

# Highlands News

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | HIGHLANDS CHURCH | MARCH 2025 | VOLUME 29 | ISSUE 3



## Ash Wednesday

Highlands Church will begin the Season of Lent on Ash Wednesday, March 5, with a special worship service at 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary. On this first day of Lent, ashes will be applied to the foreheads of those in attendance, which symbolize penance, mourning and mortality. Leaving the service wearing these ashes becomes a public expression of one's faith and penance. This short service starts the Lenten journey culminating in the crucifixion and resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ. We hope you will join us.

## ***MAKE PLANS TO SPEND THE 2025 LENTEN SEASON WITH HIGHLANDS CHURCH***

- **March 5** Ash Wednesday Service at 6pm
- **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

# From Bro. Jim's Desk

I want to thank Highlands Church for the warm welcome Cindy and I have felt in the few weeks that we have been with you. It is always a joy to find God's family waiting to receive you. The weather has been chilly, but the love we have felt has warmed our hearts. As I begin to get to know the committees and workings of the church, I hope I will also get to know each of you better, too. It is my privilege to visit with you and pray for the needs of our new church family.

The Staff-Parish Committee met with our new Presiding Elder, Clark Atkins, in a meeting Thursday, February 8. The purpose of the meeting was to develop a Highlands Church profile. This includes vital information about the ministry of our church and the needs the church sees in a prospective pastor.

Rev. Atkins took time to describe the Global Methodist Church's pastoral appointive method, which is different from the United Methodist system's appointive cabinet approach. Jeff Hale reported that all were all glad to hear that the process involves the input and agreement of the SPR committee in a much more comprehensive manner. Prospective candidates will be proposed and met in future Zoom meetings and video material will be provided in the process before the SPR will meet and interview a prospective pastor.

The good news is that we probably won't have to wait until Annual Conference to discover who our next pastor will be, and the process leading to the selection will be one of openness and input.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, Lent is the ancient season of preparation observed by the Church that prepares us for Easter. The early Christians observed with great devotion a forty-day season of spiritual preparation. During the season persons were encouraged to contemplate the cost of their sin, both to themselves, their associates and to the Lord, who gave his life as an atoning sacrifice to save us from the righteous penalty due us.

It is a time when people focus on reconciliation with others, of penitence and forgiveness, so that we all may be restored to proper participation in the life of the Church. In this way the whole congregation is reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus and the need we all have to renew our faith. I invite you, therefore, in the name of our Lord, to observe a holy Lent: by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word.

Let me make a special invitation to you to be with us as we start the Lenten Season with our Ash Wednesday Service, 6:00 p.m., March 5. We will have a short time of devotional and end with the imposition of ashes on our foreheads as a mark of both our mortality, and of the sin that so easily besets us.

As most of the Christian world considers what to give up for Lent, let me offer a suggestion. Instead of people giving up chocolate or some favorite thing, let's consider sacrificing of ourselves for the purpose of strengthening ourselves and our local ministries. I will be announcing a special Lenten offering that we will be taking up on Easter Sunday, April 20. I hope you will give special prayerful attention to the needs of our church through giving that reflects both a sacrifice for our Lord, and for our ministry in our community.

What a blessing it is to be a part of a church family and community of love and caring! Such love cannot be contained, so take it out to those you meet and share the love of Christ in amazing ways that only you can.

Bro. Jim







# Children's Worship Center



March opens Spring Quarter for Kids' Worship!

- ◇ Experiencing Lent and Easter with lessons from John and Luke
- ◇ Enjoying stories and plays about Jesus from the New Testament
- ◇ Singing worship songs that praise God
- ◇ Creating crafts and art activities together
- ◇ Learning to pray and give offerings to God
- ◇ Celebrating birthdays and building friendships

We welcome all children ages 5-11 into our Sunday Morning Kids' Worship area during the Traditional Service beginning at 10 am. Teachers arrive early for check-in, so parents can be in the Sanctuary on time.

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 our Nursery Staff, Laurie Pearson, at 479-256-4452.



- ◆ 'Highlands Youth Group' is under construction, and the Education Committee is in the planning and development phase.
- ◆ Our goal is to make disciples, specifically meeting the spiritual growth needs of our middle and high schoolers.
- ◆ An outreach Pizza Lunch is being planned for parents and their children/youth for Sunday, March 16, in the Fellowship Hall, to learn from their ideas and answer questions (who, what, why, and where).
- ◆ Please Pray, Pray, Pray!
- ◆ Questions: Contact Wanda Krug by text/call at 719-213-1115, or by email at [wlepillez@gmail.com](mailto:wlepillez@gmail.com)



# HIGHLANDS METHODIST MEN

## HMM March Meeting

Highlands Methodist Men (HMM) will be meeting on Tuesday, March 4, at 7:75 am in the Fellowship Hall. The meeting is open to all men of the church and guests are always welcome. Mark Brightwell, President of the Bella Vista Courtesy Van, will be our guest speaker. As the current President and a former driver for the BV Courtesy Van, Mark is able to give us not only an overview of the BVCV but an in depth look at the day-to-day operations of the BVCV, as well as let us know about any possible volunteer opportunities that HMM may be able to help with. Please be sure to sign-up in the Gathering Area so we know how many to expect for breakfast.

## HMM Blood Drive

Our next Blood Drive is scheduled for Wednesday, March 12, from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm and is organized by our Highlands Methodist Men (HMM). All donors will receive a FREE T-shirt and Adventure Passes! Appointments are strongly encouraged to manage donor flow. To schedule an appointment time, see the Weekly Update email or contact our coordinator, Jerry Snyder, at 763-639-2597.

Before the blood drive, please take a few steps to ensure that things go smoothly on the day of our blood drive.

- Drink plenty of water or juice the night and morning before you donate.
- Eat a well-balanced meal around 2-3 hours before giving.
- Bring your photo ID - Photo ID is required for all donors.
- Expedite your check-in process by visiting [cbco.org](http://cbco.org) the morning of the blood drive and click on the 'Donor QuickPass' to get your paperwork done before arrival.

**Give Blood. Save Lives. HAVE FUN!**

**FREE OZARKS ADVENTURE PASS and T-shirt!**  
Over \$180 in FREE admissions. Visit all 4 attractions!



**COMMUNITY BLOOD CENTER OF THE OZARKS**  
While supplies last.  
Full details: [www.cbco.org/adventure](http://www.cbco.org/adventure)

**Highlands Church • March 12 • 10:00 am - 3:00 pm**



## **HMW March Meeting: Fellowship Breakfast with Bella Vista Firefighters**

Join us for a heartwarming morning as we show our appreciation for Bella Vista's dedicated **A Shift** Firefighters and EMTs with a delicious homemade breakfast! This is a wonderful opportunity to give back, enjoy fellowship, and express our gratitude to those who serve and protect our community.



**Date:** Monday, March 10, 2025



**Time:** 9:00 AM (to set up for 9:30 breakfast)



**Location:** Bella Vista Fire Training Center

We encourage all women of the church to participate by bringing a **breakfast dish of your choice**—whether it's a casserole, pastries, fruit, or another favorite dish. Let's gather together, share a meal, and enjoy meaningful conversations with the first responders who work tirelessly to keep Bella Vista safe.

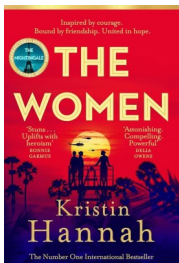
### **How to Participate:**

- ✓ **Sign up** at the Information Station in the Gathering area to let us know that you will be joining us and what dish you'll bring.
- ✓ Arrive at 9:00 am to set up and help serve breakfast at 9:30 am.
- ✓ Stay to enjoy breakfast and fellowship with our local heroes!

Let's come together in kindness and gratitude to make this a special event. We look forward to seeing you there!



## **HMW March Book Club**



Please join the Highlands Methodist Women on Monday, March 24, at 1 pm, in the Mark classroom as we discuss *The Women* by Kristin Hannah. *The Women* is the story of one woman gone to war, but it shines a light on all women who put themselves in harm's way and whose sacrifice and commitment to their country has too often been forgotten. This is another great book and all women are welcome. For any questions please call Sue LaHood at 479-855-0937.



# Bro. Jim's Mexico Mission Trip

When: **May 25 to May 31, 2025**

Where: Manos Juntas Mission, Rio Bravo, Mexico

Cost: \$750 + travel to and from McAllen, Texas

**Sign Up Deadline: April 15**

I want to invite you to be a part of a long-term mission I have been working on for the last 20 years. I take a group of volunteers each year with me to carry out VBS, Medical Clinics, Construction, Sewing, Book and Bible distributions, and evangelism. All ages can attend, but those under 18 will have to have a parent accompany them. You will need a current passport.

You will need to complete applications for the trip. Please request them from me at [jim.benfer@outlook.com](mailto:jim.benfer@outlook.com)

Information sheets may be found on the bulletin board in hallway by office.

## Flex 'N Stretch

The next 10-week session of Flex 'N Stretch starts Monday, March 24, at Highlands Church. We meet Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8am—9am in the Peter classroom. Our Mission is to challenge, encourage and promote better health through physical exercise. You can attend 1 lesson, all 30 lessons, or even somewhere in-between... whatever works for you!

Flex 'N Stretch is a wellness program of activities which provides a higher quality of life thru responsible movement that is pain free and possible for all participants. This well- organized exercise program teaches all participants how to do the exercises easily and safely, including seniors. Benefits include increased range of motion, coordination, strength, balance, and agility; all of which improve the quality of life and lead to longer independent living. Cost is \$45.00 for 30 Sessions or \$30.00 for 15 Sessions. Come, join the fun and experience the benefits! No signups required. For more details, contact Donna Williams, 479-659-2658.



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP WITH SNACK PACKS



**April 2**

**May 7**

10:00 am - 11:30 am

Samaritan Community Center



**Daylight Saving Time Starts**  
the clocks go forward one hour

# March 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1– No Celebration Service
2– Communion & Combined Worship at 10am	3	4– HMM Meeting – Compassionate Disciples Meeting	5– Ash Wednesday Service 6pm	6	7	8
9– Daylight Savings Time Begins – Coffee w/ Pastor	10– HMW Meeting	11	12– Stitches – HMM Blood Drive	13	14	15
16– 3rd Sunday Cookies	17	18– Staff Meeting – Council Meets – Kitchen Cleaning	19	20– Library Meeting	21	22– Scrapbooking & Card Making
23	24– HMW Book Club Meeting – Flex ‘N Stretch Begins	25	26– Stitches	27	28	29
30– 5th Sunday Loan Reduction – New Member Sunday	31					

## Thank You!

Church family and Brother Jim,

We deeply appreciate all your prayers and expressions of support during our recent health challenges. The prayer shawl is beautiful. A special thanks to Dennis Redenius for his invaluable help in a crisis! We believe we're over the worst and are praying that continuing rehab will take care of any remaining issues. God is good. We are truly blessed.

Dick & Susan Vroman

## 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 the second Friday of each month 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 for the American Heart Association.

We would like to schedule training for our church on **April 11 and/or May 9**. The date will depend on how many people sign up; we need at least 10 per class. There will be a signup sheet at the Information Station in the Gathering Area. **YOU MUST** sign up **by Sunday, March 23, 11:00 am**, so that we can schedule with the Fire Department. For any and all questions, please email Sue LaHood at [suelahood@currently.com](mailto:suelahood@currently.com) or call her at 479-855-0937.



# 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](mailto:office@hgmcbv.com)

Newsletter: [newsletter@hgmcbv.com](mailto:newsletter@hgmcbv.com)

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

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:** The Deadline for the April Highlands Newsletter is 12:00 (noon), on March 20. Send all newsletter submissions, comments and/or questions to this email address: [newsletter@hgmcbv.com](mailto:newsletter@hgmcbv.com)

**NOTES OF CONDOLENCES:** Dixie Brown for the loss of her husband, Tom Brown, on 2/14/25

### 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*

### Operating Budget Report - December 31, 2024

	YTD Budget	Dec Actual	YTD Actual
Income	501,740	60,656	479,036
Expenses	501,740	44,075	474,580
Net	0	16,581	4,457

Thank you for your continued support.

### Note from Finance

We're starting the year in deficit due to snowy weather and reduced income. Our electric bill was \$2053 to keep us warm. Our office software, internet and other annual one time fees were due and renewed to set us up for the new year. Hopefully, next month expenses will be more normal so we can get back in line with our budget. Continue to pray for the future of our church.



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