

Highterian

Pastor's Note

Whew! We made it through the holidays! Yippee! I always feel like we should give each other a hearty pat on the back after the holidays. Don't get me wrong – I love this time of the year. But if we are honest, it can be a lot. A lot of parties, a lot of shopping, a lot of eating, a lot of traveling, even a lot of church. Sometimes, it is just a lot. And it's okay to use this time to take a breath. Still have your Christmas tree up? Don't worry about it. Still haven't finished all those things that you said you were going to do during Christmas? Let it go.

Each New Year, people make all kinds of resolutions, usually to do with being healthier like eating better or losing weight. But what if this year, we chose to take better care of ourselves in a different way? After the business of the holidays, it is important that we take the time to simply be. It is time for us to find rest in God's presence. To return to the daily routines of life, but in a way that is mindful of God's presence with us.

The Psalmist reminds of God's words to us, "Be still and know that I am God." Even in a time when we are celebrating God (like Christmas), the busy-ness can keep us from truly experiencing God's presence. So, let's resolve to take the time this year to breathe, time to slow down when needed, time to rest. Let's resolve to give up the need to perform or produce. God's love is not tied to our performance or productivity. (Amen!) Would you join me in making this a year of choosing be still, so that we may know he is God?

— Rev Sharon Bell

Highlawn Presbyterian - on a mission

Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

We delivered 50 shoe boxes packed with love and covered with prayer to our local drop off center, New Baptist Church. **More than 25,000** shoeboxes/gospel opportunities were packed in the Huntington area this year.

At our early December work party, we finished up our 109 children's stockings. When we delivered them to the **Salvation Army**, they were very appreciative and told us how much they loved adding our handmade stockings to the Angel bags last year! The afternoon Circle took ownership of the Senior stockings as they have in past years. They made a generous donation for shopping, brought items and packed 39 stockings for Salvation Army Seniors. We also made 17 favors by stuffing mugs and drinking cups with small gifts for Seniors at Morning Point. Holly says the residents loved them!

As we do most months, we collected a very generous donation of items for the **Children's Home Society**. We sent a Pack n' Play with mattress, children's books, kids' dishes, and clothes for women and children, along with Christmas decorations. There were also packages of new underwear, towels, coats, a Lego block set, diapers, child size sleeper sofa, kids' bedding, more kids' clothes, and clothes hangers.

Children's Home society accepted applications for families to receive Help for the Holidays in the form of food boxes for both Thanksgiving and Christmas, as well as a chance to "shop" for coats and toys for their children in their Christmas Shop. Applications were only open for one day because in that time, they accepted 500 families. Additional families in need were added to a waiting list.



Highlawn Presbyterian - on a mission

I made multiple trips to deliver new items donated to the Blessings Room which were too large for stockings or shoeboxes. Toys, new clothes, a Play-Doh set, a giant teddy bear, and more, knowing that they would do their best to serve not only the 500 families, but also, as many folks on the wait list as possible right up to Christmas. They lovingly serve our community in so many ways!

We also provided 15 stockings for foster children ages 10-17 not in a family situation at Christmas, staying at the Children's Home Society's Hovah Underwood Emergency Shelter in Milton. We are told that a generous donor ensures each child at the Shelter at Christmas receives a stack of personal, wrapped gifts. Hopefully, the flashlights, pens and pencils, small toys, art supplies, key chains etc. in our handmade stockings make their Christmas feel a little more like home.

Generous gifts to the **Blessings Room** helped with the purchase of \$5 gift cards to McDonalds and Taco Bell, a favorite gift of children at the Emergency Shelter, to be added to those stockings.

The Blessings Room was also able to Sponsor a Smile for 1 child through Harmony House. They are currently serving families with a total of 36 children. Sponsor a Smile gave members of the community the opportunity to shop for gifts for one of these children, with a maximum spend of \$50. I shopped for a little girl, 4 years old, and purchased a baby doll with some accessories, a doll stroller, a 'Frozen' pants set, socks and toothbrush.

The folks at **Harmony House** greatly appreciated members of the community providing Christmas for these children. When I dropped off the gifts they were having a gift wrapping party!

Highlawn Presbyterian - on a mission

Shout out to all our stitchers! We made and filled a total of 163 stockings! If you are a bargain hunter, this is the time to shop for hats, gloves and small toys for stockings and shoeboxes.

It takes a village! I know this message is long, but I promise I summarized our many opportunities to serve our community in December. Don't hesitate to ask me if you have questions or need more information.

Thank you for the many ways you support the Blessings Room all year long!

The **Mission Committee** has of course, been busy serving our community all year long making donations and serving meals. Some of the organizations we served were **City Mission, UKirk, Branches, Highlawn Elementary, New Baptist Food Pantry, Operation Christmas Child, Salvation, Harmony House and the Children's Home Society.**

-Nancy Estler, Mission Committee





Highlawn Presbyterian - on a mission

As January and a new year begins, the Harmony House Rapid Re-Housing Program continues to have many needs for their clients. Re-Housing clients are formerly homeless individuals or families moving into a new home. Highlawn Presbyterian has continued this past year to make many donations for this mission to support newly housed individuals and families. The Re-Housing Program, accepts gently-used and cleaned or new items. Each month, Misty Golden, the Re-Housing Program Director, suggests a list of the most-needed items, and HPC collects those items in the wagon by the front door in the Narthex. Along with those suggested items, anything that helps a family in a new home setting is very much appreciated. Large items such as furniture and rugs and kitchen appliances are also needed, and Harmony House is able to pick up the larger items from your home.

Our church has also continually donated items for the day shelter. These include seasonal clothing and shoes and personal hygiene items. The staff of the day shelter welcomes season-appropriate donations as they do not have storage space for out of season items. This month they very much need warm coats, hats, gloves, and sturdy shoes and boots. Personal hygiene items are always accepted, such as toothpaste and toothbrushes, deodorant, shampoo and conditioner, bar soap and body wash.

The **January 2026** Needs for Harmony House include **diapers and pull-ups (size 5 and up), small bottles of laundry detergent, shampoo and conditioner, body wash, deodorant, and twin-sized sheets**. Donations may be brought to the church and left in the “wagon display” in the Narthex or in the Blessings Room on the table under the Harmony House sign. You may speak with any member of the Mission Committee about any questions concerning your donations.

Misty and her staff are so appreciative of each delivery of our donations from Highlawn Presbyterian Church. During 2025 there have been 2 or 3 donation deliveries each month. Each delivery is a car full of items for both re-housing and the shelter. They thank each and every one of you who has supported this important community mission.

— ***Mission Committee***

Fun photos from our Joy Gift Lunch



Updates and Announcements



Did you know?

We have received approximately \$45,000 towards the cost of our boiler! We are **so thankful** for your gifts that have made this possible.



A special “*Thank You*”
from New Baptist Church

“Dear Faithful Friends,

Your continued help and support for our food pantry at New Baptist Church is so very appreciated. Your recent donation of fruit, vegetables, etc. is so generous and we will pass on these things to so many who come for food assistance. An increased number of people in need due to a decrease in resources is seen each week. You help us fill their needs. We pray you had a lovely Thanksgiving, and may God richly bless you at Highlawn Presbyterian Church.

Our Love & Thanks,
Linda Cummings
New Baptist Church Food Pantry”

Updates and Announcements

“The family of Margie Stone is eternally grateful for the kindness and support of her friends at Highlawn. The cards, calls, and prayers will not be forgotten.”

‘O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever’

Important Upcoming Dates

Sunday, Jan. 4 – Please plan to stay after worship to help take down all of our Christmas decorations.

Sunday, Jan. 11 – There will be a Congregational Meeting following worship for the purpose of electing an elder to fulfill a one year term for the class of 2026, and for the annual review of the pastor's terms of call.

thank
you!

The staff and I would like to thank **each of you** for your generous gift this Christmas. Your kindness is overwhelming! We are each thankful to be working alongside such wonderful folks, doing the work of Christ together.

Happy Birthday

1/2 Gary Baldwin

1/6 Mitzi Cyrus

1/11 Mary Beth Biederman

Avery Morgan

Manny Dorey

1/12 Linda Hansen

1/18 Jenny New

1/20 Neva Baldwin

Lauren Panell

1/21 Anna Laura Dorey

1/29 Holly McComas

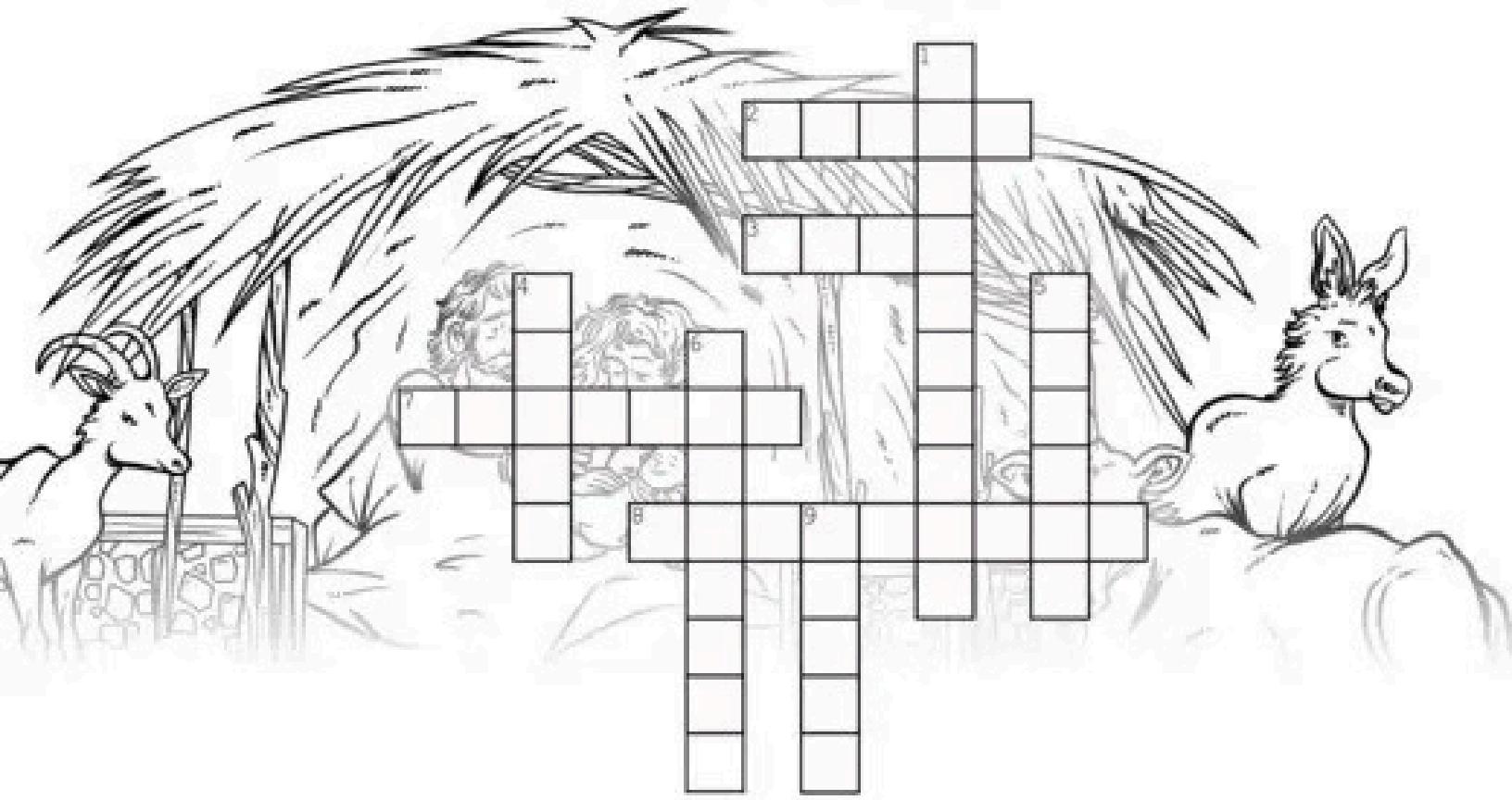
Happy Anniversary

1/2 Neva and Gary Baldwin

JOURNEY OF THE WISE MEN

A CHRISTMAS STORY

Matthew 2:1-12

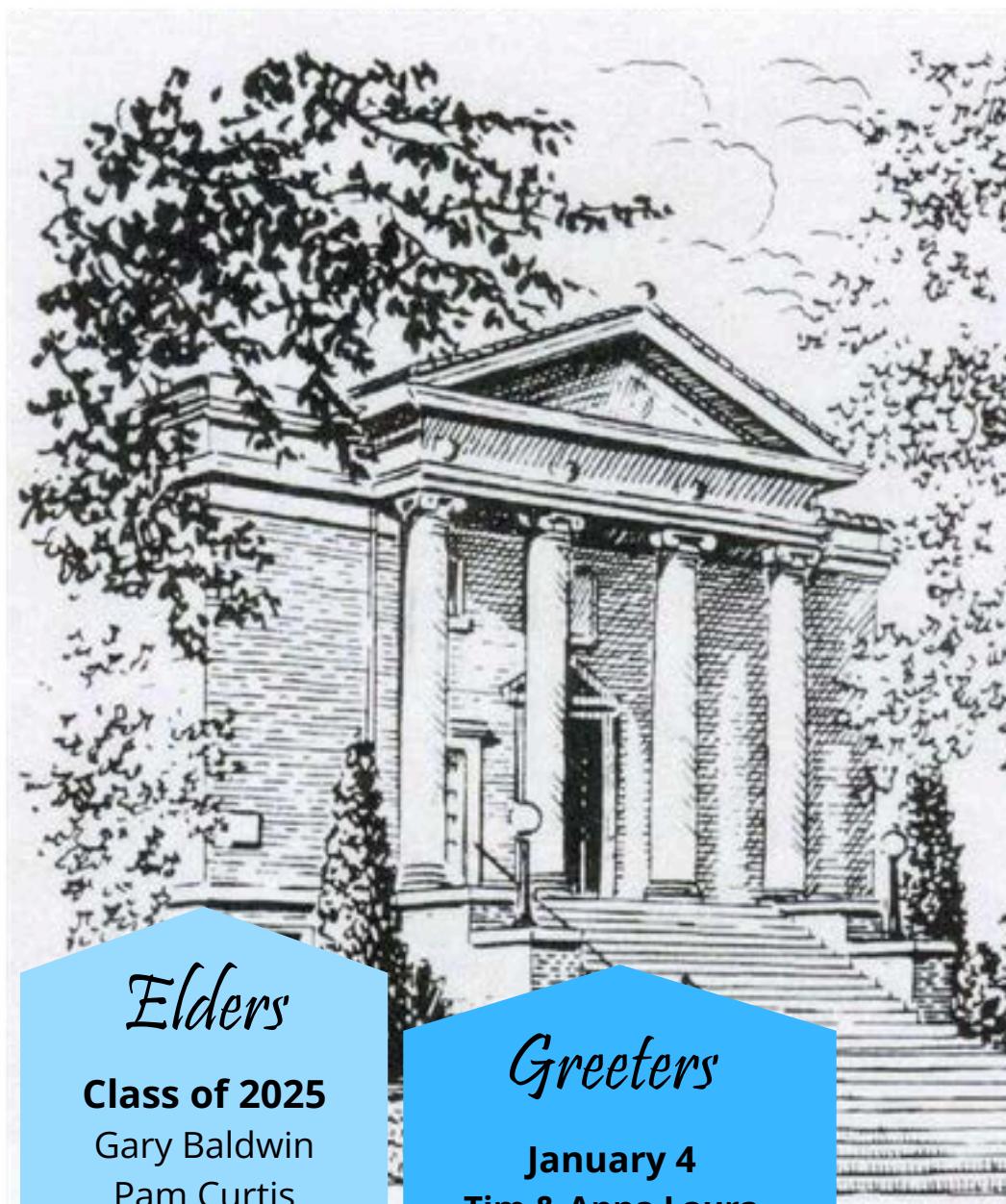
**Across**

2. King _____ was greatly disturbed by the Magi's news of a new King.
3. The Magi went through Jerusalem asking, "Where is he who has been born king of the _____?"
7. The Magi declared, "For we saw his star when it rose and have come to _____ him."
8. What city did the Magi find the new-born King, Jesus?

Down

1. When the Magi at last found the young Messiah, they fell on their faces and _____ Him
4. The Magi were convinced that the bright light in the sky was a sign of the Messiah's _____.
5. Secretly, the wicked King did not want to worship Jesus; he only wanted the wise men to discover where He was so he could have Jesus _____.
6. The Magi are also known as _____.
9. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your _____.





Elders

Class of 2025

Gary Baldwin
Pam Curtis
Howard Aulick

Class of 2026

Terri Effingham
Bob Hansen
Amy Browning

Class of 2027

Carla Lapelle
Jane Armstrong
Jim Lamp

Greefers

January 4

**Tim & Anna Laura
Dorey**

January 11

Jim & Pam Curtis

January 18

Missy Nash

January 25

Jim Cyrus

Staff

**Rev. Sharon Bell
Pastor**

**David Chenoweth
Choir Director**

**Jayne Birney
Office Manager**

**Sarah Specht
Director of Christian
Education**

**Alanna Cushing
Pianist & Organist**

**Vince McCormick
Sexton**

2814 Collis Avenue,
Huntington, WV 25702

Phone (304) 522-1676
Email office@highlawnpc.org
www.highlawnpc.org

Church Office Hours
Tuesday—Friday 9am—1pm