

Worship Center on track, Thanksgiving service planned

The Worship Center renovations are on schedule and on budget, thanks to this summer's *Take a Seat* campaign.

Take a Seat invited donors to contribute \$250 to cover the cost of a seat in the new sanctuary. A total of 1,050 seats were purchased or pledged, providing more than \$260,000 toward finalizing the Next Chapter project. The funds mean the project can be completed debt free.

A special one-hour service of worship, praise and thanksgiving is planned for Saturday, Nov. 19 at 6pm in the newly renovated sanctuary. This will be the first time the HPBC body meets in the new space to worship – so be sure to mark

your calendars now.

The first Sunday morning services in the Worship Center will be Nov. 20 – just in time for Thanksgiving. As the date gets closer, expect to hear more details on these 8:45am & 11:15am services and their focus on celebration, thanksgiving and dedication.

"I am thrilled to see God work through all of us to provide the finances necessary to move forward in a renovated facility," said Senior Pastor Brent Slater. "Because of faithful givers, we can enter our Worship Center without debt, which positions us to focus our efforts on reaching those without Christ in our neighborhood and to

the ends of the world."

The Next Chapter is the name of the special campaign started four years ago to raise funds for much needed upgrades around the church campus.

New outdoor signage, corner lot clearing, updated building frontage, and re-freshed landscaping was paid for through Next Chapter.

The church's Worship Center is more than 50 years old and until the Next Chapter, had never been renovated. The project includes all new electrical, lighting, heating and cooling, as well as a larger platform, updated decor, and stadium style seating.

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Photo by Sara Veldman

HPBC's Crash and Herd students did mission work at Central Detroit Christian this summer helping run a day camp, renovate buildings, and whatever needed to be done. Above the high schoolers are working on a home. Also the entire church sent work teams to CDC this summer as part of Go:Detroit, a church wide mission project to help the Christian non-profit get a building ready for ministry including a pre-school program. Look for more information on how to help in months ahead.

Fiscal year should break even thanks to cuts, more giving

Church leaders are projecting to break even at the end of this fiscal year thanks to a surge in summer giving, and a series of tough budget cuts.

In the summer the congregation learned how a drop in large gifts had led to a shortage in both the 2015-2016 operating budget and the church's Next Chapter building improvement campaign as well. The elders approved the *Take a Seat* campaign which is expected to make up the Next Chapter shortfall. Church leaders also implemented a number of cuts in the operating budget throughout this current fiscal year.

The church's fiscal year runs from Oct. 1 -Sept. 30. Expected giving has been down verses the budget, and as of July 1 was \$245,000 in the red. In response, the finance committee and elders have been making personnel reductions, adjusting staff, wages and hours. They implemented a spending freeze. They stopped setting

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Christian Norman becomes full-time director in December

Christian Norman, HPBC's ministry associate for the past three years, will come on staff full-time this December leading the young adults ministry with Pastor Jimmy Smith, preaching occasionally on Sundays and working as the staff liaison with Go:Detroit.

HPBC hired Christian as a part-time ministry associate three years ago and sponsored him through Moody Theological Seminary. Christian will graduate with a Master of Divinity degree this December, when he comes on staff full-time.

Senior Pastor Brent Slater said Christian is an amazing communicator, extremely intelligent, a man who wants to learn and develop as a servant of God.

"The first thing I think of when I think of Christian is a deep hunger and passion for the Word of God. His life is personally and publically completely controlled by the word of God. Second, he has an

amazing mind," said Brent. "Also he lends our pastoral team a very important cultural perspective and a generational perspective. We need that desperately and Christian is always willing to share that with us. ... He is a huge gift to us."

Christian, 25, graduated from Detroit Renaissance High School in 2009, played football at Michigan State University where he graduated with a Bachelor's in psychology in May 2013. He and his wife, Kayla, married last year. Kayla is a teacher and counselor at Westside Christian Academy in Detroit. They plan to buy a home in Detroit and recently started the housing search.

God used a serious football injury during a bowl game his sophomore year to lead Christian to himself. As Christian's faith grew, he felt God calling him to full time ministry. He gave up the chance to



Photo by Heather Fracassi

HPBC Pastor Christian Norman and his wife, Kayla

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“In Christ Jesus, you are all sons of God.” (Gal 3:26)

Those words speak powerfully to our place as believers in America today. As sons of the same Father, we are family. We are brothers and sisters.



Senior Pastor Brent Slater

We live in a society that is stressed along racial and cultural lines. Although equality is established for all of us by the constitution, and is prescribed and protected by judicial decisions at the highest levels, we still see ruptures that run deep through the very fabric of our cities and communities. But when we come to Jesus, everything is different.

Jesus is building a kingdom, comprised of family members. We come from every people group in the world. Diversity characterizes our features, languages, backgrounds, cultures, and education. Yet we

are one. How can this be?

Our unity is not based on ourselves, but on our Savior and Father and the Spirit who indwells each of us. We are not our own, but are bought with a price. The price paid was the same for every one of us. And it was paid by the same Person, Jesus our Lord.

The early church struggled with cultural and ethnic divisiveness. There was no precedence for a familial community of love and equality consisting of Jews and Gentiles, highly educated and minimally educated, men and women. The church in Jerusalem had to address the unequal care of widows who came from different ethnicities. Both the Ephesians and the Galatians struggled with what it would look like to live out this radically new form of equality. It was difficult for all of them. But their unity was their new identity in Christ.

As Christians, our identities change. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is

neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal 3:28) How could the Spirit say they were no longer Jews or Greeks? Certainly they couldn’t change their birth or cultural roots! But a new identity, one which is so much more fundamental and essential, takes precedence in believers. We are in Christ. He is our identity. We are His. We are in Him equally.

Jesus is building His kingdom among us. Highland Park Baptist Church is multi-generational and multi-ethnic. But even more that, we are IN JESUS. That is our identity. We are His and we are one.

Let’s thrive in our identity in Jesus. May that be our first descriptive, always. And may God use us to show those around us who so long for diversity in unity, that the only genuine unifier is Jesus.

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extra money aside in the Trustee Fund for ongoing maintenance, and mission funding – which was up 11 percent from previous years – was cutback, mainly by reducing support to domestic missionaries and to the general missions expenses.

But the good news is as the congregation heard about this situation people gave more. By mid-August the giving shortfall was about \$160,000. By the end of September the spending cuts are expected to offset any remaining giving shortfall meaning the budget is expected to break even.

“It has been a difficult year,” said Dave Kuntzman, business manager. “We have had to make a lot of hard decisions but I’m optimistic that we have positioned ourselves well for next year to be a much better year.”

Pete Cuffe, a church elder, thanked the congregation for responding so generously this summer. He is hopeful that when the Next Chapter giving ends Sept. 30 people will transfer a portion of what they have already been giving these last few years to the church’s operating budget, which would help the church be in an even stronger position in the year ahead.

“A large part of why we do not have to go further in making cuts for the upcoming year’s budget is because of the response everyone gave in August and July,” said Pete. “When we gave our budget message in July, we noted that the next two or three months are critical in how we set the budget for next year and whether more cuts are going to be required. Given the response that we’ve had so far, we think the cuts we have already made will be sufficient because the congregation has responded so strongly.”

Budgeted giving for the 2015-2016 year was \$4,050,000: For the 2016-2017 year it is expected to be \$3,760,000; a budget that will be less dependent upon large gifts.

Dave said it is very encouraging to see how overall, the majority of people are giving more to the church, in other words, the amount of their financial gifts are up.

The church family is encouraged to attend the Annual Meeting on Sept. 7 at 7pm in Fellowship Hall to hear a more comprehensive financial update and to approve the 2016-2017 budget.



Photo by Heather Fracassi

The Herd reached out to middle schoolers this summer in new ways with a summer Bible study and munchy Mondays (pictured above), a chance to hang out with staff and go out for lunch.

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be in the NFL draft and instead listened to what he described as, “this innate, really strong, unequivocal, pressing desire to lead the people of God: To teach and preach the Scriptures, to get involved in the lives of people and to do that from the time I wake up until the time I go to sleep.”

This calling was confirmed by the Scriptures, by other believers, and through circumstances, of which HPBC played a part.

“After I said, Ok, Lord if you are calling me to do this, I do not know where I am going to go to seminary. I do not know where I am going to get trained. I do not know what I am going to do,” said Christian. “A few days later I get a call from Highland Park with an opportunity to go to Moody, an opportunity to get practical training.”

In his new full-time position, Christian will preach before the congregation. He will also start a new effort to disciple men who live in the neighborhood that Central Detroit Christian ministers to as part of HPBC’s partnership called Go: Detroit. Christian will also have a leadership role with the HPBC’s young adult ministry, working alongside of Pastor Jimmy Smith.

While Christian said he is nervous about his new position because he knows the Lord holds those who teach His Word to a stricter judgment, he is also very excited. One thing that particularly excites him is leading HPBC’s Young Adults.

“I think people who are less than 28 years old have a unique set of struggles that weren’t even on the table 10 years ago,” said Christian, referring to the growing hostility to Christianity in America, gender fluidity; belief each person has the right to choose their reality, not to mention current cultural, ethnic and political unrest.

“I believe that when this generation comes alive for the glory of God awesome things can happen. I am really excited to be a part of seeing our young folks come alive for the sake of the Gospel.”

Search for new music minister begins, many step in to help

As HPBC church leaders start searching for a new music minister, Senior Pastor Brent Slater is asking the congregation to pray for the Lord to send just the right person.

"We are reaching out to contacts in seminaries, in churches throughout the country," said Brent. "We are also welcoming recommendations from members of the congregation if they have someone they would like us to pursue."

Church leaders plan to pray and pursue these networks for several months before using more public means of advertising this position. The church is committed to continuing to provide a traditional and contemporary service, and is looking for a music minister who can direct and oversee both styles of worship, ensuring each is done with excellence, said Brent. The annual Christmas concert will happen this year and preparations are already underway.

"Recently the Lord has brought us some very unique people and it has always been bathed in prayer where the Lord began to work in their life and our life and brought us together," said Brent. "That is what we want to see happen again."

Derrick Jackson, HPBC's music minister for eight years, took a job at a church Georgia. His last Sunday was in late June.

As the church prays and searches for Derrick's replacement, several people have agreed to run various parts of the music ministry.

- Jon Busch, high school music teacher at Southfield Christian School, will direct the orchestra which plays during the traditional service.

- Paul Bechler, HPBC's organist, will lead the chancel choir which sings during traditional service. He is also working with Brent to plan the flow of the traditional service.

- Loosha Simmons, HPBC's global missions administrative assistant, will lead the Gospel choir, which sings during the contemporary service.

- Pat Nagle, HPBC's creative arts director, along with Josh Stoddart, HPBC's worship associate, will oversee the praise band which plays during the contemporary service.

Women's ministry plans Bible studies, Christmas outreach

Women looking for an opportunity to better connect with HPBC women and grow and share their faith, are encouraged to join the Women in the Word Bible study on either Tuesday mornings or Wednesday nights, and plan to bring others to annual Christmas Breakfast outreach Dec. 10 at the Dearborn Inn.

Bible study: This year the church's women will study the books of Philippians and Colossians in a study called Women in the Word, offered from 9:30-11:30am Tuesdays and 7-8:30pm Wednesdays. Both groups will do the study - written by Good Shepherd Community Church in Oregon - on the same weekly schedule.

"We felt like this was a good opportunity to bring the women of the church together more and provide more connection," said Kathleen Hanson, women's ministry co-director. "Then when women are talking, they are studying the same thing ... It is a point of commonality."

The study is an inductive look at the Bible with practical applications. It requires about one to two hours of weekly homework and costs \$12 for the year. Women will be assigned a table where a trained leader will guide a discussion of the week's homework. There will also be a lecture, prayer and worship time.

Christmas outreach: Mark your calendars now - the annual Christmas Breakfast, an outreach event, will happen from 9:30-11:45am on Dec. 10 at the Dearborn Inn, an elegant historic hotel located off the Southfield Freeway in Dearborn. Cost will be \$25 per ticket.

Last year some 400 women attended Christmas Inspirations, a free event held at church. While attendance was high and feedback positive, Kathleen said the Women's Ministry wants to alternate the outreach location to meet everyone's needs.

"There are some women who feel like it is easier to invite people to an event not at a church because it's less intimidating," said Kathleen. "However there is cost to that and \$25 a ticket is not cheap. So we wanted to do an event at the church because it is free, but then it does have a different feel. If we alternate we get the best of both worlds."



Photo by Heather Fracassi

Cheng Zhang welcomes a young trick-or-treater at last year's Trunk or Treat Outreach

Trunk or Treat returning this October; volunteers, decorated trunks needed

Back by popular demand, HPBC will offer its second Trunk or Treat event to church families and the community this October as a way to reach out to neighbors with a safe, fun, Trick or Treating alternative.

Last year an estimated 1,200 people attended the church's first Trunk or Treat, with many, if not most, visitors from the community. This year Trunk or Treat will be from 2-4pm Oct. 29 in the west parking lot. Dave Borrer, HPBC's administrative pastor, said the event was a huge success.

"It gave our church family a huge cooperative opportunity to serve our community in a fun, celebrative environment," he said. "Having casual conversations with our guests helps those in our community realize that we are here, that we can have fun as Christians, and that we care about those in our neighborhoods - not just those who attend our church."

Dave said many who came by last year

said they knew HPBC was a church and school but had never stopped by. One of the reasons to do an outreach is to give the community an opportunity to get to know the church - its facility and people.

During a Trunk or Treat families open their car trunks and decorate them with themes. Elementary aged children, dressed in costumes then go with their families from trunk to trunk collecting candy and visiting with trunk designers.

Families are asked to register then go into the West Parking lot to enjoy the "trunks", and then come back inside to the elementary gym for cider, doughnuts and games.

Many volunteers are needed - easily more than 100. The church needs people to decorate and host a trunk, welcome and host, serve cider and doughnuts, help with registration, direct in the parking lot and of course, to be willing to donate lots and lots of candy.

Fall LifeGroups sign up will begin week of Sept. 18

Sundays 7:00pm in Farmington Hills - *Shepherding a Child's Heart*

Tuesdays 7:00pm in Royal Oak - *How We Got the Bible*

Thursdays 7:00pm in Farmington Hills - *Philippians: To Live is Christ, To Die is Gain*

Thursdays 7:00pm in Birmingham - *A Study for Young Wives*

Meet the Parks: Helping missionaries succeed overseas

Life these past few months for Missionaries Dr. Evan Parks, his wife, Carrie, and their children Kelly and Luke, has been, to put it mildly, a bit chaotic.

They started their summer packing up their home in Budapest, Hungary, putting nearly everything in storage not knowing where they would live or when exactly they would return.

Their daughter, Kelly, graduated from high school, went on a senior trip and returned home critically ill and needed hospitalization. (She is now ok) Evan received an unusually large number of calls from church leaders in serious crisis.

Then when they finally arrived in Michigan in mid-June they had no vehicle. (But they found one) And they faced a barrage of appointments, meetings, church engagements. Then, in early August, they saw their oldest, Kelly, off to first year of college at Wheaton. Whew!

Evan is a clinical psychologist with Send International. Carrie is an eighth grade teacher. This fall Luke will attend eighth grade at Southfield Christian School. The family is based in Budapest but trains and helps ministry leaders in crisis everywhere from Europe to Eurasia and the Middle East.

The Parks attended HPBC before God called them to be missionaries in 2001.

Could you describe what you do?

The focus of my (Evan) work is helping mission organizations during times of crisis and when difficulties occur with mission personnel. I help with team conflict, trauma, depression, anxiety, marriage



Dr. Evan, Luke, Kelly and Carrie Parks—missionaries with SEND International

problems, moral failure, addiction, suicide, and mental illness. I also spend a great deal of time training others and leading workshops on spiritual and emotional health. Carrie is an 8th grade English and Literature teacher at the International Christian School of Budapest. This school provides education for missionary children, many people from the expatriate community and Hungarians. We are very involved in our Hungarian church where Carrie teaches Sunday school and we host a home fellowship group for several families.

What kind of unique struggles do those you help face?

When working overseas in cross cultural ministry, many people face failure when approaches to ministry and programs do not work. Missionaries may also lack personal support, often being on the giving end, having few fellow believers or friends

who take an active interest in them personally. There are also many challenges faced in other cultures, such as language barriers, medical system problems, and corruption.

Why is it important to provide this type of help?

Helping missionaries on the field helps them stay on the field. Without on-field support, many missionaries would need to return to their home country to receive help. When this occurs, many missionaries do not return to continue their work.

How do you stay mentally healthy when dealing with so many heavy problems?

We have a good network of Hungarian and international friends in Budapest. We share our concerns and pray for each other. We also have a great marriage and spend time with our children playing games and doing sports together.

How long will you be in Michigan?

We will be returning on January 3, 2017.

Anything else you'd like to share?

A podcast, called Equip To Empower, and many additional resources to help those facing problems can be found on my website: www.dreanparks.com

How can we pray for you?

1. Please pray for Kelly who is now attending Wheaton College as a freshman. She is very excited to be starting this new phase of life and is enjoying meeting new friends. Pray for her as she is exposed to a variety of new study subjects and ministry opportunities. Like many freshman, she has a declared major (Art and Missions), but is not quite sure if this will be her focus long term.
2. Please pray for Luke while he is attending Southfield Christian School this fall and winter. We are returning to Hungary on January 3, so he will need to transition back to Hungary mid-term. Pray for good friendships to develop at school and HPBC.
3. Please pray for Evan as he attends workshops and conferences this fall. This home service time is an important opportunity to get spiritual and professional input and refreshment.
4. Please pray for Evan and Carrie as they travel to visit supporting churches and work to raise additional funds needed to return to Hungary on January 3.

Men's studies, event underway this fall

The Men's Ministry is offering two opportunities to dig into the Bible this fall, and will feature a new men's event kicking off in November designed to help HPBC men become more involved in multi-generational relationships with one another.

Bible Studies:

(1) This year's 6:30-7:30am Tuesday Men's Bible Study will be: "CALL911 - Our Nation is in Decline: *Emergency Requirements for the Man of God.*" The study is focused on the book of Jeremiah, an often passed over Old Testament prophet.

Jeremiah ministered in Jerusalem for 42 years during a time of extreme national crisis. He experienced firsthand the moral decline of his nation, suffering blame, failure, rejection and grief. Yet against all odds, he stood faithful to God's call on his life.

"Jeremiah came very close to abandoning his calling from God and settling in to becoming a Jerusalem statistic," said Pastor Dave Borrer, who is the teacher of this study. "There are times when we, like Jeremiah, need to hear from God."

The Tuesday study includes weekly teaching, table group discussion and prayer. HPBC Men's Ministry Director Mike Thomas encouraged all men to come and be challenged by the teaching of God's Word and the building into the lives of the other men at their table.

"My hope is that once again our Tuesday morning study will challenge our men to grow deeper in love with Christ.... and see their lives transformed," said Mike.

(2) Men who cannot make Tuesday mornings are encouraged to come Wednesday from 7-8:30pm where Pastor Gordon Ainsworth will lead a study on the Old Testament called, "*On the Way to Jesus the Messiah.*"

This continuing study is a walk through the Old Testament, with the goal of developing a deeper walk of faith in the Lord Jesus by learning to worship the God who governs history. It will meet in the South Atrium Hall.

MoMENTum: In the planning stages for Saturday, November 12 is an event just for men called MoMENTum, with the goal of gathering all generations of men in the church. The hope is that MoMENTum will be a springboard leading to the development of intergenerational relationships, which then leads to the bigger goal of forming intentional mentoring and/or discipling relationships.

"The Lord has given us a unique opportunity of being part of a multi-cultural, multi-generational church. Over the last few years the Lord has given me opportunities to build discipling relationships across cultural and generational lines and I've seen the benefit of that ... I'd like to see other men experience the same," said Mike.

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