



HIGHLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

PARENT NOTE – October 20, 2025

“Scripture Follower”

II Timothy 3:16-17

SCHOOL NEWS:

- **Update on Castillo/Cole Family:** With heavy hearts, we share the sad news that Esolina (Soli) Castillo, mother of two students at HCS, passed away on Friday afternoon. Please be in prayer for her children - Ace (3rd) and Akala (2nd). The kids will remain enrolled at HCS and will be living with a family member. Should you want to contribute towards the family and funeral expenses, we will be collecting funds until Monday (10/27). Thank you for your continued prayers as Ace, Akala, and the extended Castillo family grieves the loss of Soli.
- **Important Reminders:** This Wednesday, October 22 is an early release. Students will be dismissed at 1:45pm. Aftercare will be available. Also, there is no school on Thursday and Friday, October 23 & 24. Enjoy the fall break! 🍁
- **Parent/Teacher Conferences:** Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held on November 5 and 6 and sign-ups are now open. Like last year, 3rd-8th grade conferences will be student led and Pre-K-2nd grade conferences will just be with the parents. The deadline to sign up is on October 31. [**SIGN UP NOW!**](#)
- **Bus Service:** Thanks to the addition of two new bus drivers, we're excited to begin planning a 6th bus route! If you are not currently on the bus schedule and would like to request transportation, now is the time to do so. Please complete and submit the [**Bus Service Request Form**](#) by **Friday, October 25, 2025**. If your student is already on the bus schedule, no action is needed unless you are requesting a change in your stop (within our boundary lines). The cost is \$300/student per route (am or pm), \$600/student for both am & pm. Due to the large area we serve and time limitations, we must define strict boundaries for our routes.

Boundaries for Service:

North: 165th St (between the state line & Cline Ave in Hammond), 15th Ave (between Cline Ave & Broadway in Gary)

East: Broadway (between 15th Ave & 93rd Ave)

South: 93rd Ave (*Exception: 109th Ave between Sheffield Ave & US 41 for current riders*)

West: State line (between 165th St & 93rd Ave, accessible via Hohman, Calumet, and Sheffield Avenues)

Additionally, stops are assigned on a need-by-need basis including, but not limited to, the time restraints of the bus route, how busy the street is, and the age of the student(s). We will do door-to-door, corner stops, or off-road stops (usually a parking lot) based on the above criteria.

- **HCS Listening Groups:** Last call for our 2nd and 3rd grade listening session! This session will be held on Thursday, October 30 from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM. Space is limited to 12 parents in each session. As the year progresses, families from other grades will also have the opportunity to participate later in the school year. We are looking forward to hearing your valued and important feedback! To sign up, please complete the following [**Sign-Up Genius Form**](#).

- **October Saturday Serve:** Since we need leaves to be on the ground before we can rake, we have changed the date for October's Saturday Serve to **Saturday, November 1**.

Date: Saturday, November 1

Time: 9 am - 11 am

Place: HCS parking lot

Sign-up here: [October Saturday Serve](#)

Come join us as we bless our Highland Christian neighbors by raking leaves! Groups will be sent to different areas near HCS to rake leaves from the front lawn to the parkway. We will walk from house to house asking if we can bless them by raking their leaves. For this Saturday Serve, we will work outside raking. Please bring rakes, leaf blowers, brooms, gloves, etc. Please dress for the weather. We welcome any age to help with the clean-up.

- **Veteran's Day Chapel:** On Tuesday, November 11, at 8:45 am, we will honor our veterans in our Veterans Day Assembly. Our speaker will be Mr. Brandon Hiatt, a U.S. Navy veteran and HCS parent. An email will be going out this week with more information about how veterans in our HCS community can participate. We look forward to this event to honor our veterans! To sign up, please click [HERE](#). If you need additional information, please email Rick VanderWoude at veterans@highlandchristian.org.
- **Picture Retakes:** Picture Retake Day is on **Wednesday, Oct. 29**. Students who ordered a package on original picture day but are choosing to get their picture retaken **MUST** bring their original picture package with them on retake day to give to the photographer. They **DO NOT** need to place a new order. If they forget their package on retake day, we will take their photo & write their name down but we won't order a new package until the old one is returned.
If your student was absent on the original picture day, you will need to place your order at <https://inter-state.com/FlyerEntry/0131HY> using order code **0131HY**.
- **Employment Opportunities:** **HCS seeking a part-time [Director of Finance](#)**. Do you know someone with strong financial leadership skills who would love serving in our Christian community? We'd love for you to help us spread the word! For more information and to view all of our current openings, please visit our [website](#).
- **Artisan Fair:** Come to the HCS gym on November 15 to kick start your holidays! The Artisan Fair is open from 9am - 2pm. With over 30 vendors selling handcrafted goods, specialty items, and one-of-a-kind gifts, you will be able to get that "exceptional something" to fill your holidays with charm. Come enjoy a festive atmosphere filled with holiday cheer, seasonal concessions, and plenty of inspiration for your gift-giving and decorating. We look forward to seeing you there!
- **Vanilla:** Homemade vanilla is for sale in the office - \$3.00 for an 8oz bottle. If you have any empty 8, 10, or 12oz glass bottles, please send them to the office so more vanilla can be made.
- **Hot Lunch Menu- [October Hot Lunch Menu](#)**

You can find the monthly lunch menu on FACTS by navigating the following tabs:

1. **School** → *Resource Documents*
2. **Student** → *Lunch*

ATHLETIC NEWS:

Wrestling update:

- Seth Rincon has been selected to be the first wrestling coach in the history of Highland Christian.
- Tryout dates are TBD. We are hoping they will take place in the next two weeks, but we will keep you posted. We

are waiting on the mats to arrive.

- All students participating in wrestling will need their own headgear, shoes, and practice singlet.
- The first meet is scheduled for November 26th at Illiana Christian against Crown Point Christian.

Please reach out to Mr. Hillegonds with any questions or concerns.

FAITH CORNER:

With pumpkins popping up as landscape decorations, here is a great pumpkin activity that teaches the Gospel message. Use this for family devotions.

Choosing, cleaning, and carving a pumpkin can give us a great insight into the Gospel message:

1. Choosing

- a. In this activity, the pumpkin represents a person.
- b. Just as a farmer chooses a pumpkin from the patch, God “chooses” us. He knows us and has a purpose for our lives. (John 15:16)

2. Cleaning

- a. When you bring home a pumpkin, the first thing you do is to wash the dirt and mud off the outside of the pumpkin. This represents how Jesus’ death cleans us on the outside. We act kindly to each other, we speak words of encouragement to each other, we help each other. We look good on the outside.
- b. **BUT** God doesn’t stop there. The next step in cleaning is to cut off the top to create an opening. This represents how our hearts need to be open to God. We need God to come into our hearts and transform us from the inside out.
- c. **Finally**, you need to scoop out the “yucky stuff” from inside the pumpkin. Remove the slimy insides, pulp, and seeds. This is an illustration of forgiveness. The “yucky stuff” represents our sin- the selfishness, doubt, and jealousy that keeps us from God. (Romans 3:23)
- d. After the pumpkin is empty of the “yucky stuff”, it is ready to be transformed into a new creation.

3. Carving

- a. Carving a face or design on the pumpkin transforms it into something new. This represents how God gives us a new identity in Jesus. The old person full of sin is gone, and a new creation has come. (II Corinthians 5:17)
- b. **Next**, when we place a candle or LED light inside the hollowed-out pumpkin and turn it on, the light fills the pumpkin. This shows how God fills us with the Holy Spirit, which is the “light of life”.
- c. **Finally**, if the pumpkin is put in the dark, the pumpkin’s light shines brightly through its carved features. This illustrates Jesus’ command for us to be “light in the world”. (Matthew 5:14-16) We shine God’s goodness through us so that others can see God and glorify Him.

I hope this activity makes the Gospel message more understandable and memorable. I also hope this elicits many questions and discussions about faith and forgiveness, about salvation and transformation. All fitting Reformation topics. To God be the glory.

This pumpkin Gospel message was adapted from a children’s book, *The Pumpkin Gospel* by Mary Manz Simon.



T.R.I.P NEWS:

- **NO TRIP** order is being placed this week!
- **TRIP Schedule:** Next order for physical cards is due on Wednesday, Oct. 29 at 3:30pm and available for pick up on Tuesday, Nov. 4, after 2:45pm. Cash & Carry orders are not available this week. Online ordering is available 24/7 on raiserright.com. Future Order Dates: Nov. 5, Nov. 12 and Nov. 19.
- **Last Weekend for Bonus Fest!:** Take advantage of new online bonuses each weekend in the month of October! Vendors will be announced each Friday on the Raiserright Facebook page and through email. For every gift card purchased (from featured vendors) you will be automatically entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift card. Orders must be placed online during promotion. If you are not receiving emails from Raiserright.com and would like to, email Sherry Hiatt at trip@highlandchristian.org.
- **TRIP Volunteer Schedule:** Oct. 21-Team A, Nov. 4-Team B and November 11-Team B.

COMMUNITY NEWS:

- **Bethel Church Lansing** invites you to a free family event on **Monday, October 27**. Trunk or Treat from 4:30-6pm followed by a Sloppy Joe Community Dinner inside from 4:30-7.
- **NEW LIFE CRC (3010 Ridge Road, Highland, IN 46322) will be hosting Trunk or Treat on Friday, October 31, from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. in the church parking lot.** We will have decorated cars with trunks of candy and treats along with a refreshment table! Don't forget to wear your costume! Please contact (219) 838-0506 for more information. We hope to see you there!
- **Lake County Parks Department Survey:** The Lake County Parks & Recreation Department is starting work on their next 5-year master plan. As part of their community outreach campaign, "Let's Talk Parks," they are seeking feedback from residents to help them understand their priorities for Lake County parks and recreational facilities. They believe that by partnering with you, they can gather the comprehensive feedback needed to create a master plan that truly reflects the needs and desires of our community. Attached you will find a [PDF](#) with the linked survey; all survey participants are entered in a prize drawing.
- **Illiana Christian Auction:** The Illiana Christian Auction Committee is excited to announce our 11th annual auction on Saturday, November 15. The silent auction will begin at 5:00 p.m. and the live auction at 5:30 p.m. The kitchen will begin serving food at 5:00 p.m.