



# THE TOWER NEWSLETTER

INSPIRE LOVE, EMBRACE CHRIST, ENGAGE THE WORLD JULY 2025



Dear PHUMC,

It is with great pride, but also sadness, that I announce Bishop Laura Merrill's and the Cabinet's appointment of Rev. Kathleen McMurray to Lakewood United Methodist Church to serve as Senior Pastor.

We are deeply grateful for Kathleen's ministry and leadership these past five

years at Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church, especially when it comes to worship and discipleship opportunities. While we are sorry to see her go, we could not be more excited for this new opportunity in her ministry journey.

Kathleen will remain on our staff through August 1st, but we plan to have a celebration of her ministry on **July 20th between services in the Great Hall**. We ask that you pray for Kathleen and Lakewood UMC during this time of transition.

-Jill Penick, PHUMC Staff Parish Relations Chair

Dear PHUMC,

I want to share an important update regarding our Sunday morning worship schedule beginning August 10. As many of you know, Rev. Kathleen McMurray has been appointed to a new role by the Bishop. Because her move came so late in the appointment cycle, we will not be able to fill her position during this conference year.

After much thought and prayerful consideration, we have made the decision to adjust our Sunday morning schedule. Beginning in August, we will no longer offer the 9:00 a.m. Modern Worship service. We will continue to have Classic Worship at 9:00 a.m., and both Classic and Modern Worship will be held concurrently at 11:00 a.m. I will be preaching twice a month in the Modern Worship service to ensure ongoing connection and continuity across our worshipping community.

While change is never easy, I am confident that this new schedule will allow us to continue offering meaningful and Spirit-filled worship experiences for everyone. Thank you for your grace, flexibility, and faithfulness as we move forward together.

Grace and Peace,  
Dr. John Robbins, Senior Pastor



**Lee Strobel**

Saturday, September 13 | 6PM  
Pulaski Heights UMC  
RSVP: [phumc.com/raney](http://phumc.com/raney)  
or call 501-664-3600



Author of  
*The Case For Christ*

We hope that you join us the weekend of September 13-14 for our Raney Series with Lee Strobel.

Lee Strobel will speak on Saturday, September 13, at

6:00PM, and preach in all worship services on Sunday, September 14.

Lee Strobel is a former award-winning legal editor of The Chicago Tribune, a New York Times bestselling author of The Case for Christ, and a renowned speaker on faith and apologetics. Learn more at [leestrobel.com](http://leestrobel.com).

Registration will open on Monday, July 7 at [phumc.com/raney](http://phumc.com/raney) or by calling the church office at 501-664-3600. Spots are limited! Questions? Contact Virginia Lewis at [vlewis@phumc.com](mailto:vlewis@phumc.com).

## PHUMC MISSION HOUR

July 13  
10-11am  
Great Hall



Begins August 20

*Wednesday  
Nights at*  
**PULASKI  
HEIGHTS**

[PHUMC.COM/WEDNESDAYNIGHTS](http://PHUMC.COM/WEDNESDAYNIGHTS)

## TAKE OUR SURVEY

Help us discern Small Groups & Discipleship @ PHUMC!



[phumc.com/survey](http://phumc.com/survey)

We want to hear from you! As we look toward future discipleship ministries at Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church, your input is essential in helping us to design meaningful opportunities for spiritual growth and connection. Please take just a few minutes to fill out our Discipleship Survey by visiting [phumc.com/survey](http://phumc.com/survey). Your responses will directly shape the classes, groups, and studies we offer in the months ahead. Thank you for helping us grow together in faith.

We are pleased to share recent staffing updates at Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church:

- Dr. Jeff Hampton will be retiring in the summer of 2026. Effective July 1, 2025, Rev. Daniel Curry will assume the role of Pastor of Caring Ministries and Dr. Hampton will focus on counseling referrals, weekly support groups, training caring volunteers, and visitation ministry. July will be a transitional month for Primitimers and Helping Hands.
- We are proud to announce the additions of Karen Q. Clark to oversee and direct our Children's Choir and Samion Johnson to be part of our facilities team. Also, our summer interns are Karsyn Helms and J.P. Lyon. Karsyn is a student at the University of Missouri and will be working in the communications department. J.P. will be focusing on youth ministry, membership, and communication. He is a student at Hendrix College.
- Jennifer Garland, who serves on our facilities staff, will also relate to hospitality and guest services.
- Heather Doherty, our Administrative Assistant to Youth and Families, adds managing the kitchen and overseeing in-house meal preparations for most on-site meals.
- Virginia Lewis, in addition to her role as Executive Assistant to the Senior Pastor and Chief of Staff, will be supporting the upcoming Capital Campaign and assisting with worship administration.
- Kristen Coppola is our Administrative Assistant for Music & Worship. In addition, she will be updating and managing our membership records.

We are excited and feel these changes will be very positive as we look to the future. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Rev. Jay Clark  
Chief of Staff, Pulaski Heights UMC

#### AFGHAN UPDATES



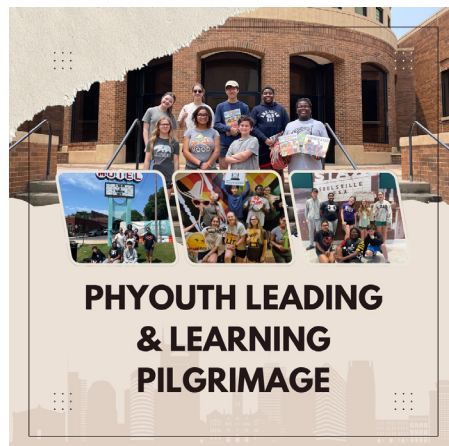
Thank you to PHUMC members who continue to support the Afghan family we "adopted" three years ago. Thanks also to the members who ask for updates. Here is a small bit of what is going on in their lives:

Because you give, Mohammad has books for his English language classes at UALR. With

recent grant cuts, Catholic Charities may no longer be able to pay his tuition. If necessary, our Afghan Fund will step in to support him.

Our fund is also providing the 6th grade son with professional English tutoring every week. He and his third grade brother also get twice weekly tutoring from Brenda Mize and Janet Stewart. All boys are doing well in LRSD schools.

Summer is here and the UWF have offered to support the boys in their summer camp endeavors. They love swimming and art and the third grader will attend wonderful Friendship Camp, which will be held at PHUMC this year. The family drove themselves to Memphis for a final meeting before they are issued their green cards. We and they are relieved that those cards should be in the mail soon. Thanks so much for your continuing concern and support!



To kick off our summer, phyouth went on the inaugural Leading and Learning Pilgrimage—A series of trips designed to help our students understand justice issues that add to the complexity of being a leader and advocating for others.

We believe that good leadership understands the complexity of the context we live in. This year, the trip took them to Birmingham, Montgomery, Memphis, and home to Little Rock to take a deep look at the history of racism in the US. Our students had important conversations, great Memphis BBQ, and new insights into their role as leaders in their own community. This is thanks to the Pulaski Heights UMC Foundation who generously supported this project. We had the trip of a lifetime!



We did it—and then some! Thanks to your generosity, we collected 837 pairs of underwear for Bright Futures Little Rock's Undie Sunday! These donations will go directly to students in our community who need them most.



#### FUNERAL PRE-PLANNING

Pre-funeral planning is one of the most thoughtful and loving gifts you can give your family. Making decisions ahead of time not only ensures your wishes are honored, but also offers peace of mind to your loved ones during a difficult time.

It allows space for grief without the burden of urgent decisions.

At Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church, we believe in the power of preparation—both spiritually and practically. Rev. Daniel Curry is available to guide you through planning your funeral service in a way that reflects your faith and life story. Additionally, Virginia Porta can assist you in exploring legacy giving through the PHUMC Foundation, helping you make a lasting impact on the ministries that matter to you. For more information or to begin the conversation, contact Rev. Daniel Curry at [dcurry@phumc.com](mailto:dcurry@phumc.com) or Virginia Porta at [vporta@phumc.com](mailto:vporta@phumc.com). Planning today is a gift your family will cherish tomorrow.

**THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO MADE THE OMP THAT PHUMC HOSTED, SPECIAL!**





Forty-two youth and eleven adults from Pulaski Heights UMC traveled to Jonesboro to participate in the largest Ozark Mission Project camp ever held. Throughout the week, teams built wheelchair ramps, painted homes, tackled yardwork, and—most importantly—built meaningful relationships with the people they served.

“Going to Ozark Mission Project gave me an opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world,” said youth participant Caiah Dunlap. “Being able to directly impact someone in a positive way was extremely fulfilling.”

Walker Lampley, another youth participant, shared, “Ozark Mission Project gave me the opportunity to go out into the community and make a real difference in others’ lives. It means so much to be a part of youth helping so many people!”  
We are so grateful for the opportunity to serve our neighbors.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**




**YOUR CHURCH IS SO PROUD OF YOU!**

Congratulations to Rev. Daniel Curry and Rev. Ellen Rowland for taking the next steps in their ministry path.

Rev. Curry was ordained as a Deacon in full connection. Rev. Rowland was commissioned as a provisional Deacon.

We are so proud of these two pastors and are so lucky to be included in their pastoral journey.

Join us for

**THE MORE YOU KNOW**

showing the PBS documentary:

**“ADDICTION”**

Sunday, August 17<sup>th</sup> at 5pm in Wesley Hall

**SUMMER BOOK CLUB**

with Pastor Kathleen

**JULY 9 | SACRED RESISTANCE**

BY GINGER GAINES-CIRELLI

**6-7 PM THE LOFT**

**HOLIDAY WEEKEND INFORMATION**

On July 6th we will only hold two services:  
9:00AM in the Sanctuary  
11:00AM in Wesley Hall

Our offices will be closed on July 3 & 4

## MEMORIALS & HONORARIA

*The following gifts were received for Food Pantry, Good Samaritan Fund, Music Ministry Fund, Operating Fund, TV Ministry Fund, and the glory of God.*

### Memorials

**Dr. Jim Campbell** by Jerry and Ann Linebarger

**Rev. John Collier** by Mary Henry

**Neil Curry** by Bo and Sunny Hawk

**Rosemary Davis** by Spence Churchill, Barbara Hoover, Rita Johnson, and Pat O'Donoghue

**Rev. Dr. Gunnar Gundersen** by Rev. Gail and Rod Hocott

**Margaret Morgan** by Helen Claire Brooks, Helen Buchanan, Anthony Cassano, Susan and Robert Davis, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hall, Doug Hughes, Janie Lowe, Alice McCoy, George Morgan, and Ann Pugh

**Lucy Owen** by Tom and April Owen III

**Cindy Price** by Curtis and Karen Barnett, Tammy Beck, Alicia and Kenny Berkemeyer, Rob and Roberta Billingsley, Cygnet and Roger Bise, John Brineman, Jack and Diane Browne, Brenda Bunting, David and Mary Coleman, Sheldon Culver, Gail Eisenhauer, Dr. Patricia Gibson, Elaine and Phillip Gillespie, George and Cristina Hamman, Peggy Hanson, Tommie and Paul Holmes, Randal and Jan Hundley, Dr. Eugene Lee, Betty Gene and Richard Mann, Virginia and Mike Porta, Ellie Roy, Mark and Laura Spradley, Jo Wheeler, Arkansas Financial Group, Inc., Arkansas Psychiatric Society, Donald Blankenship, Baker Blankenship, Laura Lucas and Family, Kelly and Gary Wall and Family, Koinonia Dialogue Class, and The Memphis-Atlanta Jungian Seminary

**Mary Putnam** by Dickie Lunsford, Mark and Michelle Mann, Dr. and Mrs. David Nixon, Tom Putnam, Brandon and Carol Ricketts, Mary Ellen Weaver, Susan Wood, The Argue Family, and The Argue Class

**Mildred Quinn** by Cathy and Al Alexander, Sheila Mehaffy, Karen O'Brien, and Michael McAfee and Charlotte Downs

**Dr. Mary Kathryn Sain** by Loretta Whitney

**Janet Tetkoskie** by Neil and Caroline Bennett, and Julia Fletcher

**Molly Vandiver** by Mike and Sherry Bracy, Mike and Melissa Holt, Lou Jamison, Mr. and Mrs. Herb Peach, Farron and Deb Wroblewski, Patricia Brooks and Family, and Vernon and Joy Horton, Troy and Emma Jones, and The Pickin in the Park Friends

**Mary Ellen Wade** by Beth and Roger Page

**Melanie Webre** by Tom and April Owen III

### Honoraria

**Rev. Jay Clark** by Alice McCoy

**Staley Catherine Johnson** by Billie and Skip Rutherford

**Charlie Marks** by Carol Rasco

**Michael McMurray** by Bev Villines

**Thelma Spencer** by Mary Spencer

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

### OUR CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY IS

**EXTENDED** to the family and friends of Donald Rebsamen in his recent death; to the family, friends, and members of Hoover United Methodist Church in the recent death of Rev. Dr. William H. Bill Robinson Jr; to Don Adams and family in the death of his brother, Jerry Adams; to Charlie Coleman and family in the death of his stepmother, Carolyn Coleman; to Michelle Banks Odum, Mark, Seth and Kate Odum in the death of their mother and grandmother, Nancy Hammersla; to the family and friends of Dr. George Doyne Williams in his recent death; to Rod Hocott and family in the death of his sister, Nancy Nauert; to Collin and Charly Callaway in the recent death of Charly's father, Callan Callaway; and to Alice Lightle, Katie, Foster, and Edward Holcomb in the death of their wife and mother, Debbie Willhite.

**OUR CONGRATULATIONS** to Anne Thomas Rystrom and Evan Madsen in their recent wedding; and to Catherine Caldwell and Blake Thorton in their recent wedding.

**WE CELEBRATE THE BAPTISM** of Ivy Abigail Woodruff, child of Brian Woodruff and Lindsey Wilbanks-Woodruff.

**WE REJOICE IN THE BIRTH** of Ford Foster McCain, child of Olivia and Nelson McCain and grandchild of Anne Dyke and Randy Bynum; and of Preston Leith Hines, child of Daniel and Anna Hines.

**WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS** The 2025 Confirmands; Katie Whitler; David and Meredith Newton; Wendy Shoffner; Scott and Anne Pace; Chase Flynn, and Sharon Cissell.

Thank you for subscribing to our online Tower Newsletter. If you'd like a paper copy for any reason, contact Michael McMurray at 501-978-0524 [mmcmurray@phumc.com](mailto:mmcmurray@phumc.com).



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### Contact Information

[phumc.com](https://www.phumc.com) • (501) 664-3600  
[phumc@phumc.com](mailto:phumc@phumc.com)

### Church Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Friday, 8:30 a.m. - Noon

## JULY MISSION COLLECTION

Clothes of all types and sizes  
Drop off at Entrance 9 or at the Welcome Desk

Our July Monthly Mission supports the PHUMC Clothes Closet, and we need your help! This month, we are collecting new or gently used clothing of all sizes to help meet the ongoing needs in our community. Donations can be dropped off at Entrance 9 or the Welcome Desk anytime throughout July.

Your generosity helps provide dignity and comfort to those in need. Questions? Contact Katye Chambers at [kchambers@phumc.com](mailto:kchambers@phumc.com) for more information.

### July Primetimers Luncheon

Featuring Kathleen Pursell,  
Arkansas Insurance Department

Thursday, July 24

11:30AM

PHUMC GYM

\$10

RSVP:

PHUMC APP

Call 501-664-3600

Front Desk

[phumc.com/primetimers](https://www.phumc.com/primetimers)

# JULY

*Staff Birthdays*

SUNGYUN KIM- JULY 21

REV. JAY CLARK- JULY 27

TRENTON TEEGARDEN- JULY 31



This summer, members of our surgical and medical mission teams are serving in Guatemala through our longtime partnership with Salud y Paz. They will provide vital care to communities with limited access to medical resources, offering healing, hope, and compassion. Please keep them in your prayers as they travel, serve, and embody the love of Christ to those in need.

## PHUMC FINANCIAL UPDATE

Below is a summary of PHUMC operating budget for the period January-May 2025.

Member Contributions	\$ 1,627,630
PHUMC Foundation Contributions	\$ 117,151
Other Income	\$ 35,252
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,780,033</b>
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 2,047,295
Tithe Payment payable	\$ 75,807
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 2,123,102</b>
<b>Net Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ (343,069)</b>