



Elder Newsletter

October 1-December 31, 2025

Hello, brothers and sisters. Greetings from our elders! We're sharing this quick quarterly update so you:

- Better understand the church's ministry and administrative affairs
- Know how to pray for our church, pastoral staff and elders
- Have a clearer sense of potential ministry opportunities.

ELDER COMMITMENTS

At each elder meeting, we review one of the following commitments to refresh our focus on shepherding responsibilities. Please pray that the Lord will help us to be faithful in fulfilling each of these commitments to Him and to the people of Highlands.

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.

New Church Members!

This past quarter, we rejoiced to welcome the following new members into the Highlands church family:

Kota Garvin

Stephanie Gilmore

Brian Green

Diana Heilman

Ian Meredith

Abel Ngetich &

Lilian Chepkemoi

Laverna Winchester

Steve & Andrea Yoon

Each new member has fulfilled the requirements for membership, including giving a credible testimony of their personal faith in Jesus and confirming their agreement with and commitment to our Statement of Faith Membership Covenant. Please join us in extending a warm welcome and praying that each would be encouraged, known, and built up as part of our body.

DISCIPLESHIP AND APPOINTMENT OF FUTURE ELDERS

The elders adopted a goal for this administrative year (April 2025-March 2026) of increasing their efforts to identify and disciple future elders. As a result of that effort, several men have been identified as potential Elder Candidates for this next administrative year (April 2026-May 2027).

Each candidate will complete a discernment process that includes an initial application, two interviews, and a comprehensive theological survey. This survey serves two purposes. First, it helps ensure general agreement with the church's Statement of Faith. Second, it provides an opportunity to explore the candidate's biblical understanding of other theological issues on which sincere, Bible-believing Christians may hold differing views. Through this process, we seek to confirm that potential elders hold strong, biblically grounded convictions and are able to work collaboratively with fellow elders while shepherding our congregation through a wide range of pastoral and cultural challenges.

Lord-willing, our reviews will be completed and we will announce proposed Elder Candidates in March. Please join us in praying for the Lord's leading throughout this discernment process!



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY GROUPS

This summer, our elders finished the Member Shepherding Pilot project. As a result of this project, our elders concluded that community groups currently are, and should continue to be, the primary means through which individual members are known and loved in our church. Therefore, our elders determined that as a leadership team, we're going to place a renewed emphasis on promoting community groups, teaching the importance of being in community, and equipping our community group leaders.

This past quarter, our staff team embraced this mandate and developed the Strengthen Community Groups objective. Pastors Nathan and Mark, with the support of our Staff Lead Team, are championing this effort over the next 9-12 months. In particular, we'll invest in intentional leader training during the first half of 2026.

As members of Highlands, we invite you to pray for this effort to strengthen the community groups of our church. If you're not yet part of a community group, we invite you to prioritize finding a group and regularly gathering for fellowship, sharing meals, prayer, and applying God's Word. We also invite you to pray that God would raise up more leaders to help cultivate opportunities for others to find community at Highlands.

BEST CHRISTIAN WORKPLACES RECOGNITION

For the second consecutive year, Highlands staff participated in the Best Christian Workplaces survey. This past year, we were grateful to receive a "Flourishing" score and to be certified as a Best Christian Workplace. We give thanks to God for the staff and the healthy culture He entrusted to our church. The elders remain committed to cultivating a healthy, Christ-honoring staff culture, and will continue striving toward that end in the years ahead.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

In September 2025, our elders shared a financial update with you. Due to a generational shift in giving patterns, we projected in September that we would end our fiscal year (April 2025–March 2026) approximately 11% or \$350K behind budget. We asked you to pray and to participate in meeting the needs of our church family.

By God’s grace, and through your incredible generosity, we have seen increased giving through the participation of dozens of new and second- time givers, as well as increased participation by existing givers. Through this outpouring of generosity, and the continued faithfulness of God’s people, we project that we will finish our fiscal year approximately \$160K or 5% behind budget, a gracious answer to prayer. We praise God for His generosity through you, and we thank you for making it possible for our church to help people find and follow Jesus!

We invite you to continue partnering with us to finish the year strong, and we invite you to pray for wisdom for our elders and staff as we develop our budget for next year.

ALL ARE INVITED

The elders want to remind everyone that you are welcome to attend any elder meeting. The public portion of the meeting typically starts at 7:15 p.m. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month (except August) in Room 270.

“BIBLICAL ELDERSHIP” STUDY

For several years, Elder Candidates have studied a book on “Biblical Eldership” as part of their Elder Candidate curriculum. Recently, a revised edition of “Biblical Eldership” has been published. The entire Elder Council has committed to studying this book together. Each month, a different elder leads a 15-minute discussion of a portion of the book. The study of the entire book will be completed by the end of our fiscal year in March. We commend this book to you as a great way to learn about God’s purposes for elders in leading His church.

FACILITY REPAIRS UPDATE

This October, we received an updated cost estimate from our architects to replace/repair the brick walls on the SE side of the FLC and the NW side of the building near Fellowship Hall, as well as the proposed 3rd floor restroom renovations and proposed natural light additions to the Worship Center. Our elders continue to work with our architects and engineers to develop a plan for wall repair and to prepare for city permitting and engaging with contractors. We’ll continue to provide updates as we receive them, and we will invite you to participate in this project as the Lord leads and enables you. Thank you for praying—the Lord continues to be gracious and guide us through this repair process.

CONCLUDING PRAYER REQUEST

Please join us in thanking the Lord for the faith and love of our members, and let’s pray that as a church we will continue to love one another and endure because of the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.

“We recall, in the presence of our God and Father, your work produced by faith, your labor motivated by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.”
(1 Thessalonians 1:3) (CSB)