

# Highlands News

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | HIGHLANDS CHURCH | NOVEMBER 2025 | VOLUME 29 | ISSUE 11



## Stewardship 2026

### Prayerfully Consider Your Giving

It's that time again when we are invited to reflect on God's abundant blessings and how we can respond with gratitude. Stewardship is more than financial giving—it's a spiritual practice that expresses our trust in God and our commitment to the ministry of the church.

Each gift we offer—our time, talents, and treasures—helps sustain our mission to share Christ's love, serve our community, and nurture faith in every generation.

As you prepare for 2026, we ask that you **prayerfully consider your giving** for the year ahead. Take time to reflect on how God has been at work in your life and how you can be part of what God is doing through our church family.

Your faithful generosity makes ministry possible—worship, outreach, education, and care for those in need. Every contribution, no matter the size, is a vital part of our shared mission.

Let's step into 2026 with hearts open to God's call, ready to give joyfully and generously.

*"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." — 2 Corinthians 9:7*



**PUT A  
SMILE ON  
YOUR FACE,**

**GOD LOVES A *cheerful* GIVER...  
BUT HE'LL TAKE FROM A GROUCH**



# Under-Shepherd Udderings

Howdy Highlands Church Family,

The “Meat and Greet with Pastor Rick” lunches have come to a close. I’m going to refrain from eating pizza on Sunday ... for a while. Thank you for coming and sharing how the Lord brought you to Highlands Church. It’s been a blessing to hear your story and know that God’s providential grace was at work to bring you to salvation in Christ and to Highlands Church.

I’m beginning to put more and more names with faces, but please forgive me when I make a mistake. You only have three new people to remember, but we are trying to remember the names and faces of about 200 new friends, and it’s fantastic.

I’ve been learning the history of the church, but also working on planning behind the scenes for the future. Please keep praying for your church each day during your prayer time. I hope you are receiving the Wake-up Call devotion each morning in your email so we may share in that spiritual discipline together as the body of Christ. Sign up here: <https://seedbed.com/wakeupcall/>

In November, we will have our annual stewardship campaign in which we will make a financial commitment to support our church, but also a commitment to use our time and talents in serving the Lord. You’ll receive a letter about that very soon. Please seek the Lord and ask for His blessings upon our stewardship campaign.

Lastly, November is a time when our nation sets aside a time for giving THANKS to the Lord. It is the Lord who raised up our nation, who has sustained us with His protection, and who has prospered us beyond any other nation. Let us truly give the Lord our thanks and our praise for all of His goodness to our nation, but let’s humbly pray for His grace to cover our sins and for revival to fill this land and our own hearts, too.

Grace and Peace

Pastor Rick



## Matthew Discipleship Class—Sundays at 9AM

Beginning Sunday, January 4, 2026, Highlands will offer a second Adult Discipleship Class—called the Matthew Discipleship Class. It will meet Sundays in the Matthew Classroom from 9:00 to 9:45 AM. Allen Lovell will be the coordinator and will teach for the first few months. The first few sessions are titled “Bible 101”, in which we’ll examine topics such as the Bible’s history, how it’s organized, and how to study it effectively. Following this, we will begin a study of the Gospel of Mark. If you are interested, please sign up for this new class at the Info Station.

# Outreach Ministry Opportunities

Thank you for support of our new mission opportunity to spread the Gospel of Jesus throughout the world with Samaritan's Purse **Operation Christmas Child** Shoebox Ministry! For more information about this ministry their website is: [samaritanspurse.org/occ](http://samaritanspurse.org/occ).

We will provide small gifts in a shoebox 12x7x4.38 inches for children ages 2-14. We have collection bins near the nursery in the Gathering Area. Shoebox Gift Suggestions as well as literature about the program are at the Information Station. Our goal this first year is 50 boxes. Let's beat that goal! I believe we can!



**Everyone is invited to the Shoebox Packing Party on Tuesday, November 18, at 10:00 AM, in the Fellowship Hall.**

Filled boxes will be delivered to the collection location for this area which is BV Baptist Church. I hope you will prayerfully consider participating in this ministry. If you have any questions, please contact Sara Sherman – sarasherman@att.net.

**A donation fee of \$10 per box is critical to cover shipping costs.** Please make your check to Highlands Church with OCC in the memo line or place your donation in an envelope with your name and notation of OCC.

Thank you to the Henkels and the Stones, our Care Group Coordinators, and all who attended the recent All Church Event for the donation of \$200 to help with shipping costs!

---

## Upcoming December Outreach opportunities:

Samaritan Center Snack Pack Program – We will pack December 3!

Salvation Army Bell Ringers – We will ring the bells December 11, 12 and 13 and again December 18, 19 and 20 at Allen's in Bella Vista. Details coming soon.

Blessings, Sara Sherman, Outreach Chair

## Food Pantry—Donations Needed for Holidays



Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays are near. Please donate holiday food items such as stuffing mix, canned sweet potatoes, green beans, instant potatoes, cranberry sauce, and dessert mixes for the Bright Futures Food Pantry & Gravette School District. Place your donated items in the marked bins located in all entrances to the church for delivery to the Gravette School Food Pantry. This outreach is co-sponsored by the Celebration Worship Team and Highlands Methodist Women (HMW). Thank you for your continued support of this Food Pantry.

# Highlands Youth Discipleship

**"SO NOW WE CAN REJOICE IN OUR WONDERFUL NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD BECAUSE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST HAS MADE US FRIENDS OF GOD." ROMANS 5:11**



All middle and high school students are invited to join us Sundays at 9 AM in the Youth Room for "Friends of God," a discipleship experience. It's a relaxed, welcoming space where students can grow in their faith, connect with friends, and enjoy some morning drinks while they're at it.

In October, we watched the full-length film *Unheard Of*, a real-world parable about Dennis, a modern-day disciple. As we continue to explore his story and the disciples in the Bible, we are learning a lot about ourselves.

- A friend of God is about relationship, not perfection or performance. Question: Where do you see Jesus sticking with you through the messiness you're living through?
- You're a friend of God—and friends take risks with each other. Question: In what ways is Jesus inviting you out of your comfort zone?

We are starting a new monthly Games & Grub event every 2nd Sunday of the month from 4–6 PM in the Youth Room. It will be a time for fun and friendship. Parents are also invited to stay. Details for RSVP will follow soon.

**Mark your calendar for Games & Grub...**

⇒ Sunday, November 9 and Sunday, December 14



## Children's Center

**"START THE CHILDREN OFF THE WAY THEY SHOULD GO AND EVEN WHEN THEY ARE OLD THEY WILL NOT TURN FROM IT." PROVERBS 22:6**



Our **Kids Discipleship Class** (ages 5–10) meets in the Children's Center on Sundays from 10:30–11:00 AM, immediately following the Children's Sermon during the 10:00 AM. Traditional Worship Service. On the first Sunday of each month, there will be no class so families can worship together.

The **Nursery** (ages 0–4) is open in the Children's Center during the 10:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service and also from 9:00–10:00 a.m. for parents attending a discipleship class. For more information, contact our Nursery Attendant, Celia Chernota, at 479-640-4549.

In November, the Kid's Discipleship Class will complete the *Fruit of the Spirit* series and begin a new study on *Jesus' Birth and Childhood* in preparation for the Christmas season. Lessons this month include Forgiveness (Nov. 9), Obedience (Nov. 16), Responsibility (Nov. 23), and A Savior is Coming (Nov. 30).

We look forward to growing and learning together this season!

### *Welcome Our Newest Staff Member - Nursery Attendant -*

*Celia Chernota joined the church staff as our Nursery Attendant in October. Celia is the oldest of 4 and has lived in Bella Vista for 16 years. She enjoys running, working out, spending time with her family, coloring, shopping, and being outdoors.*



*She is currently enrolled at NWACC, where she runs cross country and track while pursuing a nursing degree. She plans to transfer to a university to complete her bachelor's. Celia also works at a church daycare in her free time, teaching 1 and 2 year-olds about the Bible.*

***Please give Celia a warm Highlands Church welcome when you see her!***



## THE HIGHLANDERS METHODIST MEN



### November Highlanders Meeting and more...

Highland's men's group, The Highlanders, will be holding their November meeting on Tuesday, Nov 4 at 8:45 AM. We will have as our guest speaker Bella Vista Mayor John Flynn who will be discussing the upcoming special election to extend our current sales tax as well as other items of interest to all who live in Bella Vista. Along with our speaker there will be breakfast, fellowship, and coffee and all men of Highlands, and their guests, are welcome and encouraged to attend.

One of the items that we approved at our October meeting was to put together a core group of three or four men to look at different community outreach projects our men's group might like to work on or become involved in, whether that be helping with a specific community event or project, or helping at a local organization, or whatever. We are actively looking for those who would like to be a part of that core group so if you do have an interest in helping with this please let one of the Highlander's board members know.

At our December meeting on December 2, we will be electing officers for 2026. If you would like to be considered for one of the positions – President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer please contact Greg Snyder so your name can be added as a candidate.



## HIGHLANDS METHODIST WOMEN

### November HMW Meeting

Please join the Global Women of Highlands Church (HMW) on Monday, November 10 at 9:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall. We will hear from Charlene, the owner of Acceptance Treatment, & Counseling, an ALL Level of Care on Substance Use and Occurring Mental Health Treatment Facility. There are several locations in NWA: Inpatient in Springdale, Outpatient office in Rogers, and Housing if needed in Bentonville and Prairie Creek. ALL WOMEN and Friends of Highlands Church are welcome! Food, fun, and fellowship abounds and this will be a very informative meeting. Please sign up at the Information Station by Nov 9 so we can get a headcount on how many will be able to attend. See you on Nov 10!

### 36th Annual Cookie Walk – It's Cookie Walk Time!

Join us Saturday, December 6, from 8:30 to 11:00 AM (or until the last cookie is gone)! Start planning your festive Christmas cookies and pick up aluminum pans the weekends of November 8/9 and 15/16 at the volunteer signup table in the Gathering Area before or after worship. We have about 600 pans, so if you bake your 20 dozen, we'll have just enough!

Volunteer signups also begin November 2. Details about Craft, Candy, and Sweet Shoppe donations will be coming soon. Proceeds from the Cookie Walk and Coffee Shoppe benefit Highlands Mission Ministries and Highlands Methodist Women.

Questions? Contact Cookie Walk Chairpersons, Darleen Olson or Pat Lehman.



# All Saints Weekend

At Combined Worship on All Saints Sunday, November 2, we will remember the many loved ones lost since last year's observance. As each name is read, a chime will sound and a candle will be lit in their memory. We will deeply miss the dear loved ones of our Highlands family.



Lee Balzer

Sherry Bennett

Meryl Kiefer

Alice Lock

Fred Picht

Jane Rowland

Vernon Sidler

Ronald Widner



**Advent begins Sunday, November 30.** Join us as we worship, serve, and celebrate the joy of Christmas together at Highlands Church! Mark your calendar for the following important events:

**Cookie Walk** – Saturday, December 6, 8:30–11:00 AM, Fellowship Hall. Our 36th Annual Cookie Walk returns! Enjoy homemade treats, the Coffee Shoppe, and Craft Shoppe. Proceeds benefit Outreach Ministries and Highlands Methodist Women (more details on page 5).

**Blood Drive** – Wednesday, December 10, Fellowship Hall. Give the gift of life by donating blood before the holidays.

**Annual Church Conference** – Wednesday, December 10, 6:00 PM. All members are encouraged to attend our Annual Church Conference.

**Salvation Army Bell Ringing** – December 11, 12, 13 and again the following week, December 18, 19, 20. Join our Highlands tradition and volunteer to ring the bell at Allen's in Bella Vista. (signups coming soon!)

**Celebration Worship Cantata** – Saturday, December 13, 5:30 PM, Sanctuary.

**Traditional Worship Cantata** – Sunday, December 14, 10:00 AM, Sanctuary.

**Christmas Luncheon** – Sunday, December 14, following worship. Enjoy a Country-Style Christmas Meal catered by Bubba's BBQ. Tickets are \$15 per person, available from November 8–30, and hosted by the Fellowship Committee.

**Christmas Eve Worship** – December 24, 4:00 PM, Sanctuary. Join us for a candlelight celebration of Christ's birth.

## Library News—What's on Your Reading List?

Our church library wants to hear from you! What are your favorite authors? What books would you like to see added to our shelves? If there's a title you've been wanting to check out at your local library and it's not available, let us know—we may be able to add it to our collection here at Highlands.

Coming soon—a **Suggestion Box** will be available outside the Library Office, near the Sanctuary. Drop in your ideas and help us make the church library even better for everyone.

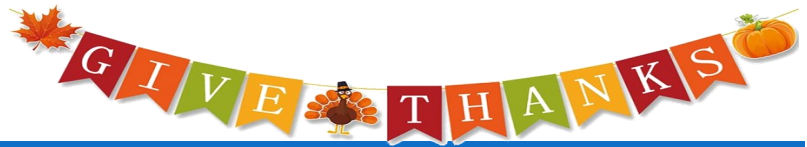
And be sure to save the date for our Library Open House on Sunday, February 1, 2026, following worship. More details to come! – *Library Committee*

## Veterans Day Celebration

The church office is updating the Veterans Picture Wall for Veterans Day weekend, Nov 8–9. If you'd like to add or update your photo, please submit it (with your name, branch, and service dates) by November 3. The display will be in the Gathering Area November 5–11, with cake and refreshments served after worship that weekend as we honor all who served.



# November 2025



| Sun                                                                   | Mon             | Tue                                                                 | Wed                        | Thu                                     | Fri               | Sat                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                       |                 |                                                                     |                            |                                         |                   | 1– Planning Retreat<br>– No Celebration Service      |
| 2– Combined Worship at 10am<br>– All Saints Day<br>– Crock Pot Sunday | 3               | 4– Highlanders Meeting<br>– Compassionate Disciples Meeting         | 5– Fellowship Team Meeting | 6                                       | 7                 | 8– Stewardship Weekend<br>– Veterans Day Celebration |
| 9– Stewardship Weekend<br>– Vets Day Celeb<br>– Games & Grub          | 10– HMW Meeting | 11– Office Closed<br>– Veterans Day                                 | 12– Stitches               | 13– Trustees Mtg                        | 14                | 15– Stewardship Weekend                              |
| 16– Stewardship Weekend<br>– 3rd Sunday Cookies                       | 17              | 18– Church Council Meeting<br>– Kitchen Cleanup<br>– Pack Shoeboxes | 19                         | 20– Library Mtg                         | 21                | 22– Scrapbooking & Card Making                       |
| 23                                                                    | 24              | 25– Christmas Decorating Church                                     | 26– Office Closed          | 27– Office Closed<br>– Thanksgiving Day | 28– Office Closed | 29 - 30                                              |



**Online Daily Devotional**  
Scripture, reflection, and encouragement in your inbox each morning

Visit the website:  
[seedbed.com/wakeupcall](http://seedbed.com/wakeupcall)

## A Shoebox That Changed Two Lives

In 2000, 7-year-old Tyrel Wolfe from Idaho packed a shoebox for Operation Christmas Child, filling it with small gifts and a photo of himself. That box traveled to the Philippines, where a young girl named Joana Marchan received it and cherished it.

Fourteen years later, Joana searched Tyrel's name on Facebook... and found him. Their friendship turned to love, and in 2014, they married. A simple gift became a love story that crossed oceans—a reminder that God can use even the smallest act of kindness to change lives.

**As Highlands Church joins this year's Operation Christmas Child outreach, may this real-life story inspire us all to pray over each shoebox we send, trusting God to use it in ways we could never imagine.**

Did you know? • Follow  
Oct 8 •

In the USA, a 7-year-old boy named Tyrel Wolfe from Idaho packed a shoebox for Operation Christmas Child in the year 2000. He filled it with toys, school supplies, and a photo of himself. 📷 📦

That small box traveled all the way to the Philippines, where a young girl named Joana Marchan received it. She loved the gift deeply but had no way to contact the boy who sent it. 🌍 📧

Fourteen years later, in 2014, Joana searched Tyrel's name on Facebook — and found him! What started as friendly chats soon grew into love. 💬 ❤️

Tyrel flew to the Philippines, and later that year, Joana moved to the U.S. They married in October 2014. 💍

A simple gift became a beautiful love story that crossed oceans. 🌍 💕

#LoveStory #ChristmasMiracle #TrueStory #Kindness #Fate #USA #lifestyle



thank you  
FOR YOUR SUPPORT





# HIGHLANDS CHURCH

A Global Methodist Congregation

5:30pm Saturday Celebration Worship  
10:00am Sunday Traditional Worship

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

## Office News

**CHURCH OFFICE, Amey Burkett:** [office@hgmcbv.com](mailto:office@hgmcbv.com)

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

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:** The deadline to submit content for the December Highlands Newsletter is 12:00 PM (noon) on November 17 (early). Please send all submissions, comments, or questions to the church office at: [office@hgmcbv.com](mailto:office@hgmcbv.com)

**CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED:** The church office will be closed Tuesday, November 11 for Veterans Day and November 26–28 for Thanksgiving.

## Church Staff

RICK SITTON, *Senior Pastor*

JOHN MATTHEWS, *Director of Music Ministries*

PAM MEYER, *Celebration Worship Leader*

JEANNINE WAGAR, *Organist*

JOYCE SHELDON, *Chimes & Bells Director*

CELIA CHERNOTA, *Nursery Attendant*

AMEY BURKETT, *Office Admin*

DRU MATTHEWS, *Business Manager*

MONICA CLARK, *Custodian*

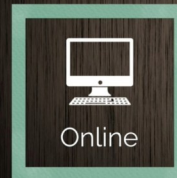
## Operating Budget Report - September 30, 2025

|          | YTD<br>Budget | Sept<br>Actual | YTD<br>Actual |
|----------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Income   | 328,503       | 33,554         | 339,748       |
| Expenses | 328,503       | 36,353         | 323,041       |
| Net      | 0             | (2,799)        | 16,707        |

Thank you for your continued support.

3 ways to give

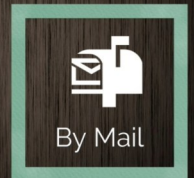
to Highlands Church



Online



In-Person



By Mail

for details visit... [hgmcbv.com/give](http://hgmcbv.com/give)



Like & Follow Us  
[facebook.com/hgmcbv](https://facebook.com/hgmcbv)  
[youtube.com/@hgmcbv](https://youtube.com/@hgmcbv)



Highlands Church, 371 Glasgow Road, Bella Vista, AR 72715, (479) 855-2277, [www.hgmcbv.com](http://www.hgmcbv.com)