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## A Letter From Our President



Happy 50th Birthday HCM!

Among the many crazy things 2020 has brought us, Highlands Community Ministries is celebrating its 50th year! We started our mission in 1970, and had some big ideas on how we should celebrate five decades of bringing fellowship, learning, and support to 40204 and 40205. But as with everyone and everything, Covid-19 had other plans for HCM.

Our member congregations, dedicated staff, gifted volunteers, and generous supporters have been called on as never before to help families in need and provide emergency support to neighbors impacted by the pandemic, social upheaval, and economic downturn. Since the beginning of the pandemic we have:

- Served 2,472 families through the HCM food pantry since March of 2020—an increase of 500 more families than we served throughout all of 2019.
- Delivered 7,000 frozen Meals on Wheels to area elders using only a skeleton crew of 19 rather than our usual 52 volunteers.
- Distributed \$90,000 in rental assistance, compared to \$25,000 last year, and 35% more in emergency LG&E and water bill assistance.
- Expanded our community outreach contacts to help and support older people within the community from 1,900 phone calls and emails to more than 3,200 in 2020.

Now more than ever, HCM needs your support. Our contributions from grants and Metro Louisville funds have been drastically reduced, and our staff is stretched as never before as requests for our help are at an all-time high. Please consider a donation at this critical time. We want to keep the HCM safety net strong for everyone who needs us—and your financial support would be the best 50th birthday present we could hope to receive.

Many thanks & please stay safe,

Tom Coursen  
Board President, HCM

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## Who to Call

Central Office  
1228 E. Breckinridge St.  
(502) 451-3695

Food Pantry  
Tiffany Murphy, Coordinator

Emergency Financial Assistance  
Danah Smith, Director

Meals on Wheels  
Donna Douglas, Coordinator

Senior Outreach  
Leona Brooks, Social Services

Event Space Rental  
Isaac Conn, Manager

Administrative Assistant  
Mary Beth Rother

Executive Director  
Troy Burden

Eastern Star Child Care Center  
(502) 458-8723  
917 Eastern Star Ct.  
Gigi Hildenbrand, Asst. Director  
Debbie Spillane, Director

Douglass Loop Child Care Centers  
(502) 458-3045  
St. Paul UMC & Douglass Blvd. Christian Church  
Sanda Miodrag, Asst. Director  
Debbie Spillane, Director

Highlands Youth Recreation  
(502) 671-9701  
Patrick Fitzgerald, Director

Highlands Court Apartments  
(502) 454-7395  
1720 Richmond Dr.  
Janet Lee, Manager

## HCM Responds to COVID

Like the rest of the world, HCM was hit with more than a few surprises by Covid-19. We were fortunate to quickly apply for and receive a payroll protection loan of \$429,000 from the federal government. The

### Meals on Wheels

Staff member Patrick Fitzgerald loads the HCM van with frozen dinners for seniors. Under Covid-19 guidelines, seniors receive a delivery each week of five frozen meals created by Masterson's Catering in strict accordance with federal nutrition guidelines. Hot meal deliveries and meals served at our senior nutrition centers are on hold for now.



loan was based on 10 weeks of payroll expenses and should be forgiven in the coming weeks in accordance with the program guidelines.

Our childcare centers closed a few days in advance of Governor Beshear's orders and stayed closed for several weeks. Staff was paid for two of these weeks and then furloughed with unemployment benefits.

### Put Your Dollars to Work

**\$20** = An extra ½ hour of our social worker's time

**\$40** = A tank of gas & maintenance on the HCM van

**\$50** = Adds to the \$300 limit on LG&E & LWC bills

We brought the staff back to reopen the childcare centers under the revised guidelines on June 15. The new guidelines reduce the number of children we can accommodate, require more staff than before, and add new sanitary precautions. We remain at reduced capacity but are looking to hire additional staff. If you know anyone with childcare experience, please have them call the HCM office.

The food pantry has remained open throughout the pandemic with the exception of two weeks when a staff person tested positive for the Covid-19 virus. During these two weeks, a Dare to Care mobile pantry provided food assistance to clients from our parking lot.



Successful curbside donation drive for the food pantry on Nov 22.

Our Emergency Financial Assistance has also continued since March. We received grants to help with rent assistance in addition to our regular LG&E and Louisville Water Company grants. These dollars have totaled over \$150,000. This money has come from Metro Louisville, FEMA, and the Community Foundation of Louisville in collaboration with the Association of Community Ministries. These funds have allowed HCM to help additional families in the Highlands.

## HCM Child Care Centers



Ms. Abby brings one of Eastern Stars 'students' out safely to meet their parents after a day of fun.

This summer Bambi Riggs retired after working in the HCM child care centers for 49 1/2 years! Bambi is a founding member of the HCM family, and we have been blessed with her leadership. Sanda Miodrag stepped into the role of Assistant Director of our Douglass Loop Childcare Centers. Sanda has been a valuable HCM childcare employee for 22 years, has a Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education, and speaks three languages. The transfer of leadership couldn't be in better hands.

In addition to this change in leadership, staffing at the childcare centers has changed and adapted since Covid 19. Troy Burden, Executive Director says:

*“Staffing has been pretty stressful since we have reopened. Several staff retired or found other jobs as they were concerned for their health. However, the team we have has been amazing—we are truly blessed to have them.”*

### Seeking Board Members & Volunteers

If you want to help guide HMC on its mission to help our neighbors in need, call Executive Director Troy Burden, 451-3695

## Our Congregations

Bardstown Road Presbyterian Church

Bellarmine Campus Ministry

Christ Church UCC (Legacy)

Church of the Advent (Episcopal)

Concordia Lutheran Church

Deer Park Baptist Church

Douglass Boulevard Christian Church

Edenside Christian Church Trust Fund (Legacy)

Highland Baptist Church

Highland Presbyterian Church

Highland United Methodist Church

Louisville Friends

Immanuel United Church of Christ

St. Agnes Catholic Church

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

St. Brigid Catholic Church

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church

St. James Catholic Church

St. Paul United Methodist Church

St. Raphael Catholic Church

Strathmoor Presbyterian Church

*Please use the enclosed envelope or donate at our website [www.hcmlouisville.org](http://www.hcmlouisville.org).*

## Empty Bowls / Give for Good

The 24th annual **HCM Empty Bowls** fundraiser to fight hunger had a different format this year since the pandemic prohibited an in-person event. A marketing campaign was launched to thank the potters, restaurants, other vendors, and sponsors who have faithfully helped host this event in previous years, and to invite online donations. It was decided that 10% of proceeds would be donated to APRON, Inc., a non-profit helping employees of Louisville's Independent Restaurant Community since 2011.



Radio advertising, email blasts, and website solicitation, along with the Give for Good Louisville campaign occurring in September, resulted in generous donations. On Thursday, October 8, 2020, when our evening of soups, raffles, silent auctions, and entertainment normally would have taken place, 25 names of donors were drawn as winners of pottery sets. Thirty-eight names were drawn as winners of \$25 gift cards, which had been generously provided by HCM board members, representing HCM's supporting churches and organizations.

Those who gave \$50 or more were entered into a raffle to win either pottery donated by our talented artists in past years or a \$25 gift card to one of our supporting restaurants who have provided the delicious soups and sides for our past Empty Bowls events.



Many thanks to all who supported our event during this challenging time. We hope to get back to an in-person event next year, so watch for news in the coming months about our exciting 25th Empty Bowls celebration.

It's not too early to help with Silent Auction items for **Empty Bowls 2021**. If you would like to be a sponsor or have gift cards or items to donate, please call the HCM office, 451-3695.



Troy Burden, HCM Executive Director, passes a check to Gary Fox of APRON, Inc, offering financial assistance to employees of Louisville's Independent Restaurant Community. While keeping the Empty Bowls spirit alive in 2020, we wanted to give back to those who have supported us in the past. Local restaurants have donated soup, bread, and desserts to our event for 23 years. Every little bit helps and we will get through this together!



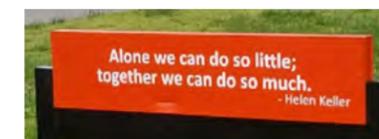
## A New Look

Just in time for our 50th birthday, HCM launched a new image for the organization. You may have seen the new HCM logo, signs, and banners on the Barrett Avenue campus, and we hope you like them. The logo was chosen because it signifies a coming together, a pooling of resources and talents to weave a strong safety net of programs and services for the community. Helen Keller was our



Highlands  
Community  
Ministries  
grow. heal. play.

inspiration when she said, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." We included those words on our new parking lot sign as a reminder of why we come together as an organization. In addition, the banners on the building along Barrett Avenue let people know all the programs HCM has to offer, and a new building directory helps visitors find their way.



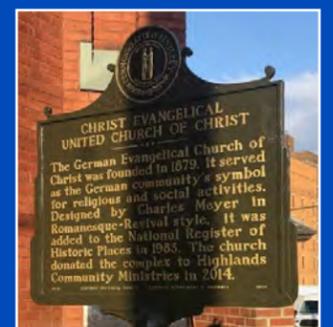
## Historical Marker Dedicated

On Wednesday, November 11, the Kentucky Historical Society dedicated a new marker at Highland Community Ministries. The marker is two-sided, with one side discussing the original church and the other side discussing the community organization that now inhabits it, HCM.



HCM founder Stan Esterle and his wife RoseAnn attend the marker dedication

Highlands Community Ministries was established in 1970 and is the oldest of the city's 15 community ministries. The group started with a grant from the Presbyterian Church USA, and six congregations began child and after-school care. The building in which HCM is located first belonged to Christ Evangelical United Church of Christ, which served as the German community's hub for religious and social activities in the city. The church donated the complex to HCM in 2014 but continued to meet in the sanctuary until closing in 2020.



# Pre-Covid Successes

Many successful HCM programs and events took place before the pandemic hit, including several HYR – Highland Youth Recreation busy sports seasons and the annual Taste of the Highlands Mardi Gras.

## Highland Youth Recreation

Beginning in the fall of 2019, HYR had several active, successful sports seasons before the pandemic put a halt to youth sports. Fall 2019 Soccer brought out 595 players, ages 5-16, an increase of 35 from 2019, including 48 children from Kentucky Refugee Ministries.

January and February 2020 saw 340 players participating in Winter 2020 Basketball and Futsal, a 20% increase over 2019. Practices and games were expanded into three area facilities. St. Paul United Methodist Church, Douglass Boulevard Christian Church, and Douglass Community Center provided space for the 34 practices and 17 games which occurred each week.

Before the pandemic forced the shutdown of all sports activities after only three days of practice, Spring 2020 Soccer saw a turnout of 620 players, the highest number of athletes ever registered for spring soccer and a 3% increase over fall 2019, and 84 volunteer coaches and 28 referees were registered. When the season was cancelled just as it began, many families chose to apply their fees to the next season, so another great turnout for soccer is anticipated in the future.



HYR Soccer



HYR Basketball



HYR Futsal



## Taste of the Highlands Mardi Gras

The New Orleans-style Mardi Gras costumes and beads adorning many attendees reflected the festive atmosphere at this over-21 party event held February 25, 2020. The fourth annual Taste of the Highlands fundraiser featured food samplings from fourteen area restaurants as well as beverages from a winery, a brewery, a bourbon distillery, and a regional soft drink maker. Music from the Billy Goat Strut Revue and dancing highlighted the well-attended, vibrant event, which also featured a bourbon raffle. A profit of over \$5000 was raised. Sponsorships were up by \$1000 over 2019, the raffle raised 30% more revenue, and attendance, at 131, was slightly higher than last year, all attesting to the event's success.



## HCM Youth Go Hollywood

Thanks to a partnership between HCM and Beargrass Media, 40 area youth had the opportunity to participate in HCM Summer 2020 Video Camps. In each of these virtual, two week-long video production camps, 20 young people learned to write, record, edit, produce, and publish video productions, using their own cellphones and tablets to create productions.

