



## Commissioning Pastor Zeb

### **ODYSSEY CHURCH**

January 5, 2025, was Zeb Greenfield's last day at Highlands as our Community Pastor. Zeb and his wife Leah have served our church family faithfully for the past 5 years, and they will be following God's call to embark on a new adventure to plant Odyssey Church in the SeaTac area. Highlands' leadership commissioned Zeb and Leah during both worship gatherings on January 5, and we celebrated the Greenfield family after both services in Fellowship Hall to show appreciation for their ministry at Highlands. Please join us in continuing to pray for the Greenfields and Odyssey Church!

# Elder Newsletter

*October 1 – December 31, 2024*

The Highlands elders want the members of our congregation:

- To better understand the ministries and administrative affairs of the church;
- To know how to pray for our church, our pastoral staff and elders; and
- To have a better sense of ministry opportunities that may exist from time to time.

### **MEMBERS' MEETINGS**

Our next member's night will take place on May 1 in the Family Life Center. We invite you to join us for this family-friendly gathering where we will enjoy a delicious meal, sing together, hear a testimony, and hear ministry updates from our staff and elders as well as a financial report.

### **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, those who worship here. The elders join the staff in individual prayer for needs expressed by the congregation each week on the Connect Cards. Also, the elders use the church directory to pray for our 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](mailto: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.

## **ELDER MEETINGS**

The elders want the members of our congregation to know that all are welcome to attend any elder meeting. Elder meetings typically take place on the third Tuesday of each month. Please contact Mike Loos ([mikel@highlandsc.org](mailto:mikel@highlandsc.org)) for more details, or to let us know that you would like to attend.

## **LIFESONG ADOPTION**

Our elders are thrilled to announce a new partnership with [Lifesong for Orphans](#), a Christian organization dedicated to helping families overcome the financial burden of adoption by providing financial support and fundraising resources. Through this partnership, we are excited to support member families in our church who are pursuing adoption by offering matching grants of up to \$5,000 to families approved by Lifesong. If you are a member of our church and would like to learn more, we encourage you to make a confidential inquiry to Pastor Ben Menenberg at [benm@highlandsc.org](mailto:benm@highlandsc.org).

Kasra Soltani | Family Pastor



## **MINISTRY STAFFING REPORT**

Pastor Nate and Courtney welcomed Timothy Wells Edmondson into their family on December 9, 2024. We praise God for this handsome addition to the Edmondson family!

Kasra Soltani has joined our pastoral staff as Family Pastor to replace Jennica Osborne. We are excited about the impact he and his wife Jessica have already had as they serve our Kids families and team members. We are also grateful for the legacy that our former Kids Director, Jennica Osborne, left through more than a decade of faithful ministry to kids and families.

We continue to interview candidates for our open pastoral staff positions (Executive Pastor of Ministry and Discipleship Pastor). We hosted a candidate for each position in November and December, and we continue to

*Welcome*  
*Timothy Wells Edmondson!*



evaluate and seek God's will for the best candidates for these positions. Please join with us in praying that God will make clear to us whom He is calling to serve in these roles.

### **MEMBER SHEPHERDING PILOT**

The elder-led member shepherding pilot teams began a nine-month project in October to evaluate how we can better know and care for the members of our church family. Team North (Dana & Vickie Rekow, Ben & Laura Menenberg, and Darla Lorbeski) and Team South (Nate & Courtney Edmondson and Nate & Sanae Garvin) have been connecting with assigned members in their geographical region for prayer and relationship building. Please pray for our pilot teams and the members they are serving!

### **SOUTHEAST EDUCATION WING REPAIR UPDATE**

As we have shared previously, an engineering report earlier this year revealed structural issues in the SE Educational Wing exterior wall. Our elders commissioned a task force to develop plans to repair and/or replace the brick wall. We have two updates to share:

1. Our task force is working with architects and the City of Renton to explore the best options to either repair and/or replace the brick wall at the southeast corner of the Family Life Center. We attended a pre-application meeting with the City in November, and we continue to work with our architects to explore next steps. We expect this process will take quite some time to secure the necessary zoning arrangements to allow us to proceed with this project. Please continue to pray for the task force that is leading in this effort.
2. In an abundance of caution, we are temporarily re-locating ministry activities out of the Upper Gym Rooms and the FLC Cafe while we are waiting for repairs.

### **UPDATE ON GRACE REPORT**

Highlands has taken action on the final outstanding GRACE recommendations. One of these recommendations requires additional care and action, specifically that Highlands explore our culture related to gender and address any concerns that this exploration reveals. This remains a priority for our elders, and we are making plans to address this in the coming year.

### **THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY**

We are overwhelmed with gratitude as we reflect on the incredible generosity of our God and our church family this Christmas season. In December, we received \$512,302 in contributions—an 18% increase over last December! Your generous giving has helped us get back on track with our budget for this fiscal year.

Your faithful support fuels the many ministries of our church, including Sunday worship services, classes, community groups, and outreach efforts like Upward Basketball.

As we move into the final months of our fiscal year (ending in March), we invite you to continue your generosity and help us finish the year strongly. Thank you for partnering with us in the Gospel!

### **CONCLUDING PRAYER REQUEST**

Please pray for our elders and staff as they labor to “keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account, so that they may be able to do this with joy and not with grief . . .” Hebrews 13.17 (CSB)

*“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)