



# Highlights

Highland Presbyterian Church  
2380 Cloverdale Avenue  
Winston-Salem, NC 27103-2012  
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November 30, 2025

## Advent and Christmas at Highland

Our Advent season will be shaped around the tradition of the *Jesse Tree*, tracing the story of God's saving work through the Old Testament and bringing us to the birth of Jesus. 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.

### First Sunday of Advent, November 30: *Hope*

Advent Study Begins  
Advent Devotional Booklets available

### Second Sunday of Advent, December 7: *Peace*

### Third Sunday of Advent, December 14: *Joy*

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

### Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 21: *Love*

Potluck Breakfast, 9:30 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 28

Worship at 11:00 a.m.

### Epiphany Sunday, January 4

Worship at 11:00 a.m.

(church school resumes January 11)

## Advent Vespers Service

### Wednesday, December 3, 6:45 p.m., Ardmore Room

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.



## **Worship at 11:00 a.m.**

### **November 30**

First Sunday of Advent  
Isaiah 11:1–9  
Genesis 12:1–4a  
Sermon: Randy Harris

### **December 7**

Second Sunday of Advent  
Micah 5:2–5a  
Matthew 3:1–12  
Sermon: Randy Harris

### **December 14**

Third Sunday of Advent  
Isaiah 9:2–7  
Luke 1:26–38  
Sermon: Debbie Layman

### **December 21**

Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Matthew 1:1–25  
Sermon: Randy Harris

### **December 28**

First Sunday of Christmas  
Isaiah 63:7–9  
Hebrews 1:1–4  
Sermon: Courtney Montoya

### **January 4**

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 find 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, [remember-church@gmail.com](mailto:remember-church@gmail.com), 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–**

Randy Harris, *Pastor*, Ext. 210,  
[rharris@highlandpres.org](mailto:rharris@highlandpres.org)

Debbie Layman, *Associate Pastor*, Ext. 212,  
[dlayman@highlandpres.org](mailto:dlayman@highlandpres.org)

Courtney Montoya, *Associate Pastor* Ext. 218,  
[cmontoya@highlandpres.org](mailto:cmontoya@highlandpres.org)

Heather Ferguson, *Director of Christian Education*, Ext. 204,

[hferguson@highlandpres.org](mailto:hferguson@highlandpres.org)

Chris Gilliam, *Director of Music*, Ext. 202,

[cgilliam@highlandpres.org](mailto:cgilliam@highlandpres.org)

Susan Bates, *Organist*, Ext. 202,

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Joy Hohmann,

*Business Manager.*, Ext. 205,  
[jhohmann@highlandpres.org](mailto:jhohmann@highlandpres.org)

Gidget Payne,

*Administrative Coordinator*, Ext. 201,  
[gpayne@highlandpres.org](mailto:gpayne@highlandpres.org)

## Churchwide

### **Pre-Worship Hymn and Carol Sing**

**Sunday, December 14 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 December 14 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 14, 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!

### **Advent Potluck Breakfast**

**Sunday, December 21, 9:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall**

We hope you will join us on Sunday, December 21, 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.



### **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 centered on the story of the Jesse Tree, we will all be invited to participate in singing and celebrating the birth of Jesus. Plan now to join us for this joyful 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.)

### **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).



## ♥ Service Opportunities

### Hunger Offering

On **December 7**, 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 donations supporting neighbors who hunger in our community and around the world.



### 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 **corn, green beans, cereal, or shelf-stable milk**.



### 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 14, but you can give anytime. Thank you for your generosity.



### Women's Shelter at St. Timothy's Through March 1, 2026

On November 15 this year the women's overflow homeless shelter opened in the Fellowship Hall at St. Timothy's and will stay open through March 1. Because you have been so generous in the past, Highland has again 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 sign up for a 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](http://highlandpres.org), for the link.



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

## Alternative Giving in Advent

Highland's tradition of Alternative Christmas Giving offers gifts for friends and loved ones that will make this world a better place *and* will lower your stress of figuring out what to purchase.

This year, the Global Service Committee is focusing on children as the beneficiaries of our alternative giving. Our three options are: 1) supporting local children through giving to the WSFCS Futures Fund; this fund was established by The Winston-Salem Foundation in order to help pay down the debt the school district owes the county; 2) supporting children in Western North Carolina who are still experiencing trauma from Hurricane Helene; your gifts will support the counseling which Black Mountain Counseling Center provides for children; 3) supporting teacher training in other parts of the world; your gift will help expand access to education for girls and other students who face barriers to learning.

We hope you will plan on sharing these alternative gifts as a meaningful way to honor beloved teachers, children, neighbors, and friends in your life.



## Christmas Eve Desserts for Samaritan

We are excited that Highland will once again provide 300 individual desserts for the guests of Samaritan Ministry on Christmas Eve. Please sign up through the Sign-Up Genius which will come through email. If you need help signing up, call Gidget at 336-724-6303.



We need sturdy desserts (ones that will not melt or require refrigeration) delivered to the Activity Building on Tuesday, 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. 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 **art supplies** for the students at ABC of NC as well as **twin blankets** for families and individuals leaving Family Services' domestic violence shelter. 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: *construction paper, washable markers, dry erase markers, glue sticks, crayons, and paint brushes* as well as *twin blankets*. Thank you for your generous giving.

# December Fellowship Meals

**Wednesday, December 3, 6:00 p.m. & Sunday, December 21, 9:30 a.m.**

December is a full time and made more special when we can connect with our faith family. We hope you will join this part of your family as we share our Fling Fellowship Meal together on December 3. We will warm up together with delicious homemade chili (beef/pork, chicken, and vegetarian options) and fixings. The cost will be \$10 per person with a maximum of \$30 per household. [Sign up today!](#)

On Sunday, December 21, we will gather for a tasty all-church potluck breakfast. We look forward to these meaningful times to check-in together!

## Joy for Our December Birthdays!

1 Janny Gauss	9 Josh Bragg	15 Neil Gargis	27 Roberts Bass
1 Emily O'Keefe	9 Taylor Hollingsworth	16 Mary Douglas	27 Rich Griner
1 Emma Sullivan	11 Grady Elliott	Mendenhall	27 Susan Hammond
2 Corinne Fontenot	11 Zora Fontenot	17 Leanne Link	27 Berkley Hoge
2 Katie Harris	11 Marty Moore	17 Carol Simes	27 Mallory Thomas
2 Liza Ward	12 Pete Fisch	19 Sarah Simpson	28 Mark Archambault
5 Geoff Beane	12 Mark Queen	20 Annette Thompson	29 Pam Kahl
5 Susan Corey	12 Randy Shields	21 Ben Gardner	30 Thomas Dominick
5 Curtis Patterson	12 Turner Simpson	21 Susan Kirkman	30 Trudy Winstead
5 Terry Sink	12 Caroline Wagoner	22 Zan Davis	31 Elizabeth Skinner
6 Curt Hege	12 Charlie Wagoner	22 Anna Kummer	
6 Evan Morgan	13 David Mikush	22 Seth Reynolds	
7 Darius Pope	13 Sue Simpson	22 John Woodmansee	
7 Elizabeth Walker	14 Davis Collins	23 Parker Bragg	
8 Vince Cannino	14 Bob Lawing	23 Kate Brandon	
8 Penny Lindsey	14 Lila Miller	24 Simon Michel	
8 Samantha Walker	14 Carol Templeton	25 Andrew Riley	



### Special December Birthday wishes to:

- \* Curt Hege, as he turns 92 on December 6
- \* Carol Simes, as she turns 90 on December 17
- \* John Woodmansee, as he turns 94 on December 22
- \* Susan Hammond, as she turns 91 on December 27

## News and Notes

**In Our Prayers:** *Libby Graves*, Hospice at Trellis; *Jim Womble*, Hospice at Home; *Becky Burke*, Home; *Jerry Cole*, Assisted Living at Arbor Acres; *Emelda Lawing*, Hospice at Home; *Pierce Johnson*, Home; *Bill Lambert*, Home; *Parks Berryhill*, Salemtowne Healthcare; *Esther and Les Preston*, Home; *John Anderson*, Salemtowne Healthcare; *Ruth Banbury*, Carriage Club Assisted Living.

**In Memoriam:** *Peggy Tyson*, November 11

**Congratulations** to Spencer and Megan Ayscue on the birth of their son Peter, on November 9; and to Liz and Dominic Veconi, on the birth of their daughter Amelia, on November 20!

**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 NOVEMBER 30, please pray for Megan Bryant, Dan Prosterman, Clara, Sam and Gabriel Bryant-Prosterman; Bill, Sheila, Kylie and Sienna Lambert; Martha Neely; Jeff, Debbie, Jake and Tori Patton; Wendell and Jayn Scholander; Carol West; Sharon Wilmoth and Piper Milsaps.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 7, please pray for Miles Abernethy; Brett, Wendy, Riley and Berkley Hoge; Emma, John, Whitten and Henrietta Parker; Garry and Penny Russ; Sara Taylor; Scott, Cheryl, Rebecca and Samantha Walker.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 14, please pray for Kathy Black; Karlen, Bailey and Jackson Boring; Eben, Missy, Maggie and Micah Carroll; Jeff, Becky, Max, Abby and Seth Reynolds; Terry Sink; Mary Hollis-Williams.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 21, please pray for Geoff, Sarah, Bryan and Cody Beane; James, Barbara and Sam Bowman; Jerry Cole; Tory and Brian Daniel; Ken and Edna Mae Fisher; Benton and Jelena Williams.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 28, please pray for Jonathan Black and Peter Kinton; Jason Bragg, Kelley Gondring, Audrey and Alice Bragg; Ann Dixon, Jeff Coppage and Julianna Dixon-Coppage; Jane Suitt; Carol Tash; Jason, Joanna, Bodhi and Luke Whittler.

FOR THE WEEK OF JANUARY 4, please pray for Mark, Amy, Milo and Luke Archambault; Hank and Betty Barnum; Kim, Jesse, Sierra, Zora and Corinne Fontenot; Dave and Cathy McCall; Natalie Sevin, Anh, Willoughby and Annika Rose Ngheim; Royce, Annette and Henry Thompson.

*The Lord bless you and keep you.*

*Numbers 6:24*



## Special Outing to The Little Theatre

### *A Christmas Carol, December 13*

Our Fellowship Committee purchased and sold thirty tickets for the matinee of *A Christmas Carol*, a Little Theater production, for Saturday, December 13 at 2:00 p.m. The tickets, with the group discount, will be \$22.00. If you are interested in going, let [Debbie Layman](#) know and she will see if we can order more!

## 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!

## 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. Highland's Arts & Worship team has been hard at work to create many new Chrismons this year! Guides to our Chrismons and crèches are available in the front window sills in the Sanctuary or [online here](#). We hope that you will take time to learn about the meaning of these special symbols that help us prepare for Christ's birth.



# Stewardship

## Stewardship Update



To date we have received 161 pledges totaling \$773,792 for the 2026 Operating Budget, and 107 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 2025 by Wednesday, December 31. The IRS stipulates that any donations not received or postmarked by December 31 must be credited to 2026. 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.

## 2026 Offering Envelopes Available Now

We have our 2026 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!

## An Update on 2025 Giving

Back in the summer, I updated you on our giving status, conveying that we were uncomfortably behind previous years' levels. After receiving that message, Highland members responded immediately and significantly, reversing the negative trend and, as of October, putting the church slightly ahead of last year. It's a remarkable turnaround but not surprising given Highland's steadfast and faithful generosity for decades.

Considering that our current budget is slightly more than last year's largely due to inflation, we should be trending higher than last year to ensure we fully fund all the ministry and programs at Highland. If everyone fulfills their pledges, we should finish the year at budget. Typically, November and December are our biggest months as members fulfill the commitments they have made for giving.

If you have any questions about your giving status or your pledge amounts, please call the church office at 336-724-6303 to speak to our Business Manager, Joy Hohmann, or email Joy at [jhohmann@highlandpres.org](mailto:jhohmann@highlandpres.org). Thanks be to God for how Highland members respond to the needs of the church and our neighbors near and far.

~ Miles Abernethy, Church Treasurer



## Gratitude for Highland's Choir

The Congregational Care Committee wants to celebrate our fantastic choir and their leader, Chris Gilliam. Every Sunday, you give us anthems that enrich our service by evoking feelings of inspiration, joy, contemplation, peace, sorrow or comfort. These are an integral part of each worship, and we thank you for helping us praise God with your singing.

## Reflections on Highland's Advent Event

Thanks so much to all of our wonderful volunteers who helped with this years Advent Event. A Special thanks to Jim Swing who created our take-home Jesse Trees!



## Are You Making a Jesse Tree at Home?

For those who took home a Jesse Tree Kit, once you have all of your ornaments completed, you can follow along in Highland's Advent Devotional to add the ornaments daily to the tree (starting at the bottom with the Stump of Jesse) and enjoy the readings from our Highland family. If you have questions, contact [Heather Ferguson](#).



## Children

### Children's Sunday Mornings

**Sunday School for Children at Highland (9:30–10:45 a.m., 3rd Floor)  
Preschoolers (2–4 Years) Growing in Grace & Gratitude (9:30–10:15)**

We share stories of love, grace and gratitude through music, story time, and activities that stretch children's hearts and minds. We also teach about God's love when we surround children with loving adults. This is the goal of our preschool teaching team as well as church staff and pastors. Your preschoolers will love **Growing in Grace & Gratitude!**

**Elementary Ages (K–4th Grade)—Godly Play & Neighborhood Workshops (9:30–10:15 a.m.)** Over a two week rotation, children will experience the a biblical story beginning in Godly Play. Every other week the children will move to a different workshop to experience the same story from a different perspective through things like Art, Drama, Cooking, and Mission, 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.

**All Children—Highland's Children's Choir (10:15–10:45 a.m.)**

Following 45 minutes of Sunday School, children of all ages will head to the Children's Choir Room where they are joined by Haley Chapman, Highland's Children's Choir Director. This room is also located on the 3rd floor. The Children's Choir sings in worship periodically to share their love for God and love for music. Contact [Haley Chapman](#) for more information.

### 4th Friday Fun Night, December 19

**Friday, December 19, 5:30–7:30 p.m.**

Mark you calendar today for the next 4th 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!

A precious friendship began one Friday night between volunteer, Esther Buzzard and Lewy McKinney when Lewy asked about Esther's parents. Since then you may have seen Lewy greeting Esther with a hug each Sunday during worship. If you would like to nurture a friendship like this, contact [Heather Ferguson](#) to volunteer for a 4th Friday Fun Night!



## Youth

### Sunday, December 7, Shopping Night

4:00–7:00 p.m.

Gather for one of our favorite Advent traditions: Shopping Night! Youth will meet at the church at 4:00 p.m., load the bus, and head out together to shop for the Brenner Hospital Angel Tree. Each person is invited to bring \$10 to contribute toward purchasing gifts that will bring comfort and joy to families spending the holidays in the hospital. After we finish shopping, we'll make our way back to Highland to wrap the gifts as a group and share dinner. It's a night full of generosity, laughter, and the kind of Advent joy that grows when we serve others together.

## High School Retreat

December 5–7

Let's head to a cozy lake house for a weekend of rest, fun, and Advent reflection. Youth can expect relaxed time by the water, shared meals, games, and plenty of space to slow down before the holiday rush. We'll weave in scripture, conversation, and quiet moments that help us enter this season with intention, along with the laughter and connection that make these trips so meaningful. All Senior High youth are encouraged to join us for this refreshing weekend away.

## Middle School Service Weekend Report

Our Middlers spent a powerful weekend in Charlotte partnering with the Odd Sock and Hospitality House of Charlotte. Over three days, our group prepared meals, packed snack and self-care bags, offered hospitality to guests, sorted hundreds of pairs of socks, shared worship, and reflected on where we saw God in the midst of service. We're so proud of this group – they showed up with energy, kindness, flexibility, and humor.



## **Young Adults**

### **Young Adult Ministry**

**Thursday, December 4 at 7:30 p.m.**

December can feel beautifully full – and sometimes overwhelmingly busy – so this month our Young Adult Ministry will gather just once, on Thursday, December 4. We'll slow down together with a simple evening of creative rest: Advent crafts, quiet vespers in the Chapel, and space to breathe in the midst of a crowded season.

We encourage young adults to stay connected to the life of the church throughout Advent. Join us for special services, fellowship and service opportunities, and the many ways our community leans into hope and light during these weeks. We'll be back to weekly gatherings in January.

Reach out to [Courtney Montoya](#) for more information.

## **Adults**

### **Coffee & Conversation Tuesdays**

On Tuesdays, Randy, Debbie, Courtney, or Heather will be hanging out for the cold months at the Bagel Station (129 Oakwood Dr), from 10:00–11:00 a.m. for conversation with whomever shows up. This is a fun and varied group, and the conversation is always interesting. We hope you will stop by to check-in with your staff and meet other Highlanders.



### **Faith & Film: *It's A Wonderful Life***

**December 1, 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 *It's A Wonderful Life* (1946). It is available for free on Amazon Prime and to rent or purchase on multiple other streaming platforms. Contact [Randy Harris](#) for more information.



### **Men's Breakfast**

**December 17, 7:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall**

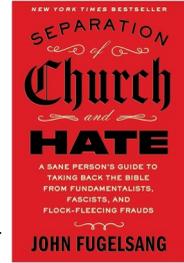
Join with the Men of the Church for a time of fellowship and study. Look for an email with details, and email [Randy Harris](#) if you have questions.



## Matthew 25 Book Group

### *Separation of Church and Hate* by John Fugelsang

Our Matthew 25 Book Group will meet on Monday, December 15 to begin our next read, *Separation of Church and Hate* by John Fugelsang. Fugelsang is the son of a former nun and a former priest and in the book challenges fundamentalists who selectively cherry-pick and misquote Bible verses out of context, urging them to read scripture fully and understand the true relevance of those passages to Christ's message.

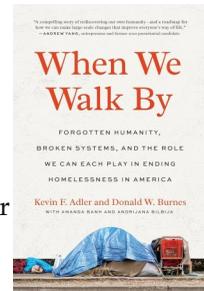


Contact Bookmarks or order your copy or click on the “book clubs” section of their webpage and look for Highland’s Matthew 25 Book Group. You will receive 20% off when ordering there. Contact [Debbie Layman](#) with questions.

## Poverty Book Group

### *When We Walk By*, by Kevin Adler and Donald Burnes

Our Poverty Book Group will take December off and will gather on Monday, January 26 to finish our fall read. “*When We Walk By* takes an urgent look at homelessness in America, showing us what we lose – in ourselves and as a society – when we choose to walk past and ignore our neighbors in shelters, insecure housing, or on the streets.”



Contact Bookmarks (and tell them you are ordering for a Highland Book Club) to order your copy or click on the “book clubs” section of their webpage and scroll down for Highland’s Poverty Book Group. Write in the “Comments” section that you are with Highland’s Poverty Group. You will receive 20% off when you order through Bookmarks’ Book Club program. Contact [Debbie Layman](#) with questions.

## Journeying Together in Faith

### 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 4:00–5:00 p.m., Highland’s Chapel

Last summer, a group of folks gathered on Sunday morning and called themselves “The Bookless-Leaderless Book Group.” The conversation was filled with insights and laughter and quickly moved to some of the more serious topics of the faith journey.

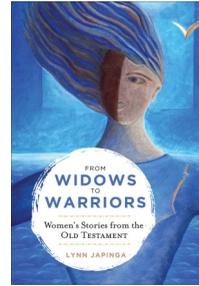


Since the summer’s end, the group has been longing to resume their conversations, deepen their faith, and grow together. Starting January 15, the group will meet again on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month. If you are interested in this type of faith-forming conversation with other sojourners, please join us. If you would like more information, you can contact [John Woodmansee](#) or [Heather Ferguson](#).

## Thursday Morning Women's Study

10:00–11:30 a.m., Ardmore Room (through December 18)  
Women's Stories from the Old Testament

For too long the women of the Bible have been depicted in one-dimensional terms. On one side are saints, such as Mary, while on the other are "bad girls," such as Eve and Jezebel. Just as often, the female characters of the Bible are simply ignored. However, the women of the Bible are complex, multidimensional individuals whose lives are inspiring, funny, and tragic in ways too many of us never hear.



In the book *From Widows to Warriors* scholar Lynn Japinga acquaints us with the women of the Old Testament. From flawed heroes like Ruth and Rahab, to fierce fighters like Deborah and Jael, to tragic characters like Jephthah's daughter and the unnamed concubine of the book of Judges, readers will encounter a wealth of foremothers in the faith in all their messy, yet redeemable, humanity. If you are looking for a Bible study group that will fill a longing for wisdom, friendship, and prayer partners, please join us!

We will meet on December 4, 11, and 18. We will resume on January 8.

## Highland Mum's Night Out

Mum's Night Out is a monthly evening of making connections, enjoying tasty snacks, sharing "Mum" insights, and building a circle of support and friendship among other Highland Mums. Whether you are expecting your first child, getting ready to send your little one to 1st Grade, or savoring that last year of high school, this gathering is for you!



We generally meet on the first Sunday evening of the month, however we will not meet in December. Please plan to join us on Sunday, January 11, 7:00 p.m. at the home of Kristine and Grady Elliott, 2429 Fairway Drive. Contact [Heather Ferguson](#) for more information or if you would like to host an evening with Highland Mums in your home.



# Adult Christian Education

Sunday Mornings, 9:30 a.m.

## The Present Word Class, Room 124 and Zoom

All are invited to share in the Present Word Sunday School Class where our goal is to:

- ◆ Explore the Bible as the primary source for understanding our Christian faith and the changing needs of the church;
- ◆ Respond in faith and love to God's love as revealed in Jesus Christ;
- ◆ Confront the concerns of the gospel to include our personal faith, values, relationships, and social responsibilities.



This quarter our lessons focus on reviewing the beliefs of our Christian faith. "Our Holy (Trinitarian) God and the Holy Scriptures," "Grace and Reconciliation," and "The Church and its Teachings." The writer for this quarter's curriculum is Julie Hester. She wrote these lessons in the Fall of 2024 when Hurricane Helene came into her community.

*Facilitators: A Wide Variety of Class Members and Guests from the Congregation*

## The Lectionary Café Salem Room

The *Lectionary Café* is a warm, welcoming gathering of folks seeking to engage more deeply into the Lectionary text (scripture focus) for each Sunday. The group shares an informal and lively discussion which seeks to draw deep connections between God's intentions for our daily lives and our practices for a more faithful life together.



*Facilitator: Mike Culler*

## Parents' Conversation and Coffee Room 126

After getting children settled into their Sunday school classes, parents are invited to gather in Room 126 on the first floor for coffee and conversation. This is a great time to get to know other parents and compare notes on the joys and challenges of parenthood. On the first Sunday of the month we will have a special speaker, video, or other resource for deeper conversation on faith formation in the family and related topics. Other Sundays will offer free time to connect and maybe even share "best practices" in this amazing thing called Parenthood!



## Sunday Morning Advent Offerings Through December 14 The Jesse Tree: An Intergenerational Experience to Deepen the Meaning of The Coming Christ Child, Fellowship Hall

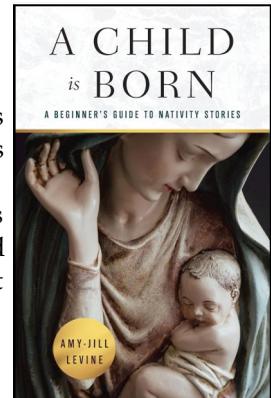
A Jesse Tree is a Christmas tradition that visually represents Jesus' family tree, starting from creation to Jesse, the father of King David, and tracing the lineage through the Old and New Testaments to the birth of Jesus. During Advent, we will add an ornament each day to a tree (a special bare-branched tree we made at this year's Advent Event) to represent a different biblical story, helping us prepare for Christmas by teaching the history of God's people. Children (Kindergarten-4th Grade) and adults will participate together in this unique, intergenerational faith-forming class.



*Facilitator: Debbie Layman*  
*Location: Fellowship Hall*

## A Child Is Born: A Beginners Guide to the Nativity Stories (In-person and via Zoom)

Discover the fascinating connections between ancient birth stories and the Nativity of Jesus in this captivating three-week Advent study. The book discusses the births of Isaac and Ishmael, Samson, and Samuel to reveal how they foreshadow and enrich the timeless Christmas story in the final chapter. Author Amy-Jill Levine brings her expert knowledge of Scripture and careful consideration of the Christian story to show readers how Scripture's earlier birth stories anticipate the story of Jesus's birth and how the birth resonates and gives new meaning to those earlier stories. Transform your Advent season with fresh insights and inspiration from *A Child is Born*. Books will be available for this class in the Gallery Hall for \$15.



*Facilitator: Heather Ferguson*  
*Location: Ardmore Room*

## Church School Schedule Reminder

We will have no church school on December 21 as all are invited to our Advent Potluck Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall at 9:30 a.m.

Church school classes will resume on January 11, 2026.

# **Community and Global Service**

## **Climate Corner**

### **Stocking Stuffer Ideas that Are Environmentally Friendly**

In this season of gift giving as you are considering what your family members may like or need, here are some environmentally friendly options to think about:



- Tegu magnetic building blocks for children crafted from eco-friendly, sustainably sourced hardwood; they are safe, non-toxic, water-based lacquers;
- Art supplies: Crayons or dough made with non-toxic, natural materials, or pencils made from recycled paper;
- Seed or garden kits;
- Sign up with your child for free membership at “Kids Saving the Earth” [kidsforsavingearth.org](http://kidsforsavingearth.org). Print the Kids Certificate Pledge;
- Reusable stainless steel water bottles and /or coffee mugs;
- Beeswax re-usable food wraps to replace plastic;
- Reusable silicone food huggers and storage bags;
- Chocolate coins made with fairtrade and ethical ingredients (Divine chocolate, Lake Champlain, Veruca);
- Natural personal care: (Dr. Bronner’s or Nature’s Brand soaps, shampoo, oils, toothpaste and lip balm);
- Notebooks/sketchbooks made out of recycled paper;
- Donation to animal sanctuaries or sponsoring an animal or supporting organizations that provide care for animals;
- An Alternative Gift from Highland!

Your imagination is unlimited! Enjoy being creative in this season of Wonder.

~ Global Service Committee