

Highlands News

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | HIGHLANDS CHURCH | MAY 2026 | VOLUME 30 | ISSUE 5



A Time to Celebrate: Debt Free at Highlands Church

On Sunday, May 3, Highlands Church will gather for a very special moment in the life of our church—a celebration of becoming debt free.

This milestone represents more than just numbers on a page. It reflects years of faithful giving, careful stewardship, and a shared commitment to the mission and future of Highlands Church. Because of that faithfulness, we now step into a new season with greater freedom to focus on what matters most—serving others, growing in faith, and reaching our community in meaningful ways.

During worship, we will celebrate together with praise hymns and a special time of thanksgiving, recognizing God’s provision and the generosity of so many who made this moment possible. It is an opportunity to pause and reflect on how far we have come—and to give thanks for the journey.

Following the service, the celebration will continue in the Fellowship Hall with cake and refreshments. We hope you will stay, visit, and enjoy this time together as a church family. Milestones like this are meant to be shared, and this one belongs to all of us.

This day will also be a Great Day of Joining. If you have been considering making Highlands Church your church home, this is a meaningful time to take that step and be part of what God is doing here.

As we celebrate this moment, we also look ahead. Being debt free opens new doors and new possibilities. It allows us to move forward with renewed energy and purpose, continuing to be a caring community of faith and fellowship.

We hope you will join us for this special day of celebration, gratitude, and looking ahead to all that is still to come.

Under-Shepherd Udderings

“And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD;
It shall rejoice in His salvation.” (Psalm 35:9 NKJV)

Rejoice in the Lord for our salvation in Christ. We can always have joy because of that blessed assurance that Jesus is mine and I am His. We also rejoice that the church is no longer in debt! Glory be to God! Many faithful and generous people have given toward the retirement of our mortgage. We must celebrate and rejoice in the Lord for His provision. So, let's worship together on May 3. During worship, we shall rejoice in the Lord for such a blessing! Stay after worship for a time of fellowship and rejoicing.

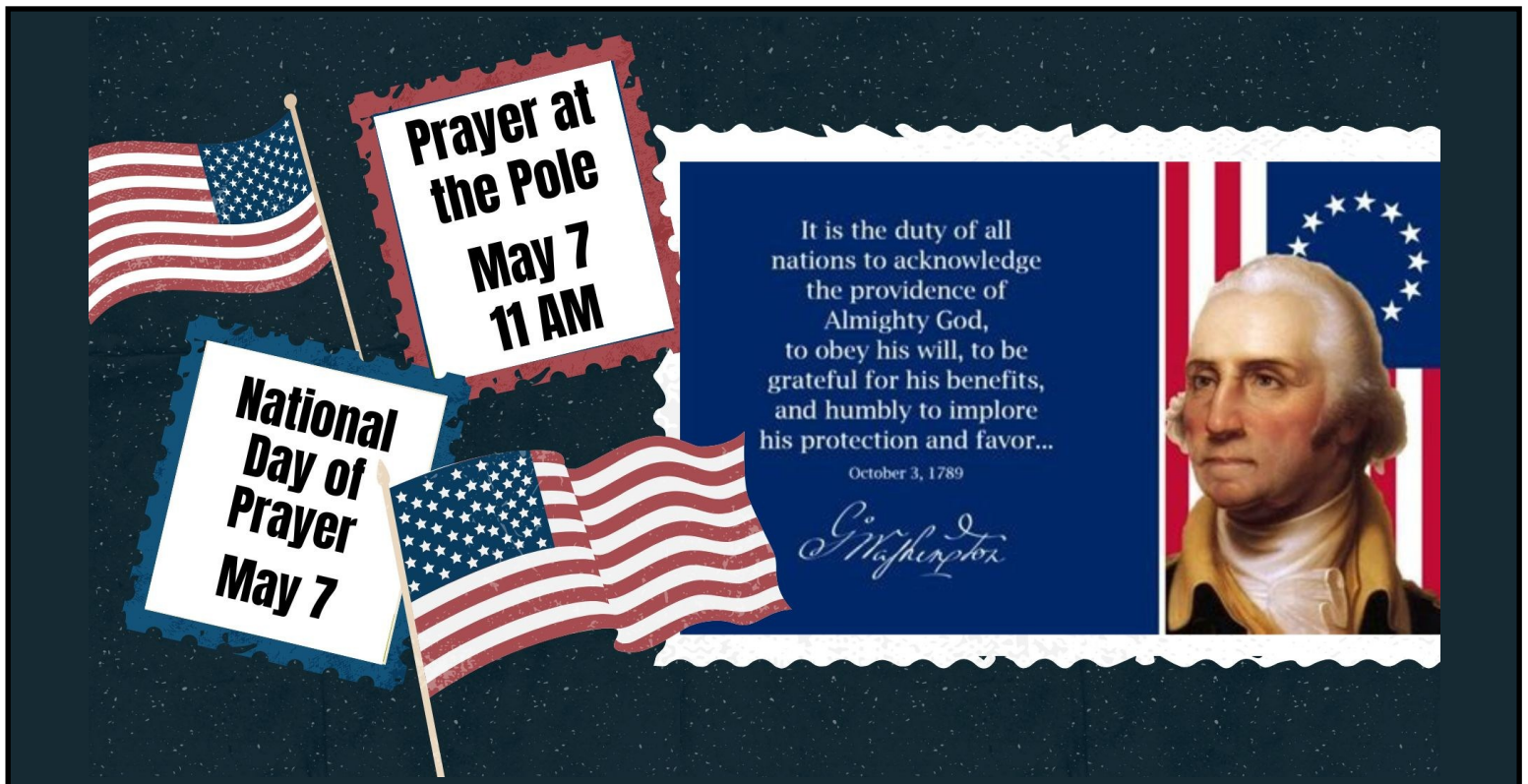


Our church would not be here without our nation being established by God, and without His providential grace shed upon the USA for 250 years. I do not doubt that the Lord has blessed our nation with His grace and mercy, since we were founded upon a Judeo-Christian worldview and have sought to honor God. Throughout our history, there have been revivals that have changed America, and we must keep praying for revival across our land, for the Lord is the only hope for America and for all nations. God's people have been faithful to pray throughout the centuries that our nation would seek God and honor the Lord. As we celebrate our 250th anniversary this year, I hope you will pray for our nation every day and participate in the National Day of Prayer event being held at Cooper Chapel on Thursday, May 7, at noon. **I invite you to gather around the flagpole at Highlands Church at 11 am that morning.** We will pray for our nation, joining millions who will do so on that day. Then, let us carpool over to Cooper Chapel and be a part of our Bella Vista Community prayer event.

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people He has chosen as His own inheritance.” (Psalm 33:12)

Grace and Peace

Pastor Rick



An Invitation to Share Your Story

By Susan Cafferty

Matthew 28:19 *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”* As Christians we are called to make disciples. One of the most effective tools for making and strengthening faith is the sharing of our own personal faith stories. Yet many of us aren’t too comfortable with sharing; we tell ourselves that we don’t have time, that our stories aren’t interesting, or that we might embarrass ourselves. Yes, people want to read your story, and we are asking you to offer it in a monthly column to be published in our Highlands Church newsletter. How to get started? Begin with prayer and then consider these questions:



Where and when did I first feel God’s presence? How is God shaping my life right now? How has faith changed my life? Your story doesn’t need to be long or eloquent, and you don’t need to share any details you would rather keep private. As the Witness Ministries representative on our Church Council I will begin by sharing my story:

I had never had a strong faith-growing up. My family didn’t have great involvement in the church, and the importance of faith was certainly not emphasized. As a young adult I faced a serious illness, and my doctors struggled for several years to find effective treatment. It caused great stress for me and my loved ones and caused an early retirement from my chosen career. In despair, I pretty much decided that if God even existed, he sure didn’t have much interest in me. But my friend Ladonna was trying to get me to attend church with her, and she asked me at least 15 times. I finally agreed just to get her to leave me alone. I arrived early that Sunday morning, and as I waited for my friend I found a corner in the foyer where I tried to avoid attention, but an older lady named Martha, saw me anyway. She didn’t know me, but she walked up, without even introducing herself and said, “You look like you need a hug.” And she followed with a big, warm hug. It’s amazing what a hug can do. God’s unconditional love flowed out of Martha’s arms and enveloped me, and the next Sunday I was back at church. My faith grew from there.

Sometimes we might feel completely beaten, but God never gives up on us. Sad things happen. We get overwhelmed, but God walks with us, guiding us along, gathering us into safety under God’s wings. Before too long, I began to understand. It took years for my illness to remit, but I didn’t walk the path alone. Before long I was working at a church, doing Care Ministries and Lay speaking. I found a new, true calling. It all began with a hug.

If you want to learn more about sharing your story call the church office or Susan Cafferty.

You’re Invited

Join us Thursday, May 7 at 10:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall for a free Dementia Friends Training, led by Alzheimer’s Arkansas through the Methodist Foundation. This 50-minute session offers helpful insight into understanding dementia and simple ways to support those affected. Open to our church family and the community—no registration required.

DEMENTIA FRIENDS TRAINING

Thursday, May 7 • 10:00 AM
Highlands Church Fellowship Hall



FOR ARKANSAS, FOR GOD.

Mission Grant Approved for Rio Bravo Ministry

We are excited to share that Highlands Global Methodist Church has been awarded a grant through the Arkansas Methodist Foundation to support the Rio Bravo, Mexico mission led by Brother Jim Benfer.

This ministry provides Spanish-language books and Bibles to children in local elementary schools, supporting both literacy and faith development. Brother Jim's next mission trip is scheduled for June 21-27, when these resources will be delivered.

If you would like to help expand the impact, donations are still being accepted through the church office. If writing a check, please note "mission trip" in the memo line. Please keep this mission and the children of Rio Bravo in your prayers.



Notes of Thanks

We, the family of Joe Wood, wish to express our gratitude to the Church for your loving, caring spirit as we celebrated the life of our beloved Joe. The many services you provide are amazing & a blessing beyond measure. May God continue to bless you & use you to His glory. Virginia & Greg Wood

To those at Highlands Methodist Church, I am Ron Widner's niece and wish to thank your congregation for ministering to my amazing uncle and his daughter Liz. Uncle Ronnie spoke especially fondly of Jim Benson who disciplined him and embodied Christ's command to "love one another as He has loved us." In honor of both Uncle Ronnie and Mr. Benson, I am donating all of the non-perishable food from Ronnie's home for the church to use as it deems fit. Please continue to bless your community and beyond by fulfilling Christ's work. Truly, I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. In Christ, Wren Hudson

It is truly a blessing to be a member of Highlands Church. Words are inadequate to encompass the acts of love, kind thoughts, and memorial gifts at this personally difficult time of my wife's passing. Our Pastor Rick Sitton was there by my side during this entire time. We are also blessed to have an office administrator that behind the scenes performed many small acts that made "everything just right." With gratefulness to a caring church, Earl Lehman

Highlanders Blood Drive

Our next Blood Drive is scheduled for Wednesday, May 20, from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM. Nat Collis will be taking appointments in the Gathering Area beginning the weekend of May 9/10.

GIVE BLOOD

FREE T-shirt & Fun Pass worth over \$245!
FOR DONORS
While supplies last.



Full details:
www.cbco.org/giveandgo

GIVE & GO... have fun!



Care & Share Thrift Store

Volunteers from Highlands Church are needed to work at the Gravette Care & Share Thrift Store the week of May 26-30, from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm. Online signups have begun, or contact the church office for assistance. For details, contact our coordinator, Connie Kiefer at 479-876-6324.





THE HIGHLANDERS METHODIST MEN



MAY HIGHLANDERS MEETING

Our final Highlanders men’s meeting before our summer break will take place on Tuesday, May 5. This will once again be an evening meeting beginning at 5:30 pm and will be catered by Papa Mike’s, who will be serving his always delicious brisket along with baked beans, coleslaw and more.

Our speaker will be our very own - and always popular - Pastor Rick Sitton, who will be speaking to us in conjunction with the upcoming “National Day of Prayer” which is on Thursday, May 7, this year.

All men are invited, so please plan on joining us for dinner and what will no doubt be a spiritually uplifting and meaningful presentation from Pastor Sitton. There will be a free will offering taken to help offset the cost of the dinner and we request that you please sign up for this meeting in the Gathering Area so we know how many dinners will be needed.



HIGHLANDS METHODIST WOMEN

MAY HMW MEETING

Please join the Highlands Methodist Women on Monday, May 11 at 9:30 AM for information about the Children & Family Advocacy Center of Northwest Arkansas. “For those affected by trauma, every pinwheel is a story of resilience.” Through long-standing essential services, they provide the resources needed for children and families in our community. By breaking the cycle of abuse, they make a lasting generational impact. This is such a worthwhile—and unfortunately much-needed—service for our community. Breakfast, devotion, fun, and thought-provoking discussion will be shared. Please sign up at the Information Desk by Sunday, May 3 at noon. See you then!

HMW BOOK CLUB

Please join the Highlands Methodist Women’s Book Club on Tuesday, May 19 at 11:00 AM in the Mark Classroom. We will be discussing Ben Carson’s autobiography, Gifted Hands.

Gifted Hands reveals the remarkable journey of Dr. Ben Carson from an angry, struggling young boy with everything stacked against him to the director of pediatric neurosurgery at the Johns Hopkins Children’s Center. If time allows, we may watch the video and possibly go out to lunch afterward.

Please sign up at the Information Station for this final book club meeting of the 2026 year. For questions, please email suelahood@currently.com.

FLEA & BOUTIQUE

A Great Big Thank You to all the hardworking women and men who helped unpack, price, pick up furniture, arrange and rearrange items, cashier, and work the 2026 Flea! We had such a dedicated group of volunteers, and it was a joy working together to raise \$5,500 (WOW!!!) for our Women’s and Children’s Charities in Northwest Arkansas.

We also want to thank everyone who donated items, helping make this year’s Flea such a success.

God bless Highlands Church, and God bless our super-duper workers!

Darleen Olson and Kathy Smith, Co-Chairs



Highlands Youth Discipleship

SEEN – Known by God – Connected to Others

Highlands Youth Discipleship (ages 11+) meets Sunday mornings from 9:00–9:45 AM for real-life conversations, Bible study, and video-based lessons. Our current study focuses on the cost of following God and how that can mean persecution for many Christians around the world today, just as it did for the early disciples. How should we respond to persecution and support those who are facing it?

We are putting our faith into action by supporting a Filipino deaf child named Clarence, who attends a Christian School for the Deaf in the Philippines (IDEA). Our weekly offering helps cover the cost of his tuition.

LESSON 1 - REMEMBER VERSE	LESSON 2 - REMEMBER VERSE	LESSON 3 - REMEMBER VERSE
“If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world.” John 15:19	“That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” 2 Corinthians 12:10	“Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.” Hebrews 13:3

COME JOIN THE FUN!

Welcome One and All Families with Children and Youth to GAMES AND GRUB!

(Every second Sunday of the month from 4:00–6:00 PM)

What: Miniature Golf and Hot Dog Roast

When: Sunday, May 10, 2026, 4:00–6:00 PM

Where: Bella Vista Rec Center, 3 Riordan Drive, Bella Vista

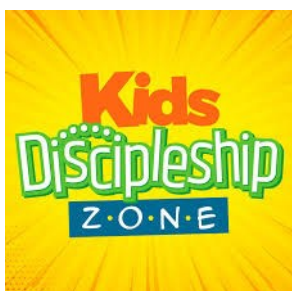
RSVP by Friday, May 1 on the SignUpGenius invitation.



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

Parents and Grandparents:



In May, the Kids’ Discipleship class will be learning about God’s plan for us. We will continue to dedicate our weekly offering to Brother Jim Benfer’s mission work in Mexico. Our weekly offering supports “Bibles and Books” for these children and schools. Our “tower of quarters” is growing weekly. Brother Jim will be leaving for Mexico in June, and we would like to see the tower filled to the top before he leaves. Children ages 5-10 are welcome at children’s worship. We meet from 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. following the Children’s Sermon. We do not meet on the first Sunday of the month. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (479) 619-8654. In God’s Love, Kitty Knight

May 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2– No Celebration Worship
3– Combined Worship at 10AM – Debt Celeb – Great Day Joining	4	5– Highlanders Meeting – Compassionate Care Meeting	6– Fellowship Mtg	7– Dementia Friends – Prayer at Pole – National Day of Prayer	8	9
10– Mothers Day – HMW Casseroles for Year Drawing	11– HMW Meeting	12	13– Stitches	14– Trustees Mtg	15	16
17	18– HMW Book Club	19– Church Council	20– Blood Drive	21	22	23
24	25– Memorial Day, Office Closed	26– Care & Share Volunteers Begin	27– Stitches	28– Care Group Leaders Meeting	29	30
31– All Church Event (info coming soon!)						

The Door Is Open: Discover the Prayer Chapel

“But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.” Matthew 6:6 (NASB95)

The Prayer Chapel at Highlands Church has been, albeit unintentionally, a well-kept secret since it was added as a part of the classroom / office addition project almost fifteen years ago. And while the chapel is readily accessible, being right next to the office, and is available for use any time the office is open, it has always been something of an afterthought and as a result is rarely used for its intended purpose. We would like to see that change.

The chapel offers a smaller, more intimate space than what our sanctuary does while still providing a prayer rail, several separate seating areas, soft lighting and an ideal spot for quiet reflection and prayer, without the distractions that may be present in our sanctuary.

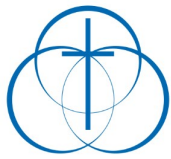
As our focus as a congregation turns more to prayer through Pastor Rick’s sermon series on the Lord’s Prayer, the upcoming “National Day of Prayer” and continued emphasis on the importance and power of prayer, we would like to encourage everyone to take a couple of minutes the next time you’re in the church and visit the chapel to see what it has to offer and how it could possibly be a part of your prayer life.



We think you’ll be pleasantly surprised with what you find and maybe, just maybe, this room will transform from being a well-kept secret to being your new *“inner room”* – the door is open, come in!

HGMC Prayer Ministry Team





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

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

MEMORIAL DAY: The church office will be closed on Monday, May 25 in observance of the Memorial Day holiday.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: The deadline to submit content for the June Highlands Newsletter is 12:00 PM (noon) on May 20. Please send all submissions, comments, or questions to the church office at:
office@hgmcbv.com

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 REDMON, *Custodian*

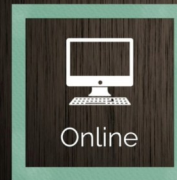
Operating Budget Report - March 31, 2026

	YTD	Mar	YTD
	Budget	Actual	Actual
Income	120,787	55,143	126,422
Expenses	120,787	46,517	116,580
Net	0	8,626	9,843

Thank you for your continued support.

3 ways to give

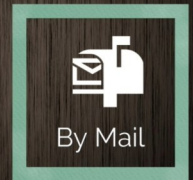
to Highlands Church



Online



In-Person



By Mail

for details visit... hgmcbv.com/give



Like & Follow Us
facebook.com/hgmcbv



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