



Membership Spotlight

MEMBERS NIGHT

We held a Members Night on October 3 at which Pastor Nate taught on the biblical qualifications for elders. We enjoyed a delicious meal of pulled pork sandwiches, and our elders and ministry leaders presented important ministry updates. We invite all of our members to join us for the next Members Night, which is scheduled for Thursday, January 16 at 6:00 p.m.

NEW MEMBERS

The elders interviewed and accepted into membership nine individuals this quarter. We reviewed the testimony of each new member and lifted each new member in prayer before the Lord. We praise God that 43 new members have joined our church thus far in 2024.

Elder Newsletter

July-September 2024

Greetings from Highlands' elders! Lord willing, we plan to begin providing a quarterly update to the congregation to help our members better understand:

- The ministries and administrative affairs of the church;
- How to pray for our church, our pastoral staff and elders; and
- Ministry opportunities that may exist from time to time.

CHANGE OF ELDER CHAIR

After prayerful consideration, the elders have approved Dana Rekow (left) as our Elder Chairman effective October 23, 2024. Mike Ryan (right) will continue to serve on the Elder Board and will work closely with Dana to ensure a smooth transition. We thank Mike for his faithful leadership during a challenging season in our church's history. We also pray for God's leading and strength for Dana as he assumes this important leadership role in our church.



MEMBER SHEPHERDING TASKFORCE

The elders have established a Member Shepherding Task Force to improve our care and relationships with members. The elders have approved a pilot project to assign an elder-led team to have periodic contacts with specific members. We will invite these members to participate in a pilot and seek feedback from the teams and members after the project is complete. Lastly, we will make a recommendation to our elders about how we can improve shepherding for all members based on what we learn in this pilot.

Task Force members include: Ben Menenberg, Nate Edmondson, Emily Jarms, Courtney Edmondson, Laura Menenberg, Darla Lorbeski, Barry Brenden, Mike Loos and Dana Rekow.

ELDERS' PRAYER MINISTRY

In accord with the admonition in Acts 6:4, the elders are committed to pray for our church, its ministries, and in particular, our members. The elders join the staff in individual prayer for needs expressed by the congregation each week on the Connect Cards. In addition, the elders use the church directory to pray for our church members during each monthly elder meeting.

We invite you to help our elders in our prayer ministry by having your church directory photo taken. Please contact Avery Fink (averyf@highlandsc.org) to organize getting your photo taken if you have not yet done so.

ELDER COMMITMENTS

At each elder meeting, we review one of the following commitments to refresh the elders' focus on our shepherding responsibilities:

1. Lord, we commit, with the help of your Holy Spirit, to shepherd well every person who you bring to be part of Highlands.
2. Lord, we commit to following you and helping your people to follow you. We commit to remain diligent in the study, teaching, and application of your Holy Word.
3. Lord, with your help, we will continue in our commitment to implement measures to protect all who attend Highlands and to prevent abuse of leadership, authority, and power.
4. With your help, Lord, we commit to thoroughly investigate and respond biblically where there is evidence of misconduct at Highlands.
5. We commit to pray for your people, that every person who comes through our doors or who participates in ministry here would find a safe place to worship, and that they will grow deeply in their relationship with you through the various ministries of this church.

Members Meeting 10.3



FINANCIAL

Each month, the elders review a financial report of contributions to and expenditures by the church. In addition, the elders presented a financial report to our members at our October 3 Membes Night ([August 2024 Financial Report](#)). We give thanks to the Lord, our members, staff, and elders for provision and stewardship of the resources entrusted to our church. By God's grace, contributions are only 1.4% (\$17,086) less than budget and operational expenses are 5.8% (\$84,951) less than budget as of August 2024.

STAFFING UPDATE

We are excited to announce two new planned additions to our ministry team. First, we are hiring an Executive Pastor of Ministry who will oversee discipleship across all ages, from birth through adults, bringing deep ministry experience to develop both our staff and lay leaders. Additionally, we are replacing the Adult Pastor role currently held by Zeb Greenfield with a Discipleship Pastor. This individual will equip adult ministry leaders and ministries with a focus on classes and small groups. Please pray with us that the Lord will make clear to us whom He is calling to fulfill these important leadership roles on our staff team.

SOUTHEAST EDUCATION WING REPAIR TASK FORCE

A task force is working with an architecture firm to review repair options for the SE Educational Wing. The Task Force is currently developing two concepts: 1) a repair-only option, and 2) an expansion option towards the southeast to create an enhanced main entrance, lobby, and restrooms. We are considering both immediate and long-term facility needs.

Please pray for the members of this task force as they prepare their recommendations for the elders' review based upon the architects' and engineers' reports. Also, pray for the elders as they consider these alternatives and take the steps that are necessary to protect and enhance our facilities.

Task Force members include: Ben Menenberg, Nate Edmondson, Mike Ryan, Bill Hepler, Scott Kaseburg, Jay Wallace, and Jorgen Graff.

UPDATE ON GRACE REPORT

The Ministry Integrity Team has completed its first annual audit of the church's policies and procedures on Background Clearance and Child Safety, and Child Abuse Reporting. Our Lead Team is working to update policies based on the Ministry Integrity Team's recommendations.

We are pleased to report that Highlands has implemented nearly all of the recommendations made in the GRACE Report. We expect that the remaining few items will be completed by the end of this year.

FAITH & POLITICS SEMINAR:

The elders hosted a seminar at which Pastor Ben taught on the subject of "[Faith & Politics: Living as Dual Citizens this Election Season](#)". This included Q&A and prayer time following the teaching.

ELDER MEETINGS

Members are welcome to attend any elder meeting. Elder meetings typically take place on the third Tuesday of each month. We also announce the meeting on the [Highlands church calendar](#).

CONCLUDING PRAYER REQUEST

Please pray for our elders, staff, and members as we labor to serve the Lord together.

*"Now may the God who gives endurance and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, according to Christ Jesus, so that you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with one mind and one voice."
(Romans 15:5-6) (CSB)*