



Highlights

Highland Presbyterian Church
2380 Cloverdale Avenue
Winston-Salem, NC 27103-2012
Volume 58, Issue 17

Phone 336-724-6303
Fax 336-724-6305
www.highlandpres.org

December 1, 2024

Advent and Christmas at Highland

Our Advent theme is *From Generation to Generation*, and we hope you will plan to be with us as we make our way together. The hymns and carols of the season of Advent and Christmas are among the most beloved of all church music. We'll be reflecting in worship on the ways that God has worked through the generations in coming to us in Christ.

First Sunday of Advent, December 1: *Hope*

Advent Study Begins
Worship at 11:00 a.m.
Advent Devotional Booklets available

Second Sunday of Advent, December 8: *Peace*

Worship at 11:00 a.m.
Post-Worship Fellowship, 12:00 p.m.
Advent Vespers Service, 5:00 p.m.

Third Sunday of Advent, December 15: *Joy*

Pre-Worship Carol Singing, 10:45 a.m.
Worship at 11:00 a.m.
Caroling for Friends in Need, 3:00 p.m.
Christmas Joy Offering

Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 22: *Love*

Potluck Breakfast, 9:30 a.m.
Worship at 11:00 a.m.
Chancel Choir and Highland Brass

Christmas Eve, December 24,

Family-Friendly Service, 4:00 p.m.
Candlelight Service, 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Day, December 25

Joy to the World, the Lord Is Come!

First Sunday of Christmas, December 29

Worship at 11:00 a.m.
(no church school this day)



*Please see inside for details about these
and other offerings!*

Worship

11:00 a.m.

December 1, First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 2:1–5

Matthew 1:1–17

Sermon: Randy Harris

December 8, Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11:110

Luke 1:26–38

Sermon: Randy Harris

December 15, Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35:1–10

Matthew 1:18–25

Sermon: Debbie Layman

December 22, Fourth Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2–5a

Luke 1:39–55

Sermon: Randy Harris

December 29, First Sunday of Christmas

John 1:1–14

Luke 2:15–21

Sermon: Courtney Stevens

January 5, Epiphany Sunday

Isaiah 60:1–6

Matthew 2:1–12

Sermon: Randy Harris

Highland Worship Online

There are several ways to access worship:

- Click the link in the Sunday morning email;
- Go to [Highland's website](#) and click on the "[Highland Worship Online](#)" page;
- Subscribe to Highland's YouTube channel where the worship videos are posted (Highland PCWS).

On our Worship Online page, there are links for the Bulletin, a virtual "Friendship Pad," as well as a virtual "offering plate."

Wheelchair Assistance on Sundays

If you or a loved one need assistance on Sunday mornings to church school and/or worship via wheelchair, please contact [Mike Culler](#), 336-413-8414, no later than noon on Saturdays to make arrangements for the next day. The morning of, you would park in the Activity Building parking lot, and someone would meet you with a wheel chair.



Office hours are Monday–Thursday, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Randy Harris, *Pastor*, Ext. 210,
rharris@highlandpres.org

Debbie Layman, *Associate Pastor*, Ext. 212,
dlayman@highlandpres.org

Courtney Stevens, *Associate Pastor* Ext. 218,
cstevens@highlandpres.org

Heather Ferguson, *Director of Christian Education*, Ext. 204,
hferguson@highlandpres.org

Chris Gilliam, *Director of Music*, Ext. 202,
cgilliam@highlandpres.org

Susan Bates, *Organist*, Ext. 202,
sbates@highlandpres.org

Joy Hohmann,
Business Manager, Ext. 205,
jhohmann@highlandpres.org

Gidget Payne,
Administrative Coordinator, Ext.
201, gpayne@highlandpres.org

Alternative Giving in Advent

We look forward to our tradition of offering an Alternative Giving focus during the Advent season. As we celebrate the formation of Highland's Earth Care Team this fall, the focus for our Alternative Giving this year will be on being stewards of God's earth. Gifts will focus on ways to support neighbors near and far suffering the impact of the climate crisis. You can make gifts which will support two organizations in Western North Carolina in Buncombe County – Black Mountain Counseling and BeLoved Asheville. The other option is a gift of mangrove trees in Madagascar. More details are available on our website [here](#), or at the Alternative Giving tables which will be available before and after worship in the Narthex and Gallery Hall during the season of Advent.

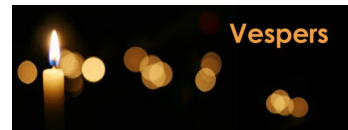


We hope you will plan on these alternative gifts as a meaningful way to honor loved ones and make a difference in the lives of our neighbors near and far.

Advent Vespers Service

Sunday, Dec. 8, 5:00 p.m. in the Chapel

All are welcome to this evening worship time. The service will include music, readings, prayer, reflection time, and more. In the midst of the busy-ness and stress of these days, we hope you will take some time apart to remember who we are, and whose we are, in this season of light that shines in the darkness.



Christmas Eve Services, 4:00 and 7:00 p.m.

This year's 4:00 p.m. worship service will be interactive and intergenerational. While children, youth, and adults will lead the service with a drama, *An Unexpected Christmas*, we will all be invited to participate in singing and imagining what that first Christmas might have been like. Plan now to join us for this unforgettable worship experience.



Our 7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service will feature scripture readings, beautiful carols and hymns, and the warm glow of candlelight as we celebrate the Light of Christ, born into the world. (We plan to livestream the 7:00 p.m. service.)

Hunger Offering

On **December 1**, don't forget to bring your gifts for our monthly Hunger Offering — pasta sauce for Crisis Control and your 5 Cents a Meal for our Presbytery! Thank you for your generous donations supporting neighbors who hunger in our community and around the world.



Need a Ride to Church in December?

The Congregational Care Committee does not want anyone to miss our meaningful Advent or Christmas Eve worship services because they do not drive. If you would like a ride or volunteer to drive others to an Advent Sunday morning worship or the 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service, please call the church office (336-724-6303).

Highland's Chrismons and Crèches

Part of Highland's Advent decorations in the Sanctuary include the Chrismon ornaments on the tree, as well as a wondrous variety of crèches in the Sanctuary window sills. Guides to our Chrismons and crèches are available in the front window sills in the Sanctuary. We hope that you will take time to learn about the meaning of these special symbols that help us prepare for Christ's birth.



Final 2024 Fling Fellowship Meal

Wednesday, December 4, 6:00 p.m.

We hope you will join us for our final mid-week fellowship meal of 2024. These monthly meals are a great time to check in with your Highland family — and to have a much needed break from the routine. The cost is \$10 per person with a maximum of \$30 per household. Our menu for December 4 will be vegetarian chili or chicken parmesan on spaghetti. Sides will be green beans with garlic and caramelized onions, fresh fruit and dinner rolls. Dessert will be apple pie. This Meal will be prepared by Marty Moore, volunteer Fling Team (contact [Debbie Layman](#) if you would like to sign up for a prep or clean-up Fling Team!). Sign up on our website or by calling the church office, 336-724-6303.

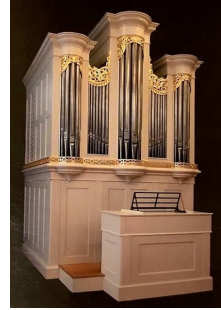
New Member Class, December 8

We will hold a class for those interested in membership at Highland on Sunday, December 8 at 2:00 p.m. If you are interested, contact [Debbie Layman](#) for more information. This is a great way to learn more about Highland and to connect more deeply with God and this church family.

Pop Art Old Salem Tour

Historic Tannenberg Organs, December 12, 1:00 p.m.

Join your Highland Friends to experience two historic organs in Old Salem. We will have the privilege of seeing and hearing the two historic organs with Susan Bates as our organist. The 1800 Tannenberg Organ is housed in the Gray Auditorium of the Old Salem Visitor Center and the smaller 1797 Tannenberg Organ in the Saal of the Single Brothers House. Don't miss this amazing Advent opportunity. The cost per person is \$32.



[Click here](#) or contact the church office to reserve your spot for this Advent Pop Art Tour.

Pre-Worship Hymn and Carol Sing

Sunday, December 15 at 10:45 a.m.

Members and friends of Highland are invited to gather in the Sanctuary before worship at 10:45 a.m. on Sunday, December 10 to select and sing favorite Advent or Christmas carols. All are welcome for this time of singing and preparation!



Share the Joy of This Season with Caroling



Join us Sunday, December 15, as we share the Christmas spirit with some Highland members. We will gather in the Fellowship Hall at 3:00 p.m. for cookies, hot beverages, and fellowship. If you only plan to join us for the singing, come at 3:30. We look forward to this tradition!

A Season of Christmas Joy

The Christmas Joy Offering is one of our four denominational offerings and is split evenly between the Assistance Program of the Presbyterian Board of Pensions and scholarship funds for Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges. Help us support these faithful servants and students in their hour of great need and hour of great promise. Look for the [Christmas Joy Offering](#) envelope in a pew, mail in a check with "Christmas Joy" in the memo, or give online. We will receive the offering in worship on December 15, but you can give anytime. Thank you for your generosity.



Advent Potluck Breakfast

Sunday, December 22, 9:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall

We hope you will join us on Sunday, December 22, at 9:30 a.m. for a festive Advent Potluck Breakfast! This will be a joyful time of reconnecting with folks who are retuning home for Christmas as well as getting to know new Highland family and friends. Bring a favorite breakfast dish to share (fresh fruit, bagels, breakfast casserole, coffee cake, quiche, muffins, or more!), and we will celebrate the joy of the Advent and Christmas season around tables in the Fellowship Hall.

Time to Join a Meet & Eat Group

It's time to reshuffle! New Meet & Eat groups will be formed soon for the January - June term. If you are currently in a group and want to take a break, you need to let us know. If you are not currently signed up but want to join the fun, you need to let us know. If you are currently participating and want to continue, you do nothing. You will automatically be placed into a new group. Participants will be contacted by a new group leader in late December or early January.



Meet & Eat is a fellowship opportunity for adults of all ages. You may sign up as an individual, as a couple, or pair up with a friend. You'll be placed into a group of six to nine people that will meet four times within the six-months term. Flexibility is the key word! Groups may meet in one another's home or go out; have a meal or just a drink; opt for daytime or evening, whatever works for your group is fine!

To sign up or drop out, or if you have questions, please contact [Judy Bass](#) or [Sarah Mixon](#). You may also call Gidget in the church office, 336-724-6303. Hope you will join in!

Coffee & Conversation Tuesdays

On Tuesdays, Randy, Debbie, Courtney, or Heather will be hanging out at Camel City Coffee from 10:00-11:00 a.m. for conversation with whomever shows up. We hope this will be a fun and varied group and invite all to consider stopping by. We sit outside, so if it's chilly, pack an extra layer in your car in case you need it! We hope you will stop by to support a local business, check-in with your staff, and meet other Highlanders.



News and Notes

In Our Prayers: *Richard Howerton, Home; Jeff Patton, Home; Carol Healy, Home; Kathy Morgan, Home; Bill Lambert, Home; Nicole Gottfried, Home; Gilmour Lake, Memory Care, Arbor Acres; Leslie Sizemore, Home; Emelda Lawing, Home with Hospice; Curtis Patterson, Home; Parks Berryhill, Salemtowne Healthcare; Esther and Les Preston, Home; Jim Womble, Heritage Woods; Wes McGraw, Homestead Hills; John Anderson, Salemtowne Memory Care; Ruth Banbury, Carriage Club Assisted Living (Charlotte).*

In Memoriam: Vern Cooper, November 19

Since we both love history and we both love Highland, it fits that we would end up in our church's Archives Room. Our workdays there over the years were so much fun, and we never thought of being recognized for the endeavor we were enjoying so much. Nonetheless, the lovely plaque and bright bouquets we received during Highland's 75th anniversary lunch brought a delightful surprise that means more than we can ever say. Thanks to the 75th Committee, the Staff, and anyone who had a part in these precious gifts. We are so happy to know that we will be "hanging around" the Archives Room for years to come. ~ Love, Esther Preston and Caroline Wright

Bless You! ~ Our prayers for one another. Each week we invite you to pray for members of our Highland family. We will pray not because anything is wrong, but because we care about each other.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 1, please pray for Bobby and Jane Boles; Zack, Cindy and Alta Brown; Rob Greene; BJ Swing; Jim and Kathy Wilson.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 8, please pray for Drew Bowers; Sam Bowman; Anne Dowell; Jean and RD Fortner; Alexia Hunt; Stewart Swing; Jim and Sue Womble.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 15, please pray for Marshall Beane; Mary Bland; Kelsey Bradshaw; Kristen and Kyndall Brown; Thomas Bullock; David Christenbury; Lauren Corbett.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 22, please pray for Richard, Susie, Ty and Whit Andrus; Mike and Lola Culler; Bob and Myra Hannah; Alice Michalove; Nargish Murchison; James, Gillian, Caitlin and Mallory Thomas; Darlene Williamson.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 29, please pray for Nancy Wolfe; Megan Bryant, Daniel Prosterman, Clara, Sam and Gabriel Bryant-Prosterman; Bill, Sheila, Kylie and Sienna Lambert; Martha Neely; Jeff, Debbie, Alex, Jake and Tori Patton; Wendell and Jayn Schollander; Carol West.

FOR THE WEEK OF JANUARY 5, please pray for Melanie Adams; Emily Black and Anais Ovalle; Elizabeth Gee; George Hodge; Joe and Harriet Mitchener; J Don and Margie Smith; Sharon Wilmoth and Piper Milsaps.

The Lord bless you and keep you. Numbers 6:24





Special Birthday Blessings to
 Curt Hege as he turns 91 on December 6;
 John Woodmanse as he turns 93 on December 22;
 Susan Hammond as she turns 90 on December 27.

**We wish them joy
 filled celebrations!**

Joy for December and Early January Birthdays!

- | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Janny Gauss | 12 Caroline Wagoner | 25 Andrew Riley | 4 Alice Michalove |
| 1 Emily O'Keefe | 12 Charlie Wagoner | 27 Roberts Bass | 5 Audrey Bragg |
| 1 Emma Sullivan | 13 David Mikush | 27 Rich Griner | 6 Susan Burroughs |
| 2 Corinne Fontenot | 13 Sue Simpson | 27 Susan Hammond | 6 Cheryl Walker |
| 2 Katie Harris | 14 Davis Collins | 27 Berkley Hoge | 7 David Campbell |
| 2 Liza Ward | 14 Bob Lawing | 27 Mallory Thomas | 7 Betsy Sell |
| 5 Geoff Beane | 14 Lila Miller | 28 Mark Archambault | 7 Jeff Sodko |
| 5 Susan Corey | 14 Carol Templeton | 29 Pam Kahl | 8 Dianne Searce |
| 5 Curtis Patterson | 15 Neil Gargis | 30 Alice Arcury-Quandt | 9 Esther Buzzard |
| 5 Terry Sink | 16 Mary Douglas | 30 Trudy Winstead | 9 Marc Eppley |
| 6 Curt Hege | Mendenhall | 30 Elizabeth Skinner | 9 Bryan Link |
| 6 Evan Morgan | 17 Leanne Link | | 10 Kay Chalk |
| 7 Elizabeth Walker | 17 Carol Simes | | 10 Pierce Henderson |
| 8 Vince Cannino | 19 Sarah Simpson | | |
| 8 Penny Lindsey | 20 Annette Thompson | | |
| 8 Samantha Walker | 21 Ben Gardner | | |
| 9 Josh Bragg | 21 Susan Kirkman | | |
| 9 Taylor Hollingsworth | 22 Zan Davis | | |
| 11 Grady Elliott | 22 Anna Kummer | | |
| 11 Zora Fontenot | 22 Seth Reynolds | | |
| 11 Marty Moore | 22 John Woodmansee | | |
| 12 Pete Fisch | 23 Parker Bragg | | |
| 12 Mark Queen | 24 Cameron Messick | | |
| 12 Randy Shields | 24 Simon Michel | | |
| 12 Turner Simpson | 24 Craig Woosley | | |

January

- 1 Lisa Alley
- 1 Peggy Dunlap
- 1 Beverly Edwards
- 1 Terry Hauser
- 1 Hudson Maddux
- 1 Bill Oliver
- 2 Bryan Beane
- 2 Lora Buchwalter
- 2 Bill Hill
- 2 Bill Semans
- 3 John Garrou
- 4 Eben Carroll



Dolorosa Gathering

Sunday, December 22, 4:00–5:00 p.m., Highland Chapel

The word, *dolorosa*, in Latin means “sorrowful way.” Jesus shows the way to hope, healing, and wholeness through journeys of sorrow and pain. This season can be particularly grief-filled for those who have experienced loss. If you would benefit from a time of sharing your experiences of grief and your hopes for healing and wholeness with Highland friends on similar paths, we invite you to join us in the Chapel on the 4th Sundays at 4:00 p.m.



Celebrating Joy Hohmann

Joy Hohmann has served as Highland's Business Manager for ten years. Joy's responsibilities entail working with our Treasurer and Finance Committee in managing all of Highland's financial activity. She also works with the Property Committee to ensure that Highland's facilities are cared for and kept up to date. Working tirelessly behind the scenes, Joy is appropriately named, as she brings a joyful spirit to our life together. Please extend a word of gratitude to her as we honor her tenure with us!



Highland's 75th Anniversary

Enduring gratitude for a joy-filled celebration

We had a *grand* celebration of Highland's 75th anniversary on November 17. Worship was filled with joy and fanfare; our luncheon provided for wonderful fellowship, food, and more joyful celebration of Highland. That luncheon gathering included special recognitions of our charter members and families, and of the beloved curators of Highland's Archive Room. We also lifted up the countless volunteers who have enabled the honoring of this anniversary to be spread throughout the church's ministry this year.



On Highland's website we are maintaining a [75th Anniversary webpage](#), where you can find links for Cameron Kent's 75th Anniversary video that we shared during the luncheon; a video slideshow of photos from the day; and the video from worship.

We want to express an additional word of gratitude to our 75th Anniversary Planning Committee. They outdid themselves all year long, enabling the entire church--and beyond--to share this celebration together. Members of the committee are Margaret Sehon and Katina Barksdale (co-chairs), Alice Milam, Skip Pickett, Elizabeth Skinner, Jordan Xu, and Steve Zorn. When you see them, please extend your thankfulness to them for their steadfast, tireless efforts.



♥ Service Opportunities

Moore School Food Pantry

Highland, alongside Temple Emmanuel, supports Moore Elementary School by providing a food pantry for students of Moore School and their families.

For the month of **December**, we are asking for donations of **canned corn or green beans**.



Christmas Eve Desserts for Samaritan



We are excited that Highland will once again provide 250 individual desserts for the guests of Samaritan Ministry on Christmas Eve. Please sign up through the Sign-Up Genius which came through email. If you need help, call Gidget at 336-724-6303.

We need sturdy desserts (ones that will not melt or require refrigeration) delivered to the Activity Building on Monday, December 23 between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. They do not need to be pre-cut but do need to be in disposable containers. Highland responded so generously the past few years; we look forward to this tangible and tasty way to share our love again this year!

Please Bring Gifts for Under the Tree



In this season of giving, we reflect on God's greatest gift. One of the ways we respond to God's generosity is to share gifts with others. The Community Service Committee is collecting necessities and gifts to share with those who are in need in our community. Please bring unwrapped gifts to place under the Christmas tree in the Sanctuary. They may be brought between now and Christmas Eve. Items requested are: *new or*

gently used kids' coats, sweatshirts, sweatpants, menstrual hygiene products. Thank you for your generous giving.

Gratitude for Pillows

As part of our 75th anniversary celebrations, we collected 75 pillows for GreeNest's Up Off the Floor program. Thank you for helping support this program which donates mattresses and compact metal platform frames so families can provide comfortable and safe space for their children to sleep. Since 2016, greeNest has gotten nearly 2,000 children Up Off the Floor and into their own beds. Thank you for your generous support of this ministry!



Sign Up Today for the Women's Shelter at St. Timothy's December 1, 2024 through February 28, 2025



On December 1 the women's overflow homeless shelter will reopen in the Fellowship Hall at St. Timothy's and stay open through February 28. Highland has agreed to partner with St. Timothy's financially, through volunteer support, and through donations of meals and to-go bags. Please prayerfully consider how you can help and be prepared to sign up for a monthly or weekly meal team, a hospitality / check-in shift, or snack / to-go bags. You can sign up now by visiting the [Support Our Unhoused Neighbors page](#) of our website, highlandpres.org.

Thank you for your prayerful support and your practical support as we work with our neighbors in need.

Stewardship

Stewardship Update

To date we have received 159 pledges totaling \$830,877 for the 2025 Operating Budget, and 121 Time & Talent forms. The Stewardship Committee extends its gratitude to all of those who have made a commitment thus far! If you intend to make a commitment and have **not** yet turned in your pledge, you may do so by placing it in the offering plate on Sunday, in the mail, or by contacting [Joy Hohmann](#) in the church office at 336-724-6303.

Year-End Offerings and Reimbursements

Please make all offerings for 2024 by Sunday, December 31. The IRS stipulates that any donations not received or postmarked by December 31 must be credited to 2025. Also, please submit any requests for reimbursement of funds spent on behalf of the church by this date. If you have any questions please contact [Joy Hohmann](#), 336-724-6303.

2025 Offering Envelopes Available Now

We have our 2025 offering envelopes now available for pick up in the church office. Please come by between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday–Thursday or on Sunday!

☀️ Children

God's Good Neighborhood

On Sunday mornings, Highland's Preschoolers gather for stories from the "God Loves Me" series, including arts, activities and creative play. This is a wonderful time of learning about God's love and how the church is a safe and loving place to be.



Elementary aged children are welcomed into *God's Good Neighborhood*, located on the third floor. We are excited about a new form of the workshop rotation model, to which we have added an anchoring element of Godly Play, a Montessori-based storytelling experience. Every other Sunday, children will experience the a biblical story beginning in Godly Play. The following week the children will move to a different workshop to experience the same story from a different perspective through things like Art, Drama, Cooking, or even a Cinema. *God's Good Neighborhood* is the place where children and leaders grow in faith and understanding of what it means to be the people of God.

At 10:15 a.m., all children will go to the Worship Center (third floor, White Door) for Children's Choir. Parents can pick up children there at 10:45 a.m.

Friday Fun Night

Friday, December 20, 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Mark you calendar today for the next Friday Family Fun Night at Highland when parents can drop children off and enjoy the evening with Highland friends or running errands.

In Highland style we will have tasty food, fun games and activities, surprises around each corner, and friends are always welcome! Reach out to [Heather Ferguson](#) for more information or if you would like to volunteer for a Friday event.



Youth

Sunday Church School, *Faith in Practice*

Youth Breakfast begins outside AB4 9:30 a.m.

Youth Choir 9:30 a.m. December 1 and 8 in AB5

Youth Church School in AB4 9:45–10:30 a.m.

Youth Fellowship

December 1 Shopping Night

4:00–6:30 p.m. Meet at Marshalls to shop and share dinner

December 8 Youth Christmas Parties

4:00–5:05 p.m. Middle School

5:00–6:00 p.m. Senior High

December 15 All Church Caroling, 3:00 p.m.

Senior High Mystery Trip

January 17–20

The legendary experience continues! A Mystery Trip is the chance to share in community as we brave the surprises of this trip while growing in our faith and as a faith family. In years past we have adventured to zip-line over alligators, worshiped in the largest and smallest churches in America, slept in a cave, hang glided, and more. There is only one way to find out what is planned this year. Lean into the adventure, and sign up today!

Parenting the Teen Years: Friendships

First Monday of the Month, 7:00 p.m. by Zoom

December 2

A new month brings fresh opportunities to connect as parents! Join us as we share experiences and explore how to guide our teens in building healthy friendships. Let's support each other on this journey. For the Zoom link or to share questions in advance, reach out to Courtney at cstevens@highlandpres.org.

College Student Candle Lighting

December 24 Christmas Eve 7:00 p.m. Worship Service

We ask our college students to participate in the Christmas Eve service to help pass the candlelight during the final hymn. If you are interested in leading worship in this way, let Courtney know, cstevens@highlandpres.org, and plan to meet in Highland's Parlor at 6:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve to receive instructions.

Young Adults

Our ministry meets each Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in a variety of locations. We gather for fellowship, study, and faithful conversation. Contact Courtney for more information (cstevens@highlandpres.org).

December 5: West Salem Public House

December 12: Christmas craft night at Courtney's

December 19: Little Richards on Stratford

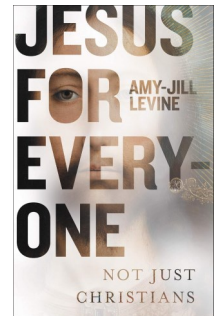
Adults

Thursday Morning Women's Study

10:00–11:30 a.m., Ardmore Room

Why Jesus's historic and cultural influence makes him fascinating, provocative, and relevant for everyone, not only Christians

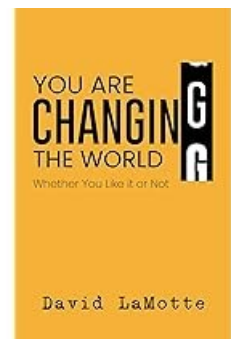
Two thousand years after his birth and death, Jesus of Nazareth continues to be of vital interest. Yet much of the scholarship around Jesus focuses on his religious significance. *Jesus for Everyone* examines his most famous teachings from a fresh perspective, exploring how they have continued to shape ethics and civilization in the West for two millennia. Even for those who reject faith, Jesus's life and his philosophy are important to study, writes renowned biblical scholar and author Amy-Jill Levine, because of the insights they hold for us today. If you are looking for a fun, engaging group of women to study alongside while building lifelong friendships, please join us. For more information or to purchase a book for \$15 contact [Heather Ferguson](#).



New Matthew 25 Book Group

Beginning Monday, January 20, 2025

As we begin a new year of ministry together and enter a new season in our country's life, we seek to deepen our roots as a Matthew 25 congregation, focusing on *building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty*. The first book for our new Matthew 25 Book Group will be *You Are Changing the World: Whether You Like it or Not* by David LaMotte. Kathleen Norris has written, "This book serves as an antidote to the hopelessness so many of us feel about our world today." If you are in need of an antidote, we hope you will join us. Reach out to [Debbie Layman](#) with questions or to sign up. The group will meet on the third Mondays at 7:00 p.m.



Faith & Film: *The Holdovers*

December 2, 7:00 p.m., The Sherwood Restaurant

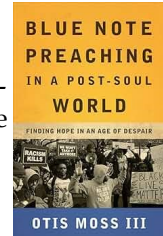
Join us for this monthly gathering as we reflect on the visual parables of movies. Our movie for December is *The Holdovers* (2023).

It is available to stream on Amazon Prime and Apple TV. Contact [Randy Harris](#) for more information.



Listening to Black Voices Book Group

Join us via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. December 17 as we continue reading and reflecting on the experience of our African American neighbors, and consider what our faithful responses might entail. In December we will discuss the second half (Sermons 1 through 4) of *Blue Note Preaching in a Post-Soul World*, by Otis Moss III. If you are interested, please contact [Randy Harris](#).



Men's Breakfast

December 18, 7:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Join with the Men of the Church for a time of fellowship and study. Look for an email with details, and contact [Randy Harris](#) if you have questions.



Lamentations and Laughter

Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m., Activity Building, Room AB 5

Lamentations and Laughter is a men's weekly gathering to focus on the positives in life, even during challenging and difficult periods. The idea behind Lamentations and Laughter is to encourage paying attention to one another, to share and be heard, and to listen. All are invited and encouraged to attend! If you have questions, contact [John Woodmansee](#).



Highland Ukuleles

Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m., Room 126

Life is definitely more enjoyable with a ukulele! Come and join us for some fun, regardless of your age or skill level. If you don't have a ukulele, let Heather Ferguson know and we can arrange for you to borrow one. We're all learning and having a great time together. For more details, please contact [Heather Ferguson](#).





Sunday Morning Christian Education

9:30–10:30 a.m.

The Present Word Class, Room 124 and Zoom

The winter quarter, “A King Forever and Ever,” explores the broad sweep of biblical teaching about God’s reign and connects to Jesus as the earthly exhibition of the divine Kingdom. Beginning with key moments in the history of David’s ancestors, Unit I highlights Jesus’s birth as the “Son of David.” Unit II is a four-week study of psalms that extol the reign of God, while Unit III gives a New Testament look at Jesus’s teaching on “Life in God’s Kingdom.”

Unit I, “Jesus, the Heir of David”

Unit II, “Our God Reigns”

Unit III, “Life in God’s Kingdom”

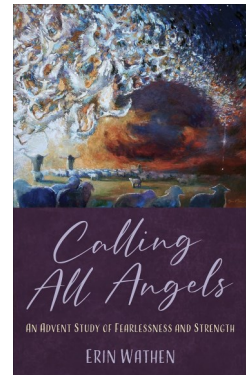
Facilitators: A Variety of Class Members and Guests



Calling All Angels: An Advent Study on Fearlessness and Strength

During the season of Advent we are offering an opportunity to join us as we read and study the book *Calling All Angels: An Advent Study on Fearlessness and Strength*.

What would you do if you were not afraid? Life can be daunting, filled with uncertainty and fears. It wasn’t any different two thousand years ago when Jesus was born. An aged priest is told he is about to become a father for the first time. A young woman is told she is going to give birth – outside the protection of marriage. A simple carpenter is asked to believe the impossible. A group of shepherds’ night on a hill is interrupted by a bright host of angels in the sky. Yet, each of these encounters begins with the same refrain: do not be afraid. Those words, though, are not just words of comfort; they are an invitation and a calling from God. Books are available in the Gallery Hall (\$15).

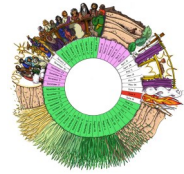


The class will be offered in-person in the Ardmore Room on Sunday mornings, December 1, 8 and 15, 9:30 a.m., OR via Zoom on Monday evenings, December 2, 9 and 16, at 7:00 p.m. The content of both class offerings will be the same.

Contact the church office, gpayne@highlandpres.org, to join the Monday evening class and receive the Zoom link.

The Lectionary Café, Salem Room

The *Lectionary Café* is a welcoming group that engages in lively discussions on Sunday's Lectionary text, exploring connections between God's intentions and living faithfully together.



Parents' Conversation and Coffee, Room 126

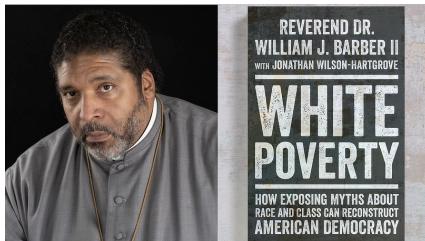
After settling children into Sunday school, parents can gather in Room 126 for coffee and conversation. It's a chance to connect, share parenting experiences, and on the first Sunday of each month, enjoy a special speaker or resource on faith and family. Other Sundays offer relaxed time to chat and exchange tips on parenting.



Coming in January

The Life and Legacy of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Beginning January 5

A recent movie (*Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Spy, Assassin*, 2024) has brought Dietrich Bonhoeffer back into public view. Using the book *Dietrich Bonhoeffer for Armchair Theologians* as a guide to his life and work, participants in the class will also read selections from Bonhoeffer's writings as we consider what his work meant in his time, and what he might say to our time. *Led by Randy Harris and others*



Spring Poverty Group

***White Poverty*, by William Barber, Beginning February 24**

Our spring Poverty Book Group book will be *White Poverty* by Reverend Dr. William Barber. Dr. Barber began the Moral Mondays movement in our state and now is co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign:

A National Call for Moral Revival. Bishop Michael Curry says of the book: Barber "raises his clarion voice to amplify the cry of America's poor, especially the invisible majority of impoverished white Americans." The group will meet for discussion on Mondays February 24, March 24, and April 28. Please let [Debbie Layman](#) know if you have questions or if you would like to join the group.

Community and Global Service

Climate Corner

Climate Friendly Christmas Ideas

As the little ones get excited, and we are scurrying about to 'fill' wishes, we found a few ideas to help keep the Christmas Season a bit eco-friendlier:

- Wrapping paper – use PAPER wrapping paper that is recyclable and will break down. Paper that is shiny or does not tear easily is not recyclable.
- Cards - send plant-able cards with pollinator plant seeds embedded in cards.
- Gift ideas - gift reusable water bottles, plant-based phone cases, recycled paper bead or bracelet-making kits, wooden toys, organic bath bombs, homemade edible gifts.
- Ornaments - make DIY Dried orange slices with fabric ribbon to mount on the tree, decorated pinecones with scrap fabrics, homemade wreaths, or cinnamon stick stars with fabric ribbons– the ideas are plentiful online.
- Centerpiece – use herb pots, homemade wreaths using fabric, cones, or colorful seed packets.
- Alternative Gift Market - give in honor or memory of family or friends to support our environment or for those in Western North Carolina in need. (Read more on page 3.)
- Compost - bring your food scraps to the church for our composter! (Contact Debbie, dlayman@highlandpres.org, for details.)

A simple online search offers many more ideas to explore with your friends and family. Enjoy the adventure of learning more earth-friendly tips this Advent and Christmas.

~ Highland's Global Service Committee