



St. James United Methodist Church

May 2023

THE CONNECTION

A NOTE FROM BEN



Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I want to give thanks to all who have either attended or watched our Town Hall Meetings that were held a few weeks ago. In these sessions we outlined the current landscape in the United Methodist Church, and discussed how that is currently impacting St. James. If you haven't had the chance to watch yet, I would highly encourage you to go to the "Media" page on our website and look in the "Special Events and Highlights" link, where you will find the recording.

I am pleased to say that I have received positive feedback from members of our congregation on every side of the issue we are facing. What I am consistently hearing is your deep love of God, your love of St. James, and a strong desire to love each other. I cannot tell you how proud that makes me as your Senior Pastor. I know that there will be further conversations around our future, but I face that future with much less fear because of your hearts for God and one another.

God is doing great things through us now, and we will not solely fix our eyes on the future but will keep our hands and feet moving to build the Kingdom. Join me in praying for our mission and ministry as we seek to know Jesus Christ and make Him known, sharing the good news that changes lives.

Grace and Peace,
Ben



Pictured l to r: Chance Creighton, Bob McCord, Mary Grace Smith, Beverly Milford and Jan Nixon

St. James responds to affected families of the central Arkansas tornado

BY REV. GREG SCHICK

In the midst of the shock our community went through following the BAD news of a tornado barreling through Little Rock, the GOOD news was seeing how people showed up to help their neighbors. St. James members dispersed into the neighborhood both by request - as we found out who had been affected - and on their own as they saw need. Whether it was searching for items, clearing out debris, or cutting up downed trees with a chainsaw - St. James helped be the "C"hurch.

Along with the immediate response to help affected families, the actions that quickly followed included helping look for housing for those who were displaced. Many of us have noted that we cannot remember a day when we used our phones more than that weekend! Multiple text threads were in play with messages flying between staff and members. It was beautiful to see the

overwhelming response of our members offering money, a place to stay, food, clothing, cleaning materials, toiletry items, and their manpower!

One of the blessings that came out of a community in pain was hearing from our members and THEIR neighbors as they found out about the needs of others St. James did not know! OUR ability to help was able to extend BEYOND our congregation to come alongside those outside of our knowledge - as it always should be! Thank you St. James for looking out for our neighbors!



Philip Davis and Kathy Strock help out with the St. James Chancel Choir tornado cleanup day.

St. James welcomes Betsy Robb to the finance staff



Betsy Robb, Director of Finance and Administration

We are excited to announce that Betsy Robb has been hired as the new Director of Finance and Administration at St. James. This position oversees all of the Church's Finances as well as managing our campus and buildings. Betsy is a Little Rock native and brings a diverse background in accounting and finance with her to St. James. She has spent the last ten years working in the advertising/public relations and home décor industries. Betsy is a graduate of Hendrix College in Conway, AR, where she earned a Master of Arts degree in Accounting, and a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Business. When not at work, Betsy volunteers her time to help our city animal shelter the Little Rock Animal Village, as well as a variety of local animal rescues. We hope that you will warmly welcome Betsy onto our staff, and pray for her as she begins her work with us on May 30. If you would like to send her a message, her email is betsy@stjameslr.org.

St. James members feed the homeless at Canvas Community



St. James Church members Brian Robinson, Beverly Mildford & Dorothy Ganz help feed the homeless at Canvas Community.

On Wednesday nights, Canvas Community invites their homeless friends inside for a free meal and entertainment. "What began as simply showing a movie and offering a place to belong to those who had no place eventually became a core part of their approach to addressing Little Rock's chronic homeless problem through holistic means: relationship, authentic friendship, community, and belonging rather than merely handouts or relationally distant case management."

Canvas meets at 1111 West 7th Street in Little Rock. If you would like to volunteer, contact our Director of Missions, Brenda Weeks, at 501-217-6722 or brenda@stjameslr.org.

Methodist churches team up with Habitat for Humanity



St. James has teamed up with Habitat for Humanity along with several churches in Central Arkansas to build a home for a family in need. These include Pulaski Heights UMC, Asbury UMC, First UMC, Highland Valley UMC, Trinity UMC, Wesley Chapel UMC, and the Methodist Foundation of Arkansas.

The Project is called "The Apostles Build", and is located at 3517 W. 11th Street in Little Rock.

Thanks to the generosity of the St. James congregation, we were able to help pay for the first house and have contributed almost \$19,000 toward a second.

If you would like to help with the building of the home, please contact Brenda Weeks, Director of Missions, at 501-217-6722 or brenda@stjameslr.org.



Rev. Jessica Durand and Rev. Ben Crismon at the Apostle's Build ground-breaking.

Community of Hope Regional & International Retreats



Sarah Roberts, President of Community of Hope International, was the guest speaker at the COH Regional Retreat.

The Community of Hope held its Regional Retreat on Saturday, April 22 at St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in West Little Rock - the first time gathering since the COVID epidemic.

Community of Hope is made up of lay people from all denominations who serve in pastoral care in a variety of ways. It is shaped by Benedictine spirituality and members learn to match theological and spiritual practices when ministering to others. It is a tool for spiritual growth and equips members in various ministries including visiting the homebound, hospitals nursing homes, retirement centers and hospices. Many participate in the homeless ministry, the prison ministry, prayer shawl and card ministries.

Thirty-five people attended from four denominations, Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian. The majority were from Little Rock, Maumelle, White Hall, and North Little



(L to R) Christa & Rev. Greg Schick, Jenny Smith, Carolyn Sue Auffert and Willi Bobo attend the COH International annual retreat in Dallas earlier this year.

Rock in Arkansas.

The morning began with a video of the History of Community of Hope featuring founder, Helen Appleberg. It was well received especially by those new to COH.

Sarah Roberts, president of COH, was the guest speaker, her presentation featured the Circle of Care as the heartbeat of Community of Hope.

The Healing Service, Communion, and Blessing of the Hands by Rev. Mary Vano made for a day filled with the spirit and completed the beautiful gathering.

If you're interested in joining the Community of Hope, please contact Jenny Smith, Director of Congregational Care, at 501-217-6756 or jenny@stjameslr.org. New Community of Hope classes begin in March 2024.

Commemorative Gifts through May 15, 2023

In Memory of:

- Mike Arnold by Caren & Lawrence Dodd, Mike Waters, The Hayden Family, Pam & Jay Gadberry, Kathryn & Jordan Carlisle, Susan Lamb, Gus Vratsinas, Dr. & Mrs. Bobby Caldwell, Stacy & David Robinson, Flatrock Energy Advisors, Becky & Guy Parker, and Rollins Parker.

To the Endowment Fund:

- In memory Frances Jernigan by Robbie Riley, Patricia Richardson, Patricia & Joseph Luzzi, Patricia & David King, Caren & Lawrence Dodd, Sammie & Chris Dunkum, Passages Sunday School Class, and McClelland Consulting Engineers.

To the Mission Fund:

- In memory of Jane Sherrod by Pat Racop.

To Music Ministry:

- In memory of Ross Honea by Sara & Price Gardner.

To Habitat for Humanity:

- In memory of Janet Fowler by Lindy Neal.

To the Thompson Scholarship Fund:

- In memory of Mike Arnold, and Pat Henry by Martha Lynn Thompson.
- In memory of Ross Honea by Sara & Price Gardner.

To Caring Hands Prayer Shawl Ministry:

- In memory of Pat Henry by Neva O'Brien, Pat Racop, Donna & Ed Henry, Judy & Rick Jacobs, Brenda & Bob Bailey, Shelia & Bob Stobaugh, Cathy & Jimmy Campbell, Sandy & Jim Kelley, Bev Milford, Lucy Neal, Lolly Honea, Carolyn Owen, Marilyn Miller, Sylvia & Joe Potter, Arkansas Cardiology, Cayleen Nakamura and Debby Fiser.

Worship with Us....

Saturdays

- 5:30pm Casual Worship
Sanctuary
(in-person only)

Sundays

- 8:30 Traditional (in-person only)
- 9:30 Contemporary
(in-person & live stream)
- 11:00 Traditional Service
(in-person & live stream)
- 11:00 Contemporary
(in-person only)

Watch the Livestream

On our website:

www.StJamesLR.org -

click on "Media" drop down to Livestream

On Facebook:

www.facebook.com/stjameslr

In Remembrance

(March-May)

Marilyn Brewster
Janet Fowler
Bill Laman
Jean Whipple
Pat Henry
Frances Jernigan
Sid Rowley
Pete Price
Rick Kuonen

Baptisms

Hank Wright
(son of Christine & Austin Wright)

Welcome New Members

Kay Marsh
Susan & Nick Brown
Sally Hughes
Charles Buffkin
Christine & Austin Wright
Jane Heaston
Marshall McDaniel
Lexis McDaniel
Sheryl & Darrel Allen
Audrey & Will James
Sarah & Brandon Crawford

*If you would like to join St. James,
contact Rev. Greg Schick, at 501-217-
6706 or greg@stjameslr.org. New
members forms are available at the
Welcome Center information kiosk at
Entrance 1.*

PERIODICALS

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Project
Transformation®
Arkansas

LISTEN TO CHILDREN READ!



We're looking for 10-12 volunteers to travel
to Pine Bluff to listen to children read.
Transportation will be provided.
*Must be Safe Gatherings certified if
volunteering for more than 2 Wednesdays.*

WEDNESDAYS, JUNE 7-JULY 26 • LAKESIDE UMC, PINE BLUFF
LEAVE AT 8:15AM - RETURN AT 1:30PM (MEET AT ST. JAMES)

Contact Brenda Weeks 501-217-6722 OR brenda@stjameslr.org
OR Rev. Jessica Durand at 501-217-6710 or jessica@stjameslr.org.