



THE TOWER NEWSLETTER

SUMMER EDITION

LOVE GOD, LOVE NEIGHBOR, CHANGE THE WORLD

JUNE-JULY 2020

Blessings and Farewell from Senior Pastor Britt Skarda



Photo by Jamison Worley, AY Magazine

Dear PHUMC friends,

As I prepare to end my time as your senior pastor, Karen and I want to thank you for the many ways you have reached out and embraced our family these past ten years. In the months and years ahead we will look back on our time together with great fondness, and I trust it will be the same for you. Of the twenty-two senior pastors who have served Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church since its founding in 1912, only three have served longer: Dr. J. Kenneth Shamblin, Dr. James B. Argue and Rev. Victor H. Nixon. It is an honor to be among these gifted pastors. I was also blessed to serve this great church as an associate pastor from 1989 to 1992.

Because of this, my experiences at

Pulaski Heights span a whopping thirty-one year period! I have been blessed to rub elbows with founding members of the church, lead the first-ever foreign mission team to Haiti, celebrate the church's centennial and complete the last great master plan building project for the Woodlawn campus. Over the years I have watched children grow up. I have baptized infants and adults, celebrated marriages and presided over far too many memorial services. I have visited hospitals and shut-ins, and I have sweated bullets over every sermon I have preached.

While Karen and I will be leaving you in order to enter a new phase of our life, you will not be alone. Jesus Christ will remain a constant presence through the power of the Holy Spirit. Please don't take this beautiful gift for granted. You will also be blessed by the leadership of Dr. John Robbins and his wife, Susan. John will be your new senior pastor, and I will be your friend. I have known John for many years and he is a stellar leader, gifted preacher and a faithful disciple of Christ. He will lead you well. Pray for the Robbins family and welcome them with open arms!

The best is yet to be!

In faith and love,
Britt Skarda

LATEST CHURCH PLANS *in the time of COVID-19*



IN-PERSON WORSHIP **AUGUST 2ND**

This is our target date to return to in-person worship. Until then, worship will be offered as it currently is and all classes will continue meeting online. The situation could change between now and then, but for a church the size of Pulaski Heights UMC, we feel this date is measured and responsible..



CHILDREN'S LEARNING CENTER **AUGUST 3RD**

The target date for the reopening of the CLC is August 3. However, this date could change as we continue to monitor the situation. During this time we will be drafting new policies and procedures to enhance the safety of our children and staff.

Rev. Belinda Price *Last Service June 28*

What an odd place I find myself in. As a young adult I arrived at Pulaski Heights in the mid-seventies and was involved in the Young Singles Sunday School Class and sang in the Sanctuary Choir and Joyful Noise. Phil and I met at the church, married and raised our children here. The church was fertile ground for growing spiritually and eventually the call to ministry took hold. I first served as Director of Children's Ministry for six years. The last time I left PHUMC, I was off to seminary, then a seven year ministry as Pastor of Vilonia UMC. I came full circle in 2013 when I returned to Pulaski Heights as Associate Pastor of Welcoming and Spiritual Formation. The last seven years as one of your pastors has brought me a great deal of joy.



I have found great joy in our worship together, singing and praying, preaching, sharing with you the bread and the cup, meeting with parents to discuss baptism and participating in those baptisms, meeting our new members as they attended Membership Matters Classes, working with Sunday School Classes, young women's groups and the Women's Retreat. Overseeing the Community Easter Sunrise Service has been a special joy.

But the greatest joy always comes from doing ministry with you, and sharing life with you, sharing grief and difficulties and sharing joys and celebrations.

As I begin a new phase of life, saying goodbye seems so odd. I am buoyed by the words of the poet, Rumi, who said, "Goodbyes are only for those who love with their eyes. That is because for those who love with heart and soul, there is no such thing as separation." So, my role changes, and as I meet the challenges and joys of this new adventure called retirement, I take you all with me in my heart. You have much to look forward to as you receive Rev. Robbins and Rev. McMurray. They will bring new gifts to share with you and you will be greatly blessed.

May the Peace of Christ be with you!

Belinda

Goodbye from *Rev. Andrea*

It seems like not long ago that I graduated from the Candler School of Theology at Emory University. I packed up my apartment in North Decatur, GA, and the next morning I preached my last sermon before hopping on the road to Little Rock for my first appointment as the campus pastor of our second campus, St. Luke. Time flies!

I want to thank the members who worship at St. Luke. It has been a privilege and joy to serve as your campus pastor. You have journeyed with me as I navigated many firsts. You have encouraged me and challenged me to grow as a pastor. You have showered me with kind words and affirmations. You have celebrated and prayed for me as I completed the ordination process.

In addition to cherishing you as my



first congregation, I will always remember you as God's people. You have remained faithful to the church of Jesus Christ. You have served and prayed for your church. You have experienced the loss of many faithful friends who have worshipped with you. It has not been a smooth transition, but you have remained steadfast. I hate that we are not able to gather to worship and say our final goodbyes. Right now, however, you are all in my thoughts, and I lift you to God's compassionate care. I will miss you, dearly.

To all the members of Pulaski Heights, I thank you for your faithful witness as a great church with members who have a deep desire to serve its community. I have witnessed this firsthand through our St. Luke Community Meal, food pantry, and CLC. Thank you for your solidarity and loving support of the St. Luke campus. You, too, have met me with affirmation and encouragement, and entrusted me to serve as your associate pastor, thank you! As I depart to my new appointment, I am thankful to God for allowing me to serve as your associate pastor.

To the pastors and staff of PHUMC -- my fellow co-laborers in God's mission field -- I thank you for your mentorship, wisdom, and encouragement. I have learned so much from each of you.

Farewell for now. I ask for your prayers as I prepare to serve as the associate pastor of contemporary worship at First United Methodist Church of Bentonville. Love you all!

Andrea



Goodbye from the Snyder Family!

In 1987, I left my home church, Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church to go to seminary. Saints like Ernestine Henderson McKinney, Johnny Roberts, Dr. James B. Argue, Sr., and Betty Meyer encouraged me.

After my internship at Benton First, graduation, and service to three small churches in South Arkansas, Rev. Vic Nixon asked me to join the PHUMC staff in 1992. (Thank you, Vic.) I followed Rev. Britt Skarda, who would become a friend in ministry. Mission and service became my passion. I still have friends in Russia because of the sister church we had there so long

ago. After eight years serving PHUMC, I moved on to a rural charge, became an urban missionary, and served a midtown church, along with getting married and having four children. Whew!

Amazingly, 16 years after leaving, I rejoined PHUMC in 2016 at the invitation of Rev. Skarda to be your pastor in charge of mission, New Heights worship, and the preaching themes. (Thank you, Britt.)

Not long after I returned, Dewey Glasscock, one of our long-time members, gave me an envelope. In it, I found a worship bulletin dated December 31, 1961. I was just five months old. My oldest brother, who was youth director at PH, was the preacher that New Year's Eve. On the letter, he wrote a note to thank the Glasscocks for their support as he went on to seminary to become an ordained minister. Last summer, my brother and mentor had a massive heart attack, and we lost him. The copy of that old-fashioned worship bulletin was a lovely keepsake to remember where so much of my journey began.

On July 1, I will serve my 11th church and go to my 8th appointment, Winfield UMC. I will be serving the church my grandmother joined on Jan. 5th 1916, though the church is in its fourth location. In its first century, Winfield became the largest Methodist church in Arkansas and would soon build a gothic revival building at 16th and Louisiana. My great-grandmother was already a member, and my great uncle, Rev. Dr. JD Hammons, a pastor, received my grandmother into membership. The Holy Spirit is ever unpredictable.

It has been a joy to serve, and to work again with old and new friends. My children and husband have had a great home here. Thank you to all staff and laity who have worked with me and supported us, especially the saints I have known for decades, some of whom walk with me even now. We covet your prayers.

Peace,

Snyder Family
Betsy, Victor, Penn, Wyatt, Sullivan and Aubrey



LOVE OFFERINGS

If you would like to participate in a love offering for any of our transitioning pastors, please make your check payable to PHUMC and note "Love Offering- (clergy name)."

We would like to have all funds in by **June 30**. We hope you will join us in celebrating the ministries of these four servants of Christ who have helped shepherd our congregation!



W E L C O M E

to Pulaski Heights
United Methodist Church



Dr. John Robbins



Rev. Kathleen
McMurray

Susan and I are privileged to begin our ministry at Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church. Despite the highly unusual circumstances, I am overjoyed to be sharing in the work of Christ with each of you. I am certain that what we accomplish together will greatly impact the Kingdom of God both in Little Rock and across the world. Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church has a long and rich history of being a welcoming congregation where all can feel as though they have a place to worship, fellowship, and serve. Because of that, I have desired to serve this congregation since the first time I worshipped with you more than thirty years ago!

I want to express my sincere appreciation to Britt Skarda for his leadership over the last ten years. He has paved the way for me to begin my work by assembling a strong staff and supporting me during this time of transition. I also want to encourage you to find ways to welcome the Reverend Kathleen McMurray to our staff. She is going to be a tremendous addition. Both of us officially begin our ministries on July 1.

I will be preaching my first sermon on July 5 in the sanctuary. Though we cannot gather together in person, I hope you will watch on television or online. **In addition, the following Wednesday, July 8, I will begin teaching the Gospel of Mark online.** I have always led a weekly study of scripture throughout my ministry and will continue that tradition here.

Things are going to be different for a variety of reasons. The pandemic has made it impossible for me to shake hands and introduce myself. The clergy staff is smaller, having gone from six to four. Consequently, some responsibilities are going to have to be redistributed among the present staff. It will also take time to relaunch our regular schedule, starting that only after we have made sure it is safe to do so. Change is inevitable, but that's ok. Circumstances require change, but the work we are doing together will never change!

When the appropriate time comes, Susan and I look forward to meeting you and serving with you face to face. In the meantime, let's do everything we can to keep the many ministries of PHUMC thriving. I am grateful to be your new Senior Pastor!

John Robbins

What a joy it is to have a chance to say hello!

I first want to say how thankful I am for the warm welcome I have already received from so many of you. We find ourselves in very strange times in this transition, and our first interactions will not be what we Methodists are used to. Nevertheless, I am looking forward to meeting you and, along with Dr. John Robbins, beginning in ministry with you and the wonderful pastors and staff at Pulaski Heights.

I grew up in Little Rock. I attended Parkview High School, where I was involved with music and theatre. I was a member of First United Methodist Church before attending college at Louisiana State University and seminary at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. After living across the world for a bit in Thailand, across the country for my education, and across the state in my previous two appointments, I am so excited to be returning home to Little Rock to serve at Pulaski Heights!

It is such an honor to serve a church like Pulaski Heights. **Your vision to “love God, love neighbor, and change the world” resonates deeply with me.** I was asked recently to identify my top three values, and I realized they are connection, creativity, and inclusion. I care deeply about finding creative ways for all people, particularly ones who may be struggling with faith or feel hurt or burned by the church, to connect with one another and with God. Through this connection, through loving God and loving one another, we do change the world, and I am excited to be on the journey of doing so along with you!

In Christ,

Pastor Kathleen

GOSPEL OF MARK BIBLE STUDY

STARTS JULY 8TH
EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 6:30 P.M.
ON FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE

LED BY SENIOR PASTOR DR. JOHN ROBBINS



Virtual Vacation Bible School Set for July 12-16



The best week of your life is just a little bit different this year! VBS at PHUMC will be online and at-home from July 12-16.

Knights of North Castle: Quest for the King's Armor, invites children to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of God's power by exploring how we put on the armor of God.

Volunteers are also needed - Youth and Adults - to be Zoom Small Group Leaders (Adults to set-up & lead a short Zoom group meeting of 4 - 8 children each afternoon/evening. SUPER FUN & EASY - Material Provided!)

Register at phumc.com/vbs2020

NOW ACCEPTING DONATIONS!

GIVE A KID A CHANCE

Each summer we collect funds in order to help out our friends at Wakefield Elementary. **We are asking for a donation of \$35 to provide a backpack, school supplies, and a uniform for students at Wakefield.** Make checks payable to PHUMC with "GAKAC" on the memo line.

PHUMC Foundation Awards \$80,000 in Grants

Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church Foundation awarded over \$80,000 in grants from Unrestricted Earnings for program ministries throughout the church and community. Each year earnings from these endowments are available to the Board for on-going Foundation operations, our pledge of \$80,000 to the PHUMC Operating Budget, and these grants.

The grants awarded are shown here.

Technology

\$27,570
Upgrades for servers and desktop computers

Van Replacement

\$15,000
Allow PHUMC to purchase a new 15-passenger van

Caring Ministry

\$12,000
Good Samaritan Fund for support of agencies to which PHUMC makes regular referrals - Compassion Center, St. Francis House, and Jericho way

Hospitality Committee

\$10,000
Deep cleaning of all kitchen areas of PHUMC

St. Luke CLC

\$5,000
Children's Learning Center #kidsponsor

ACES Summit

\$3,000
PHUMC is a founding member of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) Summit which supports young children

Adventures in the Arts

\$3,000
Scholarships for Summer Music and Arts camps for low-income students

Worship

\$2,500
Enhancements for Christmas worship for Sanctuary and Wesley Hall

PH Children and Youth

\$1,350
Gaga ball pit to be used at children and youth events

New Heights

\$1,185
Lenten and Easter Banners

class of 2020

Congratulations to these young men and women! We know you will do well in the world and we look forward to watching you grow in life and faith even more!!

Phillip Abston
Anthony Bean
Elek Boone
Casey Carter
Sidney Dassinger
Anne Marie DeLuca



Davidson Dunkum
Connor Flegal
Kennedy Fogleman
Reece Forrest
Sarah Gornatti
Porter Griffin



Caroline Harrelson
Collier Hartsfield
Warren Heird
Eli Hicks
Chris Hightower
Ragan Hightower



Jackson House
Lucie Hughes
Sarah Jackson
Anna Claire Jacob
Sam Kostopolus
Jackson Lankford




Jaxon Lee
Jack McGahee
Seth Odom
Ben Porta
Jamison Reeves
Jackson Rice



Lily Ryall
Lydia Schallenberg
Robert Shannon
Cole Smalling
Caleb Stortroen
Jaxon Wickliffe





Confirmation Class 2020



Tristen Baker
Matt Bennett



Virginia Brantley
Jordyn Brown
Calamese Nora
Buchanan Liza
Bynum Liza
Cain Angelene
Cain Brooklyn



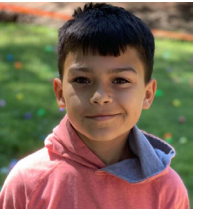
Christianne Cain
Madi Carr
Catherine Daugherty
Lilla Gordy
Louis Gornatti
Lacey Gross



Turner Harbour
Jake Harrelson
Sadie Harris
Parker Hartsfield
Lucy Haynes
Samuel Heard



Saer Hollingsworth
Eden Holman
Vivian Huff
Jacob Jones
Will Jones
George Knox



Kate Kostopulos
Christian Lopez
Madison Mace
Henry McFarlin
Juliana Neesvig
Nate Palmer



Will Palmer
Spencer Pittman
Mary-Margaret Rutledge
Heidi Sanders
Skyler Schaffer
Ella Scott



Addie Spencer
Aaron Swindler
Leslie Wallace
Guy Webb
Storm Wilson
Madi Zamilpa

EASTER SUNRISE

THANK YOU to all of our contributors for the Sunrise Service. We hope to be back next year!

In Memory of Bess Campbell by George Campbell; In Memory of Jimmie Lee Pendleton by Judge Marion Humphrey; In Memory of Louis Dudderar and Win Rockefeller by Lisenne Rockefeller; In Memory of Marcus K. Billingsley by Mary Lou Billingsley; In Memory of Marion Tucker Glatter by Rhett and Becky Tucker; In Memory of Mary Kay East by Mark and Kathy Williamson; In Memory of Patricia Payne Hill and Sally Freeman McKenzie by Martha and French Hill; In Honor of Henry Traylor and Scottie Traylor by Vaughn and Jan McQuary

Robert and Juli Araiza, Charlie and Nancy Baker, Chris and Mary Burrow, Cynthia Conger, Alex and Cannell Dillard, Bill and Mandy Dillard, Mark and Laura Doramus, Brad and Kelly Eichler, Drake and Misty Hawkins, Barbara Hoover, Dusty and Susan Hoskyn, Abigail Howe, John and Julie Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Lewallen, Dickie Lunsford, Andrew and Susan Meadors, Lynn and Julie Marshall, Dotty McLemore, Richard Meyer, Sheffield and Mary Lynn Nelson, Mark and Vicki Saviers, Terry and Martha Sharp, Robert and Mary Smith, Mary Grace Smith, Robin Smith, Mark and Laura Spradley, Lou Ellen Stevens, Tyler Thompson, Charlie and Capi Whiteside, Randall and Terri Wright, & Buddy and Beverly Villines

Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church
4823 Woodlawn
Little Rock, Arkansas 72205

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PHUMC Online Schedule

starting in July* (Worship services already happening at these times)

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday Worship Service

10:30 A.M.
Watch on KATV or Facebook/YouTube

New Heights Online

6:00 P.M. - THURSDAYS
Facebook and Youtube

DEVOTIONALS

"Morning Word"

8:00 A.M. - M-F
Short devotional led by
PHUMC clergy

BIBLE STUDY

Gospel of Mark

6:00 P.M. - WEDNESDAY
New Senior Pastor Dr. John Robbins
weekly Bible Study

www.phumc.com • (501) 664-3600



@pulaskiheightsunitedmethodistchurch



youtube.com/pulaskiheightsumc



@phumchillcrest

BEING A METHODIST in the time of COVID-19

It is common to feel helpless in a crisis. Yet, the vows we took when we came United Methodists offer the perfect blueprint for how to support your community and stay connected to the church.



PRAYERS

Focus your daily prayers toward those sick and suffering, and all those out there who are working to keep us safe and well, including healthcare professionals and other first responders. Pastors and staff are always available at 501-664-3600 or you can fill out a prayer request on phumc.com/prayer.



PRESENCE

Just because we can't be physically together in worship doesn't mean we can't be connected! Setting time aside to worship connects all of us together through shared experiences. You can watch our Sunday worship at 10:30 a.m. each Sunday on KATV or on Facebook & Youtube. New Heights Online is every Thursday at 6 p.m.



GIFTS

Your gifts during this time not only ensure the church continues to operate and is able to retain staff, but also allows the church to support recovery efforts at home and abroad. Give online at phumc.com/give or mail your donation to 4823 Woodlawn Dr, Little Rock, AR 72205.



SERVICE

There are a number of ways you can help your neighbors, even at a distance: sewing masks, delivering food to homebound neighbors, or even being a "Caring Shepherd" to call members and make sure they know they are loved by PHUMC.



WITNESS

As the body of Christ we can still build a community of love that worships through our witness to the world. People are hungry for hope and joy especially right now. Be a beacon of light through your speech and actions to support one another during these trying times.