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October 6, 2020

Why I Give by Vi Chatmon

Growing up, I went to a small fundamental Baptist church. The preacher preached “what God laid on his heart” for that Sunday. The music director picked hymns that were requested by members, or just because they were favorites, or maybe because they hadn’t been sung in a while. The choir sang the “special” based on what we had rehearsed the previous Wednesday night. I don’t think there was ever any communication, let alone planning, between the preacher and the music director; they both did their own thing, and a church service was had. There was never a memorable service at that church from that period of my life.



When I began worship at Highland, I was astonished by the way the scriptures, prayers, hymns, anthems, sermons, and all other aspects of the service were blended into a meaningful, coherent “liturgy”, that as a whole, spoke a unified message. It is so clear that ministers join together in deliberate planning for every service to deliver a specific message. While many of us may take away lots of different perspectives, the message is indeed consistent and therefore, powerful.

I am grateful for our ministers involved in planning and for the artists who have written beautiful works of music and poetry. The salaries, the sheet music, the licenses to print, the bulletins--these all require our pledges of money to pay for and to purchase. This is one of the many reasons I give to Highland. I hope you will, too.

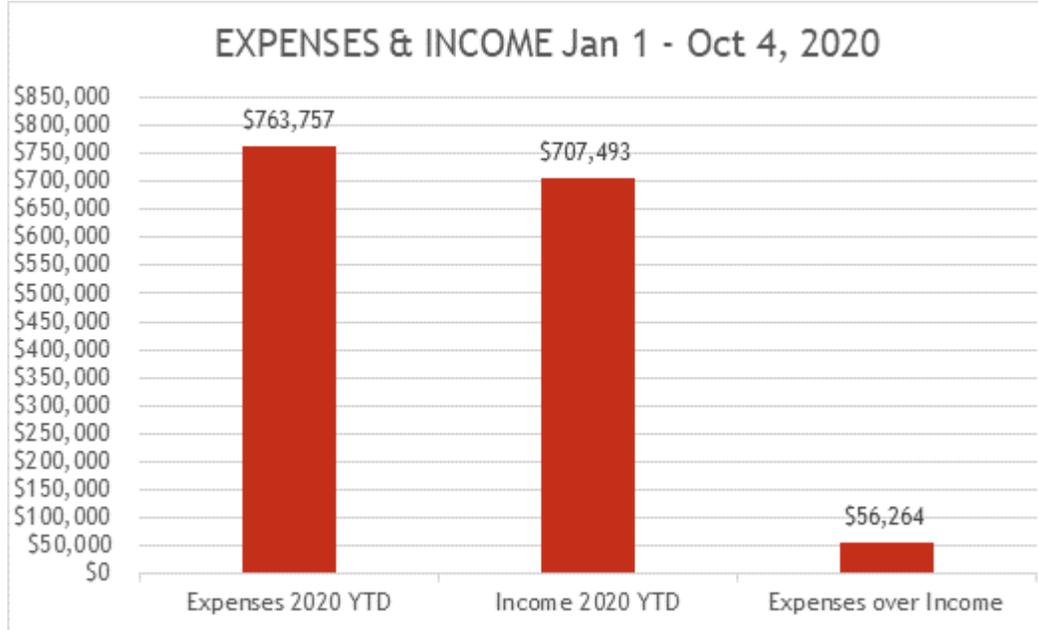
We want to give you a recap of giving after our first Commitment Sunday. We are pleased that 58 people (or family units) have committed \$272,680. We are so very grateful for these pledges! If you have not had an opportunity to make your commitment yet, please do so. You can do this online, by calling the church office, or by mailing back the tear-off portion of the brochure you received in the mail. Thank you again, ~
Faithful Giving Ministry Group

[Click here to set up your 2021 pledge online!](#)

Update from Finance Ministry Group

Finance Ministry Group will begin to provide a weekly update on our finances. We will provide highlights with bullet points along with a graph below.

- A reminder that the vast majority of our expenses continue even as we are not meeting in person.
- Through October 4, 2020, expenses are \$56,264 over our income. However, this will change as we get the end of month totals and add in those expenses.
- Pledged Income is at 97.5%.
- In the weeks ahead, we will provide an estimate of expenses for the remainder of the year and the income needed to ensure that we meet those expenses



Virtual Quarterly Church Conference Scheduled for October 21

We will have a virtual Quarterly Church Conference on Wednesday, October 21, at 7:00 p.m., via Zoom. This Quarterly Church Conference will include our regular reports, as we seek to adapt to new avenues of meeting during this season where we're healthy at home. We will share the agenda for this upcoming Quarterly Church Conference in next week's newsletter. Please mark your calendar so that we can make sure we meet our quorum even during this digital age!



Meet with Mary Alice - New Dates Available

I am loving my times meeting the Highland family face to face, and I look forward to meeting many more of you in the days to come. Please be assured that I will continue opening up more meeting times each week! I will continue to do this throughout the fall until I am able to meet with everyone. To schedule a time to meet with me,

visit <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4CA9AC23A0F9C34-meet2>. Please note that I will need to meet at Highland (socially distant and masked inside or outside) on weekdays during office

hours. On weeknights or weekends, I am happy to meet offsite and come to your front porch/back porch, have you over to mine, or meet at another outside space. Know how much I value this time with you, friends! I hope to learn your stories, to discover what you value most

deeply about Highland, to listen to your concerns or questions about the future, and to hear your hopes and dreams for our faith community as we journey together in the days ahead. ~ *Mary Alice*

For the Living of These Days by Mary Alice Birdwhistell

The “living of these days” for me as your pastor has been quite different than any of us probably imagined it would be at the beginning of this year. Never would I have imagined that we wouldn’t be able to gather together for worship face-to-face. Never would I have imagined that I would meet my new congregation in Zoom rooms, Facebook profiles, and drive-thru’s around the church parking lot. Never would I have imagined that I wouldn’t be able to visit you in the hospital, to lay hands on deacons as they begin their ministry with us, or to offer a hug to the people who are quickly becoming the family of God for me in this place. Never would I have imagined that I wouldn’t know what it feels like for our singing to echo off the stone walls of the sanctuary, to share a meal together in the Fellowship Hall, or to dream together around the table as we plan for the upcoming year.

And there is certainly grief and loss in all of this. There is grief for us as a congregation, and there is grief for me as your pastor. We can all feel it.

And yet, never would I have imagined the beautiful ways that God’s love might continually break through the boundaries and limitations of Covid-19. One of the best ways I have experienced God’s tangible love and faithful presence in this community is through meeting you—something I do not take for granted in this unique time and space.

In my short time with you at Highland, I have already had over 45 meetings with you—in the sanctuary, on your back decks, in Zoom rooms, on my front porch, and even on Highland’s playground. This has allowed me to have one-on-one time with a little over 100 people from the Highland family. Each of these meetings, without exception, is sacred space that is bringing healing and hope to this unique season that we share.

Each time I meet you, you invite me into your stories. You share your deep love for the unique kind of faith community that Highland aspires to be. You share your honest questions, your frustrations, and the real challenges of what it means for us to be the Church in authentic ways. And, you share your God-sized dreams about where we might journey together as the Highland family in the days ahead.

I recognize that we will need to get creative about these meetings as the weather gets colder and the days get darker earlier. However, know that these meetings are and continue to be one of my top priorities as I begin as your pastor.

Someone asked me if I would have scheduled these meetings if Covid hadn’t happened. I’m not sure, but I doubt they would have looked quite like they do now.

And so, for the chance to be together with you in creative ways, to hear from you, learn from you, give to you, and receive from you, I give great thanks. Never would have imagined what a gift this would be.

Weekend Services
Nineteenth Sunday
after Pentecost

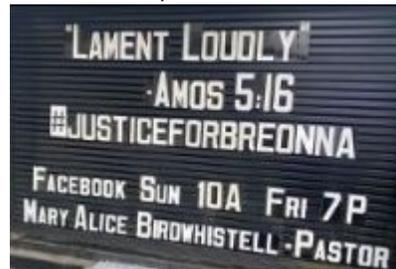
Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23
 Philippians 4:1-9
 Matthew 22:1-14

Mary Alice Birdwhistell, Proclaimer

Highland's Word To Our Community

... on NPR: ...continuing to nurture our faith community with Friday and Sunday worship services available on Facebook and YouTube.

... on our marquee:



Please Note:

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

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.

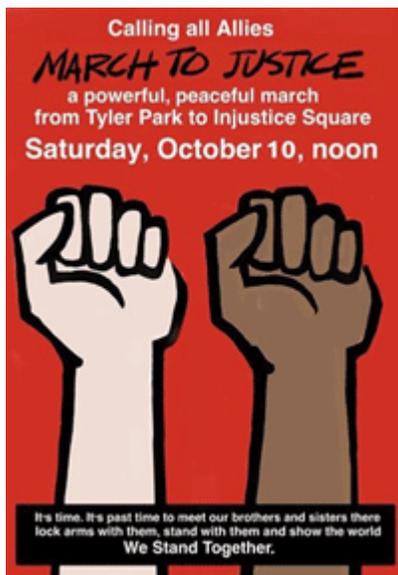
Bible study & children's gatherings via Zoom. Several adult Bible study classes and Pastor Renee are gathering weekly via Zoom which allows connectivity via computer or phone. If your child would like to connect, email Renee. If your Bible study class would like to begin meeting this way, email Carol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

Adult Corner

Zoom to Table Talk

Table Talk will meet this Thursday, October 8, 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.

Mission Corner



March to Justice

Planned in conjunction with Attica Scott, Shameka Parrish-Wright and others, all are invited to join on Saturday, October 10, this march which will move from Tyler Park to Injustice Square. Sadiqa Reynolds and Rev. Bruce Williams will speak at the march's end downtown. Charles Booker will be present, and Hannah Drake will write a poem. The goal is to expand, enormously, the ally community with a daytime, weekend event.

HCM's Empty Bowls

Highlands Community Ministries' annual fundraiser, [Empty Bowls](#), a virtual edition for 2020, is in its final days! Donate now through

Thursday, October 8, to be eligible for prizes! HCM is more grateful than ever to have had the support of their community for 24 years for this event that helps feed Highland's neighbors in need.



Empty Bowls 2020

HCM especially thanks the businesses that have sponsored Empty Bowls and the Highlands Congregations that have been with us since the beginning, in 1970.

TAKE ACTION: Oppose New Anti-Immigrant Policy Proposal

This month, the Trump administration proposed a rule that would dramatically expand surveillance of immigrants and U.S. citizens sponsoring immigrants under the guise of increased "vetting." This dangerous proposal includes collecting DNA, voice prints, iris and face scans, as well other personal characteristics for virtually all immigration and citizenship applicants to be stored in government databases. This sweeping rule does nothing to make us any safer, and in the past, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has been unable to protect the personal data it receives. DHS has also given merely 30 days (instead of the standard 60 days) for the public to submit comments on this massive, 328-page rule.

This is yet another step on the anti-immigrant agenda and represents dehumanizing and undemocratic values. Join Church World Service and KY Refugee Ministries in sending a clear message that people of faith and people who care about immigrants believe that this is an immoral, extreme proposed rule seeking to harm immigrant communities.

[Click here](#) to submit a pre-drafted comment that you can adapt to your voice to oppose the proposed rule by Tuesday, October 13, at 4:00 p.m. ET (1:00 p.m. PT). Consider sharing your own experiences, stories, perspectives, values and research as to why we should not institute mass and indefinite surveillance of immigrants.

Friday Church Corner

We would love to have you join us for:

“Let Your Spirit Sing”

When: Saturday, October 10, 4:00 p.m. (weather permitting)

Where: At Highland Baptist Church in the parking lot

Masks and Social Distancing Required.

You may bring your own chair or sit in one of ours.

What: The Friday Church Band will be leading us as we put our fear in the backseat and lift our Spirit and the Spirit of others through sharing, encouraging, and connecting.



Around Highland...

... Many thanks to Bob Belcher and Bob Cunningham for giving Fellowship Hall a fresh coat of paint. The "Bobs" worked hard to spruce up the basement. Thank you!



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