



## A Message from Keith



Keith Keeton

If you are on our email list, you received some surprising news earlier this week. After much prayer and discernment, my family and I are being reappointed in June to a church that's closer to family. This was not a

decision that we made lightly or easily. It led to many anxious days and sleepless nights, but we have gotten to a place of peace about it.

Pastoral change is a part of every denomination and system, but I think it creates more uncertainty in the United Methodist Church. Itineracy is never fun. That's the process by which the bishop and cabinet choose and send clergy to all the churches in their conference. It works a lot like the local church's council on nominations or lay leadership committee. They examine gifts, consider circumstances, pray extensively and try to make the best fit for a church's season of ministry. Whether we acknowledge it or not, an evaluation of pastoral appointments is made every year. Most years in most churches, there aren't changes.

Moving preachers sparks a lot of anxiety in church systems. Who is coming next? What will their leadership style look like? Will I like them as much? Will I like them more? Will our church grow? Will our church shrink? Will it be a good fit? There are so many questions. The last one is the one that I heard the most four years ago.

"Will you be a good fit?" If it was asked once, it was asked a thousand times. I could tell everyone was really nervous about me. I think it worked out fine. Most pastoral changes do. Good churches are good churches. As my Methodist mom used to say, "We were here before this preacher. We'll be here after them." This is your church. I simply got a chance to help with it temporarily. At least, I hope it was a help.

Will you do something for me? Will you pray for this transition? Also, will you begin to pave the way for Larry as he prepares to come? As a transitioning pastor, it's scary to prepare to arrive. Send him messages of encouragement, ask him what he might need to feel welcome and don't expect him to fix everything in the first week. You demonstrate your love for me by how you treat him. He's excited to share in ministry here with you. I'm excited to see it as well. His gifts will help take the church places that I could not. That's what different people can do. New people offer opportunities and creativity.

I will be your pastor for several more months. Please don't try to tell me goodbye for that entire period. Let's keep on keeping on until closer to the time of transition. Remember, it is an important season. I would hate for this to distract us from the importance of Lent and Easter. Both of those seasons remind us that unsure times aren't barren times for God's people.

-Keith

## Lucas Lenten Series

This year during Lent, five area churches are hosting the inaugural Lucas Lenten Series. This series consists of midday concerts and fellowship lunches each Wednesday. Lunch begins at 11 a.m. every week, with the concert following around 12:10 p.m.



If you plan to attend any of the lunches, please make a reservation at the host church by calling the number provided. Each church determines cost of the meal. If you plan to attend **only** the concert, there is no cost or reservation required. The calendar of events is as follows:

- ▷ **March 4** - Dr. Katrina Cox, vocalist, accompanied by Dr. Christina Mathis on piano at Main Street UMC - For lunch reservations, call 601.582.5557.
- ▷ **March 11** - Organist Dr. Bradley Hunter Welch at Westminster Presbyterian Church - For lunch reservations, call 601.584.7574.
- ▷ **March 18** - Dr. Kristina Finch, harpist, at Parkway Heights - For lunch reservations, visit [parkwayheights.org/calendar](http://parkwayheights.org/calendar) or call 601.550.2466.
- ▷ **March 25** - Ecumenical Choir composed of host churches, Southern Chorale and William Carey University Chorale at Main Street Baptist Church - For lunch reservations, call 601.296.8000.

## Lent 2026: Could You Not...?

### LENTEN RESOURCES

This year during Lent, we encourage you to practice spiritual disciplines to prepare your hearts and minds for Easter. We're asking Jesus' question, "Could you not...?" We are providing a scripture and prayer for your reflection all week, leading up to the next Sunday's message. These can be found on the back of the bulletin, in our weekly email and on our Facebook page. A booklet containing all meditations is available in the Atrium and also online at [parkwayheights.org/lent](http://parkwayheights.org/lent).

Visit our website to listen to additional weekly audio devotions recorded by our pastors as well.



And don't forget to pick up a small cross at church to hold as you pray over the next few weeks.

### 24-HOUR PRAYER

Be on the lookout for a sign-up for our 24-hour time of prayer on Quiet Saturday, April 4.

## New Study Opportunity

Beginning Monday, March 9, Susan Eaton will lead "We Are the Church... Let's Act Like It - A Study in the Book of Acts" on Mondays at 10 a.m.

In this study, we'll take a close look at the early Church and learn from its example. How did early churches get it right, and where did they stumble? What can we learn from their experiences that might help us be better disciples today?

Cost for a book is \$10. Sign up now at [parkwayheights.org/studies-groups](http://parkwayheights.org/studies-groups).



## WE NEED YOU at WNL on March 4!

Have you bought your tickets yet?  
Please do so now to help us prepare for the meal!

Wednesday, March 4 / Auction & Meal begin at 5 p.m. / Founders Hall  
Don't miss the great items we'll have up for grabs in the silent auction...  
delicious food, deals on gift cards, beautiful pottery and more!  
Proceeds help our youth attend spiritual retreats and mission trips.

Salad & Potato Bar: \$10 per person / \$40 family max  
Pizza available for kids: \$1 per slice

Buy tickets online at [parkwayheights.org/calendar](http://parkwayheights.org/calendar) or use the QR code to the right. Thanks for your support!



## Prayer Chapel Dedication on March 22

A little over a year ago, Craig Wiseman asked if there was any way he could honor his mother's memory at Parkway Heights. We had recently held her funeral service. Mrs. Evelyn loved her church so much. She was especially passionate about prayer and the church's Prayer Ministry. She also loved the sacrament of communion, which her previous denomination celebrated weekly, before she found her home here at Parkway Heights.

Keith expressed that our Prayer Room was a sad-looking cinder block room that was rarely utilized. Craig loved the idea of making it a focal point of the church. Through his generous contribution, we have transformed the Prayer Chapel into something beautiful. After months of construction and work, it is a remarkable space.



*our new Prayer Chapel following renovations*

Now we are ready to dedicate it for weekly use. On March 22, we will have a dedication and reception in the Atrium at 9:30 a.m. The service will conclude with communion in the new chapel and cake in the Atrium. Additionally, we will begin weekly communion in the Prayer Chapel at 9:30 a.m. every Sunday. We hope you'll join us for this special day as we honor the legacy of all our prayer warriors, especially Evelyn Wiseman.

## Stephen Ministry Update

Stephen Ministers do not serve alone. We meet on the first Sunday of the month for continuing education and peer group supervision. It's a time for Stephen Ministers to not only continue to build their caregiving skills but also to support and encourage one another. In March, our Stephen Ministers will learn how to care for people experiencing the challenges of aging, as well as understand the needs for care that people may have associated with aging.

As part of our Stephen Ministry, trained lay church members known as Stephen Ministers provide confidential emotional and spiritual care to individuals experiencing life challenges such as grief from the loss of a loved one, divorce, unemployment, medical crises and difficulties in starting or adding to a family. Stephen Ministers are individually assigned by our supervising minister, Julie Collins, and are available to support, encourage, listen, comfort and provide confidential care with the help of God.

Please complete the form at [parkwayheights.org/stephenministry](http://parkwayheights.org/stephenministry) or contact Julie Collins if you are interested in learning more about Stephen Ministry.

## WOMEN'S MINISTRY

### Women's Retreat

Women's Ministry Spring Retreat  
*Redefining the Good Life*  
April 24-25  
Longleaf Plantation in Purvis  
Cost: \$100

What if the "good life" is not what we think it is?

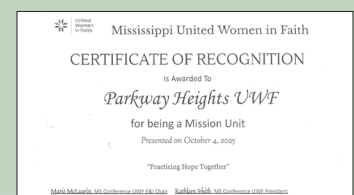
At this year's Spring Retreat, we will step into Jesus' words from Matthew 5-7 and explore how he redefines blessing, abundance and what it truly means to flourish. In our time together, we'll explore the following questions: What did Jesus mean when he said "blessed"? Who is actually living "the good life" in God's Kingdom? What kind of person do I want to be?

This retreat is an invitation to realign our lives with Jesus' vision of abundance as we grow in love, expand in grace and live in ways that make the world less harsh and more whole. Come ready to reflect, to notice what is good and to discover how life in God's Kingdom reshapes everything.

Spaces fill up fast, so don't delay! Register at [parkwayheights.org/calendar](http://parkwayheights.org/calendar) starting March 1.

### UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Our United Women in Faith unit received its certificate of good standing with the Mississippi Conference.



# OUTREACH

## Christmas-Easter Fund

To fund our community benevolence fund, which assists our neighbors with needs such as gas, prescriptions or temporary housing, twice a year we ask our congregation to contribute to our Christmas/Easter Offering. Watch your mail for a letter to come later this month regarding this special offering. Thank you for your support and for showing our community that we care.

## March Communion Offering

The United Methodist Church financially supports seminary students with Ministerial Education Funds, which cover half of seminary expenses; however, these funds are only available in the United States. This is one of the reasons for the low number of seminary degrees globally.

The communion offering collected on Sunday, March 1, will be added to our UMC district's collection to support seminary students around the world. Please give and help people who are passionate about serving the church receive further training. To give to this fund, you can designate it on your check or select "communion offering" if you give online at [parkwayheights.org/give](http://parkwayheights.org/give).

**AS ALWAYS, OUR CONGREGATION WAS VERY GENEROUS TO OUR COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY. THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO BROUGHT CLOTHES FOR HONDURAS, GAVE PANTRY ITEMS FOR THE WESLEY FOUNDATION AND DONATED BLOOD IN OUR BLOOD DRIVE!**

# SENIOR ADULTS

## First Wednesday Lunches

Wednesday, March 4  
11 a.m. - lunch & 12:10 p.m. - concert  
at Main Street UMC

This year during Lent, five area churches are hosting the inaugural Lucas Lenten Series. The second concert will coincide with March's First Wednesday Lunch for adults 55+. The concert will feature vocalist Dr. Katrina Cox, mezzo-soprano, and Dr. Christina Mathis on piano.

If you plan to attend the lunch, please make your reservation by calling 601.582.5557. If you will only attend the concert, no reservation is required. It is free and open to everyone - of all ages!

Wednesday, April 1  
11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
Founders Hall at Parkway Heights

Go ahead and mark your calendar for April 1 (no joke) for April's First Wednesday Lunch! Mike Lopinto of the University of Southern Mississippi will give us a preview of FestivalSouth 2026.

## SAVE THE DATE!

Senior Adult Ministry Day Trip  
Bellingrath Gardens Chinese Lantern Festival  
Thursday, April 30  
Watch for more information soon!



Reminder...  
2026 North of 70  
directories are  
available in the  
Church Office.

## FEBRUARY'S FIRST WEDNESDAY LUNCH

Our older adults enjoyed lunch, fellowship and a performance by the PCS high school choir, led by Kameron Batty, on February 4.



## SUNDAY NIGHTS @ PARKWAY



February brought with it a lot of fun for our youth! We had a great time at our Super Bowl Watch Party. We had basketball, football and baseball inflatables. Students spent time playing gaga ball and 9-square in the air. It was a great night of fellowship for our Youth Ministry family!



## PHUMC YOUTH

Throughout the past month, our youth enjoyed fun games, as well as inspiring messages.

On February 1, we took an opportunity to play car lot, an oldie, but favorite among our students. It is a version of sharks and minnows on land.



On February 22, we worshiped "on the bridge" with music led by Southern Miss Wesley Foundation students. Thanks to Zoe Burris and Michael Christmas for leading our songs! It's always a meaningful time.

Over the course of the spring semester, we are talking about the message of the Gospel. We are taking some time to break down the Gospel story, so that our students are able to put language to what they believe for the purpose of being able to share the Good News.



## Upcoming Events

**March 4** - Wednesday Night Live Youth Ministry fundraiser - Please come help out! Parents, remember this is how you can earn credit to help pay for youth retreats! Buy your tickets now for \$10 each!

\* \* \*

**March 15 & 18** - Spring break is coming quickly. We will NOT have SN@P on Sunday, March 15, and there will be NO D-Groups on Wednesday, March 18.

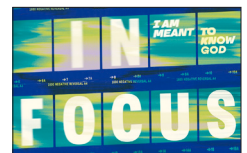
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**May 3** - Senior Sunday will be here before we know it! We will celebrate our high school seniors on Sunday, May 3. Please reach out to Kaitlin at [kaitlinbabington@parkwayheights.org](mailto:kaitlinbabington@parkwayheights.org) if you have a graduating senior who would like to participate in the service that day.



## Sunday School Update

The month of March brings with it a new series for Sunday School. We will look at the importance of keeping our focus on God. Each week, students will explore their innate desiring to know God and be known by God! All 7th-12th graders are invited to join us at 9:40 a.m. every Sunday in the second floor Youth Room.





# PH HAPPENINGS



## MADE WITH LOVE VALENTINE'S MEAL

We enjoyed a fun Valentine's fellowship meal on February 11. Everyone was entertained by the PHUMC version of the Newlywed Game featuring the Venables, Christensens and Arcements.



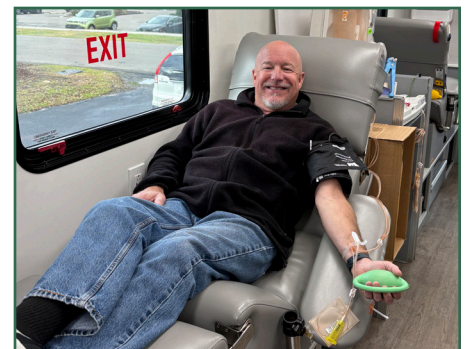
## BABY GODBOLD'S BAPTISM

Mary and David Godbold presented Carson Crews Godbold for baptism on February 1. Big brother Connor and big sister Madelyn assisted with the baptism. God bless you, Carson!



## SCOUT SUNDAY

We appreciate the service of Scout Troop 93 on Scout Sunday, Feb. 8. The Scouts served as greeters, ushers and read scripture in both services. They also held their annual chili fundraiser.



## BLOOD DRIVE

Big thanks to all our blood donors, including Michael Reed (above), who donated during our blood drive on February 15. Thank you for saving lives with us!



## STEPHEN MINISTRY TRAINING

Our Stephen Ministers gathered for their monthly supervision on Sunday, Feb. 1. This month's training was about the impact of divorce and better understanding the experience of it in order to care for people who are experiencing this transition.



# FYI

## Easter Lilies

Would you like to place a lily in church on Easter Sunday in memory or in honor of a loved one? Pick up an order form in the Atrium and pay in the Church Office or order online at [parkwayheights.org](http://parkwayheights.org). The order deadline is Sunday, March 29. Lilies cost \$20 each. You may take your lily with you after the Sanctuary service on Easter Sunday, April 5.

## Barefield Lecture Speaker

This year's Barefield Lecture speaker will be Dr. Stacey Floyd-Thomas of Vanderbilt Divinity School. Her lecture will take place Tuesday, April 28, at 6:30 p.m. in the Gonzales Auditorium at the University of Southern Mississippi. Dr. Floyd-Thomas' lecture will be "Moving Beyond Good Intentions: What Faithful Christians Owe Justice Now." For more information, see Sam Bruton.

# Mail Room

Dear Parkway Heights Friends,

YOU make a difference every day by providing hope, help and healing to neighbors in need through your generous support of Edwards Street Fellowship Center.

We have seen a substantial increase in requests for food assistance over the last five years. However, thanks to you and many others, every eligible household receives nourishing groceries each time they visit! So, how many people receive food from Edwards Street each month? The average number of households served per month increased by 47% from 2021 to 2025 - 1,350 households served per month to 1,986. The average number of individuals increased by 50% from 2021 to 2025 - 4,197 individuals to 6,277 individuals.

When reading the statistics above, please note that these numbers aren't reporting the monthly distribution of pounds of food (currently 54,509 pounds... 27 tons!... per month) or the number of grocery bags (3,792 per month). Rather, these numbers represent real people with real stories. As our staff and volunteers visit with folks in our food pantry lobby, we meet:

- Senior adults whose grown children unexpectedly moved back home, often bringing grandchildren, too;

- Individuals who are working one or more jobs, but still can't make ends meet;
- Neighbors who are facing life changes and life crises due to an illness or accident that happened to them or a member of their household;
- Plus many, many other difficult scenarios.

Thankfully, at Edwards Street, these friends find hope and help! Your generous support provides nutritious food through our pantry, quality healthcare through our free clinic and affordable clothing and household items at our thrift store. Through your compassion, the light of God's love shines brightly in the Pine Belt! Thank you for making a difference!

"Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon."  
~ Isaiah 58:10

With Gratitude for You,  
Ann McCullen, Executive Director  
Edwards Street Fellowship Center

## SPRING CALENDAR

- **Wednesday, March 4 - Lucas Lenten Series concert & First Wednesday Lunch at Main Street UMC**
- **Wednesday, March 4, 5 p.m. - Wednesday Night Live Youth fundraiser**
- **Thursday, March 5, 10 a.m. - Claiborne Heights worship service**
- **Sunday, March 8 - Daylight saving time begins**
- **Wednesday, March 18 - Lucas Lenten Series concert at Parkway Heights**
- **Sunday, March 22, 9:30 a.m. - Prayer Chapel Dedication**
- **Sunday, March 29 - Palm Sunday**
- **Thursday, April 2, 7 p.m. - Maundy Thursday Service**
- **Friday, April 3, 7 p.m. - Good Friday Service**
- **Saturday, April 4 - Day of Prayer**
- **Sunday, April 5 - Easter Sunday**

### Prayer Concerns

Oliver Brown, Buddy Klein, Benson St. Louis & Evelyn Stone

### Praise For...

the birth of John Barra Fleming, born to Becca and Andrew Fleming on February 7, 2026

### Sympathy to...

Nova Corley on the death of her sister, Lou Kindred



### Parkway Heights UMC

2420 Hardy Street  
Hattiesburg, MS 39401-5911  
parkwayheights.org  
601.544.7873

### Sunday Worship Times:

8:30 a.m.: Contemporary Service  
in Founders Hall

9:40-10:30 a.m.: Sunday School

10:45 a.m.: Traditional Service  
in Sanctuary

Both services are livestreamed  
on various platforms.



Keith Keeton, *Lead Pastor*

Julie Collins, *Executive Pastor*

Susan Eaton, *Discipleship Pastor*

David Sellers, *Associate Pastor*

Wes Arrington, *Director of  
Outreach & Facilities*

Kaitlin Babington, *Director of Youth &  
Family Ministries*

Lesley Ellison, *Director of Children &  
Family Ministries*