



Highlands Review 2023

MAY FAMILY, 2023



Greetings Church Family!

To the good folks of Highlands,

As I sit in my office, preparing for our future endeavors, I am reminded of Paul's words from our study of Philippians: *"Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way"* (Phil 3:13-15). This passage does not talk about forgetting your past, but Paul understands that to know Christ and the power of His resurrection, one must look forward to what is ahead.



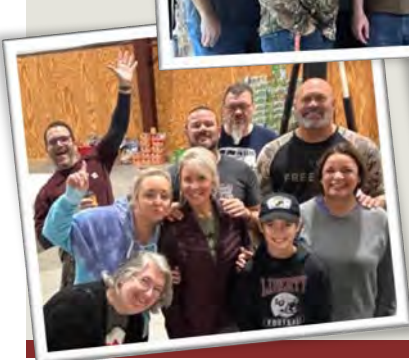
There will be challenges this year for HCC as we prepare and move forward to do more ministry and better evangelize the lost, all while stewarding our resources well. In completing this past year of ministry, I truly believe we pursued our vision of **Cultivating Kingdom-Minded Families**.

Our review of what God has accomplished through our church in 2023 leaves me overwhelmed with our collective achievements, all for His glory. This past year, we marked several "First Time Achievements" that have not only strengthened our local community but have also extended our reach across state borders and into international territories.

Let's take a moment to celebrate these achievements together, and then review our new budget as we plan our next year of **Developing the Disciples of Jesus** for further and greater impact.

In faith and fellowship,

Pastor Joseph May



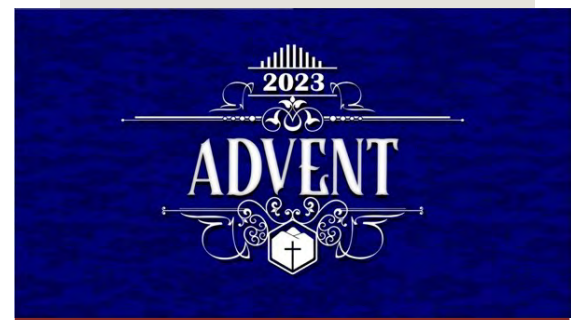
EDUCATION

Preaching Is At The Heart Of What We Do...

Over this past year we have been in our sermon series, Acts; Can I Get a Witness?, and that is because at HCC we have committed to expository preaching. We started the year in chapter 4 witnessing a church had all things in common, living in peace harmony. We landed in chapter 17 where we have been learning how to endure through struggles along with the Apostle Paul and the new Gentile churches. It just so happens, by God's Providence, we are using Paul's Sermon on "Knowing the Unknown God" as our Advent theme celebrating the Incarnation of Christ so He could be known!

We are currently 2/3 of the way done and we are on pace to finish Acts by the end of 2024. This is a great resource to share with friends and family if they want to learn what it means to be a part of a church, to be more evangelistic, and to live with a realization that we are to be different than the rest of the world.

Then in October, back by popular demand, we visited the The Five Solas of the Reformation. Yes, we had gone through them before but in light of our culture trying to deconstruct the Truth of God's Word at every chance it gets, we decided to go on the offensive. We went back to the book of Genesis and showed everyone that the War Cries of the Reformation have been with us from the very beginning. In this way we sought to help the body learn that the major truths that we hold to about the Doctrines of Grace have been with us for thousands of years, showing that they are as unchanging as God Himself. This is a good series to share with someone who may be struggling coming to terms with Calvinism and it offers a way to introduce these concepts in a non-threatening manner.

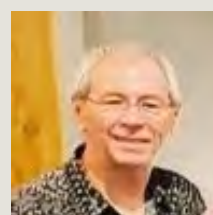
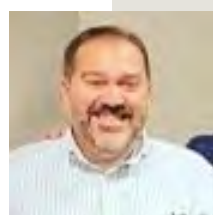




And Then There Were Four...

Another first we accomplished this year was the ordination of two new elders from our current body: Pastor Mike Clark and Pastor Onan Coca. Both of these men have been diligently working over the last couple of years to complete their elder requirements and training, as prescribed by Pastors Bill and Jody. Since their ordination in the fall, we have been gradually integrating them into their roles. We've tasked Pastor Mike with serving in the areas of worship and praise, and Pastor Onan in liturgy development. Additionally, both men contribute by teaching each week in our Foundations ministry.

We were blessed to have five of our beloved brothers in Christ from across Paulding county join us in ordaining our new pastors that night (pictured below from left-to-right): Pastor Keith Stell, Senior Pastor, New Georgia Baptist Church; Wayne Meadows, Senior Pastor at Poplar Springs Baptist Church; Marty Guy, Church Planting Catalyst at West Metro Baptist Association; Jason Loudermilk, Association Mission Strategist, West Metro Baptist Association; Pastor Dan Pervorse, Senior Pastor, Church of the Vine / CAYA Ministries.





CLARK FAMILY, 2023

A Few Words From Pastor Mike

2023 was a wonderful year of ministry and blessings from the Lord at Highlands Community Church. For our music ministry, we added and learned 13 new hymns. We learned not only the music of some of these great hymns but also the theology behind them and short biographies on the writers.

We also added some new people to the praise team to help lead our congregation in song and praise to the Lord. In the adult foundations class, we learned 10 new hymns and covered another 52 catechism questions from the 1689 LBCF and had many fruitful discussions, particularly those centered around the 10 commandments.

I have thoroughly enjoyed preaching from the pulpit some of the messages from the book of Acts and from the 5 Solas this year. And we completed our first class on the Fundamentals of the Faith, a 13 week study on the major doctrines of the Christian faith, with some of our new members. I am excited for 2024 as we continue to grow in our music ministry and education of the church. I would love to see others join our praise team and see growth in our adult foundations class, so invite your friends, neighbors, or co-workers to come learn the Word of God with us!

Pastor Mike

A Few Words From Pastor Onan

This year has been a whirlwind. I have had the privilege, alongside my beautiful bride Leah, to teach the Elementary Foundations class, to host many of you in our home for Gospel Community each Sunday, and to partner with you all in ministry, whether in our house, in the community, or at our church building. I was also humbled and honored to become one of your pastors when you ordained me to the task this past August. In the coming year, Leah and I plan to continue working with our little ones and hosting anyone who would like to join us in our home each week. I'd also like to encourage our men to begin leading their families in regular, at-home family worship throughout the week. The culture is attempting to disciple our families, and so it is up to us to ensure that they are first disciplined by us, using God's Word.

[Signature]



COCA FAMILY, 2023

Please be in prayer for all of us as we seek unity in our decisions for the health and welfare of the body. Pray that we are strengthened for our tasks of teaching and leadership, and that we steward wisely all that God has entrusted to us. Pray that we each work from a position of passion and humility for the church. Pray that our wives embrace the calling as well, contributing to the gift of hospitality and peace in our homes. Pray for the protection of our homes from the scheme of our enemy as he would seek to stifle our efforts for the church. Soli Deo Gloria!



It Starts With A Firm Foundation

Foundations is our Sunday-school format, focused on teaching the doctrines of the Christian faith. Our Sunday School classes cover Elementary, 6th through 12th grade, and adult classes. Last year, Pastor Onan Coca, alongside his wife Leah, accepted the challenge and spearheaded the development of our elementary and student curriculum program, which implements lessons based on the Baptist Catechism. We have also committed to having male leadership in each class, lead by our Pastors, which allows more people across the congregation to build and grow direct relationships with our leaders.

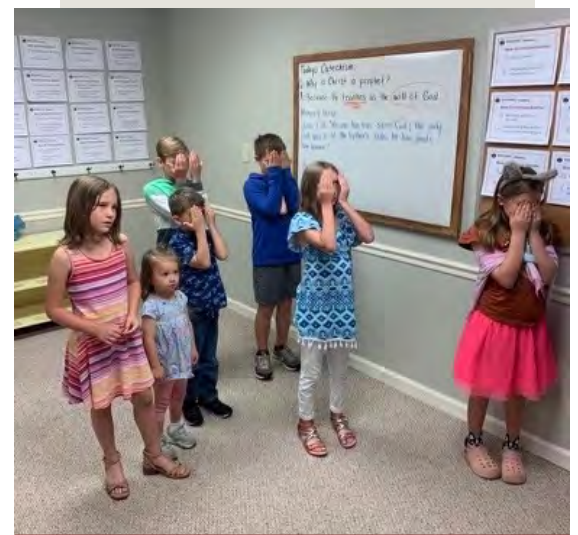
In 2023, we continued catechizing students across all age groups, from elementary through middle school to adults, using the Baptist Catechism. It has been enriching to see not only our younger children but also our middle schoolers and adults deeply engage with God's Word. They have been memorizing Scripture, participating in worship, and delving into understanding the 'why' behind our beliefs. Currently, we are about 85 weeks into our catechism journey, with approximately 50 weeks remaining before we start anew.

We encourage you to invite families with children of all ages, particularly those in elementary (K-5) and middle school, to join our church. This way, their children too can be immersed in the knowledge of Scripture. Teaching our diverse group of students is immensely rewarding and provides a wonderful chance to connect with and cherish every member of our Highlands community.

EDUCATION



Elementary Class



Elementary Class



Middle school and lower high school class



The Items That Build Up Our Preaching And Our Daily Lives.

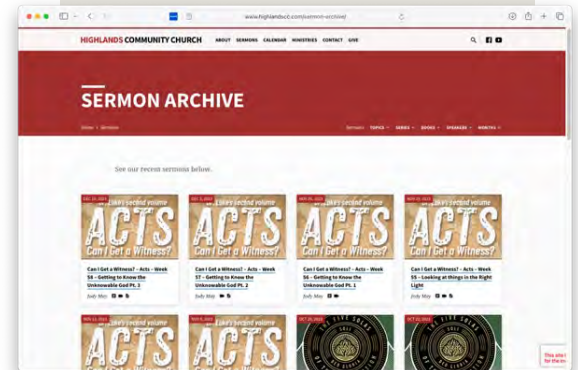
Alongside the sermons available on our webpage, you can also find all our sermon transcripts in PDF format. This resource is designed to assist you in revisiting and studying the topics we cover. You will discover multiple scriptural references and footnotes that enable you to find facts independently. Additionally, all our past sermons can be found on our YouTube page. We invite you to take a moment to explore these resources for both enjoyment and personal growth.

As part of our ongoing commitment to our core value of education, we emphasize the daily discipline of Bible reading. While we could invest considerable time and effort in various programs and ministries, their true value only emerges when we ground ourselves in God's Word. We rely on Scripture alone to shape our minds and hearts, as we grow together in knowledge of our God. The **"To The Word"** Bible reading plan (developed by Christ Church of Moscow, Idaho) offers an extraordinary opportunity to read through the entire Bible from September through May. Then, the **"Same Page Summer"** reading plan takes you through the New Testament throughout the summer. If you haven't already, we earnestly invite you to join us in this daily journey through the Word. Experience your love for God grow as you engage in this devotional discipline with your church family.

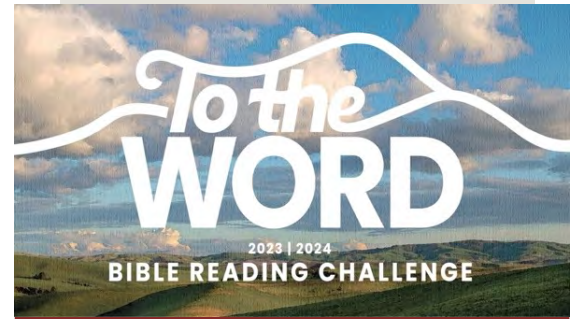
This past year, Pastor Mike also conducted a course called **"Fundamentals of Faith,"** consisting of 13 intensive lessons that delve into the basics of Christian faith from a reformed perspective. We will be offering this course again, starting in the winter. If you're interested in becoming a member or gaining a better understanding of your theology, this class is tailored for you.

In addition to our Bible reading plan and Fundamentals class, we have made diligent efforts to foster discipleship within same-sex groups. For the men, we organized monthly men's breakfasts, sponsored by Pastor Bill, while for the ladies, Leah Coca hosted similar gatherings. Prior to each meeting, we carefully selected material to address the specific needs of the men and women in our congregation...

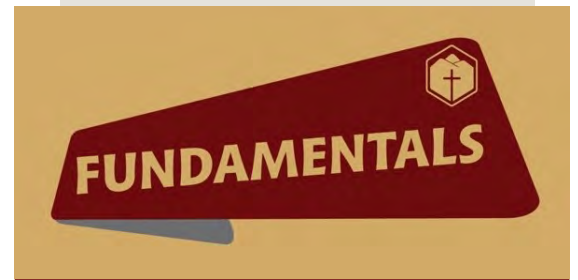
EDUCATION



HighlandsCC.com/sermon-archive



HighlandsCC.com/read-the-bible



EDUCATION

Sunday Morning Praise Team

This year, our praise team has grown – both spiritually in the gospel and through the addition of talented new members. Pastor Mike and Brother Clay have been the steadfast core of our band's musicians for several years, beautifully complemented by Deana Newsome's vocals. We were delighted to welcome Bonnie Alderson to the regular lineup, alongside a roster of talented guest vocalists including Pastor Jody, Baylee May, Heather Clark, and Amanda Chambers, who have graced us with their voices throughout the year. Jonah Clark contributed his guitar prowess, while Avery May and Levi Attard added rhythmic depth with the cajon.

Our Sunday morning services have also seen growth in the sound booth team, skillfully led for many years by Brother Steve Fisher. Phil Attard has stepped up to assist with audiovisuals, and we've welcomed Micah Baker and Jonah Attard into training for running the Sunday morning slides. Josh Newsome, a veteran behind the sound board, is frequently joined by his son Eli, together ensuring our worship band sounds great.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who dedicates their time and talents every Sunday morning. Your commitment makes our worship experiences not only meaningful but smoothly orchestrated. Your contributions are invaluable, and we are truly blessed by your service.



BOOTH TRAINING



EDUCATION

G3 Church Network

2023 marked our second year as Network Members of G3 Ministries. In addition to providing monthly financial support to G3, we have been attending monthly luncheons with their leaders, Scott Aniol, Virgil Walker, and Josh Buice. These meetings offer insights into their ongoing efforts to further the Gospel cause within local churches.



In September, Highlands attendees joined 8,300 fellow believers at the National G3 Conference in Atlanta, a first-time experience for many of us. The conference featured renowned speakers like Paul Washer, Vodie Baucham, James White, and Stephen Lawson, who provided enriching teachings from a reformed perspective. We encourage all our members to consider attending next year's conference in the fall of 2024.

We would also like to invite you to the 2024 G3 Biblical Worship Workshop on The Psalms at Pray's Mill Baptist Church (Tue Mar 19, 2024 8:00 AM - Wed Mar 20, 2024 6:00 PM). A few of us have already signed up as we look forward to learning how to study God's Word better and then apply it to our worship.

Additionally, for those seeking a valuable resource to deepen their understanding of God, we recommend checking out the **G3+ App**. With a modest subscription fee, you gain access to the extensive G3 library. The app is available for download on both Apple and Android app stores.



CONFERENCE ATTENDEES



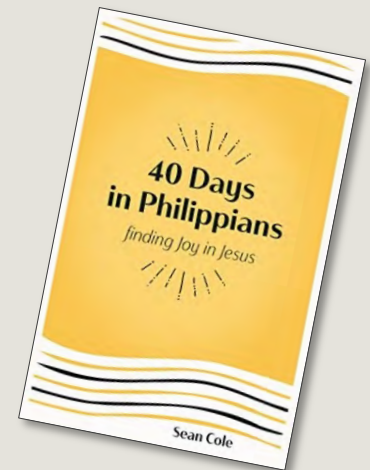
Men's Fellowship

Throughout this year, our men's group has fostered a sense of community by coming together for our monthly men's breakfast. These gatherings have provided an opportunity for us to not only share hearty breakfast, but also to engage in meaningful discussions centered around the Word of God. Each meeting is a chance for us to grow spiritually and deepen our connections with one another.

In addition to our regular monthly meetings, we organized an annual range day, creating a unique space for male bonding. This special event allowed us to unwind, connect, and enjoy each other's company while participating in a fun recreational activity.

This September and October, our focus shifted to a profound exploration of the Bible with the "40 Days in Philippians" study by author Sean Cole. This daily dive into Philippians provided a thought-provoking verse-by-verse exposition of Paul's epistle, combined with tangible personal applications, allowing us to dive deep into worship, prayer, and spiritual growth. By going through this study together, we had the opportunity to encourage, uplift, and share experiences with one-another, fostering stronger bonds while growing in the joy of the Lord.

COMMUNITY



"Make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind." — Philippians 2:2

MEN'S RANGE DAY



Women's Fellowship

2023 was a wonderful year for our ladies here at HCC! We participated in several "Fruit of Her Hands" evenings, where ladies demonstrated everything from how to save money while managing a household to making delicious salsa and homemade tortilla chips! We were able to spend a few days up in the North GA mountains at our annual Fall Ladies Retreat, where we were encouraged by the women in the early church as we studied their faithfulness in good works throughout the New Testament (Ephesians 2:10)! We are looking forward to serving the Lord with gladness in 2024!

COMMUNITY



"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." — Ephesians 2:10



FALL LADIES' RETREAT



Forge: Youth Group

Youth growing in faith, mission, and biblical friendships

Our Forge youth group assembles most Wednesday evenings throughout the school year, driven by a vision of empowering the next generation to become discerning followers of Christ. We aim to cultivate a close-knit youth community that thrives on fellowship and spiritual growth, providing a transformative journey firmly rooted in Scripture. Our mission is to nurture our youth, equipping them to embark on everyday mission in their community, and shine as beacons of His truth in a world that often seeks conformity.

Each week, our focus is centered on exploring our identity in Christ. We've dug into topics that have resonated deeply with our young members, such as the significance of biblical friendship, navigating the challenges of peer pressure and temptations, nurturing leadership skills, and joys and struggles of embracing a life lived on mission for God.

One unforgettable highlight of the year was our end-of-school lock-in at the church, a night filled with laughter, excitement, and shared spiritual moments. A hard-fought Nerf-gun battle and a variety of games provided a full evening of entertainment, followed by a good night's sleep (😴), and a bleary-eyed breakfast together in the morning.

In addition, our youth group ventured beyond our church's walls to connect with our brothers and sisters from New Georgia Baptist Church. We shared memorable events like game night at the Dallas Markets, our summer mission trip with World Changers, and Bible studies held at both of our churches. These interactions have strengthened bonds and expanded our faith community, nurturing the spiritual growth of our youth.



COMMUNITY



"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." — Romans 12:2



Cultivating Kingdom-Minded Families by Celebrating the Acts 2:42 Life

The 17th-century English poet and Christian, John Donne, once wrote (and preached) that "No man is an island." Donne explained that as Christians, we are all interconnected and unique within the created order, and we require one another for survival and thriving. This truth is frequently conveyed in Scripture, and it is emphasized when the Bible refers to us (the church) as a "family," a "body," a "bride," a "building," and a "temple."

The modern American philosophy of self-sufficiency or "going it alone" stands in opposition to the way the Bible instructs us to live and function. Christians need the church, and the church needs Christians. We all suffer when believers choose to distance themselves from regular attendance and fellowship. If we believe that we are a "family," as Scripture clearly tells us, then we must take both the command to love one another and our inherent need to know and be known seriously.

At Highlands Community Church, we facilitate this through our Foundations classes, Sunday services, monthly men's and women's fellowship, Forge evenings for teens, our worship band, and our weekly community groups. Community groups, in particular, provide an excellent opportunity to get to know your fellow brothers and sisters as we share meals and discuss how God is working in our lives. These gatherings are always marked by uplifting conversations, prayer, and delicious food.

We invite and encourage you to make every effort to consistently participate in these fellowship opportunities. If you haven't been regularly attending one of our community groups, please reach out to Pastor Jody or Pastor Onan to get connected soon!

COMMUNITY



"And they devoted themselves to the apostle's teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."
- Acts 2:42



A Joyous Celebration of Baptism

On September 3rd, our church gathered with great joy as we witnessed the baptism of five of our members: Tony and Nina Lundgren, Don and Stephanie Starcher, and Jonah Attard. This baptism, a profound expression of Christian faith, represents more than just a ritual; it is a deep and personal declaration of each individual's commitment to Christ.

In Christian belief, baptism by immersion symbolizes a believer's faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It's a powerful act that signifies the believer's own death to sin and rebirth into a new life in Christ. This ceremony is an outward demonstration of an inward transformation, marking the beginning of a renewed journey in faith and obedience to God.

Before entering the baptismal waters, each of these individuals shared their personal testimonies with the congregation. These stories of faith and transformation deeply moved and inspired us all, reminding us of the grace and power of God in changing lives. Their testimonies served as a vivid illustration of the transformative power of faith and the hope that comes with a life committed to following Jesus.

As a church, we celebrate these moments of baptism as sacred and joyous occasions. They not only signify the personal spiritual journey of the individuals but also represent the strength and unity of our church community in supporting and nurturing each other's faith. This baptism is not just a prerequisite for church membership and participation in the Lord's Supper; it's a celebration of new life and a commitment to walk in the path of righteousness and faithfulness, guided by the teachings of Christ.

FALL 2023 BAPTISMS



COMMUNITY

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."
- Matthew 28:19-20



Memorable Gatherings



In line with the Acts 2:42 theme, our church fervently embraces the joy of communal gatherings, especially for special occasions. This year was filled with memorable celebrations, each marking a unique milestone. Our Fourth of July event was particularly spectacular, featuring an impressive fireworks display that lit up the night sky, symbolizing our collective joy and unity.

The excitement continued with our eagerly anticipated annual chili cookoff. The competition was more fierce than ever, as everyone brought their best recipes to the table. Amidst the tough competition, Amanda Chambers triumphed, earning the title of this year's grand champion with her exceptional chili recipe. Another heartwarming celebration was honoring Benji Aguilar's high school graduation, a proud moment for our community. On Veterans Day, we paid tribute to our beloved veterans, Don and Tony, expressing our deep gratitude for their service and sacrifices. Mother's Day and Father's Day were celebrated with equal enthusiasm. We treated mothers to an array of delightful sweets and honored fathers with a unique beef jerky bar, catering to their tastes.

As pastors, we extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to organizing these wonderful events. Your dedication and spirit of service have been the cornerstone of these successful celebrations, fostering a sense of togetherness and community spirit within our church.

COMMUNITY



*"This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it." - Psalm 118:24*





MISSION - GLOBAL -

Peñas Blancas Mission Trip

In October 2022, we sent Rolando along with Pastor Keith from New Georgia Baptist Church to visit Penas Blancas, initiating what we hope will be a long-term partnership with the [West Metro Baptist Association](#). This collaboration aims to reach some unreached people groups along the Ecuadorian coast. This year, we managed to send both Brother Rolando and Pastor Jody as part of a four-member team. We raised these funds outside our normal budget to start determining how we can better serve the people of Peñas Blancas.

This endeavor proved to be an incredible experience for our church. It allowed us to learn the names of the local people, hear their stories, and begin to pray specifically for their needs. We are exploring ways to meet these needs effectively.

Our mission team spent a total of seven days working in a local school, undertaking needed renovations while also engaging with and sharing the gospel among the local population. During their stay, they successfully repaired and rebuilt a roof on an old portable school building, providing much-needed space for the school's expansion. Additionally, the team hired a welder and enlisted local assistance, forging valuable relationships for future projects

They also managed to repair the school's cistern, essential for water collection, and conducted minor home improvements for some of the teachers. Fortunately, the team had the opportunity to immerse themselves in the local culture, share the gospel, interact with the local fire department, and share their testimonies about Jesus.

This trip marked a fantastic beginning to what our team hopes will be a more extensive effort, and they pray that many others will have the chance to be a part of this experience in the future.



SHARING THE GOSPEL





Youth Summer Mission Trip

This summer, Pastors Bill Alderson and Keith Stell (of New Georgia Baptist Church) lead 5 adults and fourteen teens on a week-long mission trip to Panama City, where they participated in construction-based projects. This trip provided an incredible opportunity for our young members to serve a broader community and share the love of Christ with those in need.

Our hard-working youth put their sweat equity into various projects aimed at meeting the physical needs within the Panama City community. They worked on homes, offering services such as cleaning, painting, yardwork, and building handicap ramps, among other tasks. These projects were a tangible expression of Christ's love for others, showcasing our commitment to positively impacting the lives of those we encountered.

Throughout the mission trip, our youth built meaningful relationships with homeowners and other community members. Through these interactions, they created opportunities for sharing the gospel and demonstrating the transformative power of God's grace. It was inspiring to see the youth stepping out in faith, eagerly spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. Your support, shown through sending E-couragrams via the World Changers website, provided much-needed encouragement to our missionaries on site and was a daily highlight.

We extend heartfelt thanks to our members for your unwavering support and commitment to our church's missions. Your prayers were invaluable, and together, we made a lasting impact. Let's give thanks for the success of our youth missionaries, confident that God's hand was upon them and that their efforts glorified His name.

Pictured from left to right: (Standing) Pastor Keith Stell (NGBC), Rowan Johnston, Avery May, Jonah Clark, Micah Baker, Elem Chambers, Tim Estes, Chad Hall, Charlee May, Mackenzie Rabun, Allie Estes, McKayla, Genevieve Alderson, Bonnie Alderson, Lauren Puopolo. (Sitting) Cadence Hall, Brittany Sheppard, Aubrey Hulsey, Ashley Hawkins. (Front) Michael Fisher.



2023 MISSIONARIES

MISSION - NATIONAL -



YARD SALE TO RAISE FUNDS



TO BE CONTINUED...

In June 2024, our two churches will join forces again for a mission with World Changers in Huntington, West Virginia.





Serving Our Community

As we reflect on our community outreach efforts in 2023, we are filled with great appreciation for what we've achieved together through our partnership with CAYA Ministries, lead by Pastor Dan Purvorse. Our church played a significant role in hosting the annual Summer Lunch Program and supporting the Thanksgiving and Christmas outreach programs.

Summer Lunch Program – This year's Summer Lunch Program concluded with a record-breaking 25,453 lunches delivered! To put this incredible achievement into perspective, we distributed 23,411 lunches in 2022 and 15,443 in 2021. We praise God for His abundant blessings and provision throughout the 2023 program. The substantial increase in the number of lunches delivered this year was made possible through His grace, which ensured sufficient donations, volunteers, and drivers each day.

We extend special thanks to every member who donated, volunteered to pack lunches, and drove to deliver them. Your service blessed the program and enriched your lives through serving those in need in our community.

Thanksgiving & Christmas Outreach – This Thanksgiving, CAYA served 573 families, setting a new milestone for the program. Members of Highlands participated through donations and by packing and delivering meals to those in need. The Christmas outreach in December was a heartwarming success, with 180 Christmas dinners delivered, reminding us of the one Savior we celebrate and the spirit of giving and love He embodies.

Your participation in these programs has been instrumental in touching lives and showcasing the love of Christ in our community. Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to these vital outreach initiatives. Let's continue working together to make a difference in Paulding County and beyond.

MISSION - LOCAL -



THANKSGIVING OUTREACH



2024 GOALS

So, What Lays Ahead?

Each year, the Elders of our church prayerfully anticipate the coming year, striving to honor God by identifying key areas where we foresee change and growth. As we move into the next year, here are three primary areas of focus:

Plans & Goals for Education

Our Elder team has diligently prayed over various aspects of our church's ministry this year, and we feel a divine calling to revise our liturgy. Liturgy, which simply means "the work of the people" or "acts of worship" in a church context, refers to the order of service. This led us to ponder, "What constitutes a biblical order of service?"

The Second London Baptist Confession 22.1 states:

"The acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, nor the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representations, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures."

This concept, known as "the Regulative Principle of Worship," restricts the elements of public worship to preaching and reading the Word, the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, prayer, singing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and whatever else Scripture commands (LBCF 22.5).

We believe that the Bible provides clear instructions for worship, meaning our practices should be scripturally guided. Furthermore, we uphold that every congregation member should participate in all worship aspects – it's not solely the Pastor's responsibility. Thus, prayer, scripture reading, singing, and listening to the preached Word are duties of each congregant.

With this perspective, Highlands Community Church will welcome the New Year with a refreshed liturgy, aiming to honor God and edify the body in every aspect of our Sunday worship.

Post New Year's, we will review our sermon calendar to select our next book for study, possibly one of Paul's Epistles. We are also planning to offer a Fundamentals class in the winter for new members and those seeking theological strengthening.



2024 GOALS

Plans & Goals for Community

Our church is enhancing fellowship and spiritual growth through dedicated same-sex groups, growing community groups, service opportunities, and a family discipleship program designed to deepen faith and community bonds.

Men's and Women's Groups – Our church recognizes the importance of fostering strong bonds within gender-specific groups, where members can share and grow in their faith through more personalized discussions and activities. Plans for the upcoming year include continued investment in our men's and women's fellowship groups. These groups will continue to provide a safe and open environment for discussing challenges and topics specific to each gender from a biblical perspective. The men's group might focus on leadership roles within the family and community, while the women's group might explore biblical womanhood. Both will involve study sessions, prayer times, and fellowship opportunities.

Expanding Community Groups– To accommodate our growing congregation, we're introducing an additional community group (CG) luncheon on Sundays. This will bring our total to 3-4 groups, ensuring that everyone has space to join and engage in meaningful conversation and study after service. Each group will offer a unique theme or study focus, providing variety and choice for members to find the best fit for their spiritual growth.

Family Discipleship Routines – We are encouraging families to develop a routine of family discipleship, meeting with other families 1 to 2 times a month. These gatherings are designed to strengthen faith at home and build inter-family relationships within the church community. Activities may include shared meals, Bible study, service projects, and prayer times. This initiative aims to build a network of support among families, fostering a multi-generational discipleship culture.

Church Workdays – Our ongoing church refurbishment project has been a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and service. In 2024, we aim to complete the painting of the church as a community, inviting all members to participate in scheduled painting days. This initiative helps to instill a sense of ownership and pride in our place of worship while fostering a spirit of teamwork.



2024 GOALS

Plans & Goals for Mission

We have exciting plans lined up for the coming year at our church, focusing on community outreach, leadership development, and expanding our support programs.

Peñas Blancas Mission Trip – In October, our church will embark on a mission trip to Peñas Blancas, aiming to foster sustainable development and self-sufficiency in the local community. We intend to send a team of skilled craftsmen who will mentor and train residents in essential construction skills such as basic welding, electrical wiring, and plumbing. This project is a pivotal part of our church's commitment to global missions, focusing on equipping individuals with the knowledge and abilities needed to improve their living conditions and community infrastructure. Our mission will not only provide immediate assistance but also leave a lasting legacy by empowering the people of Penas Blancas to continue developing their skills long after our team has returned home.

World Changers Youth Mission Trip – The summer of 2024 marks another exciting chapter for our youth as they go on mission with World Changers. This mission trip is more than just a service opportunity; it is a formative experience that allows our young members to practice their faith in tangible ways. By engaging in community service projects, our youth will contribute directly to the well-being of communities while developing a deeper understanding of broader needs in our nation. They will take part in various hands-on tasks that are crucial to community growth, learning the value of hard work, team collaboration, and Christian service. This mission trip promises to not only impact the lives of those we serve but also shape the hearts and minds of our young participants.

Expanding CAYA Summer Lunch Program – The CAYA summer lunch program, which we host at Highlands, has seen a massive increase in reach and impact, calling those involved to look at broadening the scope even further. In response to this growth, CAYA is exploring partnerships with neighboring congregations like New Georgia Baptist Church (NGBC) to initiate a new branch of the program. This expansion would enable CAYA to provide nutritious meals to a larger number of families during the summer months when children are not receiving school lunches. Training NGBC volunteers in the operational aspects of the program is a key step toward ensuring the initiative's success and sustainability. Through this collaborative effort, CAYA aspires to address food insecurity more effectively and demonstrate the love of Christ through service.

Timothy Men xwLeadership Development – Under the guidance of Pastor Jody, we have launched the *Timothy Men* group, focusing on growing the next tier of leadership at HCC. This initiative mirrors the process used for elder development, aiming to nurture the talents of HCC men for effective service in their gifted areas. This is a one-year commitment, and spaces are limited, with slots filling up quickly. Interested individuals are encouraged to contact us at pastors@highlandscs.com.



Plans & Goals for Resources & Relationships

At Highlands Community Church, we value participating in the broader community of believers available through participation and membership in like-minded organizations. Below is a list of our key ministry partnerships:

G3 Church Network – The goal of the G3 Church Network is to help educate, encourage, and equip local churches with sound biblical theology with the aim of engaging in joyful ministry together for the glory of God. G3 provides resources in the form of online articles, podcasts, expository preaching workshops, biblical worship workshops, and local church-based curriculum for Sunday school and small groups. In addition, G3 offers events such the national G3 conference, regional conferences, study cruises, and church history tours.

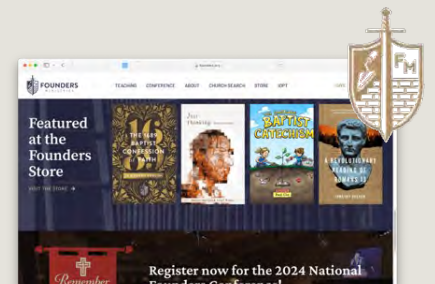
West Metro Baptist Association – The West Metro Baptist Association is a network of Baptist churches in Douglas, South Cobb, and Paulding Counties, west of Atlanta. They partner together to strengthen one another to be healthy churches, and then plant new churches as our communities grow. We work together to reach people with the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Founders Ministries – Founders believes that the biblical faith is inherently doctrinal, and we are therefore to be confessional in our convictions. Founders exists for the recovery of the gospel and the reformation of churches, and has been providing resources for churches since 1982 through conferences, books, The Sword & The Trowel Podcast, video documentaries, online articles found at founders.org, the quarterly Founders Journal, Bible studies, International church search, and the newly launched seminary level training program, the Institute of Public Theology.

CAYA Reconciliation Ministries – CAYA (Come As You Are) Reconciliation Ministries is a Christ-centered, non-profit charitable services outreach ministry serving the materially and spiritually poor both locally and internationally. CAYA currently provides the following services: Food Pantry, Emergency Food Assistance, financial assistance, financial counseling, bible study and counseling, clothing closet, furniture & household items, summer lunch program,

Hall's Living Library – Hall's Living Library is a beautiful collection of children's books, carefully selected and preserved, for families looking for quality, clean books for the children. Owned and operated by Mrs. Sandy Hall, and housed at Highlands Community Church, the library specializes in vintage, out-of-print children's books from the Golden Era of Children's Literature. Over 18,000 books collected over the past 50 years!

2024 GOALS



2024 GOALS

Plans & Goals for Fundraising

As we look towards 2024, we would like to highlight the vital need for dedicated fundraising efforts to propel our mission and capital projects forward. Your generous support and creative ideas are the keystones to our collective success.

Community Yard Sale – This spring, our youth group will organize another community yard sale to support our summer mission trip. We invite members to contribute items and to gather donations from friends and family. For questions or to volunteer, please reach out to Bonnie Alderson (she's already gathering donations, folks!)

Community Car Wash – With the arrival of warmer weather, we plan to hold a community car wash in the church parking lot. Instead of a set fee, we will request donations to foster a spirit of generosity.

Donation Matching Campaign – We are also aiming to raise funds by collaborating with a local business willing to match donations for a specified period, which could potentially double the contributions we receive.

Sponsorship Drive – Around Easter, our church will launch a sponsorship drive. Members will seek sponsorship from friends and family for challenges they undertake, such as reading the Bible in a month, achieving a walking goal, or memorizing scripture.

Bake Sale – Highlands is blessed with fantastic bakers (and not just Glenn and Erin's family)! We hope to utilize those talents through the art of the good old-fashioned bake sale here and there throughout the years.

Christmas Tree Lot – We are exploring hosting a Christmas tree sale on our property for the 2024 holiday season. This will not only raise funds for our various church projects but also serve as an outreach opportunity to the local community. The sale will offer a selection of trees, with volunteers from our congregation assisting customers. We'll need a team to organize, manage sales, and handle the logistics of tree deliveries and setup.

Austell Property Sale – In 2024, Highlands plans to sell the remaining parcel of land we own connected to our former location in Austell. The proceeds from this sale will be allocated to support capital projects for the church.

Grants – We are currently exploring opportunities to secure funding for facility and program improvements through state and local grants. Any members with experience in grant-writing, please step forward!

All Ideas Welcome – If you have a unique fundraising idea or experience in this area, we encourage you to share it. Please reach out to Pastor Bill to discuss your suggestions.



2024 Budget

In the spirit of transparency, we annually present our complete budget to the congregation for review and discussion. For the 2024 budget, we'd like to highlight the following key points:

- The mission trip to Peñas Blancas (item #7141) will rely on special fundraising efforts, and we will outline the target amount necessary to raise.
- The youth mission trip to West Virginia (item #7142) will also be financed through dedicated fundraising, and we will specify the required amount to be raised.
- Special fundraising programs (outlined on page 22) will be utilized throughout the year to support projects various projects and programs.

Ministries - #7100	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	ANNUAL
Ministry to God (Praise/Education) - #7110	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$3,000
Sermon Research - #7112	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$1,200
Subscriptions - #7113	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$1,800
Ministry of the Word (Foundations) - #7120	\$195	\$195	\$195	\$195	\$780
Students - #7122	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$480
Birth-Elementary (including nursery) - #7123	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$300
Ministry to the Church (Community) - #7130	\$650	\$650	\$1,150	\$1,150	\$3,600
Men's/Women's Groups - #7132	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$600
Youth (Forge) - #7133	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$1,200
Events - #7134	\$200	\$0	\$700	\$700	\$1,600
Ministry to the World (Missions) #7140	\$2,000	\$8,750	\$800	\$650	\$12,200
Mission Trip - Penas Blancas / Ecuador - #7141	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$600
Mission Trip - World Changers - #7142	\$1,350	\$8,100	\$0	\$0	\$9,450
WMBA Membership - #7143	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$1,200
G3 Network - #7144	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$600
Founders - #7145	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$200
CAYA - #7146	\$0	\$0	\$150	\$150	\$300
Subtotal	\$3,595	\$10,345	\$2,895	\$2,745	\$19,580
Operations - #7200	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	ANNUAL
Facilities - #7201	\$500	\$900	\$0	\$0	\$1,400
Utilities - #7202	\$2,100	\$2,100	\$2,400	\$2,100	\$8,700
Bldg & Grounds - #7203	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$4,800
Liability & Content Insurance - #7204	\$960	\$960	\$960	\$960	\$3,840
Property Tax - #7205	\$140	\$140	\$140	\$140	\$560
Software/AV/Tech - #7206	\$1,050	\$1,050	\$1,050	\$1,050	\$4,200
Supplies (Kitchen/Coffe Bar/Bathrooms) - #7207	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$1,200
Subtotal	\$6,250	\$6,650	\$6,050	\$5,750	\$24,700
Salary / Wages / Benefits - #7000	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	ANNUAL
Senior Pastor - Wages - #7010	\$8,008	\$8,008	\$8,008	\$8,008	\$32,031
Senior Pastor - Housing Allowance - #7020	\$10,912	\$10,912	\$10,912	\$10,912	\$43,649
Senior Pastor - Benefits - #7030	\$1,080	\$1,080	\$1,080	\$1,080	\$4,320
Senior Pastor - Insurance - #7040	\$8,700	\$8,700	\$8,700	\$8,700	\$34,800
Senior Pastor - Hospitality - #7050	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$1,200
Senior Pastor - Continued Education - #7060	\$900	\$900	\$900	\$900	\$3,600
Subtotal	\$29,900	\$29,900	\$29,900	\$29,900	\$119,600
Total Budget	\$39,745	\$46,895	\$38,845	\$38,395	\$163,880

Year-Over-Year Giving Summary

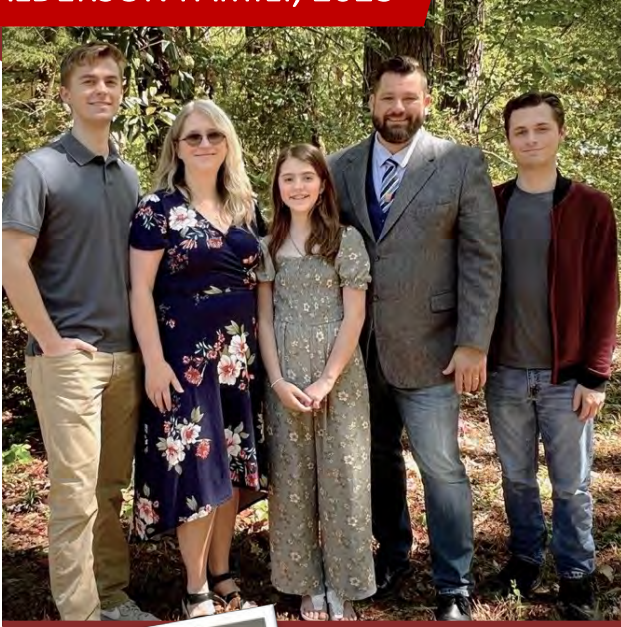
2022	2023
\$121,598.72	\$135,323

Quarter	2022	2023
Q1	\$29,226.76	\$30,823.65
Q2	\$29,349.88	\$32,763.30
Q3	\$32,821.53	\$37,033.17
Q4	\$30,200.55	\$34,703.32

Year-Over-Year Giving Summary - 2022 vs. 2023



ALDERSON FAMILY, 2023



Goodbye 2023 – Hello 2024!

Greetings Church Family!

2023 marks my 10th year as a pastor in our church, and it has been a remarkable year! Reflecting on all that our little church has accomplished brings to mind so many wonderful memories:

- The joy of witnessing five members being baptized
- Deep Gospel discussions at our weekly youth group meetings
- Engaging conversations at our monthly Men's Breakfasts
- Being rained on while building a wheelchair ramp in Panama City
- Our children's gleeful waves on TV from our Christmas parade float
- The hilarious moment at the Christmas party when Avery May somehow ran across the tops of chairs to avoid being hit by a reindeer...

Above all, the most heartwarming aspect has been the joy of loving and serving alongside the people of Highlands. 2023 was a year of challenges due to the economic downturn, but we faced these obstacles together, united as a community, just as God intended.

Looking forward to 2024, we are filled with comfort and joy, knowing that our sovereign God guides us, and His will is accomplished through our efforts. Our focus will remain steadfast on the Gospel, as we seek to faithfully preach and teach God's Word. We will continue our mission, both within our community and beyond, showing love and support in various ways – from sharing meals and working together on projects, to making sandwiches for CAYA, or engaging in community group discussions.

As Pastor Jody said in his opening, let's join hands as we go forward into 2024 and take on the joyous task of **Developing the Disciples of Jesus!**

Your Brother in Christ,

Pastor Bill Alderson

