strong, courageous, compassionate, and affirming as if God actually created the one with whom she is walking. For me, her identity, personality, and gifts make Mary Alice the pastor we need, in a congregation such as this, for a time such as this. We claim to be a progressive voice in Baptist life. To call Mary Alice would be to live into that claim in a new way we have not yet, not just because of who she is, but because of what possibilities begin to emerge if we trust that God is still at work in her and in us.

I believe that I could speak in sweeping affirmations that would be far more than platitudes. I do like writing and talking after all. But my imagination is exhausted today by what is happening in our city and our country. I must tell you quite simply that when I imagine the possibility of working with Mary Alice as leader and colleague, and perhaps more so when I imagine you walking alongside Mary Alice as pastor, I am given life and energy that feels a little rusty to exercise after such a long interim, in a good way. I am not allowed to endorse political candidates. I do endorse Mary Alice, because I'm allowing myself today to be surprised in good ways, and to have hope for Mary Alice and for you.



My Story by Becky Smith

I was raised in the Baptist church and spent the first half of my young adult life in the Presbyterian church. In 1987, after my mother's death, I became very disillusioned and walked away from the church. I decided that I could remain spiritual but no longer a part of organized religion. And that's the way I continued to live my life for the next 25 years. But in 2013, my closest friend, Linda Barber, started to attend Highland Baptist Church's Friday Church with her new husband and she begged me to come with her. I finally agreed and attended my first Friday Church. I returned week after week and began to "feel" my faith being restored.

One evening, Bojangles Blanchard was preaching. I don't remember the primary focus of the sermon, but he spoke of the fish who "escaped" the sea only to find himself "floundering on the beach". And just before the fish was to draw his last breath, he was able to return to the water. He was able to return to his old life refreshed and renewed. Obviously that image of the floundering fish has remained with me ever since. And it gave me the reassurance that I needed—to know that I had found the right place to "be a doer of the word and not a hearer only".

Staying Connected Outside These Stone 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:

- **Our ministry staff is offering a word every weekday at 10:00 a.m. on our Highland Facebook Page.** Our schedule is as follows: Lauren Jones Mayfield on Monday, Jim England on Tuesday, Carol Harston on Wednesday, Renee Purtlebaugh on Thursday, and Perry Dixon on Friday. These are also being uploaded to our YouTube channel within a day or two of their creation.
- **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.

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 available on Facebook and YouTube.*
... on our marquee:



Grateful for Your Story

The Faithful Giving Ministry Group is grateful for how you give so generously to Highland Baptist Church; both financially and through *Our Stories*. We continue to collect and share memories, words, and images at OurStories@hbclouisville.org.

We want to share some of our stories with you during these difficult days:



Our Highland church community is alive and well as you have faithfully continued your support in valuable ways and financial means. For me, our church family is my anchor and sailing companion through these 57 years of living, growing and trying to have a servant heart. Seeing Phil Collier's tribute to my good friend, Dave Nakdimen, reminded me of the many saints who modeled, guided, and held me up. The really wonderful thing about our fellowship today is that I have all these new Highland people that inspire and confirm the transforming Christ love engaged among us. Having retired from a position that followed the progress of scores of churches, I know just how unusual it can be for a faith community like ours to thrive and truly be "doers of the Word", be genuine Christ followers, be instruments of transforming love. We are not perfect, but the desire and the will to keep giving our best is being blessed by the Creator, Christ, Spirit. Peace be yours, ~ *Jim Hawkins*

Zoom to Table Talk

Table Talk will meet this Thursday, June 11, at 6:30 p.m., using Zoom conferencing technology. We shall have an opportunity to check in with each other and meet new people interested in an informal time to build new and strengthen existing relationships within the congregation. Everyone is invited to participate. To join the gathering, contact Marc Dowell, Jim Shelton, or Earl Shelp.



Looking to Volunteer?

New Roots is a local venture seeking to bring fresh foods to those living in the food desert. They set up local shops around town weekly. If you would like to volunteer to work at one of the locations please reach out to Terry Casey. Terry is a member of the Food Justice Team.



**Missions
Corner**

Kentucky Refugee Ministries (KRM), on June 18, will be delivering over 600 boxes of food to families through Dare to Care. Basically, a person drives up to KRM (at a designated time that has been arranged with the volunteer) and the boxes are loaded into your trunk and then you drop them off at a client's home without any contact with the client. There will be a minimum of 3 boxes of food per family (based on size of family). Jen is one of the supervisors for the project and if folks want to participate, she needs the following information: full name, cell number, and any scheduling issues on the day of the event. You can email the info to this address volunteer@kyrm.org.

Black Lives Matter Yard Signs

The Logo Warehouse is a local, black owned business, and we are purchasing 50 "Black Lives Matters" signs from them. Would you like one for your front yard? They will be \$7 each, 12"x18", and come with metal stakes. To reserve one, please email Shannon Campbell.

Get Home Safely: Ten Rules of Survival

This is an excellent video resource that resembles "the talk" that many parents must have with their black and brown children. We do well to watch this film and learn. <https://tinyurl.com/ycr48hec>.

Anti-Racism Training with Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis

One of my (Lauren) favorite pastors and preachers in our current context is Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis of Middle Collegiate Church in New York City. She will offer an anti-racism training via zoom, Wednesday-Thursday, June 17-18, 7:00-8:30 p.m., for just \$20. Learn more about it and register for the event online at <https://tinyurl.com/y8jprhxw>. Learn more about Rev. Dr. Lewis and her ministry at <https://www.middlechurch.org/ministers/Rev-Jacqueline-J-Lewis>.

Staying informed about Press Conferences, Rallies, and Marches

If you would like to receive email updates from me when I learn of various opportunities to congregate and protest, please let me know! laurenjm@hbclouisville.org.

A Letter from Karen Thomas Smith

Dearest CBF Kentucky friends,

I just got out of an EEAM (Protestant Church in Morocco) pastor's meeting via ZOOM where we shared our news and our prayer requests. Our brothers and sisters in Morocco expressed their heartfelt concern for all of us here in Kentucky and around the United States dealing with the traumatic reality rocking our country. In his closing prayer, Tetouan's Pastoral Intern Daniel Manariyo from Burundi (who, as I can testify, has known more than his share of suffering in his 30 something years) fervently prayed for us, his church partners, in the USA as we "suffer from the crisis of racism"—a simple, but profound and poignant prayer for us as we figure out how to dismantle racist structures and construct with all in our community more just structures and systems. It's not good enough to NOT be racist. We must be anti-racist.

CBF's model of partnership mission and ministry is intentionally anti-racist; CBF partners with local churches and indigenous NGOs on the ground to assist, equip, resource, and empower them according to their own discernment of vision and priorities, never trying to dictate or control. And CBF never sets up its own alternative, independent programs that compete with local churches to ensure that the will of "wise, white westerners" will predominate.

When you give to the COVID-19 Morocco Relief fund, your contribution empowers local church leaders and volunteers to take significant action to relieve suffering. You trust your African partners to make good decisions... Our CEI teams have distributed thousands (no exaggeration) of food "baskets" across the 11 cities where we have congregations, have accompanied migrant mothers giving birth and providing for their newborns (working with the larger Moroccan community to collect clothing for the infants), have offered shelter to homeless teenagers on the dangerous migration journey.

Our partners make good decisions. And by giving to this fund for the church in Morocco you are taking anti-racist action. If you were wondering to know where to begin in this struggle, let me assure you—you have already begun... Thank you. Keep up God's kin-dom work.

Grace and peace, ~ *Karen*

To contribute to this work in Morocco, go to <http://cbfky.org/donate>, or mail a check to CBF Kentucky, P. O. Box 7098, Louisville, KY 40257. Be sure to note that this is for the work in Morocco. Thank you!