

Highlands News

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | HIGHLANDS CHURCH | APRIL 2025 | VOLUME 29 | ISSUE 4



Holy Week & Easter Worship

Palm Sunday Weekend Worship: Celebrate the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem by joining us for worship at our Celebration Service on Saturday, April 12 at 4:00 pm or Sunday, April 13 at 10:00 am for our Traditional Service.

Maundy Thursday: On April 17 at 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary, the Chancel Choir will be presenting a special performance on Maundy Thursday entitled "Colors of Grace." The Cantata will portray the final days of Jesus Christ through the lessons he taught his disciples in Grace. We invite you to bring your whole family.

Easter Morning Continental Breakfast will be held before Sunday service on Easter morning. Join us from 9:00—10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall on April 20. Signups to bring muffins, pastries, sweet bread, or fruit will begin March 29/30.

A Flower for the Cross: We ask each person to bring a live flower (no silk) on Easter morning, April 20. Before the morning service, we will be adorning the small cross near the Sanctuary entrance with flowers.

Easter Worship Service: The Entire Church will be celebrating Easter together on Sunday morning, April 20, at 10:00 am; therefore, there will be no Saturday Service on April 19. The Lord Is Risen! He Is Risen Indeed! Celebrate Easter Sunday with Highlands Church.

Special Easter Offering: The Lenten tradition of self-examination and seeking a closer walk with our Savior helps us to put ourselves more in tune with God's will. That is why we choose this time of preparation to look beyond ourselves and open our hearts to the love of God for others. To this end, we recommend to you our Special Lenten offering to be given on Easter Sunday. It is our hope that this Easter Sunday, along with our regular tithes and offerings, you will consider making a special commitment through giving to further ministry to our community. You may desire to mail your Lenten offering or bring it to the church office. Please remember to mark your gift "Lenten Offering."

From Bro. Jim's Desk

Now that we have entered the Lenten Season, we are encouraged to spend this time seeking personal holiness through our following Jesus more closely. We are to notice the great dedication and sacrifice that Jesus made by going to the cross. We are also to count the personal cost of Jesus' sacrificial death on our behalf, to take away the wrath of God which is due all of us because of our sin.

Therefore, we take time to remember what Jesus has done for us personally. Surely, there are things we can amend in our lives that speak of our repentance. The spiritual discipline of fasting is often offered as a way to show the importance we place on our attitude of repentance. We know that Jesus often fasted and prayed from our Scripture readings.

If we are to draw closer to our Savior, then we can learn a lot from Jesus' devotion to discipline that helped him in times of trial and temptation. Fasting might mean giving up a bad habit. It might also mean a cessation of gossiping. It could be that we have a social media habit that we need to cease. It could also mean that we need to cease shopping after all the things we think will make us happy, and only buy what we really need. The list is almost endless for fasting when we begin to understand that we aren't giving things up to impress God, rather we are giving them up so that others may have what is desperately needed in their lives. When we begin to understand this, we are beginning to think along with God's love which is to work through our lives.

For instance, that time we save by not shopping could be spent with someone lonely or sick. That time or money could be redeemed by using it for a mission effort. Perhaps we could use it to tithe so that the kingdom can have use of it.

On the other hand, we can spend our time in serious prayer and meditation on what God would require of us. This may require us to fast from our hectic schedules and make more time for God. It could be that we have been on an unnatural fast from reading God's word, and now the Spirit is whispering to us that we need to get back into God's word with others and see how it applies to our living.

Lent can also be thought of as a time to embrace God's love. God's love was so great that He sent Jesus to die for our sins. Couldn't it also be a time to restore relationships that have been broken and embrace forgiveness for our enemies? It should be a time of dropping our grudges, erasing the list of harms we hold against others, and instead, start fresh with a goal of loving others as we know God does. Sin (our own and that of others) is what stands in our way. Perhaps Lent is the season of asking, "What would Jesus do?"

Let me make another appeal for those who may be interested in the Rio Bravo, Mexico mission trip. I will be needing in the next few weeks to get firm commitments for those who will be going with me. The trip is scheduled for May 25 through 31. The cost per participant is \$750. Mission money and forms (forthcoming as you contact me) will be due no later than April 15. Our mission expenses will cover all van rentals to take us into and back from Mexico, individual medical & emergency insurance, food and stay at the Manos Juntas mission, and goods expended on mission.

Each mission member must have a valid US Passport with an expiration date no earlier than December 31, 2025. I am always excited to see what God will do as we go and place ourselves in our Lord's service. As you have questions, please don't hesitate to email me or give me a call at 479-699-4683.





Children's Worship Center



Children are welcome to visit our Nursery (0-4 years) and Kids Worship (5-11 years) on Sunday mornings during the 10:00 Traditional worship service.

For more information, contact Laurie Pearson at 479-256-4452 (Nursery), Fran Lovell at 571-255-0701 or Wanda Krug at 719-213-1115 (Kids Worship).

New Members

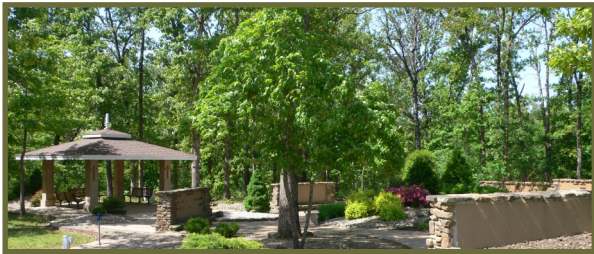


Roger and Sabrina Lawrence became members on March 2 in the Traditional Service. Roger and Sabrina moved to Gentry in 2014 from Kansas. Sabrina is a Registered Nurse and is the Director of Inpatient Services with Circle of Life. Roger retired from the Navy Reserve in 2007. Roger was in Healthcare Administration as a Radiologic Technologist managing Radiology Departments. He retired from that in 2023. They enjoy spending time riding motorcycles, camping, hiking, kayaking (about anything outdoors) and spending time with family. They have been blessed with 5 children and 7 grandchildren.

David and Judith Winchell became members on March 8 in the Celebration Service. David and Judith were both raised in New England and are still very fond of it. They met while in the service (Air Force and Navy) and have been married for over 50 years. After living their working lives on the Texas Gulf Coast, they wanted to retire to some place more like New England but without the long, cold winters. They found BV and moved here in 2014. They never had children but have had many dogs; Sophie, a large standard poodle, is their current one and their daily ray of sunshine. Judith volunteers at the library on Thursday mornings and David bowls on Tuesday afternoons.



Highlands Columbarium and Memorial Garden



Located on church grounds, our Columbarium and Memorial Garden is available for current and former members of Highlands Church and their immediate families. You are welcome to visit this peaceful area, located on the south side of our Ministries Activity Center. Brochures are available on the Information Wall located just outside the office. If you would like more information, please contact a Columbarium Committee member or the church office.

Equipment Checkout Procedures

Did you know we have a variety of equipment available for loan? If you need something for a medical issue or simply have company coming to town, we may have just what you need! The list of items include: medical equipment and supplies such as wheel chairs, walkers, shower seats, and bedside commodes. We also have a baby swing, high chairs, booster seats, car seats, playpens and more.

These items can be found in the lower level Storage Room. If you would like to checkout any equipment, please look for the clipboard with the bright pink cover sheet sitting on the stool near the door. Read the Liability Waiver at the top of the sheet and then sign-out your equipment. If you would like assistance, the office staff will be happy to help... just ask!



Highlands Church SPRC News

The Staff/Parish Relations Committee is pleased to announce the new pastor for Highlands GMC, effective July 1, 2025.

Rev. Ricky Sitton (he goes by Pastor Rick) is being appointed as the new pastor of Highlands GMC. Pastor Rick was born in Dallas, Texas. His hometown is a small East Texas town north of Tyler called Lindale. Pastor Rick met his wife, Karen, at Lakeview Methodist church camp during a college ministry retreat. They were married at Rick's home church of Swan Wood-Springs Methodist Church on July 28, 1978. They are blessed with three adult children (Chris, Stephanie and Shawn Wesley Sitton) and four grandchildren.



After graduating cum laude from Oral Roberts University in 1981 with a Bachelor's degree in communication and a minor in New Testament, Rick served three years as a youth director at FUMC Mineola, Texas. Discerning a call to pastoral ministry, Pastor Rick attended Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky and graduated cum laude in 1987. While at Asbury, he became a student pastor in Stockdale, Ohio and is now in his 40th year of pastoral ministry.

Pastor Rick is in his 14th year as senior pastor of FMC of Bryan, Texas. Prior to his appointment in Bryan he served for 9 years at Woodcrest Methodist Church in Lumberton, Texas (north of Beaumont, TX). He has also served as senior pastor of Airline UMC in Houston and Crockett FUMC in Crockett, Texas.

During his years of service in the Texas Conference of the UMC, Pastor Rick served as vice-chair of the evangelism committee as well as vice-chair of the medical benefits committee and chair of the board of pensions. He is currently serving as a PRN hospice chaplain for Brazos Valley Hospice where he has served this non-profit for over three years. Because of his passion to help families and individuals who suffer with mental health issues, he has also served on the boards of MHMR in Beaumont, Texas and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) in Bryan, Texas.

Pastor Rick and Karen have raised their grandson, Jacob (age 17), since he was born. Jacob is a special needs child who has apraxia of speech, autism, and other mental and physical challenges. Jacob is a delightful blessing and is loved by all. Pastor Rick, Karen and Jacob are very grateful to be moving to Bella Vista in late June to serve in the Bella Vista area. They have begun to pray for their new church family at the Highlands and are grateful for your prayers for them.

Food Pantry for Gravette School

We continue to collect food and non-perishables to assist food insecure families in the Gravette School District; any and all donations are welcomed! Place your donated items in the marked bins located at all entrances to the church for delivery to the Gravette School Food Pantry. We are blessed to be a blessing and your generosity and support are always appreciated! This project is being co-sponsored by the Celebration Worship Team & Highlands Methodist Women (HMW).





HIGHLANDS METHODIST MEN

HMM April Meeting

Highland's Methodist Men will be meeting on Tuesday, April 1 at 7:45 am for breakfast followed by our guest speaker Susan Hawkins. Susan is a counselor from Gravette High School and was involved in the selection process for determining the recipient(s) of the student scholarship that HMM provided to the school again this year and will be giving us details on the selection process as well as how the scholarship is administered by the school as well as other information about Gravette High School and its students. A short business meeting will follow. All men of the church are members of HMM and guests are always welcome.

Methodist Men Blood Drive Report

Our March 12 Blood Drive started off with a giant "THUD". The CBC of the Ozarks' computer server failed immediately at our 10:00 am start-up. A back-up server was dispatched from their Springdale office affording us a 1:45 minute downtime. Fortunately, most of our donors took the problem positively and returned later to give blood. That group of returnees included a lady who was a brand-new donor and would eventually have driven over 110 miles round trip from rural Missouri that day to donate to the CBC of the Ozarks at Highlands Church.



Our results for the day's effort compared to our assigned goal of 25 donors were:

- 30** folks showed up to donate
- 27** were able to successfully donate

A big 'ol **THANK YOU** to all who made the effort to give this time. Our next drive is scheduled for Wednesday, May 21 from 10:00 - 3:00 in our Fellowship Hall.

Also, another **THANK YOU** to the guys (and Anne Burgess) who helped set-up and take-down the chairs & tables in the Fellowship Hall. That help is/was essential to the project's success.

For interest... Highlands Church is in its 19th year of conducting Blood Drives in conjunction with the Community Blood Center of the Ozarks. By the CBC of the Ozarks records, they have collected 190 gallons of blood product at Highlands Church. According to the CBC/Ozarks, that 190 gallons of product would convert to treatments for more than 5,400 patients.

Again, thank you to all who, over those many years, have given, and to all who have tried to give, but for whatever reason were unable to do so. Your gift will be helping continue, perhaps even saving, the life of a person in this area of NW Arkansas. **100% of our donations are used in our local hospitals.** Thank you, one more time!

CBCO BLOOD DRIVE - TOP 10 AWARD



We are excited to announce that Highlands Church has been recognized as the #1 Top Ten Faith-Based Blood Drive for 2024, with an incredible 131 donations! This marks the fourth consecutive year we've earned this prestigious award. Bro. Jim Benfer proudly accepted the award at the CBCO Blood Drive Thankquet, which took place on March 20 at the Rogers Convention Center. A heartfelt thank you goes out to the Highlands Methodist Men for their continued dedication and support, making this life-saving cause possible!



HIGHLANDS METHODIST WOMEN

HMW April Meeting

Please join the Highlands Methodist Women on Monday, April 14 at 9:30 am We will hear from Nancy Dresler, Circle of Life representative. Circle of Life is the largest nonprofit Hospice provider in Northwest Arkansas serving Benton, Carroll, Madison & Washington counties. Circle of Life is fully accredited and certified by Arkansas Department of Health and Medicare. All women and friends of Highlands Church are invited to join us for food, devotion and friendship. A sign up sheet will be available at the Information Station until 11am on Sun, April 13.

HMW Book Club

Please come to the Highlands Methodist Women's Book Club discussion of our April book **A Gentleman in Moscow: A Novel**, By: Amor Towels. In 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, and is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. We will meet on Monday, April 28 at 1:00 pm in the Mark classroom. All women and friends are welcome! For any and all questions, please call Sue LaHood at 479-855-0937.

New Member Sunday + Potluck to follow

Hey Highlands Church family! Get ready for an amazing day because our next Combined Worship Service is happening on Sunday, April 6, at 10:00 am, and you won't want to miss it! We'll be diving into the sacredness of Holy Communion and welcoming our new members in a heartfelt New Member Sunday celebration. But that's not all—stick around afterward for a fabulous Potluck Luncheon in the Fellowship Hall around 11:15! This is your golden opportunity to connect with new friends and catch up with familiar faces over some delicious food and laughter. Don't forget to sign up to bring a dish at the Information Station before noon on Sunday, March 30! Let's make this gathering a celebration of community and connection. We can't wait to see you there!



Safety & Security News

The Bella Vista Fire Department personnel offer CPR/AED training and First Aid, accredited by the American Heart Association; infant CPR training has been requested. Bella Vista churches, babysitters, and other individuals are welcome to attend this free training session. Classes are scheduled and are held at the Fire Training Facility, 7 Carlisle Drive, from 9:00 am to approximately noon. If you would like to receive an official CPR card via email, the cost is \$25 from the American Heart Association.

We have scheduled training for our church on Friday, May 16. There will be a signup sheet at the Information Station in the Gathering Area. YOU MUST sign up by Sunday, April 27, 11:00 am, so we can let the Fire Department know how many will attend. For any and all questions, please contact Sue LaHood.

All Church Events

Sock-It-To-Me ACE — Report from our February 23 Event WOW! — Can you believe 434 pairs of socks were donated that evening!

All the Socks have already been delivered to the following organizations:

- ⇒ Oasis House
- ⇒ Samaritan's' Feet
- ⇒ NWA Children's Shelter
- ⇒ Cooper School
- ⇒ Concordia Nursing Home
- ⇒ Highland's Rehab & Extended Care



All of these charities were so thankful to Highland Church for not just the donations, but for thinking about THEM! You were a blessing to so many people, and their feet!

THANK YOU,
Stones & Henkels

The original ACE Event date of April 27 has been moved to May 18. Stay tuned for more details coming soon!



Adult Sunday School

Join us this coming Sunday at 8:30 am for our study on the Wesleyan Way via a video/book and life-application questions. We are a caring group of learners, and we'd love to have you join us. Questions? Call Brad Krug at 719-210-6124.

Library News

As mentioned before, we've removed the books that have been on the "free" racks for a while and will be donating them to Care & Share. We've also brought out a new selection for you to check out and take home. Feel free to browse!

Additionally, don't forget about the hundreds of fiction and non-fiction books available in the library. There's no need to fill out a "checkout" card for the paperbacks—just return them to the shelf when you're done, and file them alphabetically by author.

We're always happy to accept donations of books, especially those published after 2015. You can leave any donations on the desk in the main library, next to the Sanctuary.

Thank you,

Library committee



Kids Worship News

Kids Worship during Traditional Worship Service: Sundays 10-11 am
For children ages 5-11. Teaching Team: Barb Zillmann, Fran Lovell, Sue Benson, Wanda Krug

Have Fun and Grow in Faith....Together!

We celebrate Palm Sunday: Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!

We celebrate Easter: Christ the Lord is risen today!

April Curriculum	Theme
Jesus Is Tried and Crucified (Luke 19)	Jesus died for our sins.
Jesus Appears to Mary (John 20)	Jesus has power over death.
Apostles Defend Their Faith (Acts 5)	We can boldly follow God.
An Angel Frees Peter from Jail (Acts 12)	God sends angels.



Questions: Contact Wanda Krug (719-213-1115 call/text) or Fran Lovell (571-255-0701 call/text)
We would love to have more volunteers to help us in the Nursery and in Kids Worship!

Highlands Youth Group Under Construction

Pizza Lunch Report—Held on March 16

What a success! Thanks to everyone who helped with set-up, clean-up, and the survey given to attendees. Thanks to all our youth who attended and parents who joined in. And thanks to our Youth Group Committee members: Bill Williams, Carla Lemmeyer, Fran Lovell, Jerry Snyder, Kathy Smith, Wanda Krug, and Jean Galloway (Nurture Coordinator). Attendance surpassed our expectations at 40!

EVERYONE is excited about the youth room! The youth are already discussing among themselves how it should look. It was heart-warming to see parents taking the opportunity to interact with one another. Everyone in attendance **WANTS A YOUTH GROUP**. Brother Jim sensed the excitement in the room and stopped us for a special prayer of blessing on the space and our youth.

KEEP PRAYING for the many details to work out before we launch.



Mission Ministry Highlight

This month Missions Ministry is highlighting Care and Share Thrift Store in Gravette. Thank you for your continued support by donating your gently used items to Care and Share. HGMC is one of 7 churches who volunteer throughout the year at Care and Share. Merlyn and Connie Kiefer have volunteered there for over 30 years and Connie coordinates this ministry for our church.

Our dates of service through the rest of 2025 are:

April 22—26

June 10—14

July 29—Aug 2

Sept 9—13

Oct 28—Nov 1



Information below was submitted by Pastor Donald Miller, Care & Share board member and pastor at First Christian Church in Gravette.

At Care and Share our motto is “People Helping People”. We try to live to that commitment in our community. Due to the generosity of the many donations and number of volunteers, Care and Share has been able to go above and beyond helping those in need for nearly 41 years. In 2024, we have donated over \$104,000.00 to various charities and nearly \$140,000.00 to medical and utility assistance vouchers. Our voucher assistant program allows people from our community that have shut-off notices for utilities and/or medical needs to receive the help they so desperately need.

We currently support 5 missions that we donate to monthly in our area. Billy V Hall Wellness Center, Northwest AR Children’s shelter, FBC Decatur Food Pantry, 21st Century (after school program), and Outreach 58:10 a food pantry that serves our area. The donations made monthly to these organizations are possible because of the sales and financial donations given to Care and Share. These charities that we support as our mission were given over \$122,000.00 last year. In addition to those missions, we also give to other needs within our community as needs arise. Most recently we were able to help several families affected by the 2024 Decatur tornado with various items.

Power of One

Wondering what the folded lengthwise dollars in the offering plate are for? They are going to a special mission fund called The Power of One. Those ‘ones’ add up and do marvelous things to support local needs, like helping children in need in the Gravette School District by providing financial support to Bright Futures, Snack Packs, and the Samaritan’s Feet ministry.

THE POWER OF
ONE

Drop a folded dollar into the offering plate to support our Mission Ministry.

April 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1- HMM Meeting - Compassionate Disciples Meeting - Easter Eggs Stuff	2- Snack Packs	3	4	5- No Celebration Service
6- Combined Worship at 10am - New Member Sun - Potluck	7	8	9- Stitches	10	11	12- Palm Sunday Weekend
13- Palm Sunday	14- HMW Meeting - Care & Share Trailer here	15- Staff Meeting - Council Meets TBD - Kitchen Cleaning	16	17- Library Meeting - Maundy Thursday Service 6pm	18- Office Closed for Good Friday	19- No Celebration Service
20- Easter Worship at 10am - Easter Continental Breakfast	21	22	23- Stitches	24	25	26- Scrapbooking & Card Making
27	28- HMW Book Club Meeting	Highlands 30th Annual Flea & Boutique - May 2 & 3 It's time to gather your items to bring for donation the week before the Flea! If you have donations ready now and don't want to wait, simply contact the church office to arrange for their storage. Please note: we ask that you refrain from donating clothes, books, appliances, or TVs. Stay tuned for more details as we gear up for this exciting event—let's come together to make it a memorable one!				

Thank You!

The below thank you note was received from Howard and Dianna Luznicky.

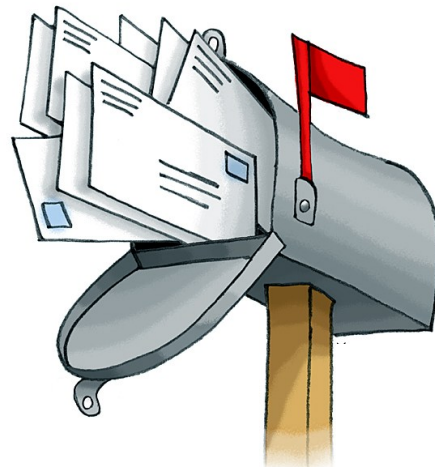
I also want to thank you for your prayers. I truly believe they are what sustained us through out this journey. Please continue to pray for healing and pain management. We love and miss you all.

*Dianna
Luznicky*



*Dear Highlands Church (Stitchers)
I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the shawl you gave me. All of your prayers and thoughtfulness and support have helped me on the road to recovery. May God bless you and keep you safe.*

*yours in Christ,
Howard Luznicky*



MAKE PLANS TO SPEND THE 2025 LENTEN SEASON WITH HIGHLANDS CHURCH

- **April 13** Palm Sunday Weekend Worship (regular times)
- **April 17** Maundy Thursday Service at 6pm
- **April 19** No Saturday Celebration Service
- **April 20** Easter Continental Breakfast from 9-10am
- **April 20** Easter Worship on Sunday morning at 10am

 Happy Easter

Easter Morning Continental Breakfast

**SERVED FROM 9-10 AM
IN FELLOWSHIP HALL
APRIL 20**

Sign Up at Information Station



HIGHLANDS CHURCH

A Global Methodist Congregation

4pm Saturday Celebration Worship 10am Sunday Traditional Worship

First Sunday Combined Worship @10am (No Saturday Service)

Office News

Amey: office@hgmcbv.com

Newsletter: newsletter@hgmcbv.com

OFFICE HOURS: Monday - Friday, 8:30am - 4:00pm

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: The Deadline for the May Highlands Newsletter is 12:00 (noon), on April 20. Send all newsletter submissions, comments and/or questions to: office@hgmcbv.com

NOTES OF CONDOLENCES:

Maribel Childress and family, for the loss of her father, Allen Tuten

Connie Kiefer, for the loss of her husband, Merlyn Kiefer

Operating Budget Report - Jan, Feb, Mar 2025

Our financial year began with considerable expenses that have impacted our operating budget heavily. That includes huge electric bills due to the severe cold weather, annual fees for office software, internet and other one-time fees/renewals. Also, our liability insurance has considerably increased.

Income was insufficient the first two months of the year, with March better and helping us to begin to catch up. It is helpful for our supporters to be current with giving and give prayerful consideration to an additional gift to the Lenten/Easter Offering. Thank you for your continued support of Highlands Church.

Church Staff

JIM BENFER, *Interim Pastor*

AMEY BURKETT, *Office Administrator*

DRU MATTHEWS, *Bookkeeper / Treasurer*

JOHN MATTHEWS, *Director of Music Ministries*

PAM MEYER, *Celebration Worship Leader*

JEANNINE WAGAR, *Organist*

JOYCE SHELDON, *Chimes & Bells Director*

LAURIE PEARSON, *Nursery Staff*

MONICA CLARK, *Custodian*

3 ways to give
to Highlands Church

- Online
- In-Person
- By Mail

for details visit... hgmcbv.com/give

THE POWER OF **ONE**

Drop a folded dollar into the offering plate to support our Mission Ministry



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