



thechurch@
**Highland
Park**

This month @ Highland Park

Wednesday, Feb 3

Church Conference on Zoom at 5p

Sunday, Feb 7

Adult Sunday School on Zoom at 9a
Livestream Worship Service at 11a

Sunday, Feb 14

Adult Sunday School on Zoom at 9a
Livestream Worship Service at 11a
Kids' Virtual Valentine's Party at 5p
Youth Sunday School on Zoom at 6p

Wednesday, Feb 17

Imposition of Ashes at 5p (Outdoors)

Saturday, Feb 20

Lifeline Screenings held in Sapp Hall

Sunday, Feb 21

Adult Sunday School on Zoom at 9a
Livestream Worship Service at 11a
Youth Sunday School on Zoom at 6p

Tuesday, Feb 23

Social Hour on Zoom at 1p

Wednesday, Feb 24

Council Meeting on Zoom at 5:15p

Sunday, Feb 28

Adult Sunday School on Zoom at 9a
Livestream Worship Service at 11a
Youth Sunday School on Zoom at 6p



MIRROR WIBBOB

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What Wondrous Love



Lent 2021 @
Highland Park

The Season of Lent begins on February 17 with Ash Wednesday. The church will host an **outdoor Imposition of Ashes on February 17 at 5:30 p.m.** as we look to begin our journey to the resurrection cross. You are invited to gather at the front of the property: you may remain parked in your car or find a lawn chair pre-set in socially-distant circles. Rev. Cheryl Kimble will deliver a homily & come to each group to place a sign of the cross on each person's forehead with ashes. If you do not feel comfortable receiving ashes, you may cross your arms in front of you, and the pastor will not approach you. Masks are required for all in attendance.

The season of Lent at Highland Park will feature special messages and music during worship and shared during the week online.

I really can't believe it is already February... and I can't believe it's been 11 months since we had to shut down the building and change our service. I look back and think about all the times we'd pick a date out in front of us, thinking we'd be back together then. We first said "by Easter for sure" and here we are facing our second Easter in this pandemic. "Oh, we'll be together by summer" and then summer came and went with no camps, no VBS, no Mission trips. We had a beautiful outdoor Christmas Eve service but we still had to keep our distance from one another and then chose to go online again as numbers rose in our area.

Well, here we are in a new year. We knew it was going to be different, but it looks like we're still a bit away from being back together as normal. We have many hopes for the future, keeping in mind that we still need to be cautious and careful to keep everyone safe.

Abby is beginning a weekly series called "Story Time with Abby". These will be posted each week on Facebook so keep an eye out and watch with your children (or just on your own if you don't have small children). Abby is also looking for a day in June to do an outdoor VBS-like day for the children to come to the church, still remain socially-distanced from one another but have a fun time together.

Masyn and Kelley have been working non-stop trying to get our new website launched, which should happen this week. With it comes many new and different ways for our church to spread information about all of our programs. With the new website (emphasizing our new name), we will also be launching new emails for all the staff with our new name. Kelley is also working making sure all companies and organizations that we have some sort of working relationship with have changed our name in their records. Our church is approaching 70 years of existence so this is no small task. This project would have been launched immediately following the name change in March 2020, but was sidelined by the quarantine.

While it will once again be a very different time, we will have an opportunity for you to receive the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday, February 17. For those who feel comfortable, we'll have folding chairs in the parking lot or save a parking spot for your car at the very front. I invite you to come receive the sign of the cross on your forehead, in a highly sanitary manner, as we begin our journey to the resurrection cross.

While things are and continue to be very different, The Church @ Highland Park is alive and well. We continue to try different things and seek ways to be church to one another. We keep you in our prayers and hope you will let us know if there are any ways we can pray specifically for you or serve you during this time.

Please stay safe,
Cheryl



Rev. Cheryl Kimble

Online Worship on Sundays will continue through the end of the month. Please join us each Sunday morning at 10:55 a.m. on our YouTube Channel or Facebook page to watch and participate in worship. The worship services are automatically saved on these platforms, so if you can't watch live, you can always check back later to watch again and again!

Sunday, February 7: Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

Rev. Cheryl Kimble preaches

National Scout Sunday recognition with messages and photos

Sunday, February 14: Last Sunday after the Epiphany

Masyn Evans-Clements preaches

Sunday, February 21: First Sunday in Lent

Rev. Cheryl Kimble preaches

Sunday, February 28: Second Sunday in Lent

Rev. Cheryl Kimble preaches



January 22, 2021

Dear friends,

It's been some time since I've seen many of you and I'd love to get an update on how you and your family are doing.

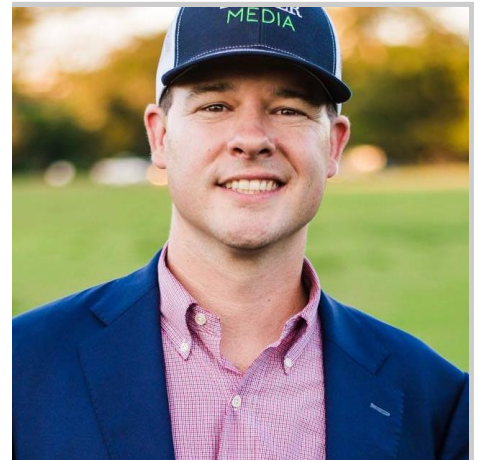
As we kick off 2021, I know as a congregation we have members juggling a lot of different emotions. Some are experiencing grief amidst the loss of friends and loved ones. Others are dealing with crippling stress as they juggle family, work, finances and other responsibilities mid-pandemic. Some are just at a point where loneliness is the predominant feeling. If you fall in any of these categories please know you're not alone. You're a member of a community that loves you and that is here to support you as we all journey to the other side of this winter.

Thankfully, we also have many reasons for hope. New babies on the way. A vaccine that is starting to make its way to many of our members. Mission work ongoing. Innovative birthday celebrations, quarantine olympics, foosball training for the future camp champs and other signs of hope can be found across our membership on Facebook and beyond. Let's join together to rejoice in those and all of the other things Highland Park is doing to breathe hope into a trying time.

We may be physically dis-connected but our mission as a staff and council leadership team is to do everything we can to keep Highland Park spiritually connected and supported during this time.

With all of that said, I wanted to send out an early 2021 update to make sure everyone is up-to-speed on everything that is happening at Highland Park:

- **Outdoor Services are Cancelled Until March** - We had a lot of great momentum going with our outdoor services but the combination of rising numbers and falling temperatures caused us to cancel outdoor services in January & February. As of now, we're tentatively focused on trying to restart outdoor services March 7th, pending what local COVID numbers look like. Until then we'll continue to have virtual services & virtual Sunday School each week and appreciate any feedback you might have on how we can make these services even more valuable for you (*What's working? What isn't working? How can these be most valuable for you?*)



Rusty Shelton, Council Chair

- **Highland Park Financials** - To the surprise of no one, Nancy Osgood has done a tremendous job as finance chair for Highland Park in perhaps the most challenging year ever to be in that seat. She has sent a full report to the congregation (see pg. 7), and I wanted to let you know at a high level that the church was able to meet all of its obligations, from staff to missions and beyond, thanks to your consistent support throughout 2020. Thanks to that support and the ability to limit loss of rent revenue, Highland Park had a very solid year. Per the motion that passed in September of 2020, we're going to continue the first five months of 2021 with the 2020 budget still in place and will be creating a new budget alongside the start of the new fiscal and council year June 1, 2021.

- **Forming a Nominating Committee** - There will be a Church Conference on Wed. February 3rd at 5 PM on Zoom to select a nominating committee for the new Church Council. We need your help in forming this committee - if you are willing to serve, we would sincerely appreciate you letting us know. If you have an idea for someone to serve, please speak to them and get their approval to nominate them ahead of that Feb 3rd church conference.

- **Staff Retreat** - Our staff has done such a tremendous job leading our church through the pandemic and they deserve our utmost gratitude for all of their hard work. With so much work being done, it's helpful to take a step back and spend some time visioning toward the future, so we decided to organize a staff retreat (socially distanced and outside) to review highs & lows of 2020, vision toward the future and make sure everyone is aligned as we prepare for post-pandemic Highland Park.



to review highs & lows of 2020, vision toward the future and make sure everyone is aligned as we prepare for post-pandemic Highland Park.

Please let me know if you have any questions at all. Additionally, if you have ideas or feedback on ways that we can best support you and your family to keep you spiritually connected during this time, please share those with me.

Warmest,
Rusty

BUSINESS There will be a church-wide Conference Wednesday, February 3rd at 5:00 p.m. on Zoom. Church members and active guests are strongly encouraged to attend as we tend to the business of the church.

The main item of business is to select and vote on a new Nominating Committee. Members of the Nominating Committee shall consist of at least five (5) church members that represent an appropriate demographic balance of the Church.

The Nominating Committee will in turn do the important business of selecting the slate of members for the Church Council and other church officers. A reminder that the Nominating Committee term will now be from February to February the following year, nominating the new upcoming Church Council at another church conference in April. To assist with the transition, the new Council will start with the current Council in April/May and formally take over on June 1.

If you would like to nominate someone to the committee, please take the time between now and the meeting to seek their approval to be nominated. If you are interested in serving on the Nominating Committee for this next year, please email ckimble@hpbcaustin.org to give your name for nominations.



PERSONNEL We celebrate the 3rd anniversary of Amanda Haley's employment on February 18. Our sincere thanks to Amanda for her wonderful work in the children's ministry these three years.

Kelley DeCleene sends her heartfelt thanks to those who wrote beautiful messages for worship on January 31, sent emails, texts or letters, and for the treats that were delivered to her front step, all to celebrate her 10th work anniversary at The Church at Highland Park. It's been an amazing decade of work, life, and love shared together, and Kelley is beyond appreciative of everything that Highland Park has been, professionally and personally, for her and her family.



BUILDING Our friend & former organist Dustin Struhall has continued to play organ and piano for our services, and has now begun revamping the sanctuary sound system to enhance live streaming of services. Dustin said our system is good, but just needs additional equipment to allow for better sound, monitoring, recording, and streaming. Thank you Dustin for sharing your many gifts and talents with The Church at Highland Park.



Year-End Report from Finance Ministry

The congregation of The Church at Highland Park has truly shown its commitment this year. Hours and sweat and tears were poured into preparing a budget for the year 2020 that would perform for all of our ministries and missions and prepare for the unexpected. But it was just impossible to envision how unexpected the year would be. In January we reexamined and found that we needed to invest in the future with a new website so that our congregation and anyone who was interested in our church could see all the gifts that we are sharing. Construction was already underway for the new Youth Area off of Sapp Hall and various building accommodations for our new main tenant Paragon Preparatory School.

In March, because of the pandemic, we had to close our in person Sunday service which was extended to include our special Holy week & Easter services. Paragon went to online learning and began planning which led to many more construction projects necessary for reopening with enough safety and space. Then Vacation Bible School, Children, Junior and High School camps, Intergenerational Mission Trip were all cancelled. This history sets the stage for my financial report for the last year.

In May, with the help of our accountant Carolyn Doolittle, we applied for and received a Paycheck Protection Program in the amount of \$86,182 to allow us to pay all of our employees until we were able to reopen. We were able to pay all of our employees including those paid by the hour such as Nursery workers and Custodian with these funds. These funds could also be used for other expenses such as utilities. There were some concerns about a drop in donations without the in-person services. Each month of this year has been very close to our projected budget of contributions or exceeded it.

Through the year although we were not spending on any of our budgeted ministry expenses, we had many unplanned expenses. There was a roof repair to the back building, an ADA accessible ramp for the back building, the replacement of a broken slide in the playground, lowering lease for Paragon, Legal fees for name change and lease adjustment, various HVAC repairs & replacements, equipment required to begin livestreaming, water damage from broken plumbing, and many smaller items.

This congregation found a way to keep on giving. Pledges were kept and very generous gifts were received all through the year to coincide with our greatest needs. Our contributions for the year were above our projections and this generosity allowed us to cover all of the expenses and missions. The Payroll Protection Plan loan is expected to be completely forgiven very soon.

We are asking that you continue to give as you are able and let us know if your pledge needs to be changed.

Respectfully,
Nancy Osgood

Missions News from Alana Mallard, Chair:



The Religious Coalition to Assist the Homeless, called RCAH, has not been on my radar until recently when I saw a year-end report about the grants RCAH made for 2020 to twenty-one local nonprofits who serve individuals and families living without homes. Among the 146 churches supporting RCAH is The Church at Highland Park, and we have supported the group for more than 20 years by diverting our City of Austin drainage fee. RCAH grew from a bill passed by the Texas Legislature in 1996 and adopted by the City of Austin in 1997. Our agreement to divert our drainage payment to RCAH, means nearly \$10,000 towards the \$940,000 in grants made by RCAH in 2020. RCAH writes monthly checks to the nonprofits just as each church writes a monthly check to RCAH. Our drainage bill from COA this year was \$810 each month — and went to work toward housing and services needed by our vulnerable neighbors. It's not a dollar amount you see in our Missions budget, and it's important support for agencies such as Caritas, Casa Marianella, Front Steps, ECHO, Mobile Loaves and Fishes, SAFE Alliance, and many more.



Save the date: March 7, 2021 is CROP Hunger Walk and Balcones Drive Clean Up Day!

Since the Austin CROP Hunger Walk is virtual this year, we're encouraging folks to walk in their neighborhoods **OR** come walk the church's block for an 'Adopt A Street' Clean Up Day. Grabbers & safety vests will be available anytime on Sunday, March 7 from 12 - 3 p.m. to pick up litter on Balcones and Parkcrest drives. We can log the distance we walk on our CROP teampage as we remember those around the world who walk miles every day for food and clean water. The donations to the CROP Walk support the global work of Church World Services and help local families who are struggling with hunger. Thanks in advance from the Missions Service Group for how you love God's people and God's earth.

Sign up or donate online:

events.crophungerwalk.org/2021/team/the-church-highland-park

Checks may also be mailed to the church with the memo 'CROP Walk'.

Story Time with Abby

In trying to figure out the best ways to connect with our kids while still apart, Our Children's Ministry Coordinator, Abby Byrd has recorded herself reading children's books and we will be sharing them each Wednesday on Facebook for "Storytime with Abby". Thanks for creating these for our kids, Abby. We encourage you to watch them with your kids each week, and maybe even join Abby in wearing a silly hat!



ZOOM VALENTINE'S PARTY



Abby is also hosting a Valentine's Day kids' Zoom on Sunday, February 14 at 5:00pm. Abby plans to have the kids go on a home scavenger hunt and then report back to the Zoom with what they found. Any and everyone is invited to join, although the activities will focus on the kids. A Zoom link will go out that morning for families and friends to join for a fun evening together. Laughter & smiles guaranteed.

SOCIAL HOUR ZOOM

Members of congregation have expressed interest in having social hour Zoom meetings in addition to the great educational ones already being held.

Rev. Cheryl Kimble and Kelley DeCleene will host the February Social Hour Zoom on Tuesday, February 23 at 1:00 p.m. The link

will go out by email that morning and all are welcome to join the conversation. This will be an unstructured conversation to allow us to catch up with one another.



Our educational opportunities will continue online this month through the Zoom platform. Links to these classes are emailed privately to ensure online safety, so please email info@thechurchathp.org if you would like to know more or would like to receive the Zoom information.



<p>Adult Bible Study</p> <p>led by Walt Shelton 9:00 a.m. on Sundays</p> <p>In February 2021, the class is doing a study of the Book of Colossians.</p>	<p>Youth Sunday School Class</p> <p>Taught by Wes Glazener & Masyn Evans-Clements ages 6th-12th grade 6:00 p.m. on Sundays</p>	<p>"The Late Risers" Young Couples Class</p> <p>Led by David & Kim Balkum Meet bimonthly</p>
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The **Monday Night book group** will Zoom together on February 8 to discuss *Washington's Spies* by Alexander Rose. Let Don Hartman know if you want in on the meeting and he'll email a Zoom link. All are invited and welcome, and the meetings start at 6 p.m. Here are the meeting dates and books through the spring and summer:

March 1 - *The Son* by Jo Nesbo
April 5 - *March* by Geraldine Brooks
May 3 - *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson
June 7 - *Last Hope Island* by Lynn Osborn
July 5 — *The Body* by Bill Bryson
August 2 — *Capt. Putnam for the Republic of Texas* by James L. Haley

The **Saturday Morning book group** will meet **February 27 at 10 a.m.** at the patio by HP's back entrance. We'll talk about Heather Lende's book, *If You Lived Here I'd Know Your Name*, and then we'll spend some time choosing books for the next few months. We welcome you, and we social distance and wear our masks the entire time. Lende is a longtime resident of Haines, Alaska, where she and her husband own a hardware store, and she has a gig writing obituaries for the local Chilkat News.



sharon Duboise and Alana & Jack Mallard



THANK YOU !

The staff sends their hearty thanks to the Office Supply Fairy who dropped off this big bin outside of the office last month. We love this kind of stuff! If you'd like to reveal your identity, we'll be sure to send you a very colorful thank you note using all of the great pens, paper clips, and highlighters you delivered.

We may not be able to meet together in our building, but The Church @ Highland Park is still a loving community. Do you have a prayer request, update on yourself, or celebration from your family that you'd like to share? Photos are welcome, too! Please [email the church office](#) and we can share with everyone by email, in hopes to keep us socially-connected in this socially-distant world. Please be sure to mention if you are okay with it being shared over the church-wide email, or if you prefer for it to only be shared & prayed over during the Monday staff Zoom meeting.

Rev. Cheryl Kimble, Pastor
Masyn Evans-Clements, Minister for Youth & Outreach
Abby Byrd, Children's Ministry Coordinator
Kelley DeCleene, Director of Church Operations
Becky Dillard, Ministry Assistant
Carolyn Doolittle, Church Bookkeeper
Childcare workers: Maddy Bewley and Amanda Haley
Church janitor: Marcia Melendez

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