

Highlands United Presbyterian Mission Study



Highlands United Presbyterian Church
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Introduction

Highlands United Presbyterian church (Highlands or HUPC) is searching for a Pastor-Head of Staff to lead our congregation following the death of our pastor of 24 years. While we continue to grieve this loss, our congregation has shown great resiliency and hope in continuing to move forward in seeking God's call for our mission and ministry in Jacksonville's Arlington community.

The Mission Study Team has spent untold hours strategizing, planning and executing the steps necessary to complete this Mission Study Report. We would like to thank those members who participated by either attending Congregational Gathering Meetings, completing Demographic and Personal Belief Surveys, and for lifting our team and our work up in prayer. A special thanks goes out to the Presbytery of St. Augustine for their assistance in providing invaluable demographic and community data.

From March to April 2022, the Mission Study Team encouraged congregation members to share their personal perspectives about what they appreciate about Highlands, what their hopes are for our future, and their hopes for the type of pastor God is calling to ministry with us. A written survey was completed by 52 members (14% of members; 58% of our average 2022 worship attendance) and provided insight into what members view as our strengths versus areas for improvement, as well as information about our varied theological perspectives. Thirty-seven members participated in several small group gatherings. This represents about 10% of the congregational membership. The small group gathering participants tended to be older (75% were over the age of 65), long-time members (67% have been members for 20+

years) who are actively involved in congregational life and leadership (80% attend worship weekly and 76% are currently serving Elders and/or committee members). To gather perspectives from as many members as possible, the Mission Study Team also surveyed our children and youth to hear what they love most about their church and what they hope for in a new pastor.

Highlands' History

The first worship service was held on July 5, 1964 at Holly Oaks Community Club. Rev. Robert "Bob" Purrington was sent to Jacksonville by the United Presbyterian Church to begin a church as a response to many of their northern members making moves to the south. Highlands United Presbyterian Church was chartered during the worship service on April 11, 1965 with 64 charter members.

The Sanctuary at Highlands was dedicated on October 1, 1967. In January 1972, Highlands called its second pastor, Rev. Donald Roy Jones. Rev. Jones was followed shortly by Rev. Dr. Donald Harris in April 1980. The second building on campus was completed in May 1982 and provided a space for fellowship and learning. This building was later dedicated and named "Harris Hall" after Dr. Don.

In 1992, the campus was expanded again with the extension of the church office and the building of the Family Life Center. This addition allowed for growth in education ministries in the life of the church. In 1993, Highlands began our mid-week LOGOS ministry and expanded our existing Mother's Morning Out program into Highlands Precious Gifts Preschool.

The Rev. Dr. David Lee was called to Highlands in November 1996. Dr. Dave served HUPC for 24 years before he died of cancer on January 22, 2021. The ministries and missions of Highlands grew tremendously with his love. He is dearly missed.

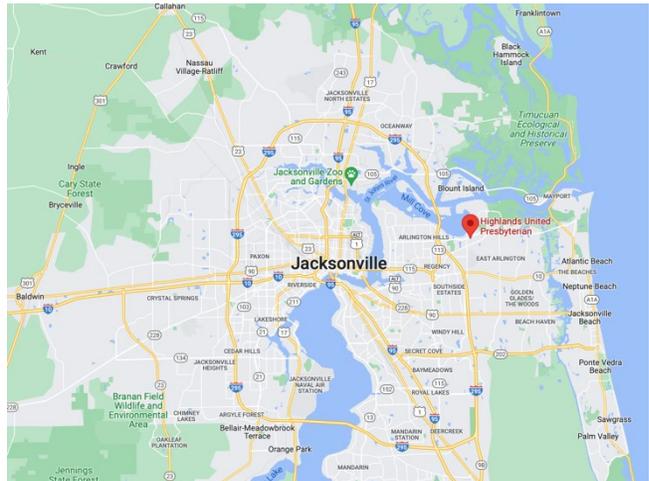
On November 28, 2021, The Rev. Beverly Dempsey began to serve Highlands as our Interim/Transitional Pastor. We look forward to experience what God has in store for us now!

For a detailed history of Highlands, read a "History of Highlands" written in celebration of our 50th Anniversary in 2015 (and updated in May 2022) see supporting data section.

Highlands Today

Our East Arlington Community

Highlands United Presbyterian Church is located in the “East Arlington” suburbs of the city of Jacksonville, Florida. Most members live within 5 miles of the church. East Arlington is a well-established area of Jacksonville that is bordered by the



St. Johns River to the north and the Intracoastal Waterway to the east. Highlands is located on the main throughfare through this neighborhood which links US-295 expressway to the Mayport Naval Station and Jacksonville’s beach communities.

Highlands is in an area with a slowly growing population that is largely reflective of the national ethnic mix. The average income and the average educational level of adults are relatively high. Employment is primarily white collar. There are greater percentages of women than men who are single, divorced, or widowed. The greatest population growth now and projected over the next 5 years are elementary aged school children and adults aged 55 and older. The percentage of single parent families (28% in 2021) is increasing in proportion to married families.

Religious preferences of those in the area were surveyed (including those currently in religious congregations and those that are not). The top eight ministry or program recommendations are ranked as follows:

- 1) Warm & friendly environment
- 2) Quality sermons

- 3) Opportunities to develop personal relationships
- 4) Opportunities for volunteering in the community
- 5) Holiday programs/activities
- 6) Traditional worship experiences (though Contemporary worship experiences were also highly rated)
- 7) Adult social activities
- 8) Involvement in social causes.

Of those not in religious congregations, the top reasons for not participating are a perception of church members being judgmental and having inflexible beliefs, distrust of religion, and an absence of faith. Of those currently participating in a religious congregation but considering not participating any longer, there were some of the same reasons but also a sense of not feeling welcomed, not having the desired children's/youth program and, most prominently, "moved from community".

Some of the prominent community needs identified that Highlands could consider in its future planning would include the following:

- Finding ways to identify and contact new residents about Highlands
- Maintaining/developing opportunities for small group fellowship, study and community engagement
- Maintaining intergenerational ministries and fellowship that provides support and community for all age groups, especially those groups that are growing within our neighborhood (adults over age 54, school-aged children, single-parent households)

- Reinvigorating successful youth/children’s programs and events
- Incorporating elements of contemporary worship in a primarily traditional worship service

Our Highlands Community

For over 57 years, Highlands has been an active “neighborhood church.” While our congregation tends to be older in age, we are a truly multi-generational church, with a few families representing 3 generations active in the church. Our largest group of members, as of 2021, was over 65, but both young adults (26 to 40) and empty nesters (56 to 65) were close behind. Our ministry programs tend to reflect this with LOGOS and Presbyterian Youth Connection for youth and their families, and various small groups for retirees and others (such as Presbyterian Women, lunch groups, and a long running adult Sunday school class). Highlands is also home to the vibrant and energetic Highlands Precious Gifts Preschool (HPGP). HPGP offers options for both part-time and full-time care and education for children from toddlers to PreK.

Our membership, budget, and attendance levels remained stable in the five years preceding 2020. Like many other congregations, our congregation experienced a slight decline in membership and worship attendance as we transitioned into remote worship and dealt with the changing dynamics of the pandemic. Our local community has seen an increase in the number and prominence of non-denominational evangelical “megachurches” over the past decade. Like many other mainline denominations, Highlands has experienced a slight shift in our attendance due to differing worship styles, as well as our decision to remain more conservative in our handling of the pandemic.

When asked how they would describe Highlands to others, it was clear that Highlands is a family of the faithful of all ages. We are involved in each other's lives and invite visitors with open arms - we believe you can come as you are, and we are happy to have you in us in worship and fellowship. Many of our programs reflect an intergenerational, extended family theme with our longest running LOGOS ministry at the forefront but not to overshadow our mission ministries that also bring together all ages for a single purpose.

Highlands is a mission-oriented church. Though we are a small church, we have a "big church feel" with a variety of mission and ministry opportunities to offer. From local neighborhood missions such as our support of Arlington Community Services (a food pantry), Family Promise (an organization that partners with local congregations to supports homeless families) and Micah's Backpack (a mission to feed local children over the weekends) to our partnership with the Grace of Mercy Orphanage in Haiti and our participation in wider missions such as PCUSA Special Offerings and the Crop Walk, we have many ways that our members can and do serve. Whether it is through financial support, sweat equity, or donating much needed items to various causes, we are blessed to find ourselves a giving and compassionate congregation.

What our members pride most are having one youth led service a month, the large number of missions given our size, our LOGOS ministry, and the ability to rise to the challenge of coping with the pandemic. Often mentioned by members are our qualities of cohesiveness, resiliency, and strong leadership.

Highlands Ministry and Mission

Highlands is, historically, a busy congregation involved in various ministries and missions. In general, these fall into the categories of fellowship, nurture, and mission.

While Highlands' fellowship often centers around food, the heart of our fellowship is in building relationships. Following Sunday worship, all are invited to gather in the Family Life Center's Dining Hall to enjoy a cookie, drink, and conversation. We love a good potluck and host several special congregational meals throughout the year, such as our Low Country Boil, Pig Roast, and Chili Cook Off. Often times, food is used as a ministry of comfort to those that are ill, grieving, or in need of extra support during difficult seasons of life. Highlands has a strong gift for feeding others.

Children and youth are a vital part of our church family at Highlands. With each baptism, our congregation promises to walk alongside parents as they work together in the Christian Nurture of that child. From the earliest ages, our children are invited and welcomed into worship and to be full participants in the life of the church.

Our ministry to children starts with the nurture of our youngest members in the Nursery. Childcare for ages 8 weeks through age 3 is available on Sunday mornings during Sunday School and worship, as well as during most other special worship services or church events. We encourage our children ages 4 and older to remain with their parents during Sunday worship as they are important members of our church community and a vital part of our glorifying God together. On Sneaker Sundays, our children and youth play an active role in leading worship for our congregation.

Sunday School is a wonderful time for all ages to learn about God's love at Highlands. Prior to Covid and the death of our Pastor, our youngest children were lead

in Bible stories and songs during their time in the nursery. Our elementary-aged children were engaged in play-based learning as they build their Biblical literacy. Our middle and high school age youth were diving deeper into our Biblical Ancestors of the Old and New Testament through engaging videos and discussion. Our adults are currently using the Present Word curriculum in a hybrid format to involve both those on-campus, as well as members that are unable to join us in-person.

LOGOS has been a source of pride to Highlands' members from 1993 to 2020. This intergenerational ministry typically meets on Wednesday afternoons from September through May. Children and youth experience what it means to live as a child of God and to develop relationships with Christian adults. LOGOS is filled with fun and fellowship through Bible study, music, and play. We are eager to rebuild our Christian nurture programs for youth and families.

While our youth are encouraged to fully participate in every aspect of church life, we understand the value of same-age peer groups in faith development. Presbyterian Youth Connection (PYC) provides an opportunity for our youth to be nurtured through study, fellowship, and mission. While we are working to reinvigorate our PYC ministry after Covid, our youth have historically met together several times during the month on Sunday evenings for study and play. They have joyfully hosted many mission events such as Trick-or-Treating for Canned Goods, Souper Bowl of Caring, and providing Thanksgiving Food Baskets in conjunction with our local food bank. Our youth have been involved in leadership opportunities within our congregation and presbytery, often serving as elders and attending local and national retreats. It is our great hope that our high school youth will be able to return "up the mountain" to Montreat in the coming years.

Putting God's love into action is central to our ministries at Highlands. We are actively involved in serving our community beyond our campus. One of our longest running missions is our participation in Family Promise of Jacksonville. Family Promise is a non-profit, interfaith hospitality network providing shelter, meals, hospitality, and case management for families experiencing homelessness. Highlands has been a part of this ministry since its inception in 2006. One of our more recent additions to our missions is Micah's Backpack, which is a community-based, grass-roots organization that works to feed food-insecure children on the weekend. Highlands provides storage space, volunteers, and funds to help sustain this ministry. Additionally, Highlands mentors other churches to help foster the program's expansion into other parts of the community. Highlands is also proud to participate in the Two Cents a Meal Offering, which supports our presbytery's Mutual Mission ministries, Meals-on-Wheels, Arlington Community Services (our local food bank), and many others.

Our church has a number of choirs (adult, hand bell, youth) and music groups (children, preschool). Member care is supported by a Shepherding program, prayer ministry and lunch/supper clubs. Women's groups in addition to providing support and fellowship have raised significant funds for church facilities/programs and community needs.

Highlands offers many opportunities for our members to care for themselves, our members, and our community. As it was said during our congregational gatherings, we "have a small church feel with big church offerings."

Highlands Financial Summary

On balance the Church's financial condition is sound and well supported, both operationally and in mission, by a generous congregation. The following discussion points will help to support this conclusion:

- Over the last 5 years the Church's **Operational Revenue** has averaged \$314K/YR, and except for 2021 the Church has operated at or near breakeven each year. In 2021 the Church was without a full-time minister for most of the year, and without a full time DCE for 4 months. Because of this the Church spent less on payroll costs and experienced a positive income after operating costs of \$59K. For 2022 the Session has approved a fiscal plan with revenues of \$348K which includes a "faith revenue" line item of \$12K, and once again a breakeven budget position is projected for the year.
- The **Church 2022 stewardship drive** yielded a revenue budget of \$318K from 81 pledges and traditional givers, for an **average of nearly \$4K per giving unit**. This represents about one half of our total 161 Church households making regular contributions to the Church.
- As further evidence of a generous congregation, 2021 **Mission Giving** to over 15 local and national programs totaled \$70K. These contributions **are not** included in operational revenue and expense, but if the mission outlays were included they would represent **22% of revenue** for mission programs.

- Through **March 31, 2022** the Church received \$83K in revenue and reported a net ordinary income of \$13K.
- Our **Balance Sheet** is strong with a **cash and investments of \$328K** as of 3/31/2022. Of this amount, \$236K are earmarked for designated reserve funds and programs, leaving \$92K unrestricted for Church operations. However, there are Memorial and Bequests (included in the \$236K) of \$83K which are not currently designated for any Church purpose, accordingly, the actual availability of **unrestricted reserve funds** for the Church **could be reflected at a level of \$176K**. The only other significant assets are **Land, Buildings, and Equipment which exceed \$2.0M in insured value** which will be free of any related debt after we retire the remaining \$6K in loan principal (of an original 10yr \$180K improvements loan) by mid-year 2022.
- There are **no other capital fund programs** in place currently.
- Finally, other than bills due in the normal course, there are **no other debt obligations** of the Church.
- The **Highlands Precious Gifts Preschool** is a vital and solvent ministry of Highlands. The school is a year-round program, and enjoys full enrollment with a waiting list in place.
- Our Financial Operating reports display Church spending in support of Programs in Christian Nurture (Logos, Sunday School, and Youth Program), Mission, Membership Development, and Worship and Music, as well as Administration and Payroll related costs.

Discerning the Path Ahead

What is God calling us to be?

Highlands finds itself in a particular moment of transition and opportunity following the pandemic and sudden death of our long-time pastor. While it is not an easy road to travel, we have been called to higher levels of trust and faith in God's plans and purpose for our worship and ministries to each other and our community. While we celebrate our deep history of vibrant worship, engaging ministry programs, and generous care for others, we also acknowledge that this season of transition offers opportunities for us to work with God to "make all things new."

The overarching premise of our future desires for Highlands is that we want to be the "Heart of Arlington". We recognize and celebrate that we are a neighborhood church. Our members predominantly live in the zip code surround our church campus and adjacent zip codes. We want to embrace that and be a hub for the community around us. Our congregation recognizes that explicit evangelism is not one our strongest traits. However, we believe that small steps can be taken to create organic forms of evangelism within our community. A simple, clear "tag line" to describe our congregation and our theology would make a great way for all members to share a bit about our church. We would like to strengthen the ties with our fabulous preschool and recognize and celebrate it as a true community beacon. Micah's Backpack is perhaps our largest and most visible mission, bringing us into multiple area schools on a weekly basis; continuing our support for this mission and looking for new ways to share information about the church through their work would likely be a successful method of community engagement. Another possible opportunity for community engagement is to

open our beautiful campus to more community groups by expanding our current missions to include things such as a community pantry or blessing closet for groups like Family Promise or local schools.

The Book of Order reminds us that “the worship of the triune God is the center of our common life and our primary way of witness to the faith, hope, and love we have in Jesus Christ. (W-1.0107). As such, we celebrate our resiliency in continuing meaningful, thoughtful, and gracious worship over the past few years. Through the dedication of church staff, amazing volunteers, and generous Presbytery members, Highlands was able to continue to glorify God through our worship while strictly online. We continue to be thankful that our forced use of technology has become a welcomed addition to our worship that allows us to reach members locally that are unable to be with us in-person, as well as members that have moved and still want to be a part of our faith community. As we move forward, we are open to new ways of tweaking our worship to meet the changing needs of our members and community. A common theme in our discussions was a desire to enlivening the music, while also keeping to more traditional styles (hymns vs. contemporary recordings, for example). We are also excited for the return of our monthly student-led worship services. For nearly 25 years, our youth have been encouraged to participate in worship through leading the liturgy, sharing special music, and, occasionally, giving a sermon.

Many years ago, the church was gifted with beautiful banners that depict the Great Ends of the Church. These banners adorn the back wall of our Sanctuary surrounding our cross. It was evident in the conversations with the congregation that we have a strong desire to continue to live up to these goals, giving particular care to “the shelter, nurture,

and spiritual fellowship of the children of God” and “the promotion of social righteousness.” We hope that by returning to a more “normal” offering of programs and missions that is intentional in creating community relationships, we may be able to both encourage a return of some of our current families that have “fallen out of practice” in attendance, as well as new families in our community. Because we have such a diverse demographic in regard to age and needs, being willing to incorporate updated ways to communicate, gathering, and give will be critical in growing in the coming years.

“Members perceive fellowship, missions, commitment to Christ and stewardship as the strongest aspects at Highlands that should be maintained and even strengthened” and “Theological views largely correspond to the mainstream Protestant views for today’s world. We are neither non-traditional nor “fundamentalist”. Communication of our theological stance may address community concerns of church ‘being judgmental’ and ‘inflexible in our beliefs’ “.

EMPHASES FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS AT HIGHLANDS

- Increase membership—especially younger persons and families
- Strengthen pastoral care
- Focus locally on missions
- Engage all demographics in worship and fellowship groups
- Incorporate more variety in worship and music
- Enhance technology for worship, evangelism and communication
- Incorporate elements of contemporary worship into the traditional worship service
- Use fully both traditional and modern means of communication
- Focus on Highlands being the “Heart of Arlington”
- Be aware and adapt to changes in society
- Develop small mid-week groups for support and study (such as parenting group, young adults, seniors)
- Find ways to support/increase participation of “empty nest” parents and retiring members

Gifts of the New Pastor

Our surveys and congregational gatherings revealed several areas of importance in the gifts and skills of our new pastor. These include quality of sermons, a collaborative leadership style, and an ability to build relationships through active participation.

Having been under the care of numerous pastors over our two-year transition, we have been able to discern the general style of sermons that is favored. Sermons that follow the Revised Common Lectionary and adhere to reformed theology are preferred. Sermons that are engaging and help tie the lectionary to our day-to-day realities, delivered with energy and thought are welcomed by our congregation. We don't mind, and some actively seek, being challenged by new or different ideas or perspectives, but need challenging messages delivered with love and compassion.

Highlands would benefit from someone who is collaborative, with both colleagues and the congregation. Our next pastor should be visionary and able to see the larger picture, tying back into our goal of being the "Heart of Arlington", and use that picture to encourage committee work amongst all members. We appreciate a leader that supports shared leadership within the PC(USA) structure of governance, listens to and considers the ideas of others, and is able to prioritize the needs and desires of various groups within the congregation.

We need a pastor who is committed to building relationships within our congregation, our wider PCUSA community, and our local community. Our pastor should be skilled in providing pastoral care and supporting lay leaders in sharing that task. We hope that our next pastor will be an active participant in the life of the church – engaging and building relationships through formal and informal educational ministries,

joining in fellowship activities, and sharing in mission. We need someone who, like in decades past, champions our youth and children through ministry and active participation in their activities and groups. We strongly encourage participation in leadership within our Presbytery and nationally when the opportunity arises. Our local Arlington community has a long tradition of support and collaboration among neighborhood churches, and we hope that our new pastor will continue to participate in the Arlington Ministerial Fellowship group. Because our preschool is our closest link to our neighborhood families, we would like our new pastor to attend various preschool activities throughout the year (i.e. Easter parade, graduation, Christmas program, etc.) to open events in prayer and invite families to worship. The ability to discern which activities, meetings, tasks should be prioritized will be an important skill in our new pastor.

In conclusion, Highlands has been a vibrant, healthy neighborhood church for over 50 years, and we are eager to reinvigorate our church family with the loving guidance of a new Pastor. The past two years have seen significant challenges for our congregation but we have persevered due to our strong faith in Christ and each other. We are mission-oriented, youth-loving, multi-generational church aiming to be the Heart of Arlington with an energetic, collaborative, and visionary Pastor at the helm to help us steer.

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you" Isaiah 43: 2

Respectfully submitted by the Mission Study Team:

Dennis Kleppen - Chair

Audrey Regnier

Laura Sambito

Richard Marsh

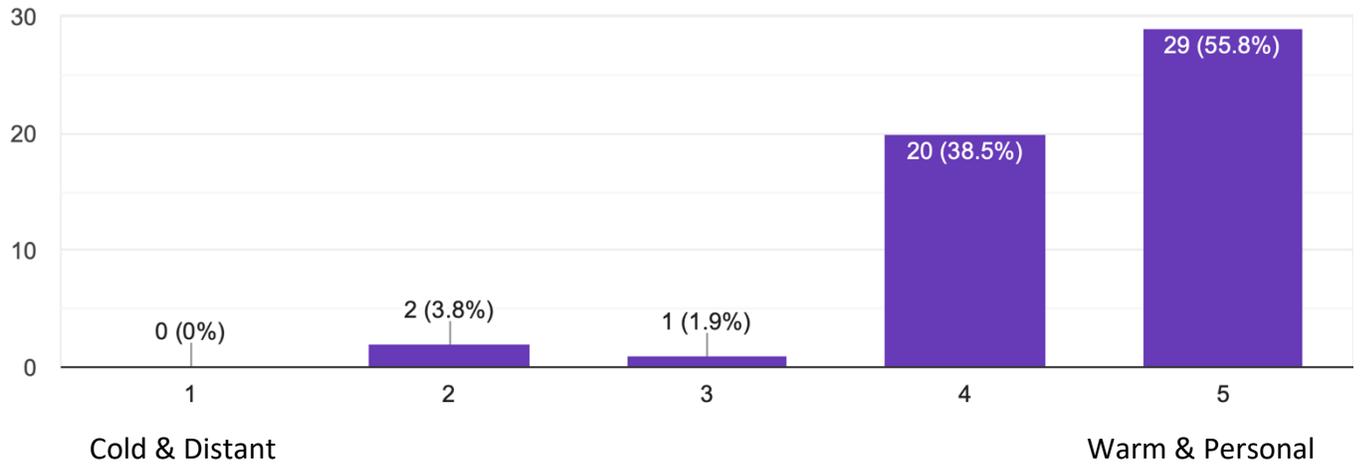
Anneliese Robbins

John Morrison

Highlands Mission Study Survey

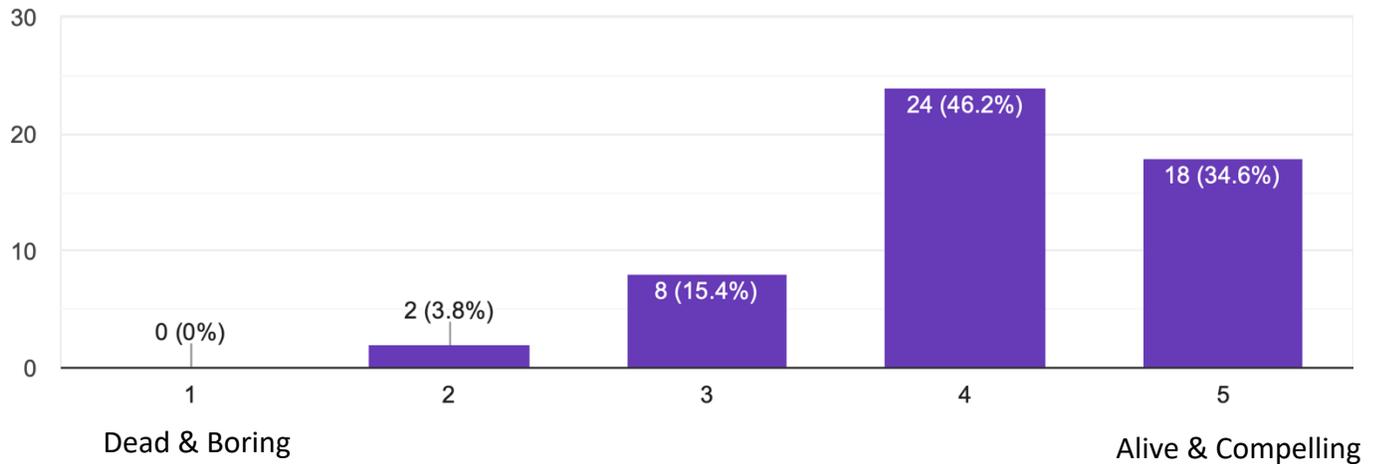
In terms of fellowship, I see my church as:

52 responses



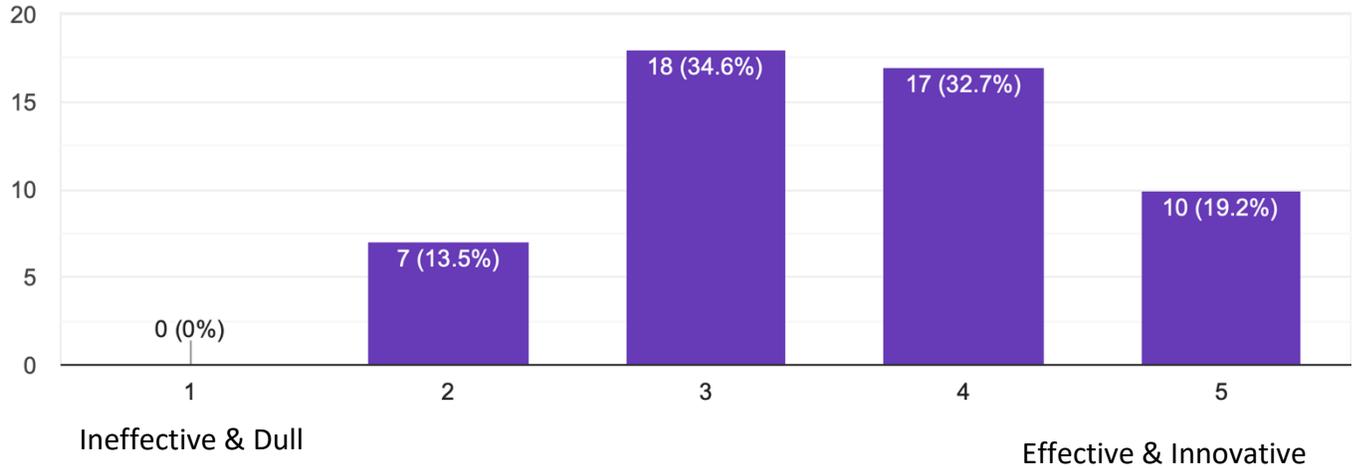
In terms of worship, I see my church as:

52 responses



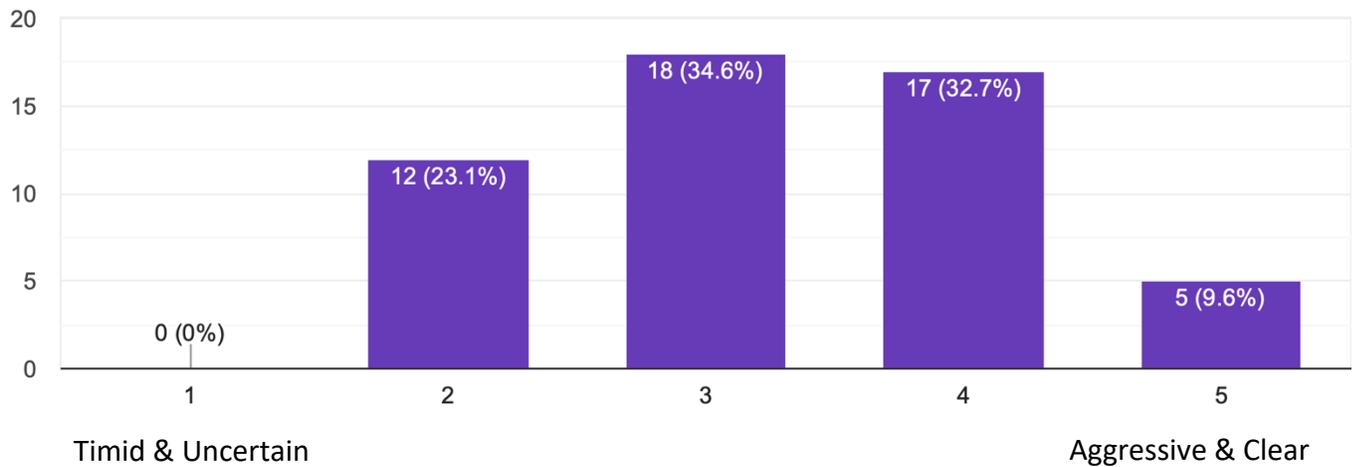
In terms of its program of Christian Education, I see my church as:

52 responses



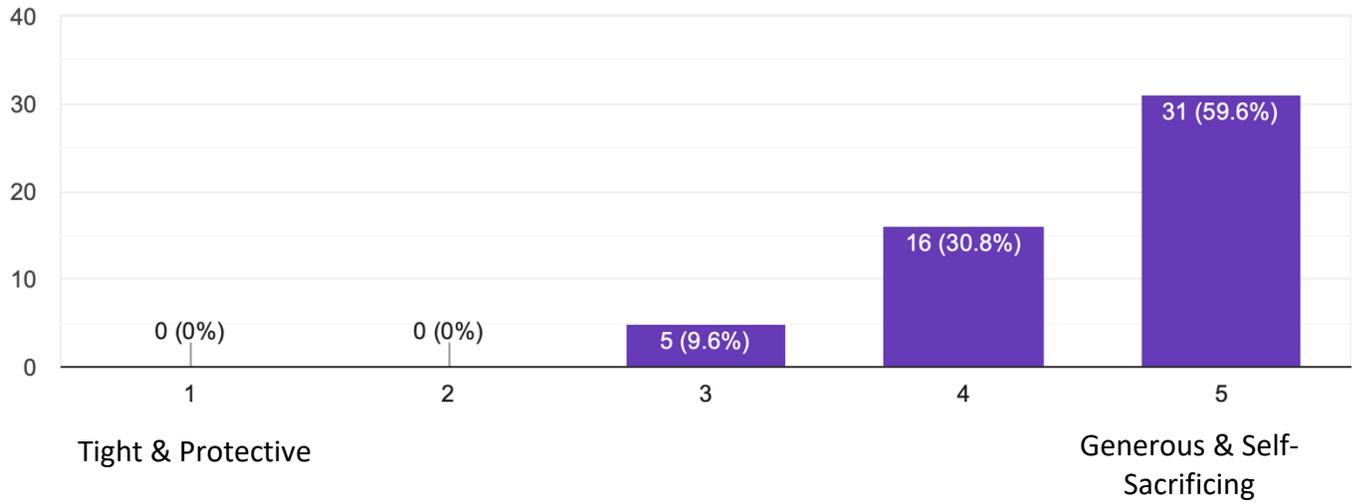
In terms of its evangelism, I see my church as:

52 responses



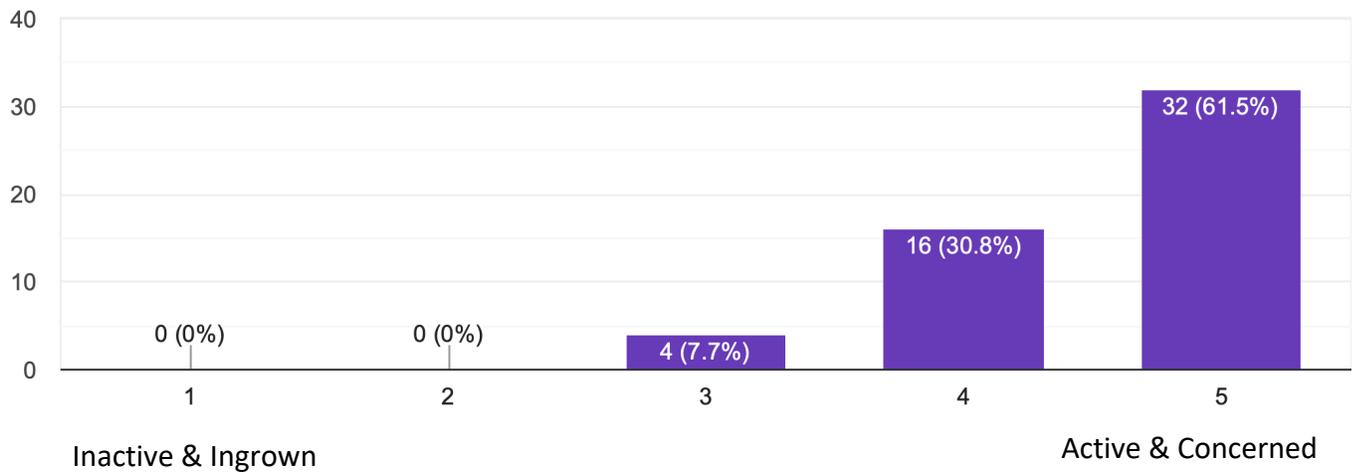
In terms of stewardship, I see my church as:

52 responses



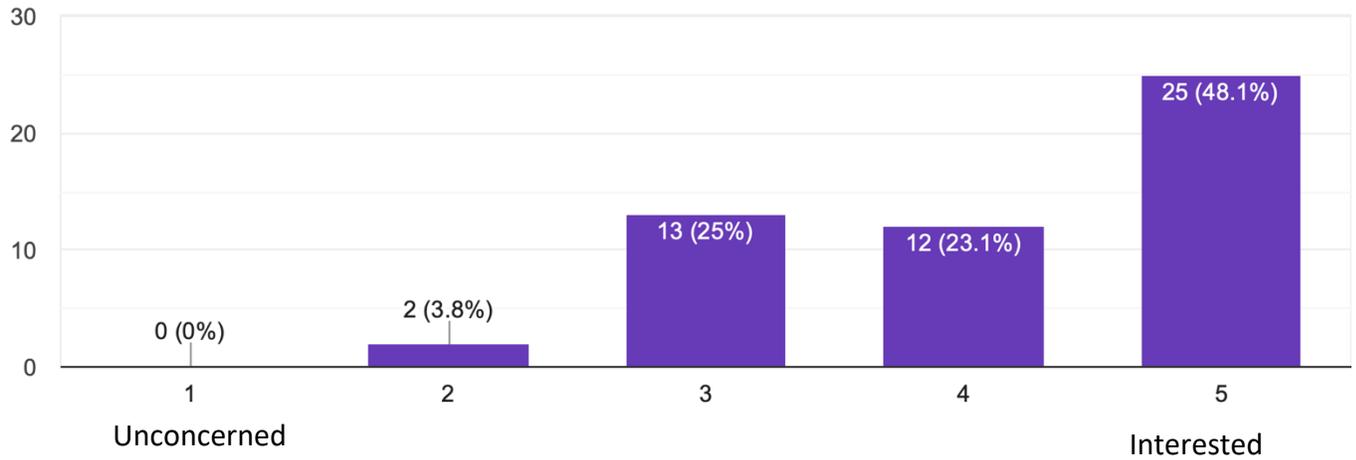
In terms of its service to others in the community, I see my church as:

52 responses



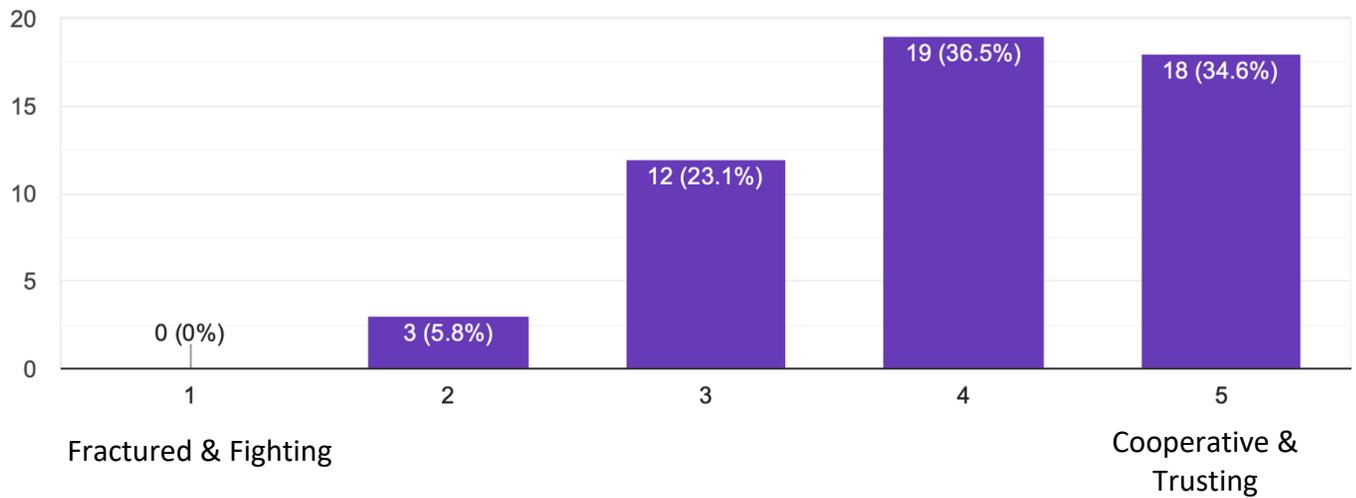
In terms of its emphasis on youth needs, I see my church as:

52 responses



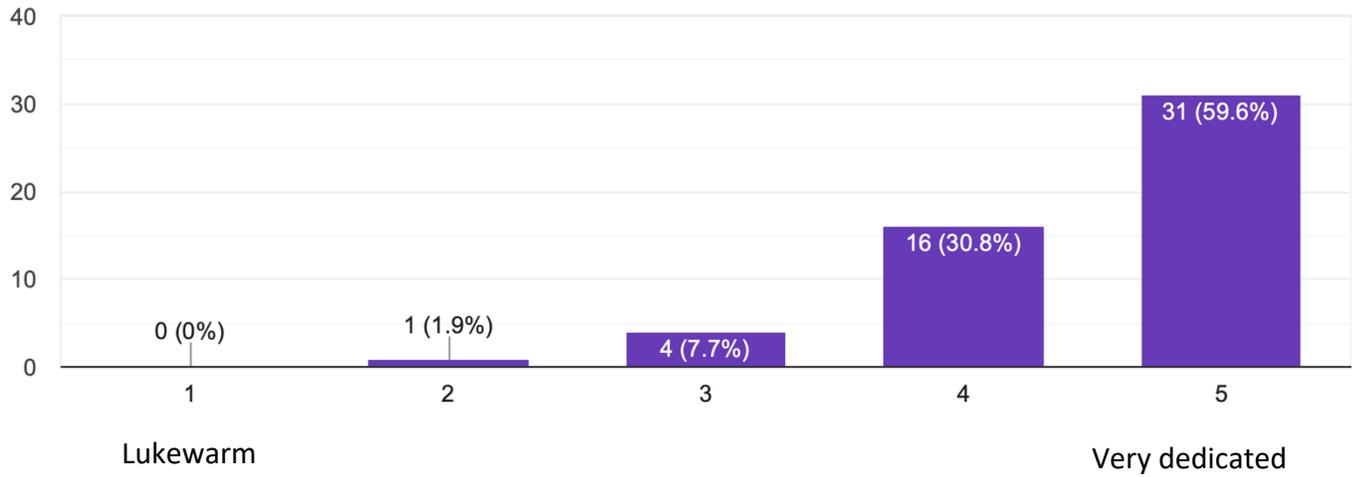
In terms of its unity, I see my church as:

52 responses



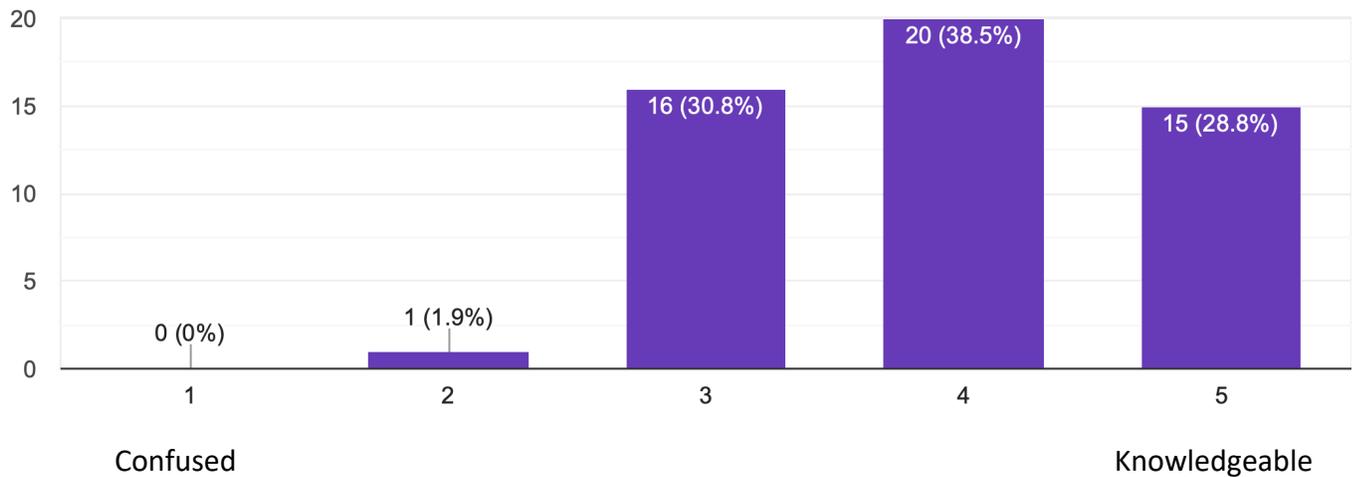
In terms of its commitment to Christ, I see my church as:

52 responses



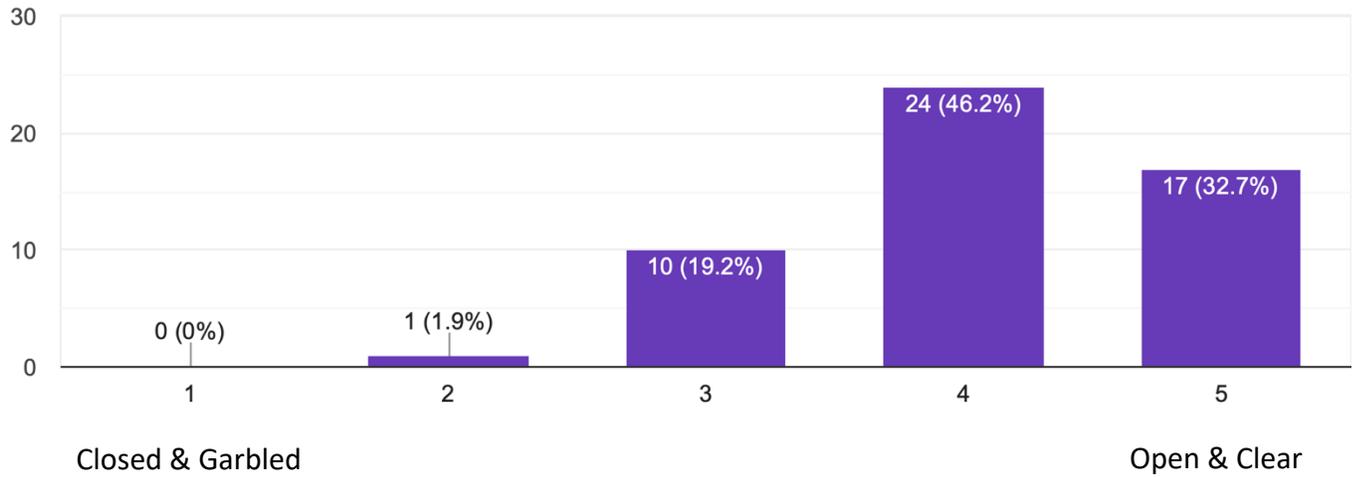
In terms of its knowledge of the Bible and Reformed faith, I see my church as:

52 responses



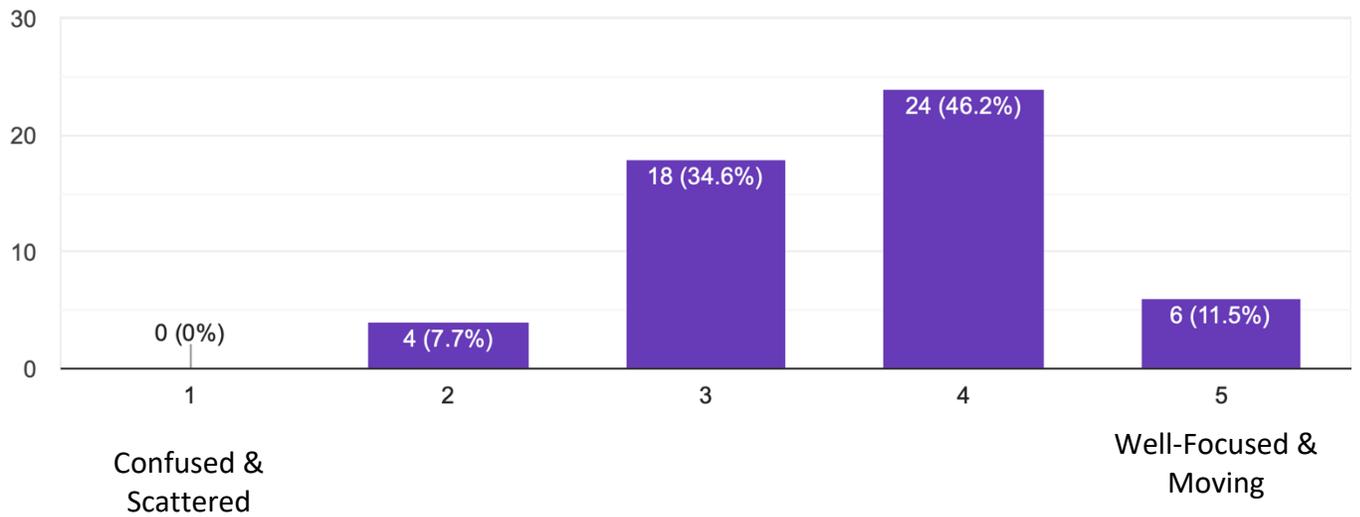
In terms of communication with/among itself, I see my church as:

52 responses



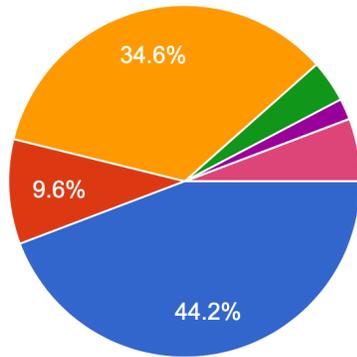
In terms of having clear goals, I see my church as:

52 responses



"Faith" has held many different meanings for people. Which statement comes closest to your view of faith?

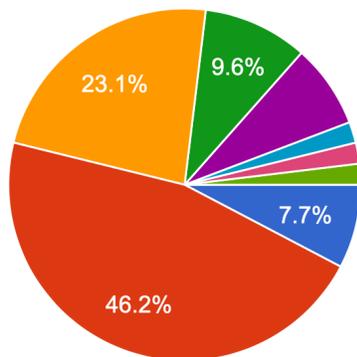
52 responses



1. A life of commitment to God, demonstrated by trying to do what is right.
2. A decision to accept Christ, instead of continuing in one's own sinful ways.
3. A trust in God's grace.
4. A belief in all that the Bible says.
5. As long as people are sincere in their beliefs, they show faith.
6. The idea of faith does not seem meaningful to me.
7. I am not sure although I am convinced that faith is important.

Which statement comes closest to your view of the way in which God influences what happens in the world?

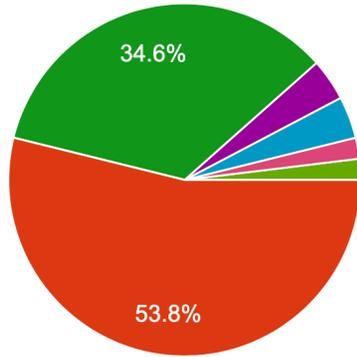
52 responses



1. God sets history in motion but does not interfere with it anymore.
2. God influences individuals who then shape events.
3. God influences individuals but also shapes events directly through nations and social affairs.
4. I do not think of God as "influencing" the things that happen.
5. I am not sure, because I have not thought about it before.
Other: There is a plan.
Other: God knows what will happen; gives us freewill
Other: God allows things to happen and gives people freedom to choose how they react and deal with the world.

People often wonder how a merciful God allows terrible things to happen, such as the killing of six million Jews during World War II or the destruction of 9/11. Which response comes closest to your view of how God lets these things happen?

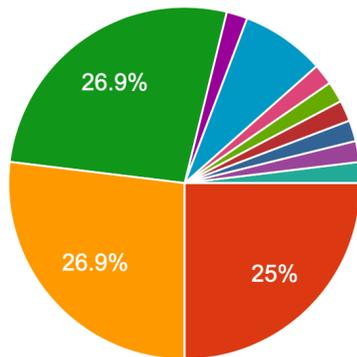
52 responses



1. God allows terrible things to happen in order to punish people for their sins.
2. We do not know why these things happen, but God is able to use them for good.
3. God does not have anything to do with these things; the devil causes them.
4. People cause these things to happen, not God.
5. I do not know how God can allow these things to happen; it does not seem right.
6. I am not sure about this topic.
Other: all of the above
Other: Bad things happen because of people and God helps people to God from them.

Which statement comes closest to your view of life after death?

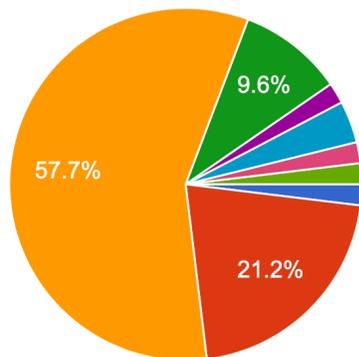
52 responses



1. There is no life after death.
2. There must be something after death, but I have no idea what it may be like.
3. There is life after death, but not punishment.
4. There is life after death, with rewards for some people and punishment for others.
5. The notion of reincarnation expresses my view of what happens to people after death.
6. I am not sure whether or not there is life after death.
Other: wages of sin but we have life everlasting with God in the knowledge that Jesus Christ died for us and saved us with his blood
Other: I have questions.
Other: There is life after death and God invites us to believe in Him and to live with Him forever.
Other: There is life after death and we feel the pain we've inflicted on others which is punishment enough.
Heaven exists and all are welcomed by God, whose son (Jesus) did atone for all our sins.
Other: Life after death with continued growth for most people but not all people.

Which statement comes closest to your view of the Bible?

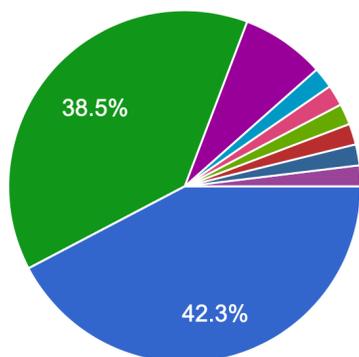
52 responses



1. The Bible, though written by individuals, has been so controlled by the Holy Spirit that it is without error in all it teaches in matter of science and history as well as in matters of theology.
2. The Bible, though written by individuals and reflecting their personalities, has been so controlled by the Holy Spirit that it is trustworthy in matters of theology and ethics, but not necessarily in matters of science and history.
3. All of the Bible is both the inspired word of God and at the same time a thoroughly human document.
4. Portions of the Bible, including some of its theological and ethical positions, may not be the inspired word of God.
5. The Bible is merely a record of the moral and religious experiences of Hebrews and Christians.
6. I am not sure that I can say.
Other: The English Bible was translated from Latin into German, into Elizabethan English; I think we need to return to the ancient scrolls and tablets in order to interpret what God is saying to us in Modern Day English.
Other: Bible is the inspired written word of God.

Which statement comes closest to your view of people in other countries who have never heard about Christ?

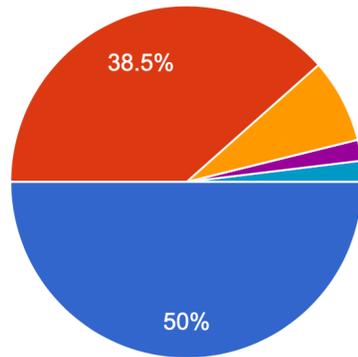
52 responses



1. I desire to share the love of Christ with them.
2. If we do no preach Christ to them, then they will be damned forever.
3. We should not worry about them, because so many people in this country have not heard about Christ.
4. We should respect their religions and stop trying to impose Christianity upon them.
5. I am not sure, because I have not considered it.
Other: that all will receive an opportunity to receive Christ
Other: Live the Christian life and the Holy Spirit will lead people to Christ
Other: How can unknowing people be held accountable for what they don't know?
Other: We should share the love of Christ, but respect that others have different beliefs.
Other: We need to preach to them but they will not be damned forever. If they never "knew" Christ/about Christ, they should never be damned.
Other: God covers all.

Christians sometimes describe God as a “God of Justice” or a God who commands us to bring about justice. Which statement comes closest to your view of what this means?

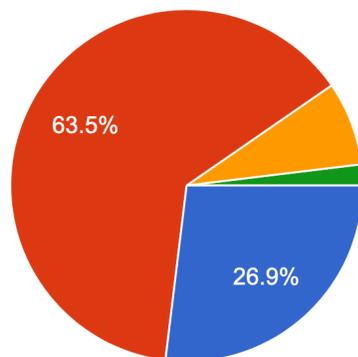
52 responses



1. The Church should work for justice and support groups that are working to end inequality and oppression.
2. At a personal level, I should try to be just and fair in all of my dealings.
3. This is a spiritual term that refers to God’s punishing evil, rather than to activities of the church or individuals.
4. The concept of God’s justice does not hold meaning for me.
5. I am not sure to what it refers.
Other: Personally and collectively, God calls us participate in and promote justice.

How well do you understand the mission of Highlands Presbyterian Church?

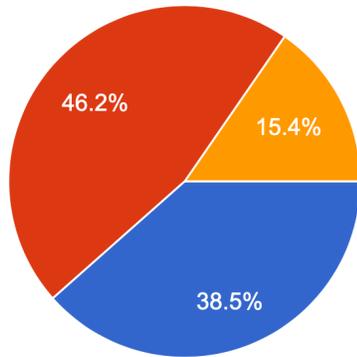
52 responses



- 1. I feel a deep connection with it.
- 2. I relate to it well enough.
- 3. I don't feel connected with it.
- 4. I don't understand what the mission is.

Do you leave services feeling spiritually fed?

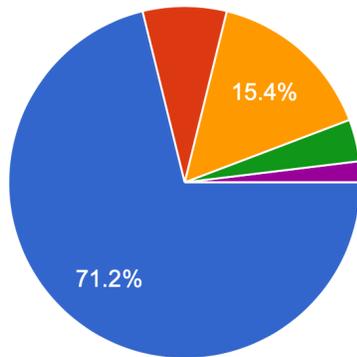
52 responses



- 1. Yes. The sermons fill me spiritually.
- 2. Often. I know the pastor has my best interest at heart.
- 3. Sometimes. I feel the sermons aren't as relevant to me as they could be.
- 4. Rarely. I'm feeling disconnected with the sermons for personal reasons.
- 5. I'm feeling disconnected because of the doctrine being taught.

Do you feel the church is sensitive to the major needs of congregants?

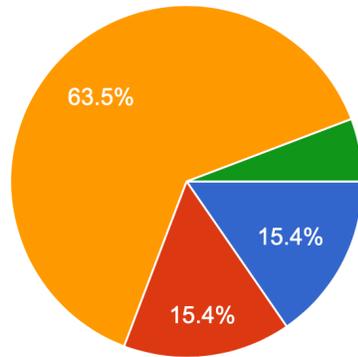
52 responses



- 1. Yes. I've seen the church help people with real needs.
- 2. Yes. I've been the recipient of help from the church when I needed it.
- 3. I've heard the pastor express a desire to help congregants.
- 4. I'm unsure.
- 5. No. I've experienced a major need, or seen others with needs, and felt that nobody noticed.

Does the worship music at Highlands Presbyterian Church resonate with you?

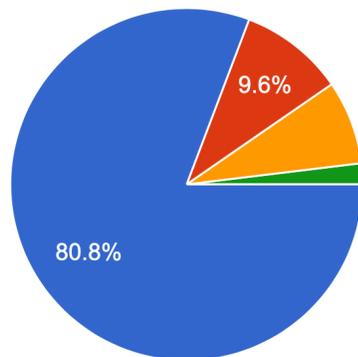
52 responses



- 1. Yes. The music helps me feel a deeper connection to God.
- 2. Yes. It helps me feel more self-reflection.
- 3. Sometimes.
- 4. I don't feel a connection to the worship music.

Do you feel Highlands Presbyterian Church spends money in a way that aligns with its mission?

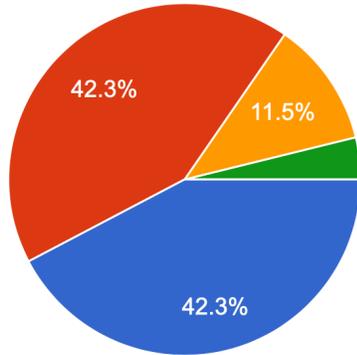
52 responses



- 1. Yes. I feel they're spending on things that really matter.
- 2. I feel they could be more careful in their spending.
- 3. I don't know where they're spending, and would like to understand it so I can feel engaged in the initiatives.
- 4. I don't believe church spending is something I need to be concerned with.

Do you feel engaged in Highlands Presbyterian Church?

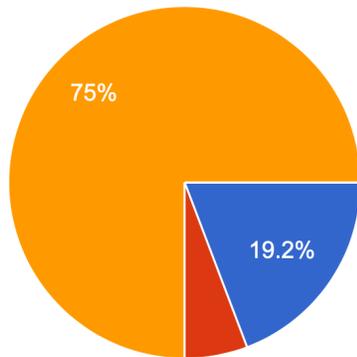
52 responses



- 1. Yes. I feel very engaged in the church, its mission, and initiatives.
- 2. Yes. I feel engaged in the church.
- 3. I enjoy being in the church, but don't take an active role.
- 4. I feel I'm sometimes watching from the sidelines.
- 5. I don't feel engaged.

Do you feel welcomed at Highlands Presbyterian Church?

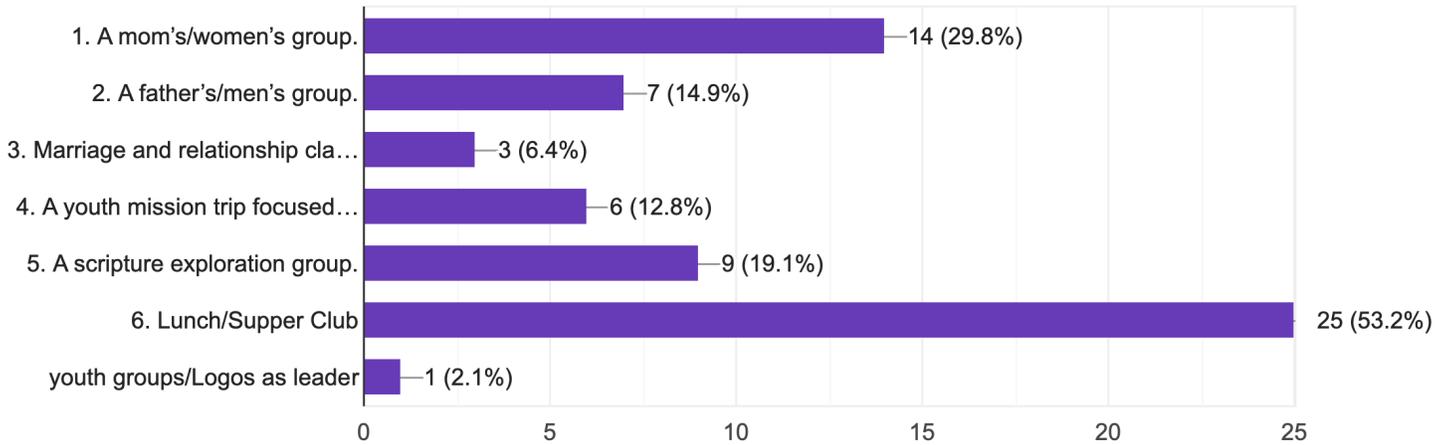
52 responses



- 1. Yes. The pastor makes me feel welcomed.
- 2. Yes. The other congregants make me feel welcomed.
- 3. Yes. Both the pastor and other congregants made me feel welcomed.
- 4. I don't feel welcomed.

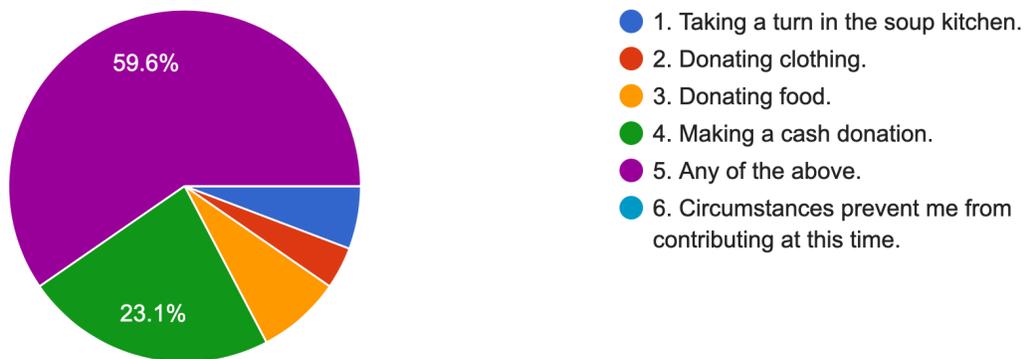
We're planning to implement several small groups, programs, or events in the next six months, and want to get a count of possible participants. Of the following, which would you most likely attend?

47 responses



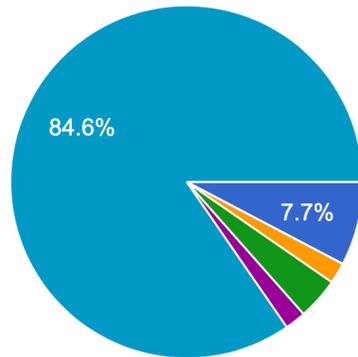
POLL: We have the opportunity to help individuals in a local shelter this winter, but need more resources to make the biggest impact on their lives. Which way would you be most able to contribute?

52 responses



If you started attending Highlands Presbyterian Church in the past 5 years, what's mainly responsible for bringing you through the doors for the first time?

52 responses

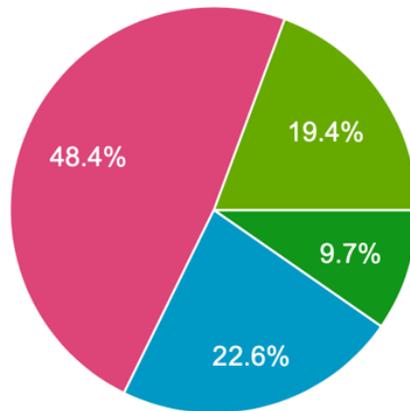


- 1. A friend or family member.
- 2. Posts or ads on social media.
- 3. A special event or program.
- 4. I saw the building and was curious.
- 5. An online search.
- 6. I've been attending longer than 5 years.

Demographics of Congregational Gathering Participants

Age Range

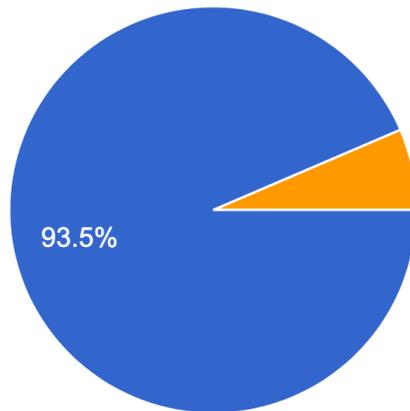
31 responses



- Under 18
- 18 to 25
- 26 to 35
- 36 to 45
- 46 to 55
- 56 to 65
- 66 to 75
- Over 75

Marital Status

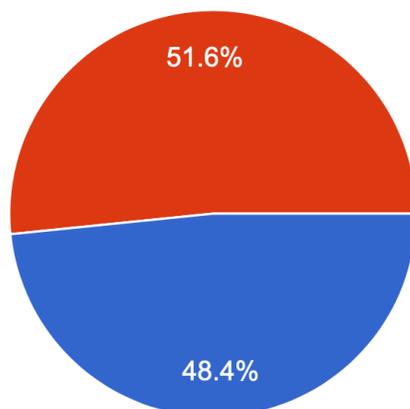
31 responses



- Married
- Widowed
- Divorced/Separated
- Single

Gender

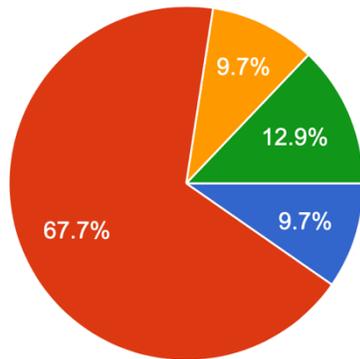
31 responses



- Male
- Female

Family/Children

31 responses



- Minor Children
- Adult Children
- No Children
- Grandchildren live with/worship with you

Ages of Children at home (by household):

3, 7, 11

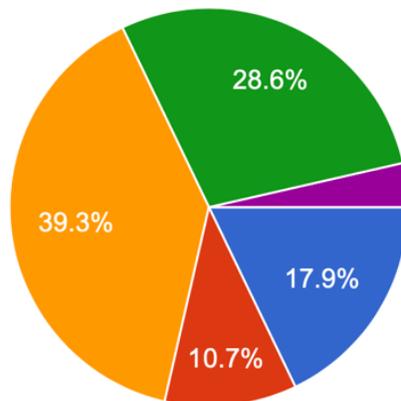
5

4, 7

8, 11

Education Background

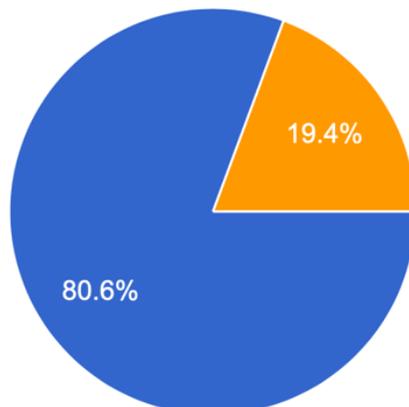
28 responses



- High School Diploma/GED
- Associate Degree
- Bachelor Degree
- Master Degree
- Doctoral Degree

Military Service

31 responses



- None
- Active Duty
- Veteran

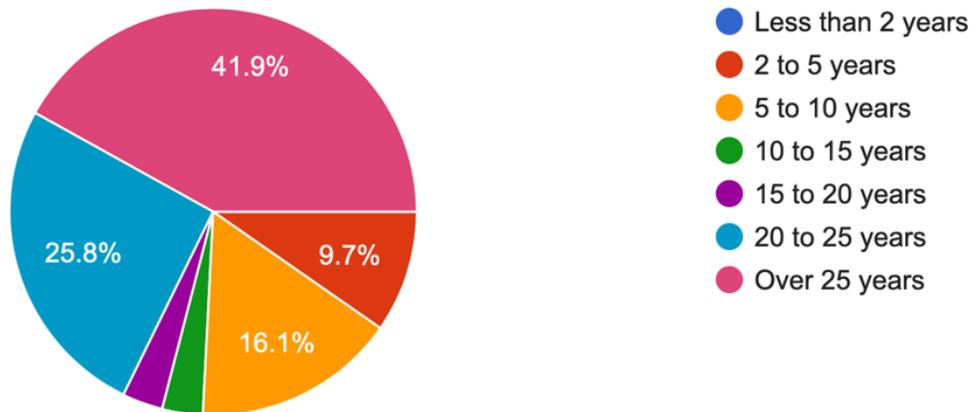
Branches of Military represented:

Army – 1

Navy – 5

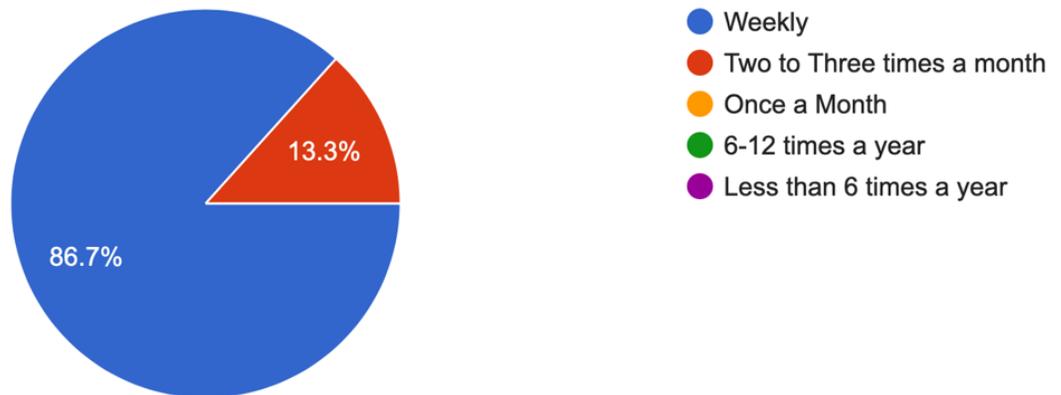
Length of Membership at Highlands

31 responses



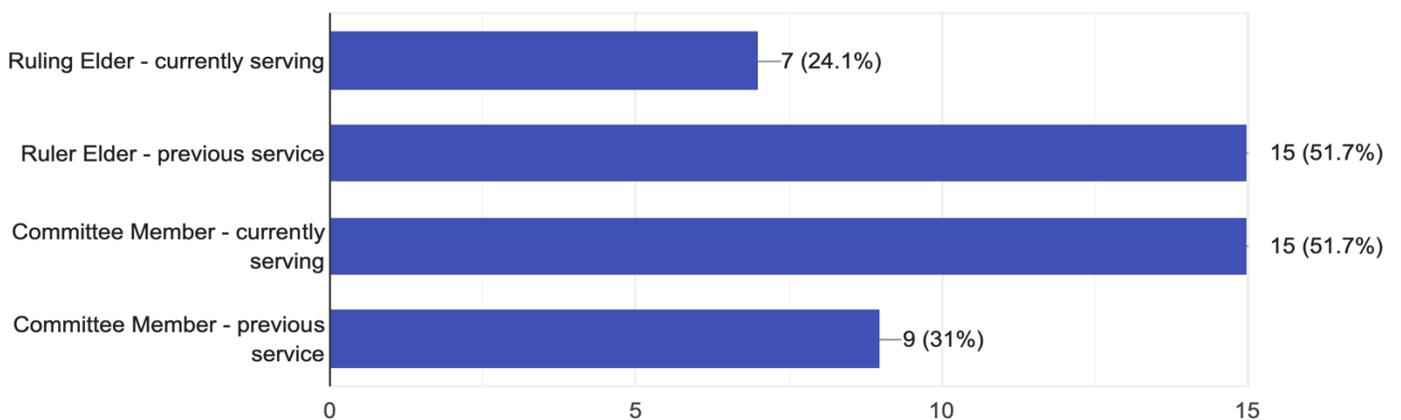
Worship Attendance

30 responses



Church Leadership History

29 responses



The ExecutiveInsite Report

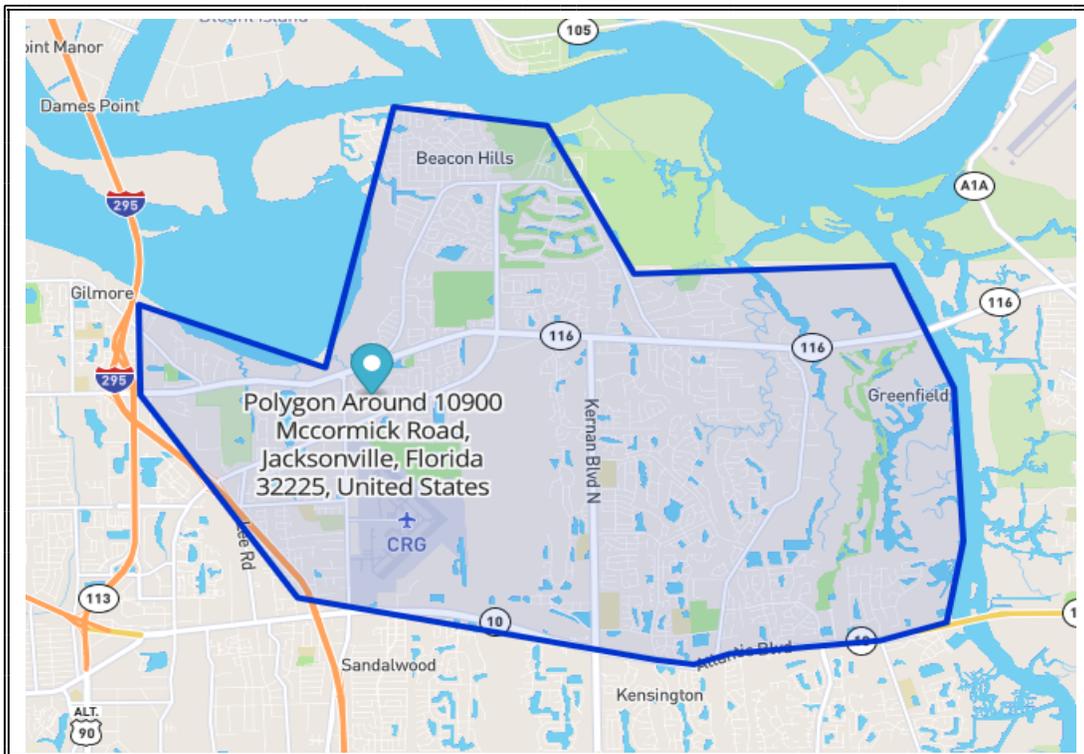
Prepared for: Presbytery of St. Augustine
 Study area: Polygon Around 10900 McCormick Road, Jacksonville, Florida 32225, United States
 Base State: FL

Current Year Estimate: 2021
 5 Year Projection: 2026
 Date: 3/22/2022
 Semi-Annual Projection: Summer

This ExecutiveInsite Report has been prepared for Presbytery of St. Augustine. Its purpose is to "tell the demographic story" of the defined geographic study area. ExecutiveInsite integrates narrative analysis with data tables and graphs. Playing on the report name, it includes 12 "Insites" into the study area's story. It includes both demographic and beliefs and practices data.

ExecutiveInsite is intended to give an overview analysis of the defined geographic study area. A defined study area can be a region, a zip code, a county or some custom defined geographic area such as a radius or a user defined polygon. The area of study is displayed in the map below.

THE STUDY AREA



THE 12 INSITES

INSITE	PAGE
Insite #1: Population, Household Trends	2
Insite #2: Racial/Ethnic Trends	3
Insite #3: Age Trends	4
Insite #4: School Aged Children Trends	6
Insite #5: Household Income Trends	7
Insite #6: Households and Children Trends	9
Insite #7: Marital Status Trends	10
Insite #8: Adult Educational Attainment	11
Insite #9: Employment and Occupations	12
Insite #10: Mosaic Household Types	13
Insite #11: Generations	14
Insite #12: Religious Program Or Ministry Preferences	15

More Information

Please refer to the last page of the report for additional notes and interpretation aides in reading the report.

Not all of the demographic variables available in the MI System are found in this report. The FullInsite Report will give a more comprehensive view of an area's demographics.

Also, the Impressions Report adds additional social, behavioral views and the Quad Report provides a detailed view of religious preferences, practices and beliefs.

Sources: US Census Bureau, Synergos Technologies Inc., Experian, DecisionInsite/MissionInsite

INSITE #1: POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD TRENDS

Population:

The estimated 2021 population within the study area is 48,018. The 2026 projection would see the area remain stable at 450 to a total population of 48,468. The population within the study area is growing somewhat slower than the statewide growth rate. While the study area is projected to grow by 0.9% in the next five years, the state is projected to grow by 4.9%. The study area's estimated average change rate is 0.2%.

Households:

The households within the community are growing but not as fast as the population, thus the average population per household in 2010 was 2.72 but by 2026 it is projected to be 2.73. Compare this to the statewide average which for the current year is estimated at 2.54 persons per household.

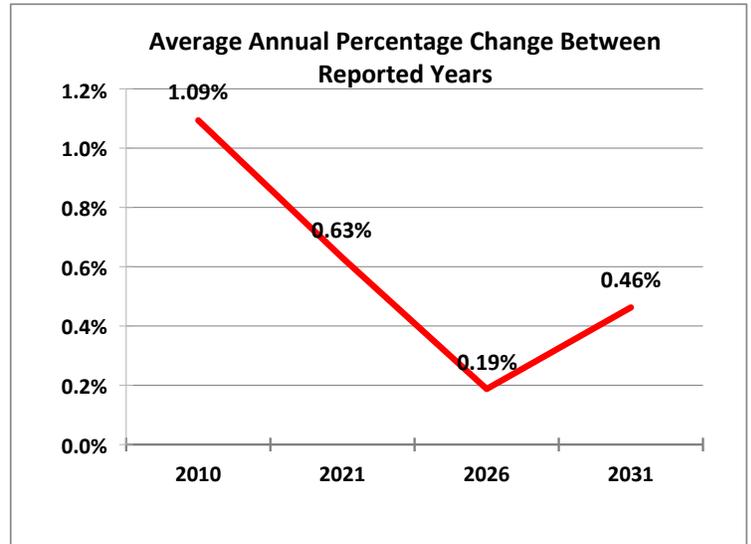
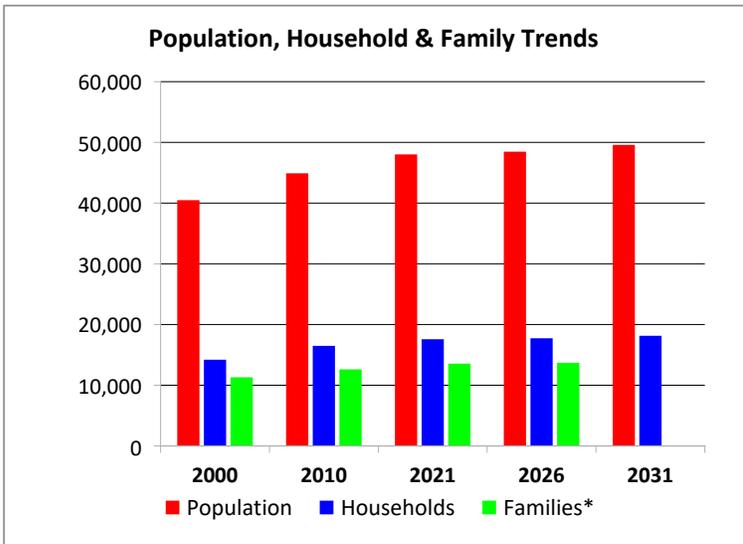
Population Per Household

Population per Household: The relationship between population and households provides a hint about how the community is changing. When population grows faster than households, it suggests an increase in the persons per household. This can only happen when more persons are added either by birth or other process such as young adults in multiple roommate households or young adults returning to live with parents. In some communities this can occur when multiple families live in the same dwelling unit.

Family Households:

Family households provide an additional hint about the changing dynamics of a community. If family household growth follows population growth, then it would be reasonable to assume that the increasing population per household comes from additional children. This is the case within the the study area. Family households are growing as fast as the population suggesting that the increasing population per household is from additional children.

<i>Population/Households & Family Trends</i>					
	2000	2010	2021	2026	2031
Population	40,480	44,907	48,018	48,468	49,589
Population Change		4,427	3,111	450	1,121
Percent Change		10.9%	6.9%	0.9%	2.3%
Households	14,203	16,485	17,574	17,734	18,143
Households Change		2,282	1,089	160	409
Percent Change		16.1%	6.6%	0.9%	2.3%
Population / Households	2.85	2.72	2.73	2.73	2.73
Population / Households Change		-0.13	0.01	0.00	0.00
Percent Change		-4.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Families	11,307	12,612	13,556	13,693	
Families Change		1,305	944	137	
Percent Change		11.5%	7.5%	1.0%	

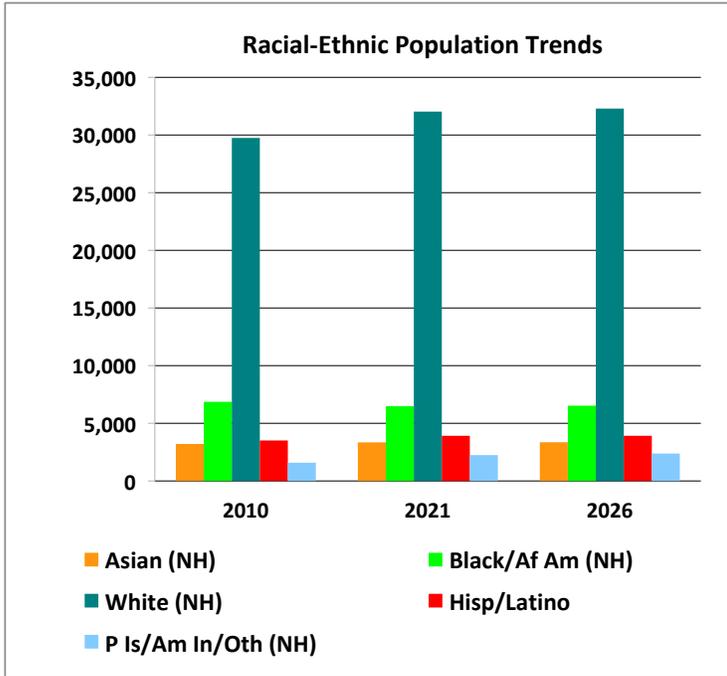


NOTE: Family Household data is not projected out 10 years.

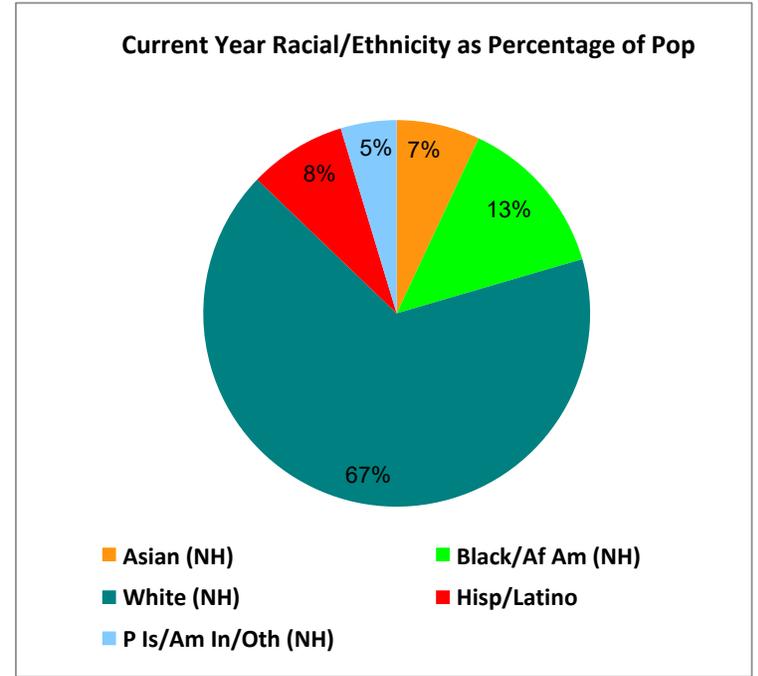
INSITE #2: RACIAL-ETHNIC TRENDS

The US population's racial-ethnic diversity is continually adding new and rich cultural mixes. This data considers the five groups for which trending information is available. Please note that several groups are aggregated into a single category due to their smaller size. Those persons who indicated Hispanic or Latino ethnicity along with a racial category have been separated into a Hispanic or Latino category.

The Population: Racial/Ethnic Trends table provides the actual numbers and percentage of the total population for each of the five racial/ethnic categories. Pay special attention to the final column on the right. This will quickly indicate the direction of change from the last census to the current five year projection.



The Racial Ethnic Trends graph displays history and projected change by each racial/ethnic group.



This chart shows the percentage of each group for the current year estimate.

The percentage of the population...

Asian (Non-Hisp) is projected to remain about the same over the next five years.

Black/African American (Non-Hisp) is projected to remain about the same over the next five years.

White (Non-Hisp) is projected to remain about the same over the next five years.

Hispanic or Latino is projected to remain about the same over the next five years.

	2010	2021	2026	2010%	2021 %	2026 %	2010 to 2026 %pt Change
Race and Ethnicity							
Asian (NH)	3,209	3,348	3,356	7.15%	6.97%	6.92%	-0.22%
Black/Afr Amer (NH)	6,863	6,481	6,526	15.28%	13.50%	13.46%	-1.82%
White (NH)	29,743	32,030	32,291	66.23%	66.71%	66.62%	0.39%
Hispanic/Latino	3,510	3,915	3,917	7.82%	8.15%	8.08%	0.27%
P Is/Am In/Oth (NH)	1,583	2,243	2,379	3.52%	4.67%	4.91%	1.38%
Totals:	44,908	48,017	48,469				

INSITE #3: AGE TRENDS

A community's age structure and how it is changing is an important part of its story. Overall, the American Population has been aging as the Baby Boomers progress through each phase of life. This has been abetted by episodes of declining live births. However, this picture may particularize differently from community to community. There are communities in the US where the average age is lower than some others. In other cases, there is a clear shift toward senior years as the Boomers enter their retirement years.

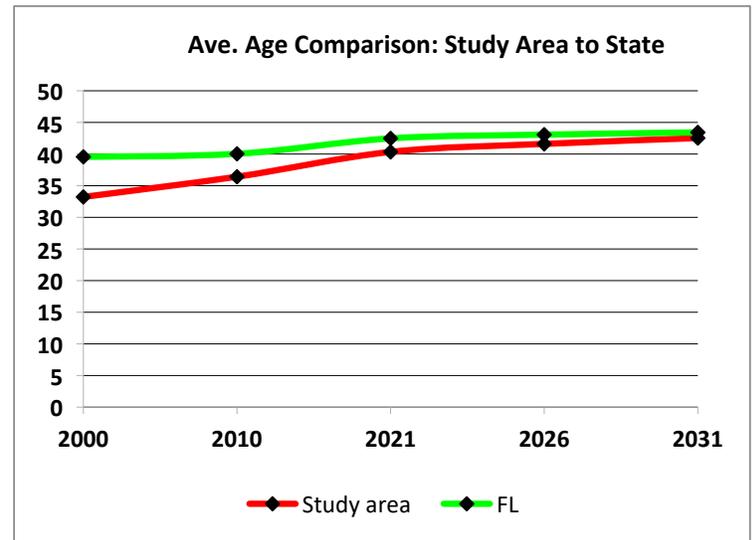
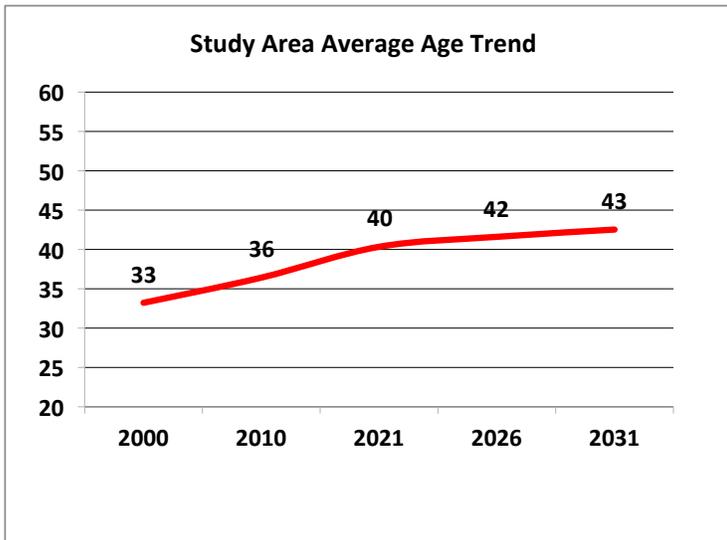
The Age Trend Insite explores two variables: Average age and Phase of Life.

Average Age Trends provides five important snapshots of a community from five data points; the 2000 census, the last census, the current year estimate, the five-year projection and the ten year forecast. These five numbers will indicate the aging direction of a community.

The Phase of Life Trends breaks the population into seven life phases that the population passes through in its life time.

AGE

<i>Average Age Trends</i>	2000	2010	2021	2026	2031
Average Age: Study Area	33.22	36.42	40.34	41.60	42.53
Percent Change		9.6%	10.8%	3.1%	2.2%
Average Age: FL	39.56	40.04	42.48	43.07	43.42
Percent Change		1.2%	6.1%	1.4%	0.8%
Comparative Index	84	91	95	97	98
Median Age: Study Area	33	37	41	42	41



Summary of Average Age Findings:

The Average Age Trend chart shows both history and projection of the change in average age in the study area. The average age of the study area has been rising for several years. It is projected to rise over the next five years.

A comparison to the average age of the state helps to contextualize the significance of the average age of the study area and its history and projection. In the graph above, the study area and state are laid out side by side. The state's average age is estimated to be higher than the study area.

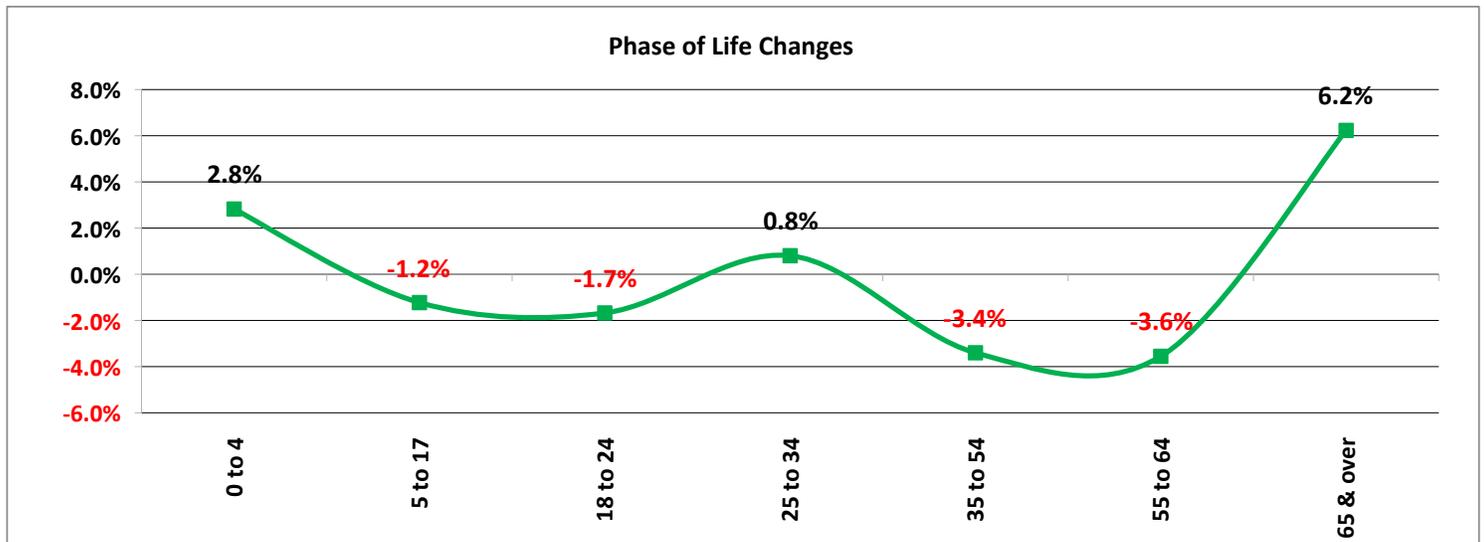
INSITE #3: AGE TRENDS (continued)

PHASE OF LIFE

The Phase of Life analysis provides insight into the age distribution of a population across the different stages of life experience. It can reveal a community in transition.

Pay special attention to the color codes of the Change column (far right below). It will immediately indicate which phases are increasing or decreasing as a percentage of the population.

Phase of Life	2010	2021	2026	2031	2010%	2021%	2026%	2031%	Estimated 10 Year %pt Change 2021 - 2031
Before Formal Schooling Ages 0 to 4	2,871	1,384	1,356	2,875	6.4%	3.0%	2.9%	5.8%	2.8%
Required Formal Schooling Ages 5 to 17	8,426	7,570	7,507	7,455	18.8%	16.3%	16.0%	15.0%	-1.2%
College/Career Starts Ages 18 to 24	3,470	4,623	4,097	4,093	7.7%	9.9%	8.7%	8.3%	-1.7%
Singles & Young Families Ages 25 to 34	6,045	5,556	6,358	6,317	13.5%	11.9%	13.5%	12.7%	0.8%
Families & Empty Nesters Ages 35 to 54	14,200	12,089	11,099	11,191	31.6%	26.0%	23.6%	22.6%	-3.4%
Enrichment Years Sing/Couples Ages 55 to 64	5,496	7,268	6,711	5,979	12.2%	15.6%	14.3%	12.1%	-3.6%
Retirement Opportunities Age 65 and over	4,400	8,070	9,915	11,686	9.8%	17.3%	21.1%	23.6%	6.2%



Summary of Phase of Life Findings:

Phase of Life changes reflect the age profile of a community. On average, it takes 2.1 children per woman to replace both mother and father. If the percentage of the population under 20 is declining as a percentage of the total it is likely that the community will see an increase in the more senior aged population possibly due to a decline in birth rates.

In this study area children 17 years of age and younger are increasing as a percentage of the total population. Considering the other end of the phases of life, adults 55 years of age and older are increasing as a percentage of the total population.

In summary it may be that the community is experiencing some growth of children of school age.

INSITE #4: SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN TRENDS

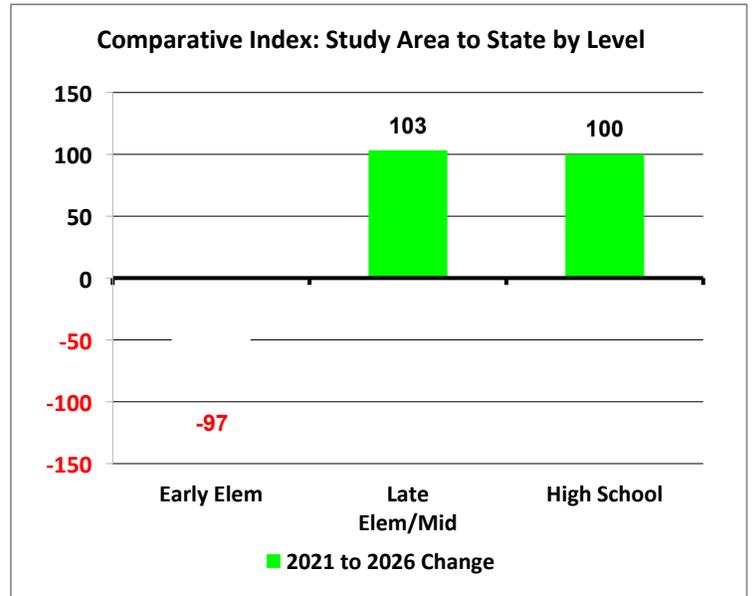
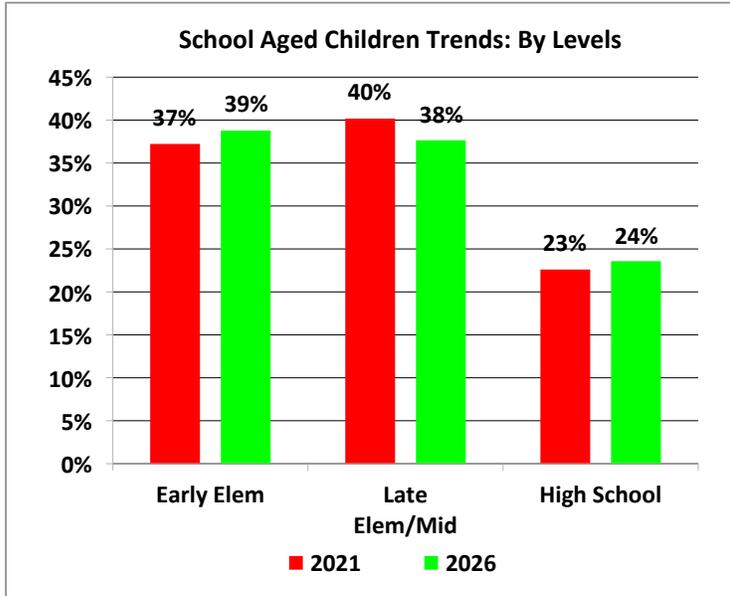
Children are the future! Understanding their specific population dynamics is critical for all planners of social and/or educational services. The “School Aged Children” variable is a subset of the “Required Formal Schooling” segment in the Phase of Life profile. It allows one to zoom in more closely on the children who are of formal schooling age.

The school aged population includes all school aged children including those enrolled in public and private schools, those home schooled and children in institutions.

The School Aged Children variable provides a snapshot of three levels of the population that comprise school age children. The three levels roughly correspond to the following.

- Elementary grades
- Intermediate/Middle School grades
- High School grades

School Aged Children	2010	2021	2026	2010%	2021%	2026%	Estimated 5 Year %pt Change 2021 - 2026
Early Elementary							
Ages 5 to 9	3,044	2,818	2,911	36.1%	37.2%	38.8%	1.6%
Late Elementary-Middle School							
Ages 10 to 14	3,375	3,041	2,826	40.1%	40.2%	37.6%	-2.5%
High School							
Ages 15 to 17	2,006	1,711	1,770	23.8%	22.6%	23.6%	1.0%



Summary of School Aged Children Findings:

Early Elementary children ages 5 to 9 are projected to increase as a percentage of children between 5 and 17 by 1.6%.

Late Elementary to Middle School aged children ages 10 to 14 are declining as a percentage of children between 5 and 17 by -2.5%.

High School aged children 15 to 17 are increasing as a percentage of children between 5 and 17 by 1.0%.

Overall, children are aging through, but there is some evidence of a resurgence of children in the younger years.

INSITE #5: HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY INCOME TRENDS

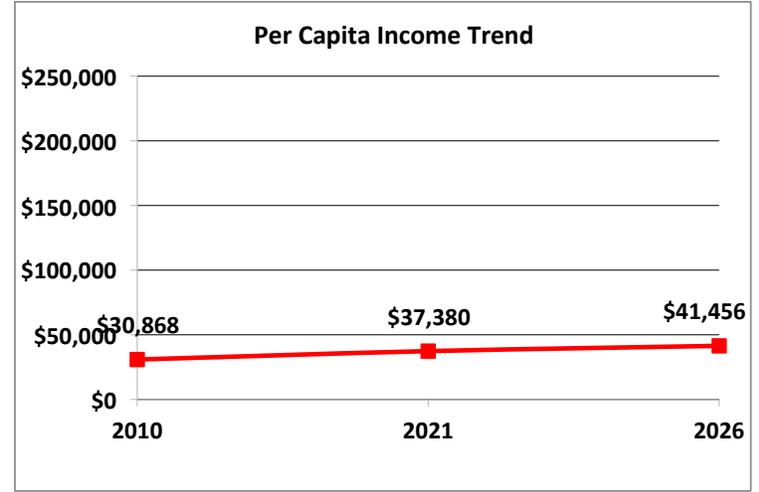
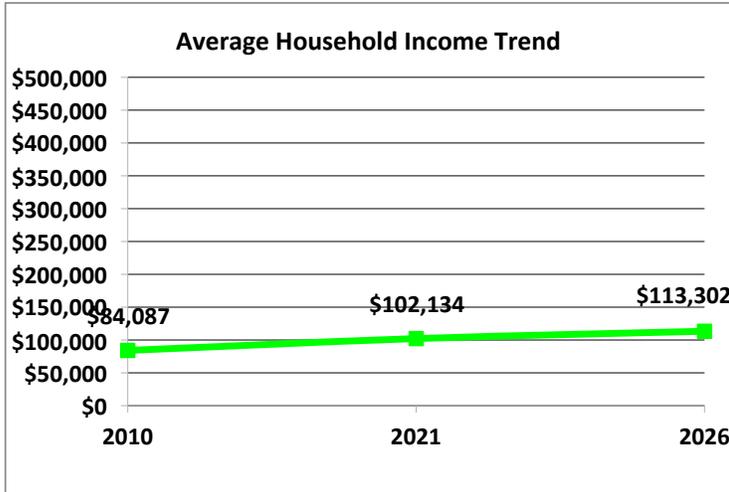
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND PER CAPITA INCOME

Average Household Income and Per Capita Income indicate the level of financial resources within a community. Average Household income reflects the average income for each household, whether family or non-family.

Per Capita Income is a measure of the average income of all persons within a household. For family households, this would include all children. It does not mean that each person actually contributes to the average income from work. It is calculated by dividing the aggregate household income by the population.

In this study area, the estimated current year average household income is \$102,134. The average household income is projected to grow by 10.9% to \$113,302.

The estimated per capita income for the current year is \$37,380. The Per Capita Income is projected to grow by 10.9% to \$41,456.



Income Trends	2010	2021	2026	2010%	2021%	2026%	Estimated 5 Year %pt Change 2021 - 2026
Households							
Less than \$10,000	333	373	363	2.0%	2.1%	2.0%	-0.1%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	412	331	270	2.5%	1.9%	1.5%	-0.4%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	738	774	728	4.5%	4.4%	4.1%	-0.3%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	1,203	980	1,060	7.3%	5.6%	6.0%	0.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	2,503	2,013	1,776	15.2%	11.5%	10.0%	-1.4%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	3,848	3,245	2,820	23.3%	18.5%	15.9%	-2.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	3,120	2,975	2,633	18.9%	16.9%	14.8%	-2.1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	2,944	3,874	4,204	17.9%	22.0%	23.7%	1.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	557	1,781	1,823	3.4%	10.1%	10.3%	0.1%
\$200,000 or more	828	1,228	2,058	5.0%	7.0%	11.6%	4.6%
Totals	16,486	17,574	17,735				

INSITE #5: HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY INCOME TRENDS (continued)

FAMILY INCOME

Family income is a sub-set of household income. It excludes non-family households. Family households include two or more persons who are related and living in the same dwelling unit. Children are more likely to live in family households. Non-family households are households in which two or more persons live in the same dwelling unit but are unrelated.

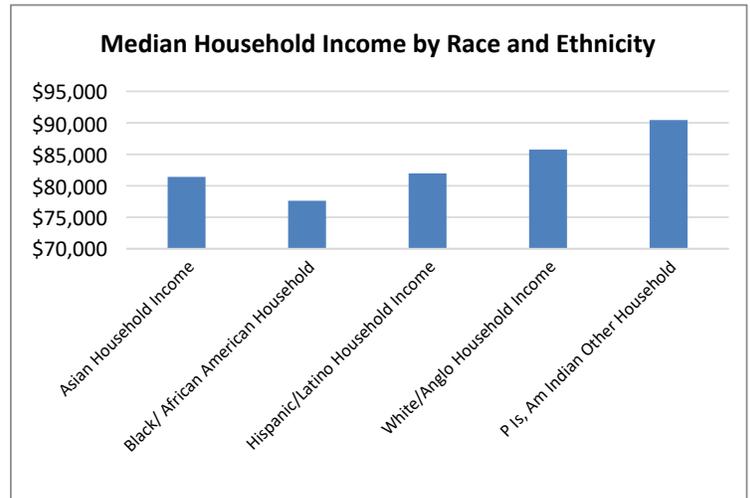
The number of families with annual incomes above \$100,000 is projected to decline over the next five years. For the current year, it is estimated that 44.3% of all family incomes exceed \$100,000 per year. In five years that number is projected to be 44.1%.

Income Trends	2021	2026	2021%	2026%	Estimated 5 Year %pt Change 2021 - 2026
Families					
Less than \$10,000	263	260	1.9%	1.9%	-0.04%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	156	153	1.2%	1.1%	-0.03%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	431	427	3.2%	3.1%	-0.06%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	548	623	4.0%	4.5%	0.51%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	1,453	1,464	10.7%	10.7%	-0.03%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	2,412	2,426	17.8%	17.7%	-0.08%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	2,285	2,298	16.9%	16.8%	-0.07%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	3,323	3,349	24.5%	24.5%	-0.06%
\$150,000-\$199,999	1,613	1,621	11.9%	11.8%	-0.06%
\$200,000 or more	1,072	1,073	7.9%	7.8%	-0.07%
Totals	13,556	13,694			

MEDIAN INCOME BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

Median income by race and ethnicity is a subset of household income. Median income is that point where there are as many households with incomes greater than the median as there are households with incomes less than the median.

Median Income by Race and Ethnicity	2021
Asian Household Income	\$81,413
Black/ African American Household Income	\$77,621
Hispanic/Latino Household Income	\$81,966
White/Anglo Household Income	\$85,747
P Is, Am Indian Other Household Income	\$90,447
Average	\$83,439



INSITE #6: HOUSEHOLDS AND CHILDREN TRENDS

Diversity of child rearing environments is increasing along with the many other types of growing diversity in the US. To understand this, we begin with the types of households that exist in a community. There are...

- family households with children under 18
- family households without children under 18

The concern of this analysis is family households with children under 18. Of the types of family households with children there are...

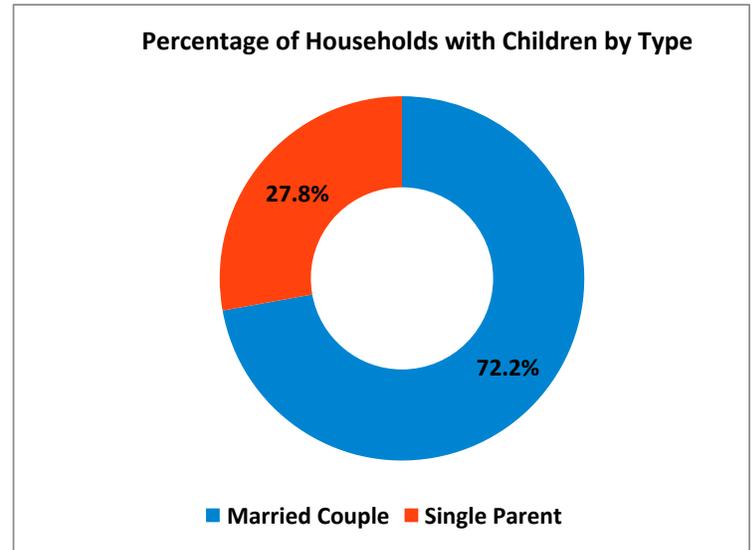
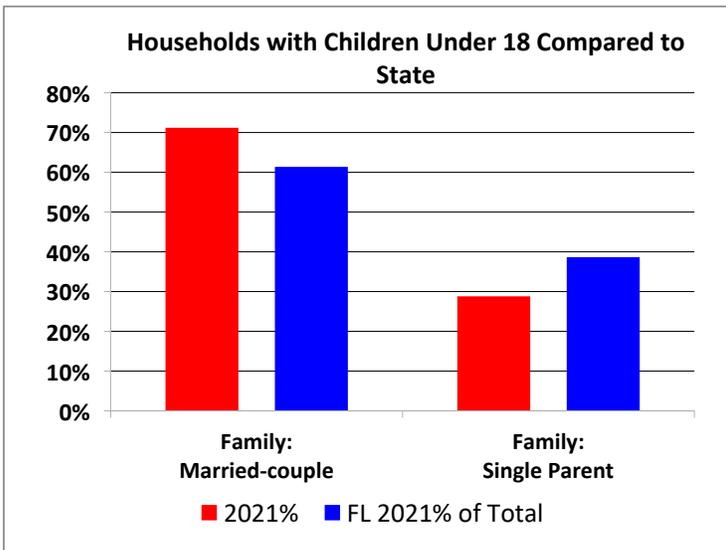
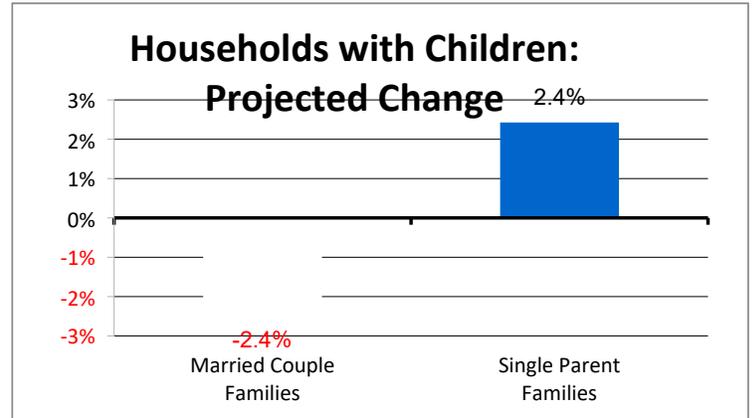
- Married couple families
- Single parent families (father or mother)

These two are reported for the study area in the table below.

Households	2010	2021	2026	2010%	2021%	2026%	Estimated 5 Year %pt Change 2021 - 2026
Households with Children under 18							
Married Couple	4,513	3,586	3,199	71.2%	72.2%	69.7%	-2.4%
Single Parent	1,826	1,383	1,388	28.8%	27.8%	30.3%	2.4%

Of the households with children under 18, married couple households are decreasing as a percentage while single parent households are increasing. The graph to the right illustrates this. Bars above the 0% point indicate a family type that is increasing while bars below 0% is decreasing. This provides "insite" into how family households and structures with children are changing in the study area.

A comparison to the state reveals to what extent this community is similar or dissimilar to the state as a whole. The study area's married couple households with children are dissimilar to the state's profile. The percentage of single parent households with children is less than the state.



INSITE #7: MARITAL STATUS TRENDS

MARITAL STATUS BY TYPE

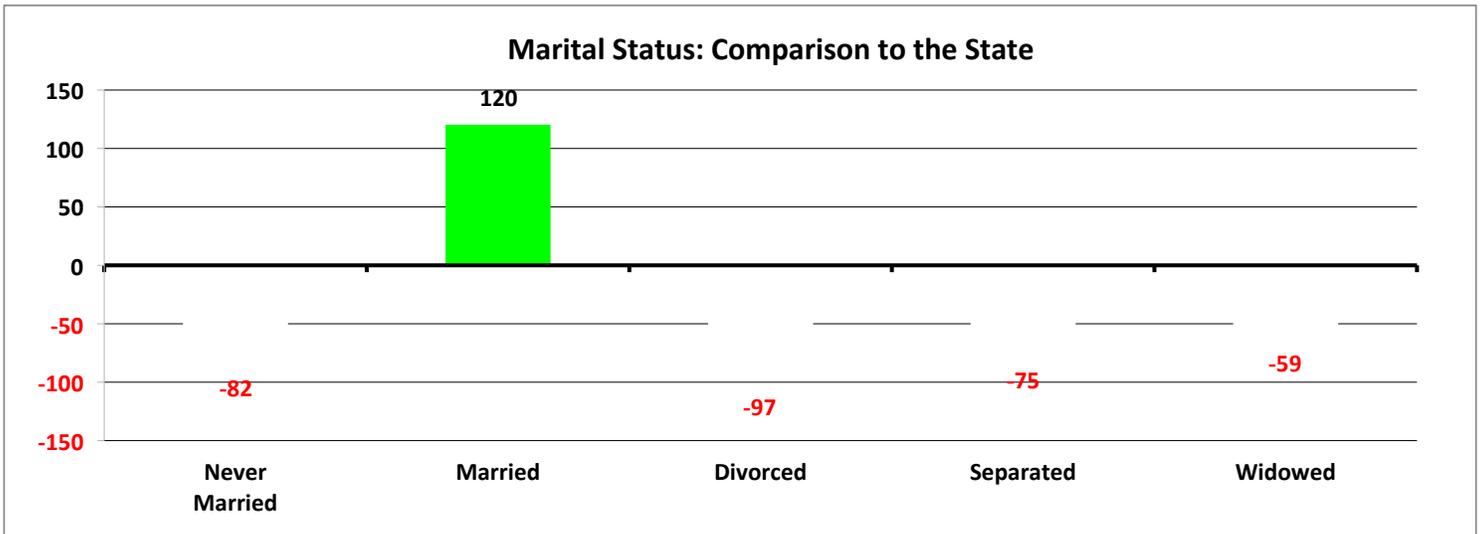
Population by Marital Status considers the number and percentage of persons 15 years of age and greater by their current marital status. Trend information as well as a comparison to the study area's state marital status types provide two different views of this social reality.

Marital types reported include..

- Never Married (Singles)
- Currently Married
- Divorced
- Separated
- Widowed

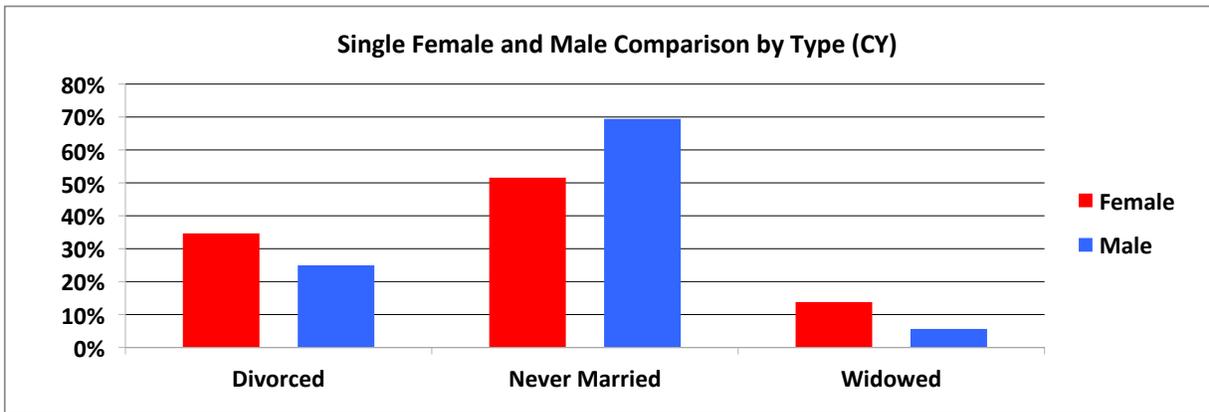
	2010	2021	2026	2010%	2021%	2026%	2010 to 2026 %pt Change
Population by Marital Status: Age 15+							
Never Married	9,219	9,882	10,004	25.4%	25.1%	25.0%	-0.4%
Married	21,772	22,226	22,390	60.0%	56.5%	56.0%	-4.0%
Divorced	3,449	4,908	5,173	9.5%	12.5%	12.9%	3.4%
Separated	435	691	683	1.2%	1.8%	1.7%	0.5%
Widowed	1,406	1,609	1,700	3.9%	4.1%	4.3%	0.4%

In this community, the current year estimate of marital status reveals a community of adults more likely to be married than the state average for adults. The percentage single never married is lower than the state average for adults 15 years and older. Divorce is less prevalent than the state wide average.



Women 15 years and older are more likely to be divorced than men.

Women 15 years and older are more likely to be widowed than men.



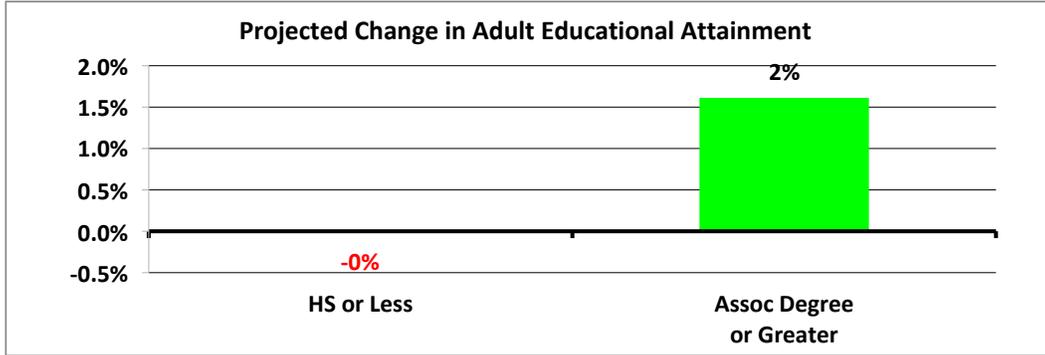
INSITE #8: ADULT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The level of educational attainment of a community's adult population is an important indicator of its opportunities and challenges. This analysis will look at the Adult Educational Attainment from three perspectives.

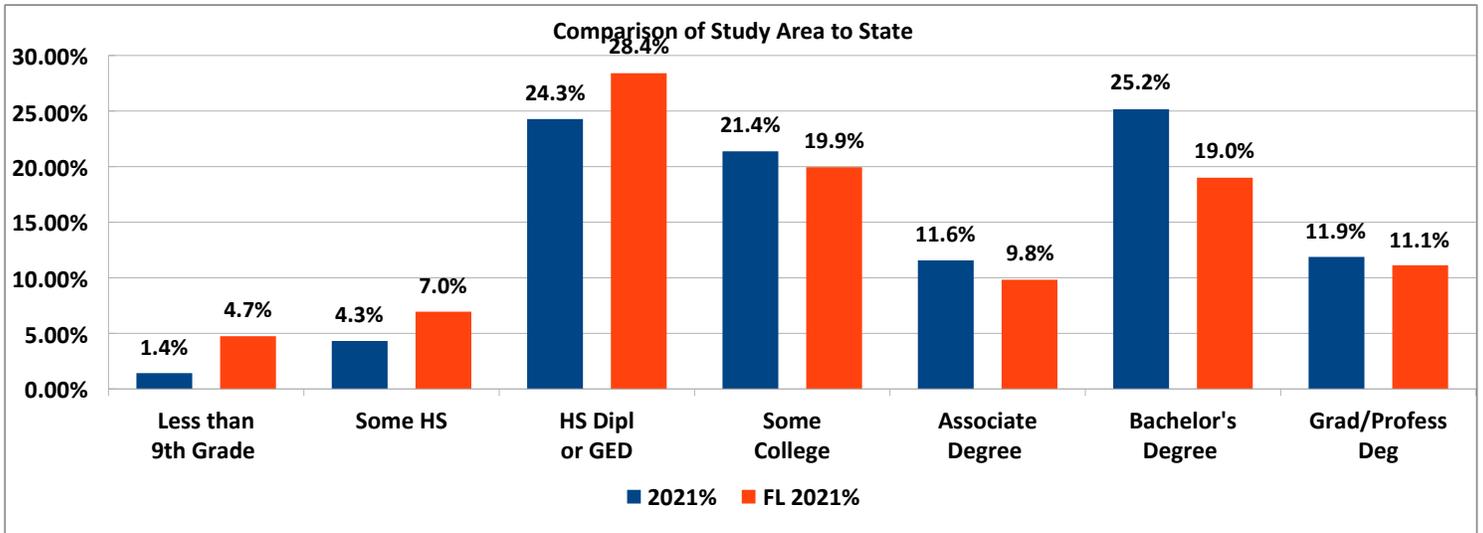
First, it looks to see if the level of educational attainment for adults is rising or not. Second, it compares the level of attainment to that of the state of FL. (If this is a state report, the comparison will be to itself.) Finally, the table provides the percentages from 2010.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL ATTAINMENT CHANGE

The educational attainment level of adults has been rising over the past few years. It is projected to rise over the next five years by 1.6%.



EDUCATIONAL LEVEL COMPARED TO THE STATE



	2010	2021	2026	FL 2021%	2021 Study Area-State Comp Index
Population by Educational Attainment: 25+					
Less than 9th Grade	1.9%	1.4%	1.3%	4.7%	30
Some HS	4.2%	4.3%	4.4%	7.0%	62
HS Dipl or GED	23.4%	24.3%	23.1%	28.4%	85
Some College	26.7%	21.4%	21.0%	19.9%	107
Associate Degree	10.9%	11.6%	11.4%	9.8%	118
Bachelor's Degree	23.3%	25.2%	26.3%	19.0%	132
Grad/Profess Deg	9.6%	11.9%	12.5%	11.1%	107

The overall educational attainment of the adults in this community is greater than the state.

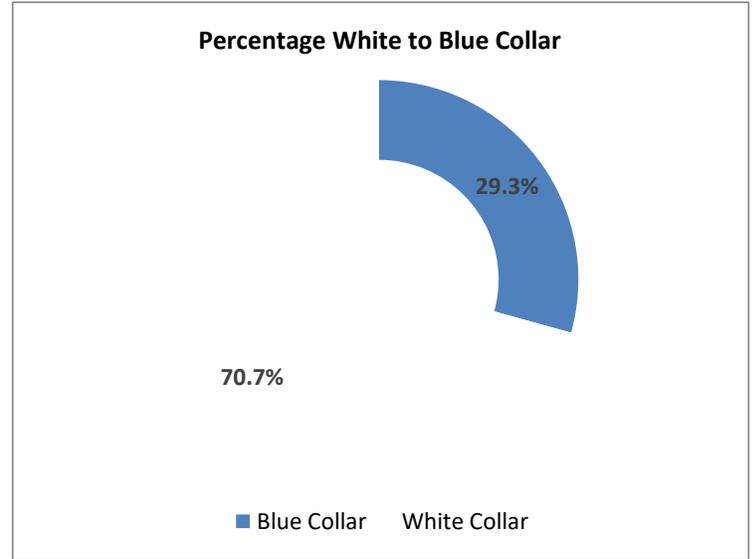
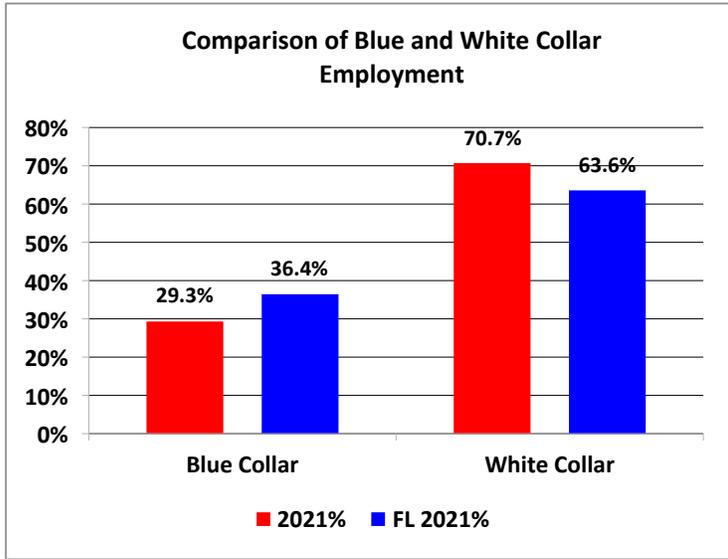
INSITE #9: POPULATION BY EMPLOYMENT

Like educational attainment, an analysis of a community by its employment types and categories provides an important “insite” into its socio-economics. This analysis looks at two factors.

First is a report of the employed population 16 and over by the traditional “blue collar” and “white collar” occupations and compares these to the state. Second, it looks at the community by the seven standard census bureau occupations and compares them to the state.

EMPLOYED POPULATION: BLUE COLLAR OR WHITE COLLAR

On the chart to the left, the study area is compared to the state of FL. This study area is well above the state average for White Collar workers. It is well below the state average for Blue Collar workers.



EMPLOYED CIVILIAN POPULATION BY OCCUPATION

	2021	FL 2021	Comp. Index	Interpretation
Employed Civilian Pop 16+ by Occupation				
Bldg Maintenance & Cleaning	3.1%	4.8%	64	Well below the state average.
Construction	6.8%	8.7%	79	Well below the state average.
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	0.2%	0.6%	36	Well below the state average.
Food Preparation Serving	4.5%	6.5%	69	Well below the state average.
Healthcare Support	1.7%	2.9%	57	Well below the state average.
Managerial Executive	20.2%	15.4%	131	Well above the state average.
Office Admin	15.8%	12.3%	129	Well above the state average.
Personal Care	3.2%	3.0%	107	At about the state average.
Production Transportation	9.5%	10.4%	91	At about the state average.
Prof Specialty	22.6%	20.7%	109	Well above the state average.
Protective	2.0%	2.5%	82	Well below the state average.
Sales	10.5%	12.3%	86	Well below the state average.

INSITE #10: MOSAIC Segments

Mosaic is a geo-demographic segmentation system developed by and for marketers. Instead of looking at individual demographic variables, a segmentation system clusters households into groups with multiple common characteristics. Demographic variables that generally cluster together would include income, educational levels, presence of children and occupations among others.

This database is developed by Experian. Some find the information helpful because it presents a multi-dimensional view of a community.

In the report below, the top 15 Mosaic Segments of the study area are provided. (If less than 15, rows will be blank.)

NOTE: For a full description please see the DI Demographic Segment Guide (Mosaic) under the Help menu on the Documents gallery.

	2021	2021%	State %	Comp Index	Relative to the FL State Ave.
Mosaic Segments					
C14 Booming with Confidence - Boomers and Boomerangs	1,832	10.4%	1.5%	718	Well above the state average
F22 Promising Families - Fast Track Couples	1,577	9.0%	2.5%	355	Well above the state average
C11 Booming with Confidence - Sophisticated City Dwellers	1,476	8.4%	2.8%	301	Well above the state average
J34 Autumn Years - Suburban Sophisticates	1,433	8.2%	2.9%	284	Well above the state average
E20 Thriving Boomers - No Place Like Home	952	5.4%	3.0%	182	Well above the state average
D16 Suburban Style - Settled in Suburbia	799	4.5%	1.2%	385	Well above the state average
O51 Singles and Starters - Digitally Savvy	692	3.9%	3.7%	106	About average for the state
A02 Power Elite - Platinum Prosperity	668	3.8%	2.2%	174	Well above the state average
H28 Bourgeois Melting Pot - Everyday Moderates	599	3.4%	0.6%	537	Well above the state average
D17 Suburban Style - Cul de Sac Diversity	597	3.4%	0.7%	456	Well above the state average
D18 Suburban Style - Suburban Nightlife	541	3.1%	2.2%	140	Well above the state average
B08 Flourishing Families - Babies and Bliss	536	3.0%	0.7%	420	Well above the state average
A04 Power Elite - Picture Perfect Families	450	2.6%	1.2%	214	Well above the state average
C13 Booming with Confidence - Philanthropic Sophisticates	432	2.5%	1.7%	147	Well above the state average
L42 Blue Sky Boomers - Rooted Flower Power	386	2.2%	2.9%	76	Somewhat below the state average

Learn about your Mosaic Households

To access Mosaic Portrait data click on:

[Mosaic USA E-Handbook by Experian](#) (To open in a new Tab hold Control key when you click on the link)

Handbook includes Mosaic Overview and two graphic pages for each of the 19 Groups and 71 Segments.

[How to Read and Understand a Mosaic Portrait - Video](#)

[Understanding Mosaic Portraits for Mission Planning - Video](#)

Faith based clients: To access the Mosaic application guide click on:

[Mission Impact Mosaic Application Guide by Bandy](#) (To open in a new Tab hold Control key when you click on the link)

INSITE #11: GENERATIONS

A powerful way to envision demographics is by following a generation through its phases of life. This is because there are, in a general sense, common life experiences at each phase of life. But even more interesting is to understand a generational cohort group that has a unique sense of belonging to others born and coming of age together. More than mere age bracketing, a generation develops a sense of identity as a group based upon their coming of age experiences—how they were parented and major world defining events, such as 9/11. Using the Strauss and Howe model of generations one is able to see a more three-dimensional view of a generational group, bringing mere age demographics to life.

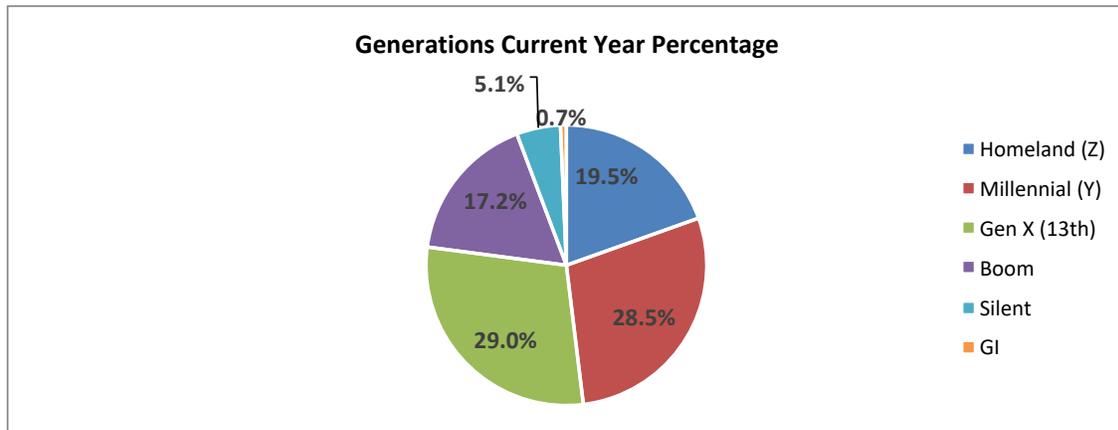
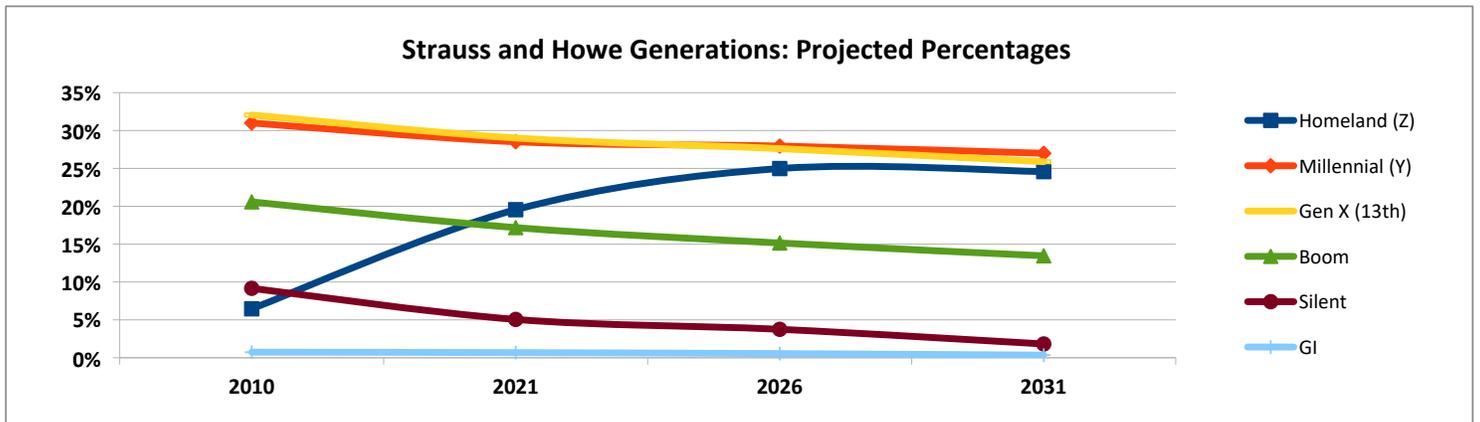
According to the Strauss and Howe model, members of a generation share three qualities. *

- An age location in history
- Some common beliefs and behaviors, including basic attitudes about risk taking, culture and values, civic engagement, and family life
- A common perceived membership in a generation, e.g., Boomers, Gen X, Millennials etc.

(* <http://www.lifecourse.com/about/method/phases.html>)

Name	S & H Type	Initial Birth	Final Birth	2010		2021		2026		2031	
Homeland (Z) Artist		2005	2025	2,871	6.5%	9,273	19.5%	11,976	25.0%	12,188	26.4%
Millennial (Y) Hero		1982	2004	13,774	31.0%	13,527	28.5%	13,399	27.9%	13,388	29.0%
Gen X (13th) Nomad		1961	1981	14,240	32.1%	13,764	29.0%	13,239	27.6%	12,837	27.8%
Boom Prophet		1946	1960	9,144	20.6%	8,150	17.2%	7,263	15.2%	6,676	14.5%
Silent Artist		1925	1945	4,072	9.2%	2,400	5.1%	1,800	3.8%	902	2.0%
GI Hero		1901	1924	328	0.7%	322	0.7%	263	0.5%	172	0.4%
Totals:				44,429	100.0%	47,436	100%	47,940	100%	46,163	100.0%

[For more information on Generational types, click here](#)



INSITE #12: RELIGIOUS PROGRAM OR MINISTRY PREFERENCES

This information is from the 2021 Quadrennium Project Survey of US Religious Preferences, Practices and Beliefs. You can view more results in the ReligiousInsite, ReligiousInsite Priorities, MinistryInsite, or MinistryInsite Priorities reports.

	Study Area		US Average		Comparative Index	
	Modestly Important	Very Important	Modestly Important	Very Important	Modestly Important	Very Important
Personal Growth	34.1%	7.5%	34.9%	8.4%	98	89
Addiction support groups	27.6%	6.7%	27.9%	7.4%	99	91
Health/weight loss programs	26.2%	4.0%	27.4%	4.7%	96	85
Membership and leadership training	32.7%	5.5%	34.3%	6.9%	96	80
Opportunities to develop personal relationships	48.2%	15.7%	48.8%	17.1%	99	92
Practical training seminars (money management, computer skills, etc.)	35.9%	5.4%	36.4%	6.0%	98	89
Family Support and Intervention Services	32.8%	7.8%	33.6%	9.2%	98	85
Daycare/After-School Programs	20.5%	4.9%	20.9%	5.6%	98	87
Crisis support groups	38.3%	10.0%	40.6%	10.2%	94	99
Family oriented activities	39.3%	12.9%	40.9%	15.7%	96	82
Marriage enrichment	32.4%	6.7%	33.4%	8.4%	97	80
Parenting development	26.2%	5.4%	26.5%	6.5%	99	83
Personal/family counseling	39.8%	7.1%	39.2%	8.6%	102	82
Community Involvement and Advocacy Programs	42.5%	11.0%	43.3%	11.5%	98	96
Adult social activities	49.9%	11.1%	52.6%	11.6%	95	95
Involvement in social causes	46.8%	12.6%	46.2%	12.7%	101	99
Mission trips and global outreach	28.1%	6.7%	30.8%	7.7%	91	86
Opportunities for volunteering in the community	49.7%	13.5%	49.5%	14.6%	100	92
Social justice advocacy work	37.9%	11.4%	37.5%	10.9%	101	105
Community Activities or Cultural Programs	39.0%	8.9%	40.2%	10.3%	97	87
Cultural programs (music, drama, art)	43.5%	8.9%	43.8%	8.9%	99	100
Holiday programs/activities	48.1%	12.9%	50.5%	14.9%	95	87
Seniors/retiree activities	44.7%	11.2%	45.0%	13.8%	99	82
Singles or college-age groups	25.3%	4.9%	25.6%	6.3%	99	79
Size of church congregation	38.2%	5.4%	40.8%	6.8%	94	79
Small groups (i.e., life groups, personal interest groups)	45.9%	9.5%	46.7%	10.7%	98	89
Youth social activities	27.5%	9.5%	28.9%	10.8%	95	88
Religious/Spiritual Programs	32.3%	15.4%	36.4%	20.0%	89	77
Bible or Scripture study/prayer groups	30.0%	11.8%	32.3%	14.9%	93	79
Celebration of sacraments	29.7%	16.9%	32.3%	21.2%	92	80
Contemporary worship experiences	39.5%	9.0%	40.3%	11.1%	98	81
Online or virtual worship experiences	33.4%	8.9%	36.8%	11.1%	91	81
Quality sermons	18.1%	13.6%	36.3%	33.3%	50	41
Religious education for children	25.4%	14.4%	27.5%	17.1%	92	84
Spiritual discussion groups	36.1%	10.5%	38.9%	11.1%	93	94
Traditional worship experiences	37.3%	19.1%	39.1%	24.3%	95	79
Warm and friendly encounters	41.7%	34.4%	44.1%	35.8%	95	96

Supporting Information

Interpreting the Report

The ExecutiveInsite report is designed for easy reading. But there are several tools provided in the tables that make this easier.

Change over time: Several trend tables have a column indicating a change over time. Generally these tables begin with the last census, include the current year estimate, a five year projection and if available, a 10 year forecast. The data in each cell represents a percentage change up or down.

Color Coding: Both the "Change over Time" and "Comparative Indexes" columns are color coded to easily spot any change and the direction of that change.

Change:	Increasing	Stable	Declining
Index:	Above Ave	Ave	Below Ave.

Variable Definitions

Full variable definitions can be found in the MI Demographic Reference Guide. Download it free from the Help/Documents menu located on the map screen of your

Download <https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/mi-docs/Discovering+Ministry+>

Indexes: Some variables will have a column called "Comparative Index." An index is an easy way to compare a study area with a larger area. For this report, all comparisons are with the state or states within which the study area falls. The indexes can be interpreted as follows.

- Indexes of 100 mean the study area variable is the same as its base area.
- Indexes greater than 100 mean the study area variable is above the base area. The higher the number, the greater it is above the base.
- Indexes less than 100 mean the study area variable is below the base area. The lower the number, the greater it is below the base.

Support

If you need support with this report, please email MissionInsite at misupport@missioninsite.com.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY FOR HIGHLANDS

This report is based on The QuickInsite Report prepared for the Presbytery of St. Augustine for the community study area of the polygon around 10900 McCormick Road, Jacksonville, FL 32225 (church site). The boundary of this area is the St. Johns River to the north, the Intracoastal Waterway to the east, I-295 to the west and Beach Blvd to the south. This includes the zip codes of 32225 and 32246 and also small portions of the 32211 and 32216 zip codes.. The findings used here focus on the study area without reference to the state and national comparisons. Primary focus is on the current situation for the year 2021 with, as appropriate, reference to the trends for the prior 10 year period (2010 to 2020), and to projected trends for the next 5 years (2022 to 2026). Statistics will be rounded to the closest full number most times.

The population is 42,018 which represents a 7% increase in the last 10 years, and a projected increase of 1% for the next 5 years. In 2021 there were 509 births but 589 persons were lost to the area. Of these losses 67% was due to death but 33% was due to a net loss of persons leaving the area over those entering the area. The ethnicity is 67% White Non-Hispanic, 13.5 % Black, 8% Hispanic and 7% Asian and 4.5 % Other. Of the Asian population 66% are Filipino, 29% are descendants from India, 15% are Chinese and 13% are Vietnamese. In the past 10 years the percentage of the population which is Black increased somewhat more than other ethnic groups but there is expected to be very little change in the relative ethnic percentages of 2021 for the next 5 years. The average median income for all races is \$83,439. The highest of \$90,447 is White Non-Hispanic while the lowest of \$72,621 is Black.

For the overall population individual average income is \$35,380 and is expected to increase by 11% in the next 5 years. The approximate weekly per capita spending pattern by percent is 38% for transportation, 23% for market basket, 24% for health care, 9% for entertainment and 6% for apparel and related services.

In terms of family income 44.3% of the full population has income greater than \$100,000 a year. But the percentage having more than \$100,000 is projected to decrease to 44.1 % in 5 years. Those above the poverty level now is 96% while those below the poverty level now is 4%.

The average age is 40 with an increase of 11% in the last 10 years and a projected increase of 3.1% in the next 5 years. Two age groups are increasing in the percentage of the total population: children 17 years and younger, and also, adults older than age 54. This reflects the trend of decline in live births in the late 20th and 21st centuries, and the aging of the Baby Boomer generation. For school-aged children 2,911 are in early elementary, 2, 826 are in late elementary and middle school and 1,770 are in high school. In the next 5 years it is projected that there will be a 2% increase in elementary students, a 2.5% decrease in late elementary/middle school students and a 1% increase in high school students.

(COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS—PAGE 2)

The diversity of child rearing environments has increased along with the many other types of growing diversity. The percentage of households with children by type are 72% to married couples and 28% to single parents. Of the single parents 21% are headed by a single mother while 7% are headed by a single father. It is projected that in the next 5 years there will be a 2.4% decrease for children of married couples and a 2.4% increase for children of single parents. Marital status by type is 56.5% married couples, 25% never married, 12.5% divorced and 4% widowed. Minimal changes are projected in these percentages in the next 5 years. Over twice as many widowed are women (12% to 5%). More women are divorced (34% to 24%), and more women have never been married than men (68% to 50%). Those living in 1 unit detached house type is 85%, and 86% of the population live in housing built since 1980. Household by type is 81% owner occupied and 19% renter occupied. Of households that have 2 or more vehicles there is a 20% gap between owner households (76%) and renter households (61%). In terms of family household by size 45% are 2 persons, 50% are 3-5 persons and 5% are more than 5 persons. It is projected that in 5 years 2 person households will increase 2% while larger households will decrease less than 1%.

Educational attainment level for adults is 37% with a college degree or higher, 33% with some college, 25% with a high school education and 6% with less than high school. In the next 5 years there will be a very small decrease for those with less than a 9th grade education, and also, for those with a high school degree. There will be very small increases for those with some high school, and also, those with some college. There will be 1% increase for those with college degrees and .6 % increase for those with graduate degrees.

In the next 10 years there is expected to be little change in trends for population, school aged children and families with children. There will be a moderately diverse racial mix, somewhat greater median family income, higher adult educational attainment, poverty will be significantly below state/national averages, and the largest racial/ethnic group will remain White Non-Hispanic.

In terms of employment status (for those over the age of 16) 65% are in the labor force, 2.4% are in the armed forces and 32.6% are not in the labor force. For civilian employment 21% are in education, 15% are in wholesale and retail, 12% are in entertainment services while 52% are in various other vocational areas. Those in Blue Collar occupations are 29% while those in White Collar occupations are 71%. In reference to amount of travel time to work 65% travel less than 30 minutes while 12% of those travel less than 15 minutes. In terms of the average number of persons employed in families 47% are 2, 29% are 1, 12.5% are over 2 and 12% are none.

In terms of worship choice there is strong support for both traditional and contemporary worship with 57% considering traditional important and 49% considering contemporary important.

(COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS—PAGE 3)

General Religious Program or Ministry Preferences (in order of importance) are as follows:

1. Community involvement and advocacy (52.5%)
2. Community activities and cultural programs (48%)
3. Religious/spiritual programs (48%)
4. Family support and intervention services (41%)
5. Personal growth (40%)

Top 15 life concerns in rank order are as follows: (out of 44 concerns listed, first 6 are very strong concern, while the other 9 are strong concern)

1. Ongoing impact of COVID-19
2. Social & political tensions/discord
3. Racism/racial injustice
4. Health crisis/illness
5. Financing the future/savings/retirement
6. Fear of the future or the unknown
7. Losing weight/diet issues
8. Quality of children's education
9. Illegal immigration
10. Personal health problems
11. Caring for aging parents
12. Reaching my goals/being successful
13. Time for friends/family
14. Satisfying job/career
15. Making the right choices/finding direction

Reasons for people **outside** a religious congregation for not participating in rank order (top 10 of 25), (first 9 are very strong, 10th is strong)

1. Religious people are too judgmental
2. Religion too focused on money
3. Don't trust religious leaders
4. Don't trust organized religion
5. Disillusionment with religion
6. Wasn't relevant to my life
7. Strict/inflexible beliefs
8. Don't believe in God
9. No longer believe
10. Moved from community

Reasons for people **inside** a religious congregation considering not participating in a religious congregation (top 10 of 25 reasons), (all 10 are very strong reasons)

1. Moved from community
2. Religious people are too judgmental
3. Religion too focused on money

(COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS—PAGE 4)

4. Disillusionment with religion
5. No longer believe
6. Didn't feel welcome
7. Don't trust organized religion
8. Don't believe in God
9. Strict/inflexible beliefs
10. Didn't have desired children's/ youth programs

For both those outside and inside a religious congregation eight of the ten reasons are the same but in somewhat different order of priority Two reasons given by those **outside** not given by those inside are “didn't trust religious leaders” and “wasn't relevant to my life”. Two reasons given by those **inside** not given by those outside are “don't feel welcome” and “didn't have desired children/youth programs”. The number one reason for those **inside** was “moved from community” while this was the tenth reason for those **outside**.

The top eight ministry or program recommendations are ranked by importance as follows: (8 of 24 recommendations surveyed).

1. Warm and friendly environment (very strong preference)
2. Quality sermons (strong preference)
3. Opportunities to develop personal relationships (moderately strong preference)
4. Opportunities for volunteering in the community (moderately strong preference)
5. Holiday programs/activities (moderately strong preference)
6. Traditional worship experiences (moderately strong preference)
7. Adult social activities (moderately strong preference)
8. Involvement in social causes (moderately strong preference)

The next rankings are important for finding the best channels for reaching the intended audience.

Media Preferences by Category in Rank Order (chosen in a series of forced pairs)

1. TV News (Network or Cable)
2. Cable News
3. Major Newspapers
4. Online News
5. Major Network News Only (ABC, NBC, CBS)
6. Social Media

Social Media (Category of Media by Popular Use & Ranked Order)

1. You Tube (20%)
2. Facebook (19%)
3. Instagram (10%)
4. Pinterest (10%)
5. Linked In (9%)
6. Twitter (7%)
7. What's App (6%)

The 2021 Annual Report
Highlands United Presbyterian Church



Prepared for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation
January 30, 2022

Highlands United Presbyterian Church
10900 McCormick Road, Jacksonville, FL 32225 • (904) 641-9622 • www.hupcjax.org
Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @HUPCJax



Membership Report for 2021

Member Deaths	3
Member Removals	3
Baptisms	1
Member Weddings	0
Active Members 1/1/2021	366
Gain for 2020	—
Loss for 2020	6
Active Members for 2022	360

Entered Into The Church Triumphant:

- Carol Houghton January 9, 2021
- Jodie Raymond July 16, 2021
- Kit Fink September 8, 2021

*Highland United Presbyterian Church's dearly beloved pastor,
The Rev. Dr. David T. Lee joined into the Great Communion of Saints
on January 22, 2021 after 24 years of dedication to our congregation.*

Joined in the Waters of Baptism:

Erza Scarlet Phipps, granddaughter of Reed and Jenna Whitney, 8/15/21

Respectfully,
Ruling Elder Sharyn' Goings
Clerk of Session



The 2021 Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation

DRAFT AGENDA
JANUARY 30, 2022

Opening Prayer

Establishing a Quorum

Approval of Agenda

Approval of the Minutes of the 2020 Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation

Report of the Interim Pastor

Reports of Committees

Report of the Congregational Nominating Committee

Financial Report
The Budget

New Business

Meeting of the Corporation

Election of Officers of the Corporation: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary

First Reading of a DRAFT of Bylaws for Highlands United Presbyterian Church and Highlands United Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville, Inc.

Closing Prayer

INTERIM PASTOR'S REPORT

January 28, 2021

Dear Members and Friends,

Greetings, grace and peace to you all in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. I am humbled and grateful that you invited me here to serve the church as your Interim/ Transitional Pastor.

This new year must begin by expressing our gratitude to the Lord for the life and ministry of The Rev. Dr. David Lee. Dr. Dave's devotion to Highlands and the countless gifts he shared with the world are what helped to make this such an extraordinary church. His shocking cancer diagnosis and tragic death last January could have left you paralyzed. Instead, it galvanized Highlands as a congregation of Christ's faithful and strengthened your resolve to pursue mission and worship even in his absence and the ongoing strain of COVID-19. Now as a faithful member of the Church Universal, Dr. Dave remains with each one of you into eternity. Thanks be to God.

2021 was an extraordinary year in the life of Highlands United Presbyterian Church. The Presbytery of St. Augustine deserves special mention for their compassionate care and worship leadership during Dr. Dave's illness and afterwards. Of particular note, we thank The Rev. Dr. Craig Davies, The Rev. Dr. Alexandra Hedrix, The Rev. Dr. Holly Dillon Inglis, and The Rev. Dr. James Kendrick. And, of course, we thank the congregation's staff and elected leaders named throughout this Annual Report. You were the glue in an incredibly challenging year.

I began my interim ministry at Highlands on the first Sunday in Advent, November 28, 2021. I was immediately struck by the congregation's vibrancy, health and hope. Two visible markers of your strength are your ongoing worship engagement and congregational giving – time, treasures and talents. Your communication is fluid and honest. You maintain as strong a programmatic life as appropriate while navigating COVID-19 restrictions. You never quit praying, and praising God. Selah!

Interim ministry is, by definition, an in-between experience when we are to reflect on our past and prepare the way for your next installed pastor. This period can extend from several months to several years, as we move through many phases and processes. Given the health of Highlands UPC, the nearly 20 months you have been grieving your pastor's diagnosis and death and celebrating his new life with Christ, and the many pastors who have walked alongside of you, it seems appropriate that we soon launch into the tangible work of the interim period.

So, while I continue to lead worship, care for you all, do my part to educate and moderate and in all ways involve myself in the day to day of church, I have encouraged that HUPC form a Mission Study Team as soon as reasonable. Their role will be to discern and document who we are as individuals and a collective of Christians and community members, list our values as a church and understand

our identity is as a congregation in the community. There is much to do in this Study that will look a lot like a Strategic Plan. Ideally, a document will be ready to share in the second quarter of 2022.

Interim Pastor's Letter, continued

After the Mission Study is delivered and filed by the Call Commission of the Presbytery of St. Augustine, Highlands' Congregational Nominating Committee will bring forward a slate for your consideration as the Pastor Nominating Committee. They will prepare a Church Information Form that will be used in their search for your next pastor who, leap forward, you will likely welcome in early-2023.

Yes, this is an exciting time in the life of a very healthy and exciting congregation. Thank you, again, for inviting me to be a part of your family while we wait for the next new thing God has in mind. We have our work cut out for us! I have no doubt that it will be joyful, hopeful and, at times, hard. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we will come out even stronger for it.

With love,
The Rev. Beverly Dempsey
Interim Pastor and Head of Staff

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Committee Members in 2021:

Tom Sweeney, Scott and Sue Heckler, Dennis Kleppen, Stephen E. Pohlhammer, Alan Robbins, Lyle/Jan Sim, Rick Stevenson, Clara Whitaker, and Reed Whitney

Highlights for 2021:

- (1) Replaced the roof over church office and walkway
- (2) Replaced walkway gutters and installed leaf guards.
- (3) Replaced the HVAC for the Sanctuary,
- (4) Upgraded the security lighting for the parking lot
- (5) Repaired a number of plumbing issues in Harris Hall.
- (6) Replaced and upgraded the security system.
- (7) Replaced fixtures in the Pastors bathroom and repainted the office.

Respectfully,
Ruling Elder Tom Sweeney

CHRISTIAN NURTURE COMMITTEE

Committee Members in 2021:

David Bauerlein, John Morrison, Audrey Regnier, Christina Trombley, and Jenna Whitney

Highlights for 2021:

- The church's youth provided hundreds of pounds of food to Arlington Community Services. The annual Trick or Treat for Canned Goods came back after a one-year hiatus, with a twist that young people collected canned goods at the church rather than going to church member's homes. The church later teamed up with Precious Gifts Pre-School families to assemble 10 Thanksgiving baskets with turkeys and all the trimmings for donation to Arlington Community Service so it could give them to families.
- A nightly series of outdoor game/movie nights made it possible for young people and families to gather for social activities when it was problematic to have indoor gatherings during the pandemic.
- The Birthday Party for Jesus the Sunday before Christmas brought together church members of all ages for fellowship, crafts, entertainment and hot breakfast on Sunday morning before service.
- The purchase of Facebook Portal equipment enabled adult Sunday school to keep on track with a growing number of attendees, whether in person at church or providing quality connections for people worshipping from home.
- A rotating group of church members took turns leading the Times with the Young Church portion of Sunday services.
- The annual Easter egg hunt became a virtual gathering where families videotaped their children in action at home and the video feed and audio was transmitted for everyone to watch.
- The "Back to School" Sunday for children blessed their backpacks with social distancing and also gave all members a chance to pick up a laminated bookmark with a child's name on it for prayer support throughout the school year.

Respectfully,
Ruling Elder David Bauerlein, Moderator



CHURCH GROWTH COMMITTEE

Committee Members in 2021:

Anneliese Robbins and Reed Whitney

Highlights for 2021:

The main emphasis of this committee has been new membership. With Covid and mainly remote worship in 2021, we focused on preparing for the time when we could regularly meet in person. This included refurbishing the name tag chart and making new name tags. We are also participating in the update of our membership list and directory.

Respectfully,
Ruling Elder Reed Whitney, Moderator



CONGREGATIONAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Committee Members in 2021:

David Bauerlein, Candy Cole, Betty Stewart, Clara Whitaker

The Nominating Committee will offer a slate for the Session Class of 2024 in February.

Respectfully,
Ruling Elder David Bauerlein, Moderator



CHURCH MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Committee Members in 2021:

Oliva B. Ehmer, Charles P. Goodyear, Charles Grabill, Helen Middaugh, Mark Morrison, Kendall Starkweather, Mark Vanderberg

Highlights for 2021:

- Insured Value Appraisal was completed thanks largely to efforts of Resource Committee member Charles Goodyear. Church contents were underinsured and the appraisal corrected that deficiency.
- Dr. Dave Memorial and Appreciation Funds raised money which resulted in the purchase and dedication of Dr Dave Cremation Bench in the HUPC Memorial Garden. Dedication was held on All Saints Day Sunday Service.

- Funding of Sanctuary HVAC system consisting of new air handler and compressor unit thanks primarily to efforts of Resource Committee member Tom Sweeney
- Successfully completed the 2022 Stewardship Campaign with the theme of Putting God's Love in Action

Church Management and Resources Committee, continued

Personnel in 2021:

The Rev. Dr. David T. Lee
 Pastor and Head of Staff
 Died in service January 22, 2021

The Rev. Beverly Dempsey
 Interim Pastor
 Beginning November 30, 2021

Gibson Dixson
 Choirmaster and Organist (PT)

Michele Loerop
 Assistant Director – Precious Gifts Preschool

Anneliese Robbins
 Church Administrator (PT)

Laura Sambito
 Director of Christian Education (PT)
Resigned in the Fall of 2021

Anna Serrano
 Director – Precious Gifts Preschool

Sam Sewald
 Custodian (PT)

Respectfully,
 Ruling Elder Charles Grabill, Moderator



FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Committee Members in 2021:

Candy Cole, Sharyn' Going, Sue Heckler, Nancy Taylor, Clara Whitaker, and Kathy Zeigler

Highlights for 2021:

In a year of Covid and social distancing, we were unable to have our Sunday Service fellowship. However, on November 7, 2021, when the ashes of our beloved pastor, Dr. David T. Lee's were interred into the memorial bench, named in his honor, we were able to have an outside reception in his honor. Attendance was very good.

On November 28, our committee hosted our interim pastor, the Rev. Beverly Dempsey, her husband Joe, young children, Owen and Caitlin, with a reception in celebration of her first Sunday in our pulpit. Again despite Covid situation, attendance was very good.

Respectfully,
 Ruling Elder Clara Whitaker, Moderator



MEMBER CARE COMMITTEE

Committee Members in 2021:

Jean Collins, Susan Lee, Nancy Marsh, Richard Marsh, Virginia Morrison, and Michael Rounds

Many others contributed in providing specific member care activities, including:

Lidia Knouse, Cindy Sweeney, and Tom Sweeney

Highlights for 2021:

The Member Care Committee in 2021, in the relative absence of in-person activities due to the pandemic, focused on the well-being and concerns of members through maintaining the HUPC Prayer Ministry/List, sending birthday and anniversary cards, contacts through calls/texts/notes/cards and emails. In addition upon request or knowledge of needs we provided transportation, meals at home, and medical equipment. Two HUPC prayer blankets were presented to members.

Respectfully,

Ruling Elder Nancy Marsh, Moderator



PRESCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Committee Members in 2021:

Bill Hart (Treasurer), Nancy Hart, Michele Loerop (Asst. Preschool Director), Teresa Read (Preschool Employee Rep), Ann Serrano (Preschool Director), Sydney Trombley (Preschool Employee Rep)

Highlights for 2021:

- The preschool has avoided closures and outbreaks in a year of COVID. They have strict protocols in place, including sanitizing the preschool building and keeping the children in “pods” to help identify contacts in case of an outbreak. Teachers continue to wear a mask during school hours.
- We continue to experience full enrollment, with a wait list. Especially during this difficult time, this reflects the parents’ trust in our preschool to keep their children safe.
- The Preschool has funded several improvements to the building, including painting all the classrooms (\$2,090), replacing the flooring and baseboards in the classrooms (\$21,419), replacing the fencing around the playground (\$4,411) and removal of a dead tree on the playground (\$950).

- All eligible preschool staff received \$1000 Pandemic relief check, along with a letter of appreciation from the Governor. Another round is available and being applied for now.

Respectfully,
Ruling Elder Nancy Hart, Moderator



MISSION COMMITTEE

Committee Members in 2021:

Betty Stewart, Ellen Shannahan, Charles Obediah and Bonnie Vanderberg

Highlights for 2021:

Family Promise

In 2021 HUPC supported Family Promise, assuring 8 adults and 18 children had shelter and food for 3 weeks during the year. Members of HUPC also moved furniture and household items donated by a church couple, basically furnishing a new home for a family of 7. Bed linens and laundry and cleaning supplies were also donated.

Grace of Mercy Orphanage, Haiti

HUPC donated \$14,004 to support the children and operations at Grace of Mercy Orphanage and donated \$2,500 for the purchase of a gas-powered generator after a devastating earthquake left the orphanage without power for lighting and cooking.

Arlington Community Services (ACS)

HUPC donated \$3,792 and 6,147 pounds of food.

Micah's Backpack

From January 2021 to December 2021, Micah's Backpack volunteers from HUPC and the community packed and delivered 5,649 bags of weekend food to food insecure children at 5 Arlington area elementary schools. Micah's Backpack was, and is, supported by volunteer hours, and by donations of food and finances from individuals, businesses, civic and social groups and by donations from HUPC and other area churches. Micah's Backpack mentored two area churches with their Micah's Backpack programs, providing an additional 800+ bags of weekend food in 3 schools.

Respectfully,
Ruling Elder Bonnie Vanderberg, Moderator

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Committee Members in 2021:

Gibson Dixson (Staff), Debbie Douget, Tom Douget, Ricky Regnier, Alan Robbins, Eva Skipper

Highlights for 2021:

- WC began the transition from Zoom, online only, worship back to on campus and socially distant worship in the Dining Hall in January 2021; completing the transition back into the Sanctuary beginning the first Sunday following Easter.
- Installed James Kendrick as Temporary Stated Supply Pastor in March, where he remained through the term of a 6 month contract.
- Gained session approval for a new Camera and AV system in the sanctuary, allowing for an improved online worship experience and live streaming via YouTube, moving beyond the web-cam Zoom streamed worship Service. August 2021
- WC was happy to welcome our Interim Pastor, Rev Beverly Dempsey to the pulpit beginning the first Sunday of Advent.

Respectfully,
Ruling Elder Ricky Regnier, Moderator

FINANCE REPORT

The 2022 Budget and 2021 year-end Cash and Funds Statement are shared on the following pages.

Respectfully,
Ruling Elder Mark Morrison, Treasurer

**HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2021 SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT AND 2022 PROVISIONAL BUDGET
TWELVE MONTHS ENDED 12/31/2021**

INCOME STATEMENT:	2020		2021		2021 ACTUAL	2021 BUDGET	VARIANCE FAV (-JUNF)	2022 BUDGET
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	BUDGET				
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME ALL SOURCES	\$338,224	\$320,183	\$323,145	\$324,880			\$- 1,735	\$347,550
EXPENSES:								
PERSONNEL	226,458	222,453	123,398	174,080			50,682	232,545
ADMINISTRATION	32,747	38,440	54,416	44,900			(9,516)	47,700
BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS	34,261	32,942	45,889	56,950			11,061	40,400
UNIFIED MISSIONS/THEOLOGICAL EDUC/FAMILY PROMI	9,535	9,847	10,441	13,900			3,459	10,300
WORSHIP	5,327	7,252	22,232	20,450			(1,782)	4,450
CHRISTIAN NATURE	13,058	4,874	2,580	8,700			6,120	4,775
PER CAPITA AND STEWARDSHIP ADMINISTRATION	3,845	4,349	4,150	4,600			450	4,080
MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	2,197	1,394	1,497	1,300			(197)	3,300
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$327,428	\$321,351	\$284,603	\$324,880			\$60,277	\$347,550
NET ORDINARY INCOME (LOSS)	\$10,796	(\$1,168)	\$58,542	\$0			\$ 58,542	(\$0)

NOTES FOR 2021 FINANCIAL OPERATIONS:

1. Strong support from congregation nearly attaining 99% budget income. Investment income +\$12,320
2. Personnel expenses significantly lower from missing full time pastor and DCE resignation late in the year.
3. Administration-insurance renewal at higher levels due to re-valuation of property and contents.
4. Building and grounds did not use budgeted levels of COVID sanitation services.
5. Logos program suspended for 2021

NOTES FOR 2022 PROVISIONAL BUDGET:

1. Strong pledge support \$318,000. \$3,500 increase in non member giving. \$6,000 increase in pre school support. Faith income \$11,786.
2. Personnel expenses include full time interim pastor, DCE/JPastoral Support on board by beginning 2nd Qtr. Staff increases for DCE and Music Director
3. Insurance renewal at higher levels due to re-valuation of property and contents.
4. Worship budget lower due to reduction in pulpit supply requirements.
5. Logos launches with new school year in the fall...provisional budget line item
6. Membership Development includes spending for marketing and local area canvassing
7. Faith income balances budget \$11,786

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS	
NOTE PAYABLE TO THE PRESBYTERY 12/31/2020	\$10,698
MISSION CONTRIBUTIONS FOR NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL (FUND DONATIONS)	\$70,171
% OF MISSION SPENDING TO TOTAL INCOME	21.7%

CASH AND FUND POSITIONS 12/31/2021	
Suntrust Checking	\$202,854
Money Market	63,428
First Port City Bank (PPP Funds)	31,500
Suntrust Brokerage	34,802
Total Available Cash and Equities	\$332,584
Reserve Funds:	
Mission Related Local	70,968
Restoration and Renewal	13,598
Memorial	51,491
Youth Related	47,486
Bequests Undesignated	32,501
Other Church Support Designated	18,339
Mission Related National/International	12,609
Total Reserve Funds	\$246,992
Free Cash for Operations	\$85,592
Total Available Funds	\$332,584

NEW BUSINESS

MEETING OF THE CORPORATION

Election of Officers

The Nominating Committee offers the following names for the slate for the 2022 officers of the Highlands United Presbyterian Church, Inc.:

Ruling Elder Alan Robbins, for the Office of President

Ruling Elder Mark Vanderberg, for the Office of Vice President.

Ruling Elder Sharyn' Goings, for the Office of Secretary.

Ruling Elder Mark Morrison, for the Office of Treasurer.

Respectfully,
Ruling Elder David Bauerline, Moderator

CLOSING PRAYER



Highlands United Presbyterian Church Leadership and Staff

Ruling Elders Serving on Session:

Class of 2021
Charles Grabill
Scott Heckler
Ricky Regnier
Reed Whitney

Class of 2022
Nancy Marsh
Betty Stewart
Bonnie Vanderberg
Clara Whitaker

Class of 2023
David Bauerlein
Nancy Hart
Alan Robbins
Tom Sweeney

Ruling Elder Sharyn' Going, Clerk of Session

Church Staff:

The Rev. Beverly Dempsey
Interim Pastor and
Head of Staff

Gibson Dixon
Choirmaster and
Organist

Anneliese Robbins
Office Administrator

Sam Sewald
Custodian

Precious Gifts Preschool Directors:

Anna Serrano
Preschool Director

Michele Loerop
Assistant Director

Highlands United Presbyterian Church

10900 McCormick Road, Jacksonville, FL 32225

www.hupcjax.org @hupcjax

Phone: 904-641-9622



**A History Of
Highlands United Presbyterian Church
1965-2015**

**Prepared for the 50th Anniversary "Jubilee Celebration"
April 25 -26, 2015
by
David Bauerlein**

Building the Church

In this year of Jubilee, there are many ways to count the history of Highlands United Presbyterian Church.

The obvious number is 50, the milestone that marks the reason for our Jubilee celebration. It has been 50 years since Highlands officially became a chartered church during a Palm Sunday service on April 11, 1965. But that number really isn't large enough to fully encompass the breadth and depth of the Highlands' experience. Fifty years adds up to 2,600 Sundays of services, all filled exponentially with prayers, songs of praise, and "peace be with you" hugs and handshakes. Highlands' pastors have officiated 180 marriages. They have baptized 305 children and 93 adults. There is the number 1,655, which is the count, so far, of communicants of all ages who have stood before the congregation and become members of Highlands over the past 50 years, sharing in the growth of the church at every possible stage of people's lives.

To start at the very beginning, it's necessary to go back 51 years. The year was 1964. Hurricane Dora roared into Jacksonville. President Lyndon Johnson visited Jacksonville twice – first to survey the hurricane's damage and then to campaign for election with a motorcade through downtown. The Beatles played a shriek-filled concert at the Gator Bowl during their first United States tour.

The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America also turned its eye toward Jacksonville.

On July 5, 1964, the Rev. Robert "Bob" Purrington led the first worship service for the small but dedicated group that would go on to found Highlands United Presbyterian Church. Thirty-three people attended that worship in the Holly Oaks Community Club, a cinderblock building off McCormick Road. Less than a year later, Highlands officially began on April 11, 1965, with 64 charter members in a special ceremony at Holly Oaks. Two years after that momentous day, Highlands dedicated the sanctuary of its newly built church on October 1, 1967 --- the building that has served as its sanctuary for 50 years of Sundays.

Much has changed in the half century that has passed since 1965 when Highlands gained its church charter.

Today, the 32225 zip code in which the church sits has about 22,000 homes in it. But when Highland was founded in 1965, the zip code contained about 1,000 homes. Today, the church is in the middle of Jacksonville's suburbs, but in the beginning, it was in "the country." McCormick Road was a two-lane road, not the four-lane road it is now in front of the church.

The signs pointed to growth, however. The opening of the Matthews Bridge in 1953 made Arlington the fastest-growing area of the city. That development was pushing to the east. The founding of Highlands United Presbyterian Church anticipated that growth and ultimately became part of it.

The “United” part of the church’s name came from its original affiliation with United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. At that time, a separate organization called the Presbyterian Church in the United States was the major organization for Presbyterian churches in the South. The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. was the “northern stream” of the church. As more and more people migrated from the north to the Sunbelt, the United Presbyterian Church followed the movement of its members by building churches in places like the East Arlington area of Jacksonville. (In 1983, United Presbyterian Church would merge with Presbyterian Church in the United States to form Presbyterian Church (USA), with which Highlands currently is affiliated).



To get the ball rolling on Highlands, the United Presbyterian Church sent the Rev. Purrington to Jacksonville, a northern transplant himself. Affectionately known as “Rev. Bob,” he faced many trials and tribulations in his life. He was with Eastman Kodak for 11 years before going into the ministry after going through a period of personal crisis. During the illness and death of his son Philip of cystic fibrosis, he received great support from his Presbyterian minister. That guidance in a time of crisis led to his calling to the ministry, which he carried out with devoted energy.

He was on the New Church Development Board of the national organization. His greatest impact was at the grass-roots level. He did the legwork – literally and figuratively -- in order to organize the founding of churches in Illinois, Ohio and Florida. In Jacksonville, Rev. Bob went from house to house, knocking on doors and spreading the word about the new church that was coming into the Holly Oaks-Beacon Hills area of town. Many of the people on the receiving end of those cold calls had fallen out of practice of going to church. Rev. Bob’s visits reawakened their faith and brought them back to Sunday worship services.

The United Presbyterian Church purchased a manse for Rev. Bob in the Holly Oaks neighborhood. He said he chose Holly Oaks over Beacon Hills because the Beacon Hills neighborhood was very strict about yard maintenance. He said his mission in life was sharing the good news, not cutting grass.

On November 8, 1965, Highlands established a building fund. For the next two years, Highlands moved forward on two tracks – worship services at Holly Oaks

Community Club while simultaneously planning the financing and design of the new church building.



Then as now, a swimming pool sat behind the community club. Members of Highlands might be jumping off the high dive on Saturday and going to church on Sunday morning in the same place. Sometimes they had to wake up extra early on Sunday mornings to prepare for services because the clubhouse had other functions besides church. If groups used the clubhouse for a Saturday night party, Highlands members, most notably the large Kinzey and Betty Reeves' family, made sure they had enough time on Sunday mornings to open the church and "air it out" before services by disposing leftover beer cans and other vestiges of revelry. Bill Kelley, one of the original charter members and the first clerk of the Session, said he worked so hard getting the clubhouse in shape for one Sunday service that he told Rev. Bob he was exhausted and he went home to sleep just before the service started.

Even though the clubhouse was temporary quarters, the services were full-fledged programs. One of the first purchases by the church involved a piano and organ in 1965, beginning a deep tradition of music of all kinds as part of the worship experience. To rehearse, the choir would go to the homes of members during the week and practice in the living rooms.

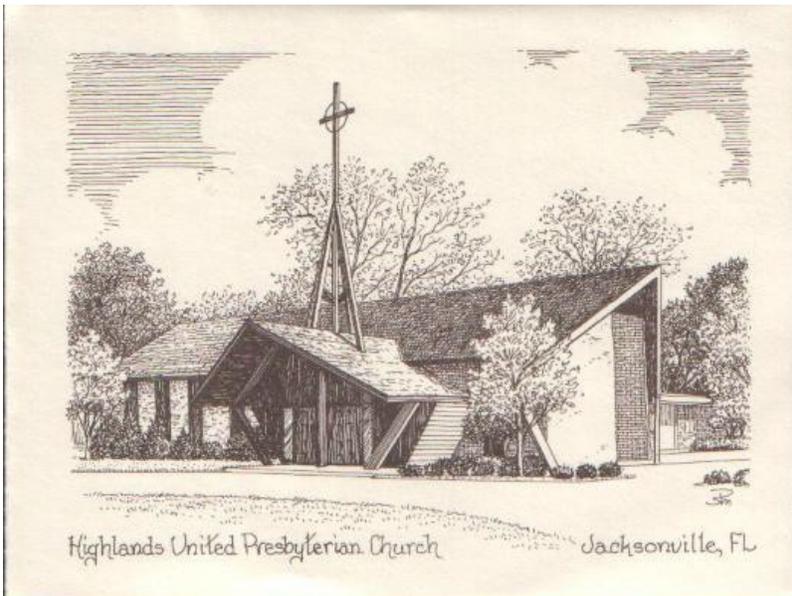
The first Good Friday service left a lasting impression on Libby McJunkin, a charter member of the church. She arrived a few minutes late. Besides her, four other people were in the room – Rev. Bob, his wife Kay, his mother-in-law Mrs. Galloway, and the church accompanist Carol Sheridan. Even though the number of people was so small, Carol Sheridan began playing music and the Rev. Bob conducted the entire Good Friday service. Many years later, Libby would recall the service when she delivered the eulogy for Rev. Bob, saying he was a man of great dignity. That Good Friday service illustrates what Jesus means when he tells us "that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will done for them by my Father in heaven. For when two or three gather in my name, there I am with them."

The Holly Oaks Community Club also was the setting of another big day for Libby and Joe McJunkin. The first baptism of a baby from a charter family was performed on May 8, 1966, when their daughter, Martha McJunkin, was baptized during a service at the clubhouse.

In the spring of 1967, members broke ground for construction of a new church, just a quarter mile down the road from the Holly Oaks Community Club. Throughout that summer of 1967, members of Highlands driving down McCormick Road on their way to Holly Oaks could watch the new church rise up from a clearing in the woods.

Located at 10900 McCormick Road, the property selected for Highlands is a four-acre, rectangle-shaped piece of land that starts at McCormick and extends all the way to Creekview Drive, which is mostly hidden from view by the thick stand of woods on the backside of the church campus.

Bill Buck, who was a charter member and served on the church's first session, was heavily involved in the selection and financing of the property. (His brother James owned Buck & Buck Inc., which developed the Holly Oaks Forest subdivision and donated land where Holly Oaks Community Club was built. A city park, Buck Park, surrounds the club.)



The original suggestion had been to build a cinderblock “starter church.” But the commitment was great enough that Highlands was able to start with a beautiful brick building featuring angled rooflines on the outside and a high-ceilinged interior on the inside with exposed wood beams. Inside the sanctuary, worshippers could see the green canopy of trees through the high windows above the altar – a sight of

nature's beauty that continues to this day.

On Oct. 1, 1967, three hard knocks sounded loudly on the heavy wooden doors of the newly built sanctuary of Highlands United Presbyterian Church. Joe McJunkin still remembers the sound made by the ceremonial knocker, which he says will forever be etched in his memory. He was among the 86 people seated inside the church for that special Sunday afternoon service, up from the 64 charter members at the time of Highlands' acceptance into the United Presbyterian Church in 1965. As the echoes of the knocker resounded inside the church, a procession of Presbyterian Church officials in vestments entered through the door and conducted the dedication service.

In addition to Bill Buck and his wife Peggy, some others who played vital roles in the planning, construction and operations of the early church were John and Charlotte McCorkle, Cecil and Virginia “Ginny” Smith, Joe and Dottie Williams, Joe and Libby McJunkin, and Kinzey and Betty Reeves. Mary Kelley, a charter member, would be continuously active in the church in the following decades, maintaining a link to the founding.

Rev. Bob continued as pastor until he received a call to a church in Cambridge, New York, in November 1971. He had suffered a devastating blow in 1968 when his second son, Larry, died in an automobile accident at the age of 19. Highlands dedicated a memorial garden in Larry's name in November 1968. When Rev. Bob died in 1992, his ashes were buried at Arlington Memorial Cemetery near his beloved son Larry.

NEXT STEPS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

The 1970s were a decade of bumpy transition for Highlands.

The Rev. Donald Ray Jones succeeded Rev. Bob as pastor in January 1972 and served until late 1978. During that time, the neighborhoods around Highlands were rapidly growing as Jacksonville in general and the East Arlington area specifically became hot spots for new subdivision developments. Session members recognized in the early 1970s that Highlands needed more building space to provide the programs that would appeal to new residents moving into the area. The building that we think of today as the sanctuary and adjoining church offices was a multi-purpose building for worship, Sunday school classes and fellowship. When the weather was nice, members gathering for fellowship dinners would dine outside under the stars.

In the middle of the decade, discussion turned to the idea of building a 1,200 square foot fellowship hall that would be an extension of the original building. But the church could not gain traction to turn discussion into construction. The church started a youth program but could not sustain it. The biggest change to the Highlands campus took place inside the sanctuary. Ever since the church's dedication in 1967, worship services had used folding metal chairs for worship. In April 1976, Highlands dedicated the installation of new pews and carpeting.

After Rev. Jones' departure in late 1978, the Rev. Albert Kissling became interim pastor for a period of more than a year.

Dr. Kissling calmed the waters by bringing years of pastoral experience. He was in his late 70s when he came to Highlands. He had served from 1932 to 1967 as pastor of Riverside Presbyterian Church, a large congregation in the Riverside neighborhood near downtown. He was president of the Florida Council of Churches in 1950 and president of the Jacksonville Ministerial Alliance in 1934 and 1959. After retiring from Riverside Presbyterian Church, he later served as interim pastor for churches in Orange Park, Tallahassee, Titusville, Baltimore, Columbia, Missouri, and of course in Jacksonville. He brought a healing touch and stability to the church, allowing it to flourish in many ways.

Dr. Kissling's ministry set the stage for the rapid stage of growth that Highlands would experience in the 1980s. The eastward march of subdivisions meant new homes were springing up all over the area surrounding Highlands. Those new homes were bringing families with children. Highlands would reflect that change in the 1980s, starting with the arrival of its third permanent minister, the Rev. Dr. Donald Harris.

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR NEW LIFE: BUILDINGS AND PROGRAMS FLOURISH



Rev. Harris was pastor of a church in Michigan when Bill Buck, a charter member who was heading the search committee, invited Rev. Harris and his wife Brenda to visit Jacksonville shortly after Christmas in 1979. If they thought they were getting a break from the harsh winter of Michigan by coming to the balmy Sunshine State, the opposite turned out to be the case. The church booked an oceanfront room for them at the Sea Turtle Inn at Atlantic Beach, where they could stand on the balcony and look down at palm trees coated with a half inch of ice. The cold snap notwithstanding, Rev. Harris and Highlands' members quickly warmed to each other during the visit.

In April 1980, he was called to become pastor of Highlands. He and Brenda moved to Jacksonville with their two children, Tom and Jennifer. Highlands transitioned from being a church for middle-aged and older adults to one that also brought in younger members with children in tow. It was a period of "build it and they will come," and come they did.

Over the next 13 years, Highlands would construct a new fellowship hall, renovate the sanctuary, build a new family life building, and enlarge the church offices.



In 1981, Highlands kicked off the second building fund in its history and broke ground on Sept. 13, 1981, for construction of the building that would house Sunday school classrooms, a fellowship hall and a nursery. (The nursery aimed to show young families that the church would provide care for their children.) The church hired contractors to do specialized construction work, but members also put their own sweat equity into the project. Bill Buck was at the construction site on a daily basis.

The extra space was sorely needed. Highlands had started its first vacation Bible school in 1980. It became a charter organization for the Boy Scouts of America in 1981. The spiritual education of its young members was growing in importance. Highlands dedicated its new fellowship hall on May 16, 1982.



The fellowship hall's hallway was the site of dinner with a twist. This was during a time when the church had a small dinner get-together and service on Wednesday nights. After being told to dress up for a special dinner, one group was escorted from the sanctuary to Harris Hall, where sheets of white paper covered the halls and seats were arranged along the length of the hallway to make it seem like people were sitting inside a plane. Just as they were about to "take off" for a flight to an exotic locale, hijackers burst onto the scene, forced the plane to land, and everyone was marched out to the back yard. Harry Wade was among those stunned by the turn of events, even more so since his wife Billie was one of the "hijackers." The second group was taken next to Harris Hall and the entire hijacking episode played out again. A little shocked but laughing about it, everyone then had a great time eating dinner outdoors. (A few years later, a variation of this would be done during a Mother-Daughter Dinner when attendees walked into Harris Hall for flights to Hawaii, were hijacked and landed in Arizona for an outdoors barbecue.)

After a short rest from construction, Highlands' members decided two years later to make a major renovation of the sanctuary building. Harry Wade, who worked in the executive office of the Winn-Dixie supermarket chain, persuaded the architect who designed Winn-Dixie stores to draw up a blueprint for remodeling the sanctuary building, which he did at no cost to the church.

In the original layout of the church, the sanctuary was not as big as it is today. The back of the large room was set aside for three small rooms of equal size – the minister's office on the side closest to the street, a middle room for first- and second-grade Sunday school classes, and the robe room where choir members put on their robes before services.

The renovation tore down the walls of those rooms and relocated the office, the Sunday school classroom and the robe room. The remodeling created more space for seating by adding rows of pews. It also created a new and bigger chancel – the place where the choir, minister and organist are during services. Before the renovation, Highlands had room for 140 worshippers and 14 choir members. After the changes, the sanctuary could seat 232 in worship plus 28 in the choir.

The choir was stretching its wings during that time, seeking to add new dimensions to that part of the service. DeAn Winton, who joined Highlands in 1977, remembers how the choir began appealing to Dorothy Hannah, who was the choir director and organist, for the choir to perform a cantata for Christmas. Ms. Hannah was adamantly opposed to a Christmas cantata, telling the choir outright that they weren't

capable of performing one, in part because the choir was small in number at the time. The choir persisted, trying to sweet-talk her into doing the cantata. She turned out not to be sweet-talk material, DeAn recalls. One night at choir rehearsal, after another round of pleas to perform a cantata, Ms. Hannah slammed the organ shut and resigned on the spot. She left the building and was never seen at Highlands again.

The choir came through and did perform a Christmas cantata that year, "Night of the Living Miracles," with great appreciation by the congregation.

In 1984, the time had come to replace the church organ, which had developed a mind of its own regarding when it would play during church services. At first, the organ would hum very quietly between songs during the church service, but that humming become noticeably louder, so it had to be shut off after each hymn and anthem, and then warmed up when it came time to play again. Harry Wade made a donation to buy a new organ and the music director, Wendell Smith, arranged for Kelly's Piano and Organ, where he worked, to deliver three electric organs to the sanctuary for a try-out. Wendell took turns playing all of them while a group decided which one sounded best. DeAn's husband, Charlie, called it "The Battle of the Organs." A Rodgers electric organ got the nod, and it's still in the sanctuary.

Highlands continued to expand its musical offerings during this time by adding a handbell choir. The first octaves for the bell choir were donated in 1988, and those were expanded with two more octaves – the largest and smallest bells in 1995. The Crafty Ladies made two huge, plush table covers for the bells to rest on when used in performances. The Crafty Ladies and Pastor Barbara Hamilton, who became the church's first parish associate in 2002, helped complete the hand chime octaves. If you arrive at church on Sunday and see a lot of people wearing black slacks and shirts, you know the handbell choir will be part of that day's services.

Highlands dedicated the remodeled sanctuary on Feb. 17, 1985. That same year, the church named the fellowship hall after Rev. Harris on the fifth anniversary of his being pastor. Terry Thurmond, who was chairman of the personnel committee, called Ed Albright, who was the presbytery executive for the area, and said church finances were tight but the congregation wanted to do something to celebrate the fifth anniversary. Ed Albright suggested naming a building for him. To this day, Rev. Harris says it makes him uncomfortable to have his name on a building. Still, Harris Hall does roll off the tongue. It would seem odd to call it anything else after so many years.

The church was always looking for creative ways for stewardship during this period of growth. The Pony Express involved a leather pouch that members relayed from house to house for people to fill their pledge cards. One Sunday at stewardship time, people walking into church found a plastic cover on the floor. They later found out why when Don Hall walked through the door leading a living, breathing, slipping and sliding pony into the sanctuary. (The plastic was intended as a precaution if nature called while the pony was inside the church, but it wasn't easy for the pony to get a

foothold.) Afterward, lots of children and even a few adults hopped on the pony for a ride outside the church.

On March 5, 1989, Highlands dedicated its first set of stained glass windows, surrounding the front door of the sanctuary. The window above the door depicts the logo of Presbyterian Church U.S.A., which shows a dove flying at the top of the cross with flames on each side of the lower part of the cross. The stained glass was made possible by a memorial gift given to the church by Nanetta Cridlin upon the death of her husband, Judge Clyde Cridlin.

The attention to the sanctuary wasn't always devoted to expansion.

Highlands has always been a church built in a tree-filled setting – a “church in the woods” – but over the years, the woods kept getting into the church. The huge pine beams that gird the roof were the perfect meal for pests that regularly invaded the building. Exterminators said the problem was woodborers, which are half-inch larvae of beetles. Carpenter ants also created problems, relentlessly chewing through the pine and sending fine particles of sawdust falling from the beams.

In 1989, exterminators covered the entire church with tarps, creating a huge tent over the church to trap insecticide gasses during a 20-hour fumigation. This led to the Night the Church Almost Burned Down – or at least, it might have seemed that way to anyone driving down McCormick Road that night when every fire truck on our side of town converged on the church. As a precaution, the exterminators had turned off the main circuit breaker during the treatment, but not the timers that controlled the spotlights that lit up the rooftop cross and the roofline. The heat of those lights burned through the tarp and it caught fire. A driver passing by saw the small flames and called the fire department. The lights under the tented tarp made it seem like the entire building might be on fire, and there were concerns as well about whether the insecticide gasses trapped inside the tent would explode. Ultimately, firefighters put on their breathing masks and went under the tent where they turned off the timer switches.

REFOCUSING FOR THE FUTURE

With all its buildings intact, the church embarked in September 1992 on its third major building project in a decade – construction of the new Family Life Center and expansion of the original sanctuary building to provide more office space for church staff. The \$720,000 project erected the 100,000 square foot Family Life Center and added 7,000 square feet in office space, along with more parking and landscaping.



The Family Life Center is designed to match the architecture of the sanctuary by using a brick exterior and a high ceiling with stained wood and open, overhead beams. The dining area is big enough to comfortably seat 300 people. It contains a commercial kitchen stocked with refrigerators, ovens and stoves to prepare meals for large gatherings. For those who are counting, this is the third kitchen built for Highlands – the small one in the original building, the second one in Harris Hall, and the third one in the Family Life Center. Highlands has always been a place where “Let us pray” is followed by “Let’s eat.” A partial list would be the Pig Roast, the Low Country Boil, the annual youth spaghetti dinner, the chili cook-offs, the Grillmaster barbecue competition, the smoked Boston Butts sold as a fund-raiser and, of course, the great spread laid out during fellowship after each and every Sunday service.

The Family Life Center was built on what used to be a parking area, so the church created a new parking lot on the back side of the campus. As the church was moving toward this phase of construction, Brenda Harris joined the session and became a leader of the building committee. The original plan was to use gravel for the parking area. Brenda insisted on having it paved, saying women shouldn’t step out of their cars in high heels and walk across gravel. The design of the parking lot left in place the canopy of stately oak trees, which resulted in vehicles getting what members came to call the “Highlands dings” when acorns dropped from branches. Throughout the years, Highlands has sought to keep that treed appearance in the parking area.

The opening of the Family Life Center added even more classrooms for Sunday school. It also enabled Highlands to launch the LOGOS program and Precious Gifts Preschool in the fall of 1993. Those brought a whole new level to the church’s Christian education programs.

Indeed, the construction of new buildings at Highlands was never an end in itself. Throughout that period, the members of Highlands were finding new ways to reach out and connect with the community. The construction gave Highlands the ability to go beyond its walls as never before.

SCOUTING COMES TO HIGHLANDS



In 1981, Highlands chartered Cub Scout Pack 181 and three years later, the church chartered Boy Scout Troop 181. Over the past three decades, 39 Scouts have earned their Eagle badges as members of Troop 181. Some of those Eagle Scouts have built their service projects on the church campus such as decorative lighting, a storage building in the playground area, a fenced and gated loading area for the metal trash bin, and a large gazebo with a fire pit that

the congregation has used as a starting point for Easter Sunday services. Highlands has also been home to Girls Scouts and Brownies who have found a welcome location for their activities.

HIGHLANDS IN LOCAL MISSION

The year 1988 marked the start of two other community programs that continue to this day. Highlands took part for the first time in CROP Walk, an annual fundraiser. Highlands joins other churches that go on 1-mile and 5-mile walks. Proceeds go to support Arlington Community Services for local assistance and Church World Services to fight hunger globally.

Also in 1988, Highlands rolled out its participation in Meals on Wheels. Every week, members of Highlands volunteer to drive hot meals to elderly people in their homes, giving them both nourishment and the spiritual comfort of having regular visitors.

In August 1989, Highlands forged partnerships with other churches to better bring its services to help those in need. Highlands joined 12 other Arlington churches to form Arlington Community Services, a jointly supported food pantry. Highlands and the other churches had always given food and support, but the churches wanted to unify a single place to maximize the outreach and ensure no one was taking advantage of their assistance programs.

Joe Travis, who served on the session at Highlands, was the first president of Arlington Community Services. Joe and Harry Wade and many, many others have been regular volunteers in this caring ministry in our community.

Harry Wade, a long time member, was also an ACS volunteer whose career was in the grocery business. Harry's philosophy is that any child who has at least peanut butter, bread and jelly will not go hungry. By his inspiration Highlands has become known as "The Jelly Church" because it pays special attention to keeping the shelves of Arlington Community Services stocked with jars of jelly. Every Sunday, members of Highlands bring bags of food for donation to the food pantry.

In 1993, Highlands launched its first blood drive. Twice a year, a mobile blood donation unit pulls into the church's driveway so members can give blood on Sundays, an outreach program coordinated by church member Sharyn' Going. Over the years, members of Highlands have donated well over 1,500 pints of life-saving blood.

FAITHFUL NURTURE

As Highlands reached out to the community, it also worked with equal measure to strengthen the ties within the church family. In September 1984, the first lay care committee was established. The committee looked for ways to provide support for

those going through times of crisis, such as illness or deaths in the family. This would be not only the pastor's calling, but something the whole congregation supported. Ginny Morrison served as chairwoman of the first lay care committee. In March 1987, Libby McJunkin helped start a prayer chain ministry. Day after day, week after week, month after month and year after year, the prayer ministry is the heartbeat of the church. It's changed some in the years since it began. Today, it's possible to request prayers by email to Nancy Moewe, the current prayer ministry contact, as well as with a phone call or personal request. But beyond the technology, the prayer chain goes to the heart of the church. Every Sunday in the worship bulletin a list of names is printed of those for whom the church is praying.

The completion of the Family Life Center in 1993 brought forth a burst of new programs to help young people grow up grounded in faith.

The first session of LOGOS started in October 1993, giving children from kindergarten through their senior year in high school a way to deepen their faith. The planning for LOGOS had been in the works for years. Part of the inspiration for building the Family Life Center stemmed from the need to have enough dining and kitchen space to support LOGOS, which is a national, non-denominational program. LOGOS comes from the Greek word for "The WORD" as in John 1:1 "In the beginning was THE WORD and THE WORD was with God and THE WORD was God." Which means that the LOGOS program teaches Jesus. The "mid-week miracle" is based on a foundation of Bible study. Young people also learn how to participate in Sunday worship by learning songs to sing before the congregation. The third part of LOGOS is a fun activity time followed by a dinner when children are joined by adult members of the church in the extended family of the church. The dining room in the Family Life Center is filled with children and their "table parents." Over the years Highlands has made LOGOS its own by adapting it and allowing it to evolve for our unique situation. Which is most likely why it is still going strong today.

The first group of LOGOS students in its inaugural year included a young girl named Laura Stewart. She would come back to Highlands after college and become interim director of Christian education in 2014. Now married with two children, Laura Sambito's oldest son has started LOGOS, so the cycle is continuing across the generations.

Another much loved tradition of the church were the annual adult retreats at the Honey Creek Conference Center in Ga. Groups would go up on Friday for a full weekend of themed retreats that built mutual affection and faith.

HIGHLANDS PRECIOUS GIFTS

Also in the fall of 1993, Highlands formally started its Precious Gifts Preschool, taking the place of the Mother's Morning Out Program that had begun in 1986. The Family Life Center afforded plenty of classroom space for the preschool classes, which filled up fast. The first year, Precious Gifts had 24 children, the second year it grew to

56, and the number was 80 by the third year. Eventually, enrollment rose as high as 146. The guiding philosophy behind the preschool is that children learn best through play, so that means children learn to paint with both their hands and their feet. They are immersed in reading and learn the virtues of Christian values. It is both a school and a ministry of the church. Many members of Highlands came to the church by way of the school when their children attended Precious Gifts.

Ever since the founding of Precious Gifts, Rhonda DeVriendt has been its first and only director. Known to children and parents as “Ms. Rhonda,” she says the 22 years she’s served owe largely to the family atmosphere that has developed among her and the teachers, some of whom were students themselves in Precious Gifts and came back to the school to teach. The staff also has had staying power over the years. Eileen Blackmon has been with Precious Gifts since its first class in October 1993.

Another distinguishing feature of Precious Gifts is that it openly tells parents of diabetic preschool children that their children are welcome. “Glucose monitors and insulin pumps don’t scare us,” the school says on its web page. That overture stems from Rhonda’s own experience as a mother when her youngest son, Daniel, was diagnosed with diabetes when he was 2 years old. To her dismay, she realized that other preschool programs didn’t have a place for diabetic children, so Highlands moved to fill that void by training teachers the basics of health care for diabetes.

After 22 years directing Precious Gifts, Rhonda bumps into students and their families all the time – at the grocery store, the airport, soccer fields, even 2,400 miles from Jacksonville on the other side of the country. In 1999, she was on a honeymoon with husband Randy in San Francisco. As they were walking through downtown, they heard shouts from across the street, “Ms. Rhonda! Ms. Rhonda!” Randy turned to Rhonda and said, “I cannot believe this.” It turned out to be the parents of children who had gone through the preschool.

STAFF LEADERSHIP SHIFTS AND GROWTH

All in all, the church was a bustling place not only on Sundays, but every day of the week when Rev. Harris received a call to an administrative position with the Florida Presbyterian Retirement Communities in May 1995. In his 15 years with Highlands, he helped organize the expansion of building space at the campus, personally working with contractors to oversee the construction. But the biggest value of his leadership was his ability to work with people and encourage them. He brought many people into leadership roles and gave his backing to efforts by members of Highlands to start new programs. “It was a marriage made in heaven,” Rev. Harris says of his time at Highlands. “The Lord blessed us mightily time and time and time again.”

Dr. Edward Gammon served as interim pastor of Highlands while Highlands searched for its next minister.

On Oct. 1, 1996, the Rev. Dr. David Lee accepted the call at Highlands, bringing his many talents to the growth and nurture of the church. Not many pastors can recite the Gospel readings during a service, then walk across the chancel to join the choir singing its anthem, and then walk back to the pulpit and sing an a cappella verse from a spiritual or a Motown song as part of his sermon. Like our previous pastors, “Dr. Dave” came from the north, but not so far north. He moved from North Carolina, his home state, where he had served two pastorates. He can speak fluently about the varieties of North Carolina barbecue and is a leader of the kitchen crew, whether it’s the annual spaghetti dinner or preparing an authentic Costa Rican dinner that helped the church youth group raise money for a mission trip to Costa Rica in 2014. He also started a tradition of making cinnamon rolls from scratch, using his mother’s recipe from when he was growing up, and inviting the congregation to join him and his wife Susan on Christmas mornings at the fellowship hall.

Highlands has been blessed to have ministers serve for long periods of time over its 50-year history. Dr. Dave has been pastor of Highlands for more than 18 years and counting, long enough to see the infants he baptized grow up and graduate from high school. He has continued to make Highlands a church for all ages. He has helped the elderly prepare for their final days. His sermons help us feel restored and renewed, and over the course of his time as pastor, the church would reach a point when restoration and renewal would be needed for what Dr. Dave rightly calls the “life of the church.”

Highlands also hired its first director of Christian education in 1996, welcoming Becky Andrews to that position. The DCE oversees all the programs that take place throughout the week, ensuring Highlands can minister and support its members. This would prove to be a very important position that Highlands would successfully continue in the future when Jaimie Shires became DCE in 2007 and then Laura Sambito became interim DCE in 2014.

HIGHLANDS GETS CRAFTY



Jo Carmichael, June Travis and Cathy Marks.

Highlands stepped up its community outreach in 1999 when a group of women came together and formed the Crafty Ladies, whose work at the church is exactly as the name describes – bringing their skill and artistry to crafts that have been a feature of Highlands every year since then. Some of the original members were Billie Wade, Jo An Ewing, Jo

The first handiwork of the Crafty Ladies hangs in the sanctuary to this day. Those are the six banners installed on the wall behind the altar. Jo Carmichael was a member at that time of the church session and each session member received a complementary calendar from the Presbyterian Church. The back of the calendar had six illustrations that she, June Travis, Rosalie Howell, and Cathy Marks used as designs to stitch and

sew the multi-colored banners. The banners show the proclamation of the Gospel, the shelter and fellowship of the children of God, the maintenance of divine worship, the preservation of the truth, the promotion of social righteousness, and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

The annual Fall Craft Fair, always the first weekend in November, has become an institution, not only in the church but in the community. Each year the Crafty Ladies and their adjunct group the Crafty Ladies of the Evening, which was started for those who wanted to participate but could not be at the Monday morning meetings, produce a Fall and Christmas wonderland of items they create themselves. Mary Lou McNaughton's bake sale is a way for almost everyone in the church to participate in the Craft Show by baking goods and then, of course, buying and eating them!

Since its beginning, the proceeds from the Crafty Ladies craft shows have helped pay for countless improvements and programs in every facet of the church. From 2000 to 2014, the Crafty Ladies raised \$104,816 for the work of the church. It has paid for ceiling lights, Bibles for Sunday school, lawn and building renovations, Arlington Community Services, the Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless, Family Promise, youth mission projects and trips, stained glass windows – the list goes on and shows no sign of stopping.

FAMILY PROMISE

In 2006, Highlands joined the network of churches participating in Family Promise of Jacksonville. As was the case with Arlington Community Services, Highlands was a founding church when the congregation joined together to bring Family Promise, a national organization, to Jacksonville. The church began exploring the program in 2004. Sue Heckler traveled to Gainesville to see the program in action at churches there. She was a driving force in getting it organized at Highlands and off to such a great start. The first family, a mother and her five children, spent a week at Highlands in July 2006.

In Family Promise, churches take turns hosting families who are going through hard times, an alternative to staying in traditional homeless shelters. For a week, the families stay at Highlands, and Harris Hall becomes their home. The Sunday school classrooms become their bedrooms. Members of the church join them for meals and sleep overnight at Harris Hall as well. Family Promise is a time for us to understand what Jesus meant when he said, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in." The families have children of all ages who enjoy being able to play with the toys and build the jigsaw puzzles at the church. The youth of Highlands join in hosting the families, so it truly is a church-wide effort to make families feel welcome. Highlands is one of 16 host congregations for Family Promise.

Since 2006, Highlands has provided a total of 21 weeks of lodging for families. That adds up to 1,799 nights of shelter for the individual family members who have

stayed at the church. Highlands has donated almost \$15,000 in cash to Family Promise, and if a dollar value were put on the meals, volunteer hours and supplies contributed by the church, that would equate to another \$204,000, according to the running total kept by Family Promise of Jacksonville.

TIME FOR RESTORATION AND RENEWAL

The campus of Highlands did not change much in the years after the Family Life Center opened in 1993. But on May 27, 2007, Highlands dedicated a new cross on the front lawn of the church.

This cross replaced the original cross that was built atop the sanctuary constructed in 1967. Due to the weight and height of the rooftop cross, it was causing structural problems and leaking in the building, so it had come down several years earlier. The new cross was paid for through a memorial gift from Harry Wade, given in honor of his late wife Billie Smith Wade and his sister, Jeanette Wade Lawson.

Church member Chad Grimm, a landscape architect, supervised the design, construction and landscaping of the cross. The steel cross stands atop a grassy mound, making it highly visible to drivers going down McCormick Road. The dedication occurred on Pentecost Sunday, a day when the sanctuary is decorated with red streamers to symbolize the flames of the Holy Spirit coming to earth. On that dedication day, motorists passing by the church would have seen a congregation wearing bright red shirts and dresses gathered around the cross.

The installation of the new cross brought home the passage of time since the church opened its doors in 1967 with the rooftop cross. The campus of Highlands was aging, and like any set of buildings, time was taking its toll.

Leading up to the 50th anniversary milestone, Highlands embarked on a building fund for its Restoration and Renewal campaign. For several years, session members had been tracking a growing backlog of maintenance needs. It wasn't the best of financial times to embark on a large-scale building initiative. The country was still climbing out of the Great Recession, and Florida had been hit as hard as any state. At a session meeting on June 18, 2012, Dr. Dave encouraged members to "step out of the boat" and have faith. Session created the Restoration and Renewal Task Force with six members: Jim Ash, Chad Grimm, John Smith, Alan Robbins, Nancy Moewe, and Inge Forchtner. Three months later, the task force spoke to the congregation about plans for a wide-scale slate of work.

Unlike the previous building funds, Restoration and Renewal was not primarily intended to add more building space, but instead sought to take the existing campus and renew it in a host of ways: new stained glass windows for the sanctuary, new roofs for Harris Hall and the Family Life Center, fresh pavement and landscaping for the parking lot, repainted walls and upgraded sound and visual systems, and enhancements to the kitchen in the Family Life Center, which was enlarged with new

appliances. There was bread-and-butter work on air conditioning systems, roof trusses, door replacements, and vinyl flooring.



The first completed portion of "R & R" was the replacement of the old windows with new stained glass. Kirk Reber, of "Creative Glass Works" was the local artist.

Restoration and Renewal enlarged Harris Hall to give it more room for storage and, most importantly, make it a better place to host families as part of the church's participation in Family Promise of Jacksonville. The renovation built showers for Family Promise families to use, something that the church had previously lacked when it hosted families.

All told, Restoration and Renewal put \$420,000 of work into the campus, creating it anew and putting it on sound footing as it moves into the next 50 years.

As always at Highlands, Restoration and Renewal also meant people rolled up their sleeves and lent a hand. After contractors poured a new cement walkway for the garden in the campus courtyard, the church's Presbyterian Youth Connection planted rose bushes and shrubs, creating a garden for people to walk through on their way from the parking lot to the sanctuary.

YOUTH IN MISSION

For the youth of Highlands, opportunities for service come early and often, starting from their pre-kindergarten years when they take small metal pails down the pews during the first Sunday service of each month and collect donations for the JEMM offering, with coins clattering into the pails for Jamaica Mutual Mission, a joint program of the St. Augustine Presbytery and the Presbyterian Church of Jamaica. Some Highlands youth have grown up and traveled on mission trips to Jamaica in their high school years.

Children also can look forward to taking part in the 30-Hour Famine, which Highlands began for its youth group in 2008. Sponsored by World Vision, 30-Hour Famine asks participants to fast for 30 hours so they can experience some of what it is like to go without food. The young people range in age from seventh graders doing it for the first time to high school seniors who are on their seventh consecutive famine.

They raise money for hunger relief by getting pledges. During the famine, they learn how many people suffer the deprivations from lack of food and clean water. Members of the church write letters encouraging the fasters to keep strong in their mission. The first night they sleep in large cardboard boxes so they can experience what it is like to face lack of shelter.

Our young people have done the 30-Hour Famine the weekend of Easter. When they break the fast on Easter morning or go to Good Friday worship while on the second night of their 30-Hour famine, it deepens their understanding of what Christ has taught us about compassion, and those of us in the congregation who watch them complete their famine have been moved as well by their dedication. Jaimie Shires, the director of Christian education, stayed with the young people for the entire time. Before accepting a call to move to another church, Jaimie did the famine for seven straight years, which adds up to 210 hours in close quarters with teens and pre-teens who are getting more and more hungry by the hour. That's dedication.

In the summer after eighth grade, Highlands youth have their first chances to "go to the mountain" for the annual trip to Montreat, the annual gathering of Presbyterian young people from across the country in North Carolina. They gather on a Saturday morning at the church with their suitcases and pillows for the 460-mile trip where they spend a week discussing their faith in small groups and worshipping in the huge stone chapel. When they come back from the mountain to our Florida coastal plain, they wear their Montreat T-shirts and lead the Sunday service upon their return.

The second event of each summer involves a week of mission work at places as close as our own Jacksonville "backyard," traveling to another part of Florida, heading to another state, or even flying to another country.



In 2014, the mission trip went to Costa Rica from June 26 through July 3. For a week, a group of youth and adults worked in the village of San Ramon de Norte, which is in the province of Perez Zeledon, near San Isidro del General. As their service project, they planted trees on a steep dirt incline in the village to prevent erosion. Host families from the town gave our missionaries a place to stay and everyone shared in the excitement of soccer-mad Costa Ricans during their team's amazing run in the World Cup.

The youth and adult chaperones worshipped at a Catholic Church service in the village. They also took zip line rides with amazing views of the rain forest and went to a national park on the Pacific Ocean coast.

How did a youth group from Jacksonville, Florida, end up not only in Costa Rica of all countries, but in this particular village among all others?

The answer lies deep in the history of Highlands. Costa Rica is the home of Kinzey and Betty Reeves, both charter members of Highlands who helped found the church way back in 1965. They later moved to Costa Rica to live on a coffee farm with their daughter Kim Wise. Their daughter Robin recalls her parents telling her that they had once had an interest in becoming missionaries. Their invitation to the youth group made it possible for the youth to be missionaries.

WE ARE THE CHURCH -- EVERYWHERE

So there really aren't any "walls" of Highlands. Over the past 50 years, people have joined the worship at Highlands and the pathways of their lives have taken them in different directions. Some have stayed in Jacksonville and the church has two, three and even four generations of family in the church on any given Sunday. Some have gone far distances from Jacksonville like the Reeves, settling in different cities, states and countries. But no matter how much time and distance has gone by, the family of Highlands at this half-century mark in its history is always growing. They have all left their mark on Highlands, just as it has left its mark on them.

It is fitting that when Highlands dedicated its brand-new church building back in 1967, that ceremony started with three loud knocks on the door.

The people inside the sanctuary had a vision for what Highlands could become – not only in that day and time, but for the generations that would follow them through that same door. The generosity of its members has built a wonderful, peaceful campus with a sanctuary, education building and Family Life Center. Its members have faithfully preserved and built upon that foundation. They have formed prayer groups and prayer chains. They have given countless hours of their time to the church and its ministries. This Jubilee year is a time to rejoice at all that has happened in the life of the church and also look ahead with new energy brought by Restoration and Renewal.

Jesus told his disciples, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Whatever the next 50 years bring, Highlands will be a church whose members keep knocking on the door.

Highlands Through the Years

April 1964: 1st pastor, the Rev. Robert “Bob” Purrington arrives in Jacksonville.

April 1964: 1st (and only) manse purchased at 10545 Serena Drive.

July 5, 1964: 1st worship service conducted at Holly Oaks Community Club, 11210 McCormick Road.

Hurricane Dora strikes Jacksonville in September 1964.

October 1964: 1st Sunday school program.

October 4, 1964: 1st baptism – Michelle Mackey, daughter of Fred and Donna Culp Mackey.

The decade’s top-grossing movie, “The Sound of Music,” is released in 1965.

April 11, 1965: 1st chartered as Highlands United Presbyterian Church during service at Holly Oaks Community Club. Church begins with 64 charter members.

May 2, 1965: 1st session meeting with six founding members: William Buck, Ordway Emmons, Harold Huff, William Kelley, Joseph McJunkin and William Sheddan.

June 6, 1965: 1st church by-laws adopted.

November 1965: 1st stewardship campaign. Twelve families make pledges.

November 8, 1965: 1st building fund established. The 1st building committee is comprised of John McCorkle, Rudy Black, Ordway Emmons, Tom McEady, Dottie Williams, John Morrison, and Milt Cummings.

February 1966: 1st organ purchased. Carol Sheridan is first choir director/pianist.

Spring 1966: 1st communicant’s class: Linda Buck, Susan Kelley, Sharon Kelley and Robert Strockley.

May 8, 1966: 1st baptism after chartering of Highlands: Martha Jo McJunkin, daughter of Joseph and Libby McJunkin.

May 15, 1966: 1st church picnic.

June 3, 1966: Flagler Memorial Church of St. Augustine donates \$15,000 to Highlands’ building fund.

June 26, 1967: 1st marriages performed by Rev. Purrington: Ralph E. Raesemann and Shirley A. Horn and Robert C. Raeaseman and Helen S. Charleston. Married in house at 1842 St. Johns Bluff Road.

Regency Square mall opens on March 2, 1967, giving Arlington the site of the biggest shopping mall in the city.

Spring, 1967: Ground-breaking for construction of church at 10900 McCormick Road.

October 1, 1967: Dedication of new sanctuary with special Sunday afternoon service.

October 29, 1967: 1st wedding performed in new sanctuary for marriage of George Spache and Evelyn Schoonover.

November 1967: Memorial garden established in memory of Larry Purrington, the son of Rev. Robert Purrington.

Richard Nixon inaugurated as president in January 1969.

Neil Armstrong becomes the first man to walk on the moon on July 20, 1969.

June 1970: Session decides to sell the church manse on Serena Drive and give housing allowance to pastor.

Disney World opens in Orlando on Oct. 1, 1971.

December 1971: Rev. Purrington departs Highlands. He is called to serve church in Cambridge, New York.

January, 1972: Highlands calls the Rev. Donald Roy Jones to be the second pastor of Highlands.

The University of North Florida opens its doors to first group of students.

November 1972: The session is expanded to nine members.

September 1973: 1st Children's Church program started.

December 1973 : 1st Chrismon project started by Women's Group.

April 25, 1976: 1st pews in sanctuary. The dedication also is for new carpeting in the sanctuary. Until this time, church used liturgical chairs for worship service.

Jimmy Carter inaugurated as president in January 1977.

Star Wars released in May 1977 and becomes one of the all-time movie blockbusters.

December 1977: 1st fenced playground for children is constructed. The church is legally incorporated.

December 1978: Rev. Jones departs as pastor.

January 1979: The Rev. Albert Kissling begins serving as interim pastor.

February 1980: 1st chimes installed in sanctuary.

April 1980: Call to Rev. Dr. Donald Harris to become third pastor of Highlands.

June 1980: 1st Vacation Bible School, directed by Betty Reeves.

November 1980: 1st church secretary, Brenda Harris.

Ronald Reagan inaugurated as president in January 1981.

September 13, 1981: Groundbreaking for new fellowship hall, which will be built as a detached building immediately behind sanctuary building.

The decade's biggest movie is "E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial," released in 1982.

May 16, 1982: Dedication of new fellowship hall.

May 1982: 1st mother-daughter banquet.

The United Presbyterian Church in the USA (of which Highlands was a member church) merges with the Presbyterian Church in the United States to form the Presbyterian Church (USA) in the summer of 1983.

October 1983: Session increased from nine members to twelve members.

May 1984: Planning begins for remodeling of the sanctuary.

September 1984: 1st lay care committee established. Ginny Morrison serves as chairwoman.

Feb. 17, 1985: Dedication of remodeled sanctuary.

April 14, 1985: Dedication of Harris Hall. The fellowship hall is named in honor of Rev. Harris.

Space Shuttle "Challenger" explodes shortly after lift-off.

Mayo Clinic in Florida opens in Jacksonville in 1986.

April 1986: 1st men versus women softball game.

August 1986: 1st Mother's Morning Out program established under direction of Kim Wise.

October 1986: Establishment of 2 Cents-A-Meal program.

October 1986: 1st Chili Cook-Off.

November 1986: 1st acolytes.

March 1987: 1st Prayer Chain Ministry begins with leadership by Libby McJunkin.

April 3, 1988: 1st handbell choir performance on Easter Sunday service. The first, second and third octaves of handbells are made possible by gifts from the congregation.

April 1988: 1st Meals on Wheels deliveries by Highlands to homebound seniors.

October 1988: 1st CROP Walk participation by Highlands.

George H.W. Bush inaugurated as president in January 1989.

March 5, 1989: 1st stained glass windows celebrated with dedication of windows installed at the front door to the sanctuary.

The Dames Point bridge opens to traffic, connecting Arlington to the Northside, in 1989.

August 1989: 1st anniversary dinner, this one marking 25 years since first church service. Anniversary dinner is held at Holly Oaks Community Club.

August 1989: Ribbon-cutting ceremony for start of Arlington Community Services. Highlands is a founding member of the church network supporting the food pantry.

September 1989: Worship expands to two services on Sundays.

June 1990: 1st fish fry.

Cold War ends with the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1992.

September 1992: Groundbreaking for construction of new Family Life Center and expansion of original sanctuary building to provide more office space.

Bill Clinton inaugurated as president in January 1993.

January 1993: Mother's Morning Out Program changed to Precious Gifts Preschool. ("Highlands" would be added to name a few years later.)

March 1993: 1st men's softball team, the "Over the Hill Gang," takes the field.

June 1993: 1st major function in Family Life Center is Vacation Bible School.

July 18, 1993: Dedication of Family Life Center and office extension.

October 1993: 1st sessions of LOGOS, which gives young people a time in the middle of the week for fellowship and Christian education.

May 1994: 1st Monday morning prayer group meetings.

September 1994: Remodeling of Harris Hall encloses the choir rehearsal room.

September 1994: 1st church blood drive.

December 1994: Session increases from 12 members to 15 members.

January 1995: 1st gatherings of Hi Yo Silvers program.

January 1995: 1st wedding coordinator is Cindy Sweeney.

January 1995: 1st pulpit assistant is Rhonda DeVreindt.

February 1995: 1st Souper Bowl Sunday.

March 12, 1995: Fourth and fifth octave bells are added to the handbell choir.

The Jacksonville Jaguars play their first ever regular-season NFL game on Sept. 3, 1995.

April 1996: 1st TLC parking spaces.

July 1996: Rev. Harris departs from Highlands. He accepts call to an administrative position with Florida Presbyterian Retirement Communities.

July 1996: Rev. Edward Gammons serves as interim pastor.

November 1996: Call to the Rev. Dr. David Lee to become Highlands' third pastor.

November 1996: 1st Director of Christian education, Becky Andrews.

December 1996: 1st three-time Christmas services.

December 1996: 1st time children receive communion.

Jacksonville Jaguars make it to AFC Championship Game before losing to New England Patriots 20-6 in January 1997.

The decade's biggest movie "Titanic" is released in 1997.

January 1997: 1st Barnabas Club

March 1997: 1st session sponsors for communicants' class

August 1998: Highlands meets requirements to become part of Presbyterian Youth Connection (PYC), the national youth ministry of Presbyterian Church (USA).

The Jacksonville metropolitan area surpasses the 1 million mark for population in 2000.

Jacksonville Jaguars reach AFC Championship Game a second time, losing 33-14 to Tennessee Titans.

January 2000: 1st meeting of Crafty Ladies. Their first project is Great Ends of the Church banners that hang in the sanctuary on the wall behind the altar.

Florida Supreme Court ruling in Florida's "hanging chads" election results in George W. Bush winning presidency of Al Gore. Bush inaugurated in January 2001.

Summer 2001: 1st time youth traveling to Montreat stay in a cabin instead of a dormitory.

August 2001: Three Highlands members travel to South Korea to work on a Habitat for Humanity project. They are George Carpenter, Karen Prewitt and Chun Park.

August 2002: Call to Barbara Hamilton as parish associate.

Two hijacked airliners crashed into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

August 2002: Large cross is removed from roof of the church to prevent leakage.

October 2003: Replacement of pews and carpeting in the sanctuary.

July 2004: 1st discussion during church session meeting of Highlands participating in Family Promise program.

Jacksonville captures the national spotlight by hosting Super Bowl XXXIX on Feb. 6, 2005.

July 15-22, 2006: 1st Family Promise family stays for a week at Highlands. Church hosts a mother and her five children.

September 2006: Church receives \$34,200 as compensation for impact of Wonderwood Connector project widening McCormick Road in front of the church.

September 10, 2007: Gibson Dixon assumes the role of Choir Director/Organist.

The real estate boom crashes in Florida, part of the economic turmoil that becomes the worst national recession since the Great Depression.

May 27, 2007: Dedication of new cross installed on the front lawn of the church.

June 24, 2007: Launch of “Be a Part of It” campaign to retire \$240,000 debt. An anonymous donor contributes \$80,000.

June 2007: Call to Jaimie Shires as the church’s second Director of Christian Education.

The Navy decommissions the USS John F. Kennedy aircraft carrier, leaving Mayport base without an aircraft carrier, though there are plans to someday bring a nuclear-powered carrier.

March 21-23, 2008: 1st 30-Hour Famine by Presbyterian youth.

2008: 1st Adopt-a-Road by Highlands, sponsored jointly by Troop 181, Pack 181 and PYC for section of McCormick Road.

September 2008: 1st “Walk to Bethlehem.” Walkers post their miles walked on a church log.

Jacksonville Transportation Authority finally completes the years-long construction of Wonderwood Connector in December 2008.

Barack Obama inaugurated as president in January 2009.

“Avatar,” released in 2009, becomes the decade’s biggest movie.

September 2010: Sunday services consolidate from two services to a single service.

June 2012: Sessions form a building and grounds task force that marks the first step in the Restoration & Renewal campaign.

September 2012: Rally Day at church marks the official debut of the Restoration & Renewal campaign.

Feb. 2, 2013: 1st barbecue butt fundraiser for Montreat and youth mission trips.

September 7, 2013: 1st Grillmaster Dinner raises money for R&R and for Family Promise.

September 22, 2013: Congregation approves seeking loan to help pay for R&R.

January 25, 2014: 1st gathering of Bridge, a new program for youth in fourth through eighth grades.

June 26-July 3, 2014: PYC mission team travels to Costa Rica and small village of San Ramon de Norte where they are guests of charter church members Kinzey and Betty Reeves and their daughter Kim Wise.

July 20, 2014: Sunday worship service features bilingual songs and prayers as youth and adult chaperones reflect on their mission trip to Costa Rica.

July 27, 2014: Family Promise families return again after renovation of Harris Hall is complete.

November 23, 2014: Dedication of all the Restoration and Renewal projects on the church campus.

December 7, 2014: Congregation has farewell ceremony for Jaimie Shires who is leaving as Director of Christian Education to take a position at Palms Presbyterian Church.

December 2014: Laura Sambito becomes interim Director of Christian education.

April 25, 2015: 1st Jubilee celebration marking 50 years of Highlands. Members do a mission project Saturday morning and then gather for a "Celebrate HUPC Banquet" on Saturday night.

April 26, 2015: Jubilee continues with a special guest preacher, the Rev. John Purrington, the grandson of our organizing pastor, the Rev. Robert Purrington. Rev. John Purrington traveled to Jacksonville from Atlanta where he is pastor of St. John's United Methodist Church. After the service, everyone "walks back in time" by going up the road to Holly Oaks Community Center for a cook-out and old-fashioned "field day" with games and activities led by our youth.

April 30, 2015: Sue Heckler retired as church secretary

June 2015: Laura Sambito becomes permanent, full-time Director of Christian Education

August 2015: Highlands Precious Gifts Preschool amends their charter and begins to offer full-time childcare to our community

September 2015: Micah's Backpack begins

February 24, 2016: Rev. Dr. David Lee was awarded the Pastor of the Year Award by the Academy of Parish Clergy

March 2016: Member Care's Prayer Blanket ministry begins

June 20, 2016: Highlands begins its support for the Grace of Mercy Outreach Ministries, an orphanage in Haiti

August 19, 2016: Rhonda DeVriendt resigned as Director of Highlands Precious Gifts Preschool and Michele Loerop moved in to that role

September 2016: The Highlands' Handbell sets were refurbished to ensure continued years of use during worship

Hurricane Matthew passed along the coast of Jacksonville as a Category 2 storm on October 7, 2016, causing widespread power outages, felled trees, and flooded roads.

October 1, 2017: Highlands celebrates 50 years of worship in our Sanctuary

May 2018: Highlands celebrates the completion of its 25th year of LOGOS

February 9, 2019: Highlands hosts the Winter Stated meeting of the Presbytery of St. Augustine

March 14, 2020: Session decides to cancel on-campus activities due to the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The original decision was to consider worship on a week-to-week basis, but worship would end up shifting to Zoom for 13 months. Highlands was able to receive a PPP loan to ensure that staff at both the church and preschool continued to be paid during our closures.

June 2020: Rev. Dr. David Lee diagnosed with cancer and begins treatment; Rev. Craig Davies begins to serve as moderator of Session and pulpit supply

July 6, 2020: Highlands Precious Gifts Preschool reopened for care under strict Covid-19 protocols, such as all adults wearing masks, the building closed to non-staff adults, and limited capacity.

October 1, 2020: Michele Loerop resigns as Highlands Precious Gifts Preschool Director. Anna Serrano will step into the Director role. Michele stays on as assistant director.

January 22, 2021: Rev. Dr. David Lee passed away after his battle with cancer. Just prior to his death, the Family Life Center was renamed the Dr. David T. Lee Family Life Center and dedicated in his honor.

March 2021: Rev. James Kendrick begins serving Highlands as Stated Supply Pastor.

April 11, 2021: On-Campus worship resumes with streaming continuing online

September 13, 2021: Laura Sambito resigns as Director of Christian Education

November 28, 2021: Rev. Beverly Dempsey begins as Interim Pastor

Charter members of Highlands

The roll of church members when Highlands was chartered on April 11, 1965.

- Ronald Altman
- Mrs. Patrick Bauer
- Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Black
- Bill and Peggy Buck. Robert Buck.
- Mr. and Mrs. Hal Culp. Diane Culp.
- Susan Cummings
- Mr. and Mrs. Ordway Emmons
- J. David Finley and Mary Finley. Susan Finley and Kathy Finley.
- Mr. and Mrs. Harold R. Huff
- Bill and Mary Kelley. Pamela Kelley.
- Mrs. Lyman D. Mabon
- Donna Mackey
- W.F. and Marion Malsberger. Bill Malsberger and Kitty Malsberger.
- Mr. and Mrs. Neil MacDonald
- John and Charlotte McCorkle. Sandra McCorkle and Robert McCorkle.
- Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. McEaddy
- Joseph and Libby McJunkin
- Mrs. James Neely
- Mr. and Mrs. Frank Panzarino
- Hubert and Betty Penfield. Kathy Penfield, Terry Penfield, Thomas Penfield.
- Kay Purrington. Lawrence "Larry" Purrington.
- Marcus and Minnie Rawls. Thomas Rawls and Marcus Rawls Jr.
- Kinzey and Betty Reeves. Kizzie Reeves, Robin Reeves, and Jon Reeves.
- William and Carol Sheddan. Kathy Sheddan and Larry Sheddan.
- Carol Sheridan
- Mrs. Frank Smokelin
- Mrs. Robert Werder

Session Members

The session started with six elders in April 1965. Over the years, the session grew as large as 18 elders, and now is 15 elders. They serve three-year terms.

Founding session: William Buck, Ordway Emmons, Harold Huff, William Kelley, Joseph McJunkin, William Sheddan

Class of 1969: John McCorkle, Kinzey Reeves, Stewart Nystrom

Class of 1970: Albert Heston, John Morrison

Class of 1971: Robert Hines, Roger Strockey, Cecil Smith

Class of 1972: H.R. Culf, Joseph Purrington, Joseph Williams

Class of 1973: John Anderson, William Lantz

Class of 1974: Roger Johnson, Willard Smith, Peggy Buck, Richard Golson

Class of 1975: Robert C. Collins Jr., H.R. Culp, G.B. Youmans Jr.

Class of 1976: William Pressley Jr., Allen Clark, Ross Sheldon

Class of 1977: Dorothy Anderson, Charles A. Smith, William Lantz

Class of 1978: John Dyer, Doyle Stanfield, Jo Bell Stansell

Class of 1979: O.R. Haller, Garland Smith, E.W. Davison

Class of 1980: Thelma Hall, Earl Holcomb, William Skeeles

Class of 1981: Mary Kelley, C.F. Green, Les Dreifke, Ron Raby

Class of 1982: Betty Reeves, Dot Perrin, William Buck

Class of 1983: Theresa Greene, Nanette Cridlin, Richard Snyder

Class of 1984: Mark Morrison, Francis "Sonny" Bourne, Hazel Langenbach, Alan Hale, Robert Hallman, Linda Cheryl Lennon, Mildred Woodham

Class of 1985: Rosellyn Calvert, Paul Hankin, Joan Leake, Ben Whitfield, Judy Hall, Bob Glover

Class of 1986: Homer "Butch" Loan Jr., Virginia "Ginny" Morrison, Terry Thurmond

Class of 1987: Maggie Baxter, Shelton Hobbs, Joe McJunkin, Stacy Scott

Class of 1988: Cathy Gearhart, Bob Glover, Don Hall, Eileen Regnier, Sharon Koch, Sandra McCorkle Whitfield

Class of 1989: George Carpenter, Norm Going, Joan Leake, Fran Thurmond, Brenda Harris

Class of 1990: Owen Scott, Marleen Hobbs, Grace-Ann Vickers, Roger Wilde

Class of 1991: Victor Stewart, Joseph Travis, Candy Cole, Beverly DeVriendt, Sara Wilde

Class of 1992: DeAn Winton, Orié Taylor, Mark Morrison, Sharyn' Going, Shelton Hobbs, Allen Clark

Class of 1993: Ginni Carpenter, Frank Thrower, Chris Dahlgren, Janet Paparelli, Art Richard

Class of 1994: Jake Reber, Dan Beasley, Dan Sharp, Sara Wilde, Suzanne Morrison, Chet Smith, Brenda Harris

Class of 1995: Kathy Brown, Stewart Keen, Jim Marks, Libby McJunkin, Lorin Mitchell

Class of 1996: Hoagy Carmichael, Dave Lucas, Betty Stewart, Kerri Ross, Rhonda Hanson, Jake Reber

Class of 1997: Rick McCook, Ron Moewe, Hal Morrison, Sandra Richard, Judy Smith, Ginny Morrison

Class of 1998: Mary Spivey, Mary Miller, Ruthie Sharp, Joe Travis, Jan Kukar, Norm Going

Class of 1999: Scott Hanson, Tom Sweeney, Cathy Marks, Tom Johnson, Jo Carmichael, Jan Kukar

Class of 2000: Leslee Burch, Bruce Hays, Karen Prewitt, Chun Park, Don Hall, Patt Martin

Class of 2001: Bob Abbott, Gene Fulgham, Katie Anderson, Tyler Cole, Nolan Winn, Nancy Moewe

Class of 2003: Kimberly Rounds, Bill Hart, Jo An Ewing, Samantha Barger, Linda Heinzman, Joe Travis

Class of 2004: Becky Andrews, Dennis Kleppen, Chet Smith, Shayrn' Going, Kim Guenot, Tom Douget, Alan Robbins

Class of 2005: Terrell Newberry, Mark Hand, Bonnie Bue, June Etsminger, Donna Wilson, Randy DeVriendt

Class of 2006: Leslee Burch, Jim Drank, Clara Whitaker, Belinda Abbott, Michele Loerop, Vohn Williamson, Larry Ewing

Class of 2007: Lee Anderson, Debbie Douget, Teri Grimm, Jason Heckler, Karen Prewitt, Betty Stewart

Class of 2008: Diane Bierne, Linda Bohling, Gene Fulgham, Karen Inman, Bonnie McDowell, Michael Rounds, Nancy Hart

Class of 2009: Bob Burch, Dennis Kleppen, Nancy Moewe, Art Richard, Bev Smith, Beth Stotz-Potter

Class of 2010: Dawn Barney, Bruce Hays, Steve Mandella, Craig Steed, Laura Sambito, Lisa Weitzel

Class of 2011: Bob Abbott, Tom Douget, Alex Martin, Mark Morrison, Betty Reeves, Virginia Williamson

Class of 2012: Candy Cole, Linda Hall, Rick Regnier, John Smith, Rufus Taylor, Katie Potter

Class of 2013: Jim Ash, Jeff Burch, Michele Loerop, Nancy Moewe, Chad Grimm

Class of 2014: Inge Forchtner, Richard Marsh, Alan Robbins, Paul Wubbena, Chad Sambito, Virginia Williamson

Class of 2015: David Bauerlein, Debbie Douget, Lidia Knouse, Ann Riggs, Clara Whitaker, Ashton Robbins

Class of 2016: Erika Conner, Charles Goodyear, Dennis Kleppen, Jan Johnson, Tom Sweeney

Class of 2017: Cat Briones, Audrey Regnier, Helen Middaugh, Christina Trombley, Diane Bierne

Class of 2018: Tom Douget, Scott Heckler, Dene Ritter, Eva Skipper, Mark Vanderberg, Gibson Grimm

Class of 2019: Pete Loerop, Charlie Obedia, Alan Robbins, Clara Whitaker

Class of 2020: Rebecca Briones, John Morrison, Jennifer Terrell, Sydney Trombley, Julia Wolfson, Tom Sweeney

Class of 2021: Victor Arreola, Charles Grabill, Ricky Regnier, Reed Whitney, Scott Heckler

Class of 2022: Nancy Marsh, Betty Stewart, Bonnie Vanderberg, Karen Young, Clara Whitaker

Class of 2023: David Bauerlein, Nancy Hart, Alan Robbins, Tom Sweeney
Class of 2024: Candy Cole, Audrey Regnier, Chad Sambito, Donna Wilson

Eagles Soaring From Highlands

Highlands is the charter organization through Boy Scouts of America for Pack 181 (Cub Scouts) and Troop 181 (Boy Scouts). Highlands provides organizational support and meeting space for the Scouts, who in turn have done numerous projects on our church campus. Many Scouts have gone on to earn their Eagle badges from Troop 181.

1985: Eric Ehrenberg, William Moredock Jr.

1989: Darren Ross

1990: Dwight Ottesen

1991: Alexander Lee

1993: Herbert Jungbluth II

1994: Zachary Lynde, Christopher Lee, Robert Sparks Jr., Brian Byrd, Thomas Kukar *

1996: John Kelly *

1997: James Ian Balcom

1998: Christopher Caps, Kevin Lee Jordan, Kevin Wayne Connor, Craig Stuart Ross, Blaine Drum

1999: Brandon Lewis, Benjamin Lewis

2000: Jeff Burch, * Jordan Glover*

2001: Ryan Hand *

2002: Kyle Simmons, Timothy Paul Brown

2003: Thomas Yarger

2004: Matthew Kunkle

2005: Lawrence Stratton

2006: Stephen Scratch, William Easterling

2007: Trae Baker, Jack Pukay

2009: Jordan Mackenzie, Sean Scratch

2012: Nicholas Thomas Clayton, Zachary Michael Bodden,

2013: Noah Mackenzie, Jackson Scott Smith

2014: Zachary Adam Morrell

2016: Ethan Guckenberger*

* Members of Highlands

REFLECTIONS ON A CHURCH BY DR. DAVE...

Over 2100 Sundays of Worshiping God who calls the church into being....

Over 500 occasions of gathering at the Lord's table....

Hundreds of baptisms....

Over 200 professions of faith from confirmands and those who affirm their faith for the first time....

Thousands who have come and gone as members and guests...

Well over 3500 sermons preached seeking to allow God's people an opportunity to hear in a human voice the Word of God in the here and now...

Making real the great old hymn "O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing" thousands of hymns of grateful praise, numerous anthems and solos refocusing attention from us to the God of song, Handbells and chimes tolling the variety of music, childrens' voices delighting our eye and making glad the heart of God. Our musicians doing as the Psalmist envisions: "Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! Praise him with clanging cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!"

Over a hundred couples making a life commitment to one another in marriage...

Scores of services in which witness to the resurrection of Christ Jesus and the saints of Highlands has been given, as those loved dearly have entered the kingdom....

Over fifty gatherings of God's people wrapped up in the wonder of Christmas Eve and celebrating the glorious truth of Easter morning while learning about the richness of the liturgical year from Advent to Christ the King...

About a million cups of coffee, cookies, donuts and other delights served as tokens of fellowship as sure signs of the hospitality of Jesus himself breaking bread with his friends...

Countless meals shared around tables when more than food was consumed...as God's people were also fed with the true and good notion that as bread is broken we come to recognize Christ in each of us...

You'd have to figure probably more than a billion prayers lifted up....some in joy...some in sorrow....some born of deep concern...some quick words of thanks and others mysterious sighs, far too deep for words...but all, all earnest and compelling intercessions for God's action in the midst of God's people and the whole world...

Countless people who have shown up on Saturday mornings, just like the last few, to lay sod, to decorate God's holy space with the Hanging Greens of Advent and the red of Pentecost, to slice the ham and ice the cake, to strategize plans for fun and fellowship, work and worship, stewardship and member care....

Millions of dollars, some of which, then and now, have been agonized over and sometimes in shorter supply, but all given freely so that God's work might be done in the mundane necessity of lights and air conditioning, but others designated to build a home for Habijax, provide a roof over homeless heads, support a mission in Jamaica, and to relieve victims of fire and flood, storm and famine around the world...

Hundreds and hundreds who have answered God's call to serve as Elders to support, nurture and lead this congregation....

DCEs whose call was to feed the children of God, of whatever age, with God's living presence through faithful nurture, engaging program and creative love...

Hundreds of others who have studied lessons, taught Sunday School, volunteered at LOGOS, spent some of their summertime in Vacation Bible School, have lent their care and affection to countless youth who have in their friendship and dedication found the face of faith.

Thousands of children, youth and adults who have come to have their understanding of God expanded and their faith nurtured in Sunday School, Bible Study, small group Study, at retreats, at LOGOS, at PYC, at Montreat, at VBS and other occasions where they are met by God.

4 full time and other interim ministers of the word and sacrament who sought to bless a congregation of God's people with dedicated service, not in their perfection, but in their desire to serve God by ministering to God's people, faithfully preaching God's word, sharing the grace of the sacraments, but who, instead, found themselves nurtured by kindness, in awe of faith exhibited in the face of adversity, and convinced time and again of the abiding presence of almighty God in the lives of God's people known as Highlands United Presbyterian Church.

What is the church? You are the church, from those 1st ones who joined an adventure born in Faith to those who gather each Sunday in the halls of these hallowed buildings, you are the church joined together by a bond of faith, hope, and love in a circle of grace. Will that circle be unbroken....absolutelybecause this is God's church....this Highlands United Presbyterian Church...and for over 50 years....and 50 more...and 50 more...it will continue to be God's church....and when by God's decree this church is no more it will be only because we join our hearts and minds, our voices with the whole church ...*"so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The inspiration for this "History of Highlands" comes from an earlier work by Charter Member and Elder Joe McJunkin, whose love for Highlands continues unabated to this day. Joe and Elder Libby McJunkin make their home in Mt. Pleasant, S.C.

To all of the "scribes" of the church, our Clerks of Session, from the first, William E. Kelley, who was followed by Stewart Nystrom, James A. Morrison, R.J. Harris, Ross Sheldon, William Lantz, Doyle Stanfield, Thelma Hall, Theresa Greene, Joanie Leak (McLaughlin), Lorin Mitchell, Mary Miller, Jan Kukar, Leslee Burch, Karen Prewitt and the most faithful of them all and our present Clerk, Sharyn' Going. These were the ones who faithfully recorded the actions of the Session and the discussions, deliberations and decisions that determined the life and direction of our church.

To Elder David Bauerlein, who undertook this task with his customary humility, with energy, imagination and love. David is a writer for *The Florida Times-Union*, and we count ourselves fortunate that he 'took up the mantle' and produced for us this wonderful narrative.

Editor's Disclaimer: All of the stories, events and happenings of fifty years would fill many more pages. Some highs and some lows are not reported. Herein is captured the essence of who we are as a church and it is a testimony to the enduring presence of the Holy Spirit, the love of God for us, and the grace of Jesus Christ in our midst.

Therefore, our final acknowledgment is not in words alone, but in lives which have been lived and will continue to be lived according to our calling to be the Church, the present body, of Jesus Christ our Lord. To God be the glory!

