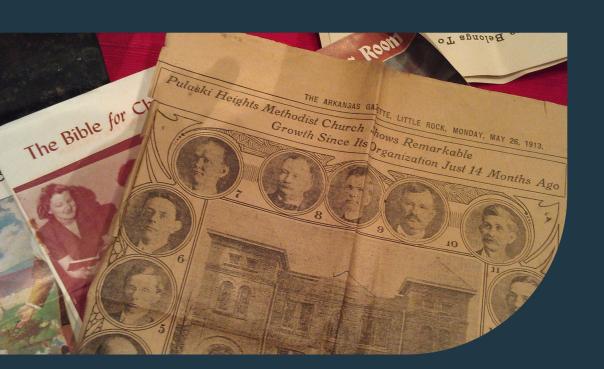
BECAUSE YOU GIVE

MINISTRY REPORT

2024

Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church is able to reach out beyond the walls of the church to the local community and even further, engaging the world with our ministries.



Inspire Love. Embrace Christ. Engage the World.



4823 Woodlawn Drive Little Rock, AR Connect Online phumc.com It is always enlightening and beneficial to reflect on what we accomplish each year as a church family called Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church. Throughout this Because You Give Year-in-Review, you will see one reason after another why we are a leading congregation in our denomination. It reflects positively on the extraordinary generosity of those who contribute financially, and hopefully, encourages those who do not to consider doing their part to give back to God a portion of what God has blessed them with too.

As we move toward the end of 2024, we want to accomplish something that will set the trajectory of our ministries for years to come. However, we need your generosity to make it possible.

Each year, during the month of December, we collect about one third of our yearly offering. A good portion of those funds arrive during the last week of the year. Together, we need to break the habit of waiting until the last minute to remember our promise to God to support the work of Christ with a portion of our finances.

I am asking that you help us reach our goal of having fully funded our ministry budget BEFORE Christmas Eve this year. That means you must do your part as soon as possible. For those who are generous all year, thank you. For those who wait until the last moment, if possible, please give your financial support in the next few weeks. For you who have yet to contribute, PLEASE DO SOMETHING to enable us to continue to offer the message of Christ in a world that needs it more than ever.

Enjoy looking at and reading about much of what your great church does year after year. We are completely reliant on your financial generosity to be just who God has called us to be: the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus Christ in the world.

Thank you for taking your faith and your finances seriously!

-DrJohn Robbins, Senior Pastor



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WORSHIP

At Pulaski Heights UMC, we have continued to strive for excellence and positive impact in all aspects of worship, from our deeply moving sermons to the incredible music that enriches both our modern and classic worship services. Our pastors consistently deliver thought-provoking and spiritually nourishing messages, while our music ministry, whether through the modern worship team or chancel choir, elevates the worship experience, drawing everyone closer to God.

Our dedication to excellence was recently highlighted as many of our staff members took on the significant responsibility of planning and executing worship for the Annual Conference. This opportunity allowed us to demonstrate the depth of our talent and organizational skills, providing a meaningful and smooth worship experience for all who attended.

Looking ahead, PHUMC is committed to creating a fully accessible worship environment for persons with disabilities. Our goal is to ensure that everyone, regardless of physical or cognitive ability, can participate fully in our worship services, whether that means enhanced physical access to our spaces, assistive listening devices, or inclusive practices that make our services welcoming and engaging for all.

With these efforts, PHUMC continues to be a beacon of inclusive and impactful worship, fulfilling our goal to serve our congregation and community with excellence in everything we do.



MUSIC BY THE NUMBERS

- 189 MONTHLY WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS
- 34 CHILDREN IN CHILDREN'S CHOIR
- 17 Youth leading worship
- OVER 210 DIFFERENT SONGS PERFORMED FOR WORSHIP IN 2024





This past year was filled with numerous highlights and blessings for our music ministries! We've led many special services from Night of Worship to a special All Saints Service of Remembrance to reviving an old church tradition, Hanging of the Greens (coming again Sunday, Dec. 1, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.)

Our Chancel Choir continues to lead by providing music every Sunday morning, as well as special musical presentations like our Festival of Lessons and Carols. This year our Chancel Choir joined with the Central UMC Chancel Choir in Fayetteville and the DFW Brass Ensemble from Dallas for multiple Hymn Festival Concerts. On March 9 and 16, 2025 we will continue this new musical tradition by adding two more church choirs, representing four United Methodist churches in four cities from around the state of Arkansas!

In addition, the Adult Handbell Ensemble and Children's Choir continue to flourish. The Children's Choir led the "Hanging of the Greens Service," a service representing the beginning of the Advent season and sang in worship for Mother's Day. Our Music Academy (formerly 'Adventures in the Arts') continues to meet a need for church members and the greater community. We currently have 15 instructors teaching private music lessons in piano, voice, violin, cello, and guitar to 100 students.

Our Modern Worship team continues to provide powerful modern worship experiences for our congregants; from building seasonal sets that correspond to the liturgical calendar, to creating a worship design team that empowers congregants to use their creativity in worship by helping with worship visuals. The Modern Worship team planned and led our first ever Service of Remembrance in the Columbarium on All Saints Sunday, to honor those who have joined the Church Triumphant.

The Modern Worship team has also equipped the phyouth Worship Team to lead worship at Sunday night youth gatherings. This dynamic team fosters an environment where students can express their creativity and deepen their faith. They have provided students with necessary equipment and tools to lead worship including loaner instruments. They have also had students learn about what it takes to lead worship at Youth Worship Camp the past three summers.

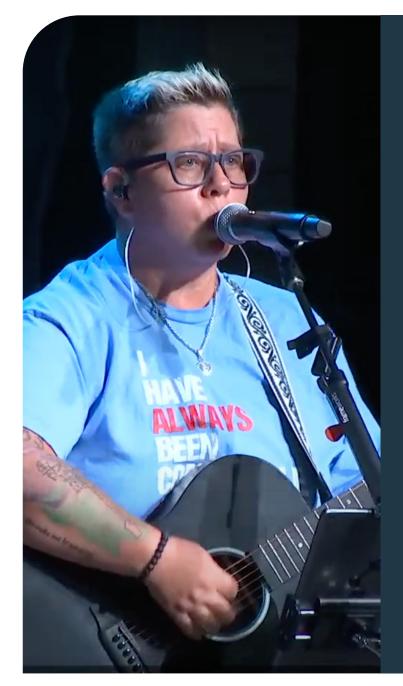
> "We welcome people, and we, like them, are in need of God's grace, God's forgiveness, God's mercy, and God's love." – Dr. John Robbins



LADALE HOUSTON

MODERN WORSHIP TEAM

LaDale Houston has become a vital part of the Modern Worship team at Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church since joining this year. As an acoustic guitarist and vocalist, she passionately shares her musical gifts and talents in worship each month, enhancing the worship experience for all. LaDale's journey onto the Modern Worship Team at PHUMC has not only allowed her to share her gifts, but has also provided a nurturing community where she can truly belong. Her commitment to creating an inclusive and uplifting atmosphere resonates deeply with the church's mission, making her an inspiring presence on the team.



MISSIONS

At Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church, our missions are flourishing, touching lives both locally and globally. The Diaper Bank is on track to distribute over **150,000** diapers this year, a tremendous accomplishment made possible by a recent move into a larger space. We collected over **1,200** socks for prisoners and unhoused neighbors for Socktoberfest this year. The Clothes Closet has also been a beacon of hope, with **33** volunteers dedicating over **300** hours this year to provide hundreds of bags of clothing to **12** non-profit partners. Each act of service reflects our church's deep commitment to uplifting those in need. Our Food Pantry has served **4,372** individuals from January to September and dramatically increased their offerings with additional protein (chicken, beef, turkey, etc.) and staple kitchen items such as seasoning, eggs, etc.

Our outreach doesn't stop there. At Wakefield Elementary, we support **72** families through our Food Pantry. Additionally, **46** church members are tutoring students weekly, ensuring they receive the educational support they need. We've also donated **\$6,600** for Back-to-School supplies, equipping students for a successful year. Internationally, our partnership with Salud Y Paz in Guatemala continues to thrive, with our 2024 surgical team completing **61** surgeries this past summer. Through these missions and more, Pulaski Heights UMC remains a vibrant force for good in our community and the world.



THE SADIQIS: AFGHAN REFUGEE FAMILY

When we look at the Sadigi children, we get a real picture of how guickly time has passed these almost three years of caring for our Afghan refugee family. Aruzu turned two in September. She is an adorable little dynamo and rules all over her three brothers. Hussain is in his first year at Horace Mann Middle School. It was a huge adjustment for him, but he has handled it beautifully and we are so proud of him. He is being tutored privately every week thanks to generous gifts from PHUMC. Sajad is in the 3rd grade and Amir is in 1st at Williams Magnet Elementary this year. All of the boys seem very well adjusted, though grasping the entirety of the English language is, of course, still a challenge. However, in less than three years in the country, their progress is an inspiration. Mohammed is working the late shift now at Baptist Hospital in order to attend daily Intensive English Language classes at UALR. He is working hard to become more independent. Salima has been sharing her needle work, and she is teaching some of the other Afghan women her craft. She also bakes delicious naan and has even given lessons to some of our Afghan team members. The Sadiqis are an amazing family and working with them is a real blessing for each member of our team.

- Carol Isom



CARING MINISTRIES

The PHUMC Caring Ministries' goal is to be physically and spiritually present for members and the community. Persons requesting prayer are added to the various prayer lists while maintaining privacy and confidentiality. Approximately 200 Caring Volunteers send cards and notes, make phone calls, and make personal contacts every day. They deliver food, drive vans on Sundays, make hospital visits, and encourage and support one another. With such a large congregation, programs like Stephen Ministry, Grief Groups, Helping Hands, and Cancer Friends are vital to equipping lay members to care for each other and the community. The PHUMC Caring Network, in its recent form, has been extraordinarily active and vital for more than 50 years.



WALKING THE MOURNER'S PATH GRIEF GROUP

"AFTER EXPLORING OTHER GRIEF GROUPS FOLLOWING THE PASSING OF MY HUSBAND, I WAS INITIALLY APPREHENSIVE ABOUT TRYING WALKING THE MOURNER'S PATH. WHEN I FINALLY DECIDED TO GIVE IT A CHANCE, I DISCOVERED PROFOUND COMFORT IN THE PROGRAM. REFLECTING ON MY EXPERIENCE, I FOUND ITS STRATEGIC APPROACH AND GRADUAL PATHWAY TO HEALING TO BE TRANSFORMATIVE ON MY JOURNEY OF RECOVERY. WALKING THE MOURNER'S PATH BECAME A BEACON OF HOPE FOR ME, ILLUMINATING THE PROMISE OF DIVINE SOLACE DURING ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING TIMES OF MY LIFE. I CAN HONESTLY SAY, MOURNER'S PATH IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING THAT HELPED ME HEAL." — AMANDA CRAVEN

HELPING HANDS

"My husband started attending Helping Hands soon after we moved to Little Rock in mid 2022. From the beginning, he attended every Tuesday very willingly and when asked about his day when I picked him up, he typically reported it was either good or great! The volunteers so graciously work with those with Alzheimer's or other dementias and help them feel special. They engage in a variety of activities that help the attendees experience interaction, socialization, music, physical action and creativity with materials. Helping Hands is a gift to myself as well since I have a day each week of respite to do some shopping, complete tasks that require close attention, and relax. Helping Hands has made great differences in our lives!" — Sue Johnsen

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

"GOD IS LOVE" - Tagg Green, 3 Years Old

3rd Grade Bibles

- Gave out 34 Bibles
- Included parents in a "Learning to Use My Bible Class"

Trunk or Treat

• Over 900 people in attendance

Hanging of the Greens

- Over 300 people in attendance
- Worked with Music Ministries to offer this service that prepares us for the season of Advent
- Children's Choir sang and youth read

Children's Christmas Eve

- Over 750 people in attendance
- Worked with Music Ministries to offer this service that celebrates the birth of Jesus
- Children's Choirs sang and youth read

Palm Sunday

 Children processed with palms in all worship services and a church-wide palm parade was held during the Sunday School hour

Sunday School

- Babies through 4th grade each have their own monthly themed curriculum
- Teaching teams work together to lead the lessons throughout the school year
- The lessons each year are designed to build on learning from previous years
- Hands on learning through play, art, and even snacks help teach the story each month

Vacation Bible Camp

- Over 185 Children and volunteers
- Children learned ways we trust in God as they created art, sang songs, played games, and learned ways to care for creation
- Had a Night @ Camp for children and families including those who couldn't attend during the day
- \$1,135 was collected for programs at Camp Aldersgate

Easter Egg Hunt

- Over 300 people attended
- Children also worked together to create a butterfly of fresh flowers that was displayed on Easter Sunday



PHYOUTH

My Walk With God

"Before I joined phyouth I had a very strained relationship with Christ. I always felt as if i was constantly digging myself in a hole of sin and there was no way out. Being a part of this youth group has not only rearranged my perspective of the gospel and my faith but given me enough understanding to believe I can use my walk with God as an example for younger kids to follow."

Trust & Friendship

"Being able to lean into the community when I felt like I had no one else was life changing for my faith. I ignored God and anything to do with him outside of youth for a long time. Long enough to where I felt like I was drowning in all of my responsibilities and to the point where I couldn't take care of myself fully anymore. My small group leaders and the support of my small group helped pull me out of that. I'm so thankful to have the trust and friendship of that group. I don't know what I would've done without them."

A Call to Ministry

"Our church and youth group has impacted my life by helping me find my calling. If it weren't for being asked to lead worship or being pushed to be more confident in my gift, I probably would have never thought that I had a call to ministry."

These are just a few remarks made by our youth. I am constantly in awe of the ways that God moves though these young people's lives! I cannot wait to see what great things come from the seeds of faith planted here at PHUMC.

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-Rev. Ellen Rowland

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

In the past year, our Young Adult Ministry has seen exciting growth and engagement. We reached 72 active young adults, expanding our community with the creation of three new small groups. These groups have been instrumental in fostering deeper connections and spiritual growth among our young adults.

We also hosted 16 fellowship gatherings at various locations across Little Rock, providing opportunities for our young adults to come together in different settings to share in faith and friendship. A major highlight was our first-ever Young Adult Night, where congregants gathered for a free meal, free childcare, and an inspiring time of worship led by Dr. Robbins. This event was an incredible opportunity to strengthen our community and welcome new faces.

Our young adults have also been actively involved beyond our congregation, connecting with peers across the ARUMC (Arkansas United Methodist Conference). Seven of our young adults attended a conference-led fall retreat focused on creation care and climate justice, reflecting our commitment to important global issues. We continue to engage in meaningful discussions through the conference-led Zoom book club and podcast discussion chats, helping us grow both spiritually and in our understanding of the world.



CATE SKINNER

"Joining the Young Adult Ministry at PHUMC has been a profound journey for me. When I returned back to Arkansas over two years ago, having moved around so much after graduation, I initially sought a way to meet new people. Little did I know that I was stepping into a community that would enrich my life in ways I never expected. YAM has given me lifelong friendships—people who genuinely care about my life journey and walk alongside me in my faith. What may seem like just grabbing dinner or catching a game transforms into something beautiful and meaningful. It's a group of young adults dedicated to creating a safe space where you can truly be yourself and learn to embrace who you are, all while nurturing your relationship with our Lord. This ministry has become a cornerstone of my life, a source of love and support that I cherish deeply."





"I have been involved with young adult activities at Pulaski Heights for about a year and a half now. Our regular Happening Hours are a great way to discover new places in Little Rock, and our small groups have been a great opportunity to connect with other people who are in the same stage of life as I am."

RYAN EPPINETTE





ADULT MINISTRIES

The Adult Ministries team at Pulaski Heights UMC has been instrumental in fostering deeper community connections and spiritual growth within the church. One of their key initiatives was reorganizing the Connect Fair, which significantly raised awareness about various ministries and missions and invited more members to participate. Additionally, they produced weekly Group Guides and devotional booklets for Lent and Advent to encourage small groups, Sunday school classes, and individuals to dive deeper into the scripture and themes presented in the worship service and sermons.

In addition to these efforts, the Primetimers ministry for adults 55 and older has played a pivotal role in fostering community and fellowship among older members of the congregation. This group has enjoyed trips together to places like Star City and Keo, providing opportunities to explore local areas while strengthening relationships. They also gather regularly for movie nights and host monthly luncheons, creating a welcoming space for connection and conversation. Through these activities, the Primetimers ministry offers older adults a vibrant and engaging community where they can form lasting bonds and share meaningful experiences.

"My favorite part of the Primetimers ministry at PHUMC is the friendships I've developed over the years. Everyone is welcoming to whoever shows up. I often bring friends that do not belong to our church, and they always comment on the friendly people and how they feel at home. The programs are educational, interesting, and fun. My friends that are non-members often call the church directly to sign up. I'm so thankful for all of the opportunities we have geared toward older adults!" — Mary Ruth Brown

WELCOMING & HOSPITALITY

The Welcoming & Hospitality team at Pulaski Heights UMC plays a vital role in supporting the church staff as they work to carry out the mission of the church by creating a warm and inviting atmosphere for both members and visitors. Through thoughtful gestures like providing donuts, arranging clear and welcoming signage, and ensuring that all who enter the church feel at home, this team helps to foster a sense of community and belonging. Their efforts enhance the overall worship experience and contribute to making the church a place where everyone feels valued and embraced, aligning with the mission of inclusivity and hospitality. Here is some of what they've done.

- Welcome 101 New members so far in 2024
- Open our building for 3,301 events, meetings, weddings, or groups that were attended by over 34,000 members of our church and community
- Throw a back-to-school Block Party for our congregation and community attended by over 250 people
- ORGANIZE TEA PARTIES FOR MEMBERS IN ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES
- Host Ozark Mission Project College Staff Training for a week
- HOST THE RANEY SERIES WITH KATE BOWLER
- CLEAN OUT EXCESS FURNITURE FROM CHURCH STORAGE AND
 CHILDREN'S LEARNING CENTER
- FACILITATE STAFF MISSION WORKDAYS AND TEAMBUILDING DAYS





PHUMC FOUNDATION

The PHUMC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that serves the members, families, and missions of Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church through careful and successful management of financial gifts. The goal is to extend the blessings of our gifts and faith well into the future by planning legacies. Here are some of the things they have achieved this year.

- Launch the PHUMC Foundation Website phumcfoundation.org
- Replace the kitchen warming oven
- Receive gifts of over \$163,000 to the Foundation and the PHUMC Memorial Fund throughout the year
- Established the PHUMC Technology and the Erwin-Faulkner Helping Hands Endowments
- Fund \$54,000 in repair and replacement costs for the PHUMC campus
- Award 10 scholarships in 2024: Stanley and Arminta Berry Music and Arts Scholarship
 (3) - \$4,500; Lorraine Cokenour Ministry Scholarships (5)- \$17,788; Little Joe and the BKs Scholarship (1) -\$1,000; and the Faulkner Basketball Scholarship (1) - \$1,000

- Provide \$18,000 in restricted funds for specific program ministry needs and support to the PHUMC clergy and staff
- Increase the annual pledge to PHUMC Operations as a portion of the Foundation's earnings to \$158,000
- Provide staff support of nearly \$37,000
- Contribute \$5,000 to the purchase of the new vans
- Support PHUMC Music and Art Ministries with over \$15,000 in distributions
- Help fund community missions (Camp Aldersgate, Robert Chancellor Hoover Treatment Center, Project Transformation, and the Central Arkansas Diaper Bank) with contributions over \$36,000

FACILITIES

In a strategic move to ensure long-term functionality and efficiency, PHUMC has a robust preventative maintenance program that has yielded impressive results across various systems. Recent HVAC inspections and adjustments have optimized airflow and efficiency, preventing costly breakdowns and ensuring a comfortable environment year-round. Upgrades to the electrical system included replacing aging components and installing energy-efficient LED lighting as needed, reducing energy consumption and enhancing safety. A fresh application of eco-friendly paint in parts of the church not only revitalized the building's aesthetic but also protects surfaces from wear and tear. Additionally, comprehensive plumbing checks and routine repairs have addressed minor leaks and improved overall water flow, safeguarding against future issues. These proactive measures reflect the commitment to maintaining a thriving community space, enhancing both occupant satisfaction and operational longevity.

However, these measures are all short term fixes for deeper issues that must be addressed completely. Our maintenance team has been identifying these issues throughout 2024 and will roll out a plan, with your help, to address the needs of our facilities and ensure our church building's future for decades to come.



Inspire Love. Embrace Christ. Engage the World.

COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY

Our Communications and Technology Departments at Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church has been doing an outstanding job using our resources to enhance both worship and fellowship. Through strategic outreach, we've been able to draw large attendance for both church and community-wide events, strengthening our connection with the congregation and the community. We've also enhanced the quality and design of our church handouts, making them more visually engaging, easy to understand, and effective in communicating our message. We've made significant strides in upgrading our infrastructure and technology, empowering our ministries and Sunday schools to thrive in new ways.

SOCIAL IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

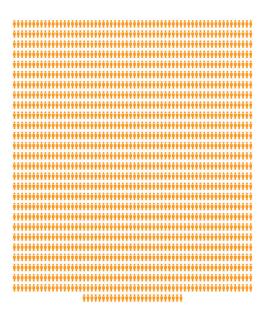
each icon represents 1000 people

1,700,000 people viewed PHUMC social media posts and content

1,000,500 people worshipped with PHUMC in

person, online, or via broadcast

34,000 people attended events hosted by our church





BROADCAST MINISTRY OUTREACH

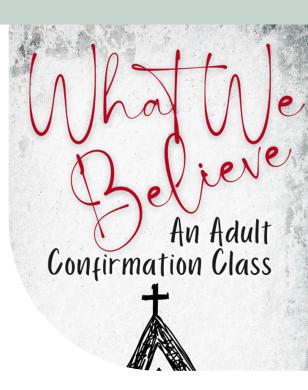
Our broadcast ministry continues to flourish, reaching well beyond the walls of Pulaski Heights. Each week, we average over 25,000 viewers through our partnership with the local TV affiliate, KATV. Additionally, our online presence is growing rapidly—so far in 2024, our services and sermons have been streamed on YouTube or Facebook by over 103,000 people. Through these platforms, we are able to extend our message of hope and faith to those who cannot join us in person, ensuring that our church's impact is felt far and wide.

These exciting upgrades and developments represent just a part of the ongoing work God is doing at Pulaski Heights UMC. We look forward to the many new opportunities they will create for deeper connection, learning, and worship in the months ahead.

UPCOMING & ONGOING PROJECTS

Publishing House

We are creating a publishing house. This will allow us to publish books, curriculum, and series that churches, Sunday School classes, and the public can use! For our first study curriculum, our communication and technology team worked with Rev. Kathleen McMurray's study "What We Believe: An Adult Confirmation Class," and created videos and corresponding graphics. This curriculum, rooted in sound theology and designed to foster meaningful discussions, has already been adopted by multiple congregations for their own use. This endeavor not only strengthens our teaching but also reflects our commitment to sharing our faith in ways that can benefit the wider Christian community. We are excited for our first projects to be released in the coming year.



Market Research Support

We have been supporting the Dream Team in their efforts to dream about the Norma Story Building space by facilitating surveys for staff, the congregation, and the community. In addition, we have done some market research about where gaps are in the community.



Stories (Podcast)

We have been working to continue our podcast series by collecting stories from church members. This will help us capture and archive some of the great stories of this church, our congregation, the building, and our ministries.

Technology Enhancements

To support the growing needs of our congregation, we've introduced several new technologies that are transforming how we engage with our community. Our Sunday School classes now benefit from upgraded digital tools, allowing teachers to create more interactive and dynamic learning experiences for children and adults alike. These improvements not only streamline lesson delivery but also encourage deeper engagement and participation. We've also expanded our online capabilities, enabling members to access teachings and resources from anywhere, creating more opportunities for connection and spiritual growth, whether attending in person or virtually.

Infrastructure Upgrades & Expansion

One of the most exciting developments has been the installation of fiber optic cabling throughout our campus. This upgrade significantly improves our network speed, enabling faster and more reliable connections across all areas of the church. Most notably, our gym area, which hosts various events and productions, now benefits from high-speed networking and audio/ visual system upgrades. This has opened the door for enhanced capabilities, allowing us to host community events like youth sports, large gatherings, and outside groups with facilities and capabilities FAR beyond most "church hosted" events. This improvement will undoubtedly enhance both our internal ministries and outreach efforts, fostering stronger community bonds.



Pulaski Heights UMC 4823 Woodlawn Drive Little Rock, Arkansas 72205

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