

# INMISSION

A PUBLICATION OF PARKWAY HEIGHTS UMC

JANUARY 2025

## A Message from Keith

I am an identical twin. If it sounds fantastic, it is. Growing up, you have a built-in roommate, an extra set of clothes and someone to throw batting practice. However, it's not always fun and games. People confusingly think that you are the same person. Sure, we share DNA, but we are very different people. You can ask our spouses or our sister. Kevin and I look and sound alike, but our personalities are distinctly different. We are unique. It's hard to identify quickly, but it's there if you get past initial impressions.

Churches can be the same way. We share the same DNA. God formed us as the body of Christ to transform the world. We are all deeply related and similar, yet every church is unique. This one is no exception. They all look the same because we do a lackluster job of defining ourselves.

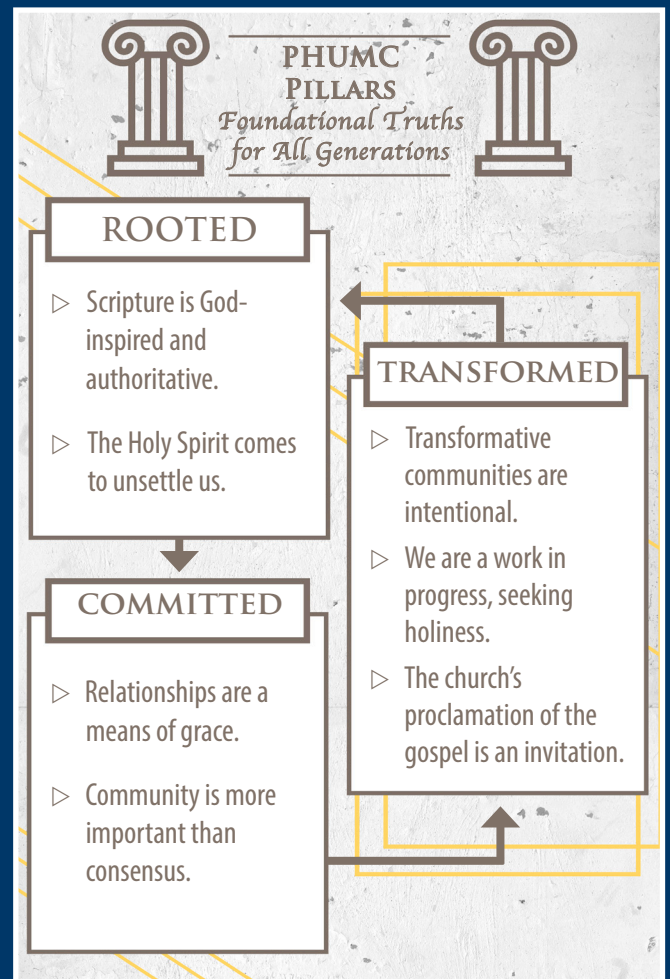
Our Acts 15 Committee has been hard at work identifying what makes Parkway Heights tick. What unique blend of theology and belief do we offer to the community around us? What core principles determine our decision making and visioning?

The committee members have completed their work on this crucial task. We have developed "Parkway Heights Pillars: Foundational Truths for All Generations." It's a set of seven simple statements that say what we believe. Starting in the middle of January, we will begin a sermon series with the same name. This four-week series will outline each part. I hope you will join us each week.

Additionally, we will have Parkway Heights Pillars Bible studies at various times, led by each of our clergy. I hope you can attend one of these. They will all cover the same material but with the unique voice and personality of one of our clergy. Hopefully, there will be a time that fits your schedule.

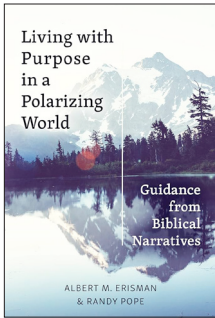
I am excited about 2025. I want us to celebrate our church's unique contribution to our lives and community. Below is a graphic describing our seven pillars. I hope you hear these enough in the coming year to share them easily. The committee summarized Parkway Heights well. Now, we get to learn and grow around who we are. Let's let the world know that this is a wonderful community based on foundational truths that matter.

-Keith



## Living with Purpose in a Polarizing World

We live in an increasingly polarized world. Some Christians feel under siege, and some common reactions include fitting in, withdrawing, fear, anger or seeking power. However, none of these align with the words of Micah (seek justice, love mercy, walk humbly); Jeremiah (seek the good of the city) or Jesus (let your light shine before others).



Join Randy Pope, co-author of *Living with Purpose in a Polarizing World*, for an eight-week study, which begins February 2 at 5:30 p.m. in Room 305. Together, we'll explore practical takeaways and Biblical lessons for thriving today. Through the lives of 12 Biblical characters, you'll uncover lessons on resilience, joy and faith that are highly relevant to our

contemporary challenges and examine their workplace lives, exploring how they represented their faith and how we can apply that to our own circumstances.

This study will help you:

- Navigate your workplace with Biblical wisdom and integrity.
- Learn from the resilience and faith of Biblical figures.
- Implement practical strategies for maintaining your faith in challenging environments.
- Foster unity and grace in your interactions, both personally and professionally.

We hope you'll participate in this study and be inspired to seek justice, love mercy and walk with God as we seek the good of our city and continue being the salt and light of the world.

## Supporting Hub City Wesley

The 2024-2025 school year has brought big changes to the USM Wesley Foundation. The ministry is expanding to serve not only Southern Miss, but also Jones College and Pearl River Community College! With this expansion, comes a new brand — Hub City Wesley!

To support this growth, our communion offering for January will go to Hub City Wesley. You can designate it on your check or select this fund if you give online. Thanks!

## 2025 Church Leadership & Meeting Dates

We would like to thank our 2024 Church Council members for serving as our church leadership last year. We also appreciate our new Church Council and committee members for the roles they will serve in 2025. Please help us welcome:

**Church Council Chair:** Lee Anne Venable

**Vice Chair:** Eric Hale

**Lay Leader:** Debra Topp

**Assistant Lay Leader:** Diane Fisher

**Church Treasurer:** Bitsy Browne Miller

**Annual Conference Lay Delegates:** Marvin & Bitsy Browne Miller, Susan Perry & Susan Walck

**Chair, Staff-Parish Relations Committee:** Stephen McCay

**Chair, Finance:** Wes Elliott

**Chair, Trustees:** Sid Collins

**UWF Representative:** Jennifer James

**Congregational Care:** Joseph Jones

**Campus Safety & Security Coordinator:** Sid Collins

**Vice Chair:** Brandon Bartleson

**At-Large Council Members:** 2025-Russell Bearden, 2026-Becky Malley, 2027-Laurie Porciello

Church Council has decided on a new meeting structure for 2025. The different committees will meet on four Sundays of the year from noon until 1 p.m. on the third floor. Following the committee meetings, the Church Council leaders will meet from 1 p.m. until 2 p.m. If you are a member of Church Council or a member of Staff-Parish Relations Committee, Finance Committee or Trustees, please mark your calendar for the following dates: January 12, April 27, August 17 and November 16.

The meeting dates for the Early Encounters Board, Lay Leadership Committee and Charge Conference are TBD.





# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

*Throughout 2024, we helped you get to know the church staff better. We continue these employee spotlights in 2025 with a focus on Pamela Fuller, our pianist/organist.*

## BACKGROUND

Pamela Fuller, our church organist and pianist, has been around music her whole life. Pamela followed in her mother's footsteps, as she was also a professional musician, who plays the organ and piano.



*Pamela Fuller with her first grandbaby, Hudson*

"My mom taught me some things on piano by rote when I was six but found a teacher

(Sue Tillman) when I was seven because I was too sassy and wouldn't listen to her," Pamela said.

Pamela said she loved playing the piano as a child most of the time, except when it came time for recitals, which she hated.

Thankfully for us, Pamela grew out of her dislike of performances and began to love everything about the expressiveness of the piano. She said it became "her voice" when she couldn't identify what was bothering her. She spent hours each night after dinner at the piano, which also got her out of doing the dishes!

She said, "Chopin became really good company."

For her senior recital in high school, her mother talked her into playing the organ for two pieces. The rest is

history! She attended the University of Southern Mississippi, where she studied organ, harpsichord and piano. However, her first set of degrees are a BS in Psychology and a MS in Family and Consumer Science.

## FAMILY

Pamela grew up with her parents and three siblings in Gulfport, where she was exposed to lots of boating and skiing. She also grew up close to her grandparents, with both sets living in Gulfport, as well. She credits both of her grandmothers for passing down their gifts of creativity, cooking and sewing to her.

Pamela is married to Parkway Heights' music director, Dr. Greg Fuller. She has three daughters. Her daughter Allison Boutwell and her husband, Austin, just had a new baby (Hudson Brooks). Allison is a physician assistant at Hattiesburg Clinic. Caitlin lives in Asheville, NC, and is a graphic designer. Molly Grace is graduating in May and heading to San Antonio for an internship this summer; she is engaged to Jackson Koloc.

## MUSIC MINISTRY

Pamela has worked in church music since high school, when she took her first job at Trinity UMC in Gulfport. Since then, she has worked in church music in several different states, including Virginia where she studied the organ more extensively. There, she also was director of music in a large United Methodist Church where she led youth choir, children's choir, handbells, men's chorus, adult choir and more.

She moved back to Hattiesburg in 2000 and began serving several churches in the Hattiesburg area.

She finished her Bachelor of Music degree in piano in 2012 and a Master of Music Education in 2013. She began teaching music and art at The 3D School in Petal and has been there ever since. She added Parkway Heights to her resume in 2020.

Pamela said that she loves the way the music at Parkway Heights is challenging and that there is always another project to work toward. The music is thematically connected to the scripture or the liturgical season, and she likes this structure.

Another thing she loves about working in a church is connecting with people and getting to know them.



*Pamela and Greg on one of their many travels*

"My favorite thing about being a church musician is when something I have played has connected with someone, and they tell me how it meant something to them, either from reminding them of a distant memory or reminding them of a person or time in their life."

## IN HER SPARE TIME

When asked about the most challenging part of her job, Pamela jokes that it's keeping up with the choir's social calendar that includes potlucks and ice cream socials!

When she's not partying with the choir, Pamela enjoys traveling and working with her hands through mosaics, pottery, crocheting, gardening, sewing or painting.

## Stephen Ministry Update

Stephen Ministers meet monthly for peer group supervision and continuing education, which is necessary to help them provide quality care and grow as caregivers. In supervision, Stephen Ministers talk about their caring relationships and their own feelings about caregiving. It's also an opportunity to care and encourage one another as Stephen Ministers because we do not do this ministry alone.

Beginning in January, our Stephen Ministers will be studying *The Gift of Empathy* by Joel P. Bretscher and Kenneth C. Haugk. This study aims to equip readers to relate in empathetic ways that make a difference in people's lives. By broadening their skills, Stephen Ministers will enjoy more meaningful connections with their care receivers.

If you are interested in learning more or have questions about Stephen Ministry, please complete the online form found at [parkwayheights.org/ministries/stephen-ministry](http://parkwayheights.org/ministries/stephen-ministry).

For more information, talk with one of our Stephen Minister Leaders: Carolyn Karlovich and Julie Collins or email [juliecollins@parkwayheights.org](mailto:juliecollins@parkwayheights.org).



## senior adults



### CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our senior adults enjoyed a Christmas luncheon on December 4. Nova Corley, Martha Parker and June Pegues won prizes for their Christmas sweaters. PCS's choir performed festive music as entertainment for the group.

### FIRST WEDNESDAY LUNCH

The First Wednesday Lunch for adults 55+ will not meet in January. We'll resume our fellowship lunches on Wednesday, Feb. 5, at 11 a.m. in Founders Hall at Parkway Heights. Dr. Joe Paul will be our guest speaker.

We're excited to partner again in 2025 with Main St. UMC in Downtown Hattiesburg for monthly gatherings! Parkway Heights and Main St. rotate hosting months on the first Wednesday from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

## A Matter of Balance

Many older adults experience concerns about falling, so they restrict their activities. A Matter of Balance class is an award-winning program designed to manage falls and increase activity levels.

Parkway Heights will host a FREE workshop on Wednesdays in January on January 8, 15, 22 and 29, from 10 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

Participants will learn to: view falls as controllable, set goals for increasing activity, make changes to reduce fall risks at home and exercise to increase strength and balance. Guest speakers, refreshments and raffles will be provided as part of this free class.

Sign up now at [parkwayheights.org/calendar](http://parkwayheights.org/calendar) or in Sunday's bulletin.

### NORTH OF 70 MINISTRY MEMBER

DIRECTORIES WILL BE AVAILABLE LATER  
THIS MONTH IN THE CHURCH OFFICE.



## DECEMBER YOUTH ACTIVITIES



**D-GROUPS**  
The guys' and girls' D-groups (with the exception of Noah Doleac at right) enjoyed lots of holiday festivities in December.



**GINGERBREAD CONTEST**  
On December 8, the youth competed in a gingerbread house contest.



**CHRISTMAS PARTY**  
The annual Youth Christmas Party was a big hit as always! Costumes, games, food and Dirty Santa... a fun end to the semester!

## SN@P Meals Needed!

Calling all youth parents — or other volunteers who are not parents of youth! We need volunteers to provide meals for our Sunday Night at Parkway gatherings this spring semester! If you, your small group or Sunday School class is willing and able, please scan the QR code below to sign up via our Google Doc for a date to provide food. You can also email [brookebryan@parkwayheights.org](mailto:brookebryan@parkwayheights.org) to sign up for a date. Reminder: expenses for the meal can be reimbursed up to \$100. Thank you!



## Wednesday Night Live Fundraiser Meeting

It's time for our Youth Ministry's annual fundraiser! Parents, join us on Sunday, Jan. 5, at 5 p.m. to discuss Wednesday Night Live, scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 26, at Parkway Heights. From the silent auction to the meal to the variety show, there are lots of ways to help. This event has always been successful, and we would love to ensure its success again with your involvement! Come learn how to raise funds for your child to use to pay for youth retreats and other events. Not able to make it? Text Alex at 601.522.6164 to discuss ways to help!

## Important Dates in 2025

- **Sunday, Jan. 5, 5 p.m.** - WNL Adult Volunteer Meeting
- **Sunday, Jan. 5, 5:30 p.m.** - SN@P 2025 Kickoff: Bonfire & Outdoor Movie Night in Berry House Yard
- **Sunday, Jan. 12, 5:30 p.m.** - Missions SN@P to benefit Rise Against Hunger & Youth Feedback Night - Our very own senior Carley Gilbert will provide dinner and share about her upcoming Rise Against Hunger event at University Baptist Church on February 2.

Following Carley's presentation, we'll come together to talk about the new year. All students are encouraged to come and be a proactive part of changes to our Youth calendar by letting your voice be heard at Youth Feedback Night. All students will have the chance to vote on potential schedule changes, event ideas and programming tweaks as we move forward.

- **Wednesday, Jan. 15, 5:30 p.m.** - All students will team up in their D-groups to take on the Escape Room at Time Will Tell Escape Rooms. Meet at church at 5:30 p.m. for pizza first.
- **January 17-20** - Breakthru Retreat - NO SN@P on Jan. 19
- **Wednesday, Jan. 22** - D-groups
- **Sunday, Jan. 26, 5:30 p.m.** - SN@P Worship on the Bridge
- **Wednesday, Jan. 29** - D-Groups
- **Sunday, Feb. 2, 1:30 p.m.** - Rise Against Hunger event at UBC (no SN@P that night)



# children

## Sunday School Teacher Appreciation Luncheon

On December 8, Children's Ministry volunteers and their families



*appreciation  
gifts for leaders*

gathered for a Christmas Luncheon. We appreciate the time, energy and love that our leaders share with Parkway Heights' children.



## Children's Choir Christmas Performances

The Children's Christmas Choir sang in both worship services in the morning and at the Claiborne in the afternoon of December 15. The children enjoyed fellowship and cookies with the residents following their performance at the Claiborne. Thank you to Anna Kate Long and Jeremiah Williams for leading our Children's Choir this year!

## Preschool Las Posadas

Las Posadas is a Latin American celebration where participants reenact the journey that Joseph and Mary made from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of safe refuge. On December 15, our Preschool Sunday School class dressed in nativity costumes and visited the adult Sunday School classes to celebrate a simple Las Posadas.



*Madelyn Godbold asked the adults if there was any room for them.*



*The preschoolers made their way down the adult Sunday School hallway.*



## Loft Christmas Party

Fifth and sixth graders gathered at the home of Fred and Diane Fisher on December 15 for a Loft Christmas Party. The children enjoyed food, games and especially loved a scavenger hunt in the Fishers' "Winter Wonderland" and roasting marshmallows at the fire pit.



## Children's Nativity Pageant

Children of all ages participated in the annual Children's Nativity Pageant on December 22. Everyone enjoyed cookies with their church family following the program.



# ph pics



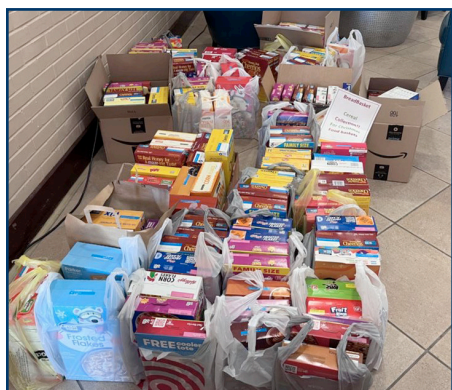
## HANGING OF THE GREENS

On December 1, we celebrated Advent at Hanging of the Greens. We decorated the church, created Advent wreaths, filled Go Live Love backpacks and made Chrismons. We ended with a meal, singing and devotion.



## CELTIC LESSONS & CAROLS

Our Sanctuary Choir, along with the choir from Purvis Methodist Church, presented a beautiful worship service on December 8.



## THANK YOU FOR GIVING!

Thank you to everyone who has donated this season to causes such as Breadbasket, Go Live Love bags, birthday cake kits and Edwards Street.



## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

The ladies of UWF held their annual Christmas celebration and installation of officers on December 12 at Tabella. Keith Keeton installed the officers.



## ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

The Godbold family lit the Advent wreath candles on Sunday, Dec. 15, during the Sanctuary service.



## SCOUT FUNDRAISER

The Scouts of Parkway Heights' Troop 93 sold red beans and rice on December 15 as a fundraiser.



## SPECIAL ADVENT MUSIC

The Advent Instrumental Ensemble performed in the Sanctuary for the first time on December 15.



## HOPE CLINIC SURPRISE

Hope Clinic surprised our church staff with Christmas carols and a thank you gift for the church's support.





## BAPTISM

On Sunday, Dec. 22, we were happy to welcome Bella Grace Marie King into the body of Christ with her baptism. Bella Grace is the daughter of Nicolette Ogden.

## CHRISTMAS EVE

The Christmas Eve Candlelight Services are always meaningful for everyone.



## Mail Room

Dear Wes,

This semester has been a very busy one, and I am now having some gaps in my schedule enough to get caught up on things, one of those on the list being to correspond with those who have been a great help to us this semester. Thank you so very much for allowing us access to Founders Hall at Parkway Heights United Methodist Church. We love to perform for appreciative audiences in more intimate spaces in our community because the large on-campus halls at USM are sometimes booked up and not entirely suitable for our needs and can sometimes stifle our connection with the audience because of their large size. We appreciate the church making the hall available to us and being so accommodating and hope it did not inconvenience or disrupt any of the ministry going on there. We felt welcomed by you and the people from the church who attended. Thank you so much for granting us access. Thanks also to Drs. Gregory Fuller and Samuel Bruton for helping make this possible. Please let us know if we can be of service to you in the future.

Sincerely,

Larry Panella  
USM School of Music  
Director of Jazz Studies

Thank you so much for allowing us to host our dance recital at your wonderful venue! We are truly grateful for your support and for providing a space where our dancers could shine. It was a memorable experience for everyone involved, and we couldn't have done it without your generosity. We appreciate your partnership and look forward to many more successful events together in the future! Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Samantha S.  
Stretch-n- Grow

## HONDURAS MISSION TRIP INTEREST MEETING

Have you ever been curious about international missions? The Honduras Mission Team will hold an interest meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 7, at 6 p.m. in Room 316. Anyone involved in - or considering getting involved in - this mission should attend. This year's trip will take place June 3-9, 2025. For more info, contact Wes Arrington.

**Volunteers are needed to take down and store Christmas decorations on Wednesday, Jan. 8, at 10 a.m.!**

## Prayer Concerns

Dixie Evans, Becky Grantham and Benson St. Louis

## Sympathy To...

- Peggy Varnado, on the death of her mother, Betty Brockman
- Diane Fisher, on the death of her brother, Lonny Jones
- Kim Kay, on the death of her brother, Kenneth Ray McQueen
- Daniel Mann, on the death of his sister, Ashley Witt
- Ken Pace, on the death of his brother-in-law, David Furse
- Charles Redmond and Jamie Russell, on the death of their son, Dalton Redmond
- Berneice Barham, on the death of her sister-in-law, Ruth Barham



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## 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

*Services are livestreamed on various platforms.*