

80th

ANNIVERSARY ISSUE



1945 - 2025

THE CORNER

CRITERION

Nov 2025

NEWS FROM UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

(a CBF/ABC Church)

This fall marks something remarkable in the life of our church—**80 years** of ministry, mission, and life together as University Heights Baptist Church. Eighty years of worship and witness in the heart of Springfield. Eighty years of people coming to faith, finding community, and serving others in the name of Christ.

Think about that for a moment. Eight decades of prayer, laughter, baptisms, potlucks, choirs, children's programs, Bible studies, weddings, and memorials. Eighty years of worship that has filled this building and spilled out into our neighborhoods. We are standing on holy ground—not because of the bricks or the pews, but because of the stories, the lives, and the love that have been shaped here through generations.

This anniversary gives us a beautiful opportunity to do three things: **remember, give thanks, and dream forward.**

We remember the faithful women and men who came before us—those who dreamed big, prayed hard, and laid a foundation that still stands strong. We give thanks for what God is doing now—through our worship, through our growing ministries, through the ways our church family continues to show up, serve, and love. And we dream forward—toward all that God still wants to do in and through University Heights. Because the story isn't finished. It's still being written, and we get to be part of the next chapter. University Heights has a bright future ahead!

One of the ways we're dreaming forward right now is through the work of our Building for Mission and Ministry **Team**. Over the last few months, this team has met with three different design and architectural firms, exploring what it could look like to refresh, reimagine, and ready our building for the future of ministry.

We are now awaiting the final bid and proposal from the third design team, and once that is received, the BFMM will prayerfully discern next steps—meeting with the Trustees, Foundation, and ultimately the congregation.

This process has been careful and prayerful, guided by the question: How can our space better serve our mission? We're not just dreaming of new walls and colors—we're dreaming of a space that helps people encounter Christ, connect with one another, extend love into our community, and make the most of this great church campus that we are blessed with.

A huge thank you to Melissa Hall, Josh Haynes, Cindy Hogan, Curtis Jones, and Jerry Jones for their dedicated leadership, and to Richard Baker and John Megee for stepping in

as consultants and now members of the team. Their time, energy, and insight are helping shape the next steps of this exciting journey. Would you join me in praying for discernment, vision, and blessing over this process?

Pastor's Corner

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Reflecting on the Past

Sue and Wyman Grindstaff joined UHBC in about 1997, along with a number of other folks transferring over from First Baptist. They visited 2 or 3 times and just “knew” this was the right place. They liked the pastor, Michael Olmsted, and the welcoming people.



They have very fond memories of the trips the Prime Time group used to take every month. This group of mostly younger retirees would go to St Louis, Branson, KC, Tulsa.

They remember sometimes there would be mini-dramas during the worship, which they liked. Sue sang in the choir, a special memory for her.

Wyman and Sue note that among the things UHBC does the best is that we are very welcoming to new people, non-judgmental, loving and encouraging. We do a “beautiful job of being tolerant of each other,” and balancing in this divided political climate.

They would want people not familiar with UHBC to know that they would be warmly welcomed, wanted, and needed. Wyman states, “this is an awfully good group of people to be with as you seek God and His will in your life.”



Dave Edwards joined UHBC with his wife, Pam, in 1980, but had been affiliated with the church since 1969 when he and Pam, who had been a member since the mid-60’s, started dating. Favorite memories are proposing to Pam at the drinking fountain outside the church office, being married here, his daughter being baptized here and his granddaughter being dedicated.

Other very fond memories are of the church picnics that took place at the Jones farm—especially noting Jerry Mackey’s barbecue sauce, sometimes flavored with Dave’s hot sauce. He also remembers the Sunday evening Bible studies when several members would go out for hamburgers afterwards.

He would want people not familiar with UHBC to know that this is a family church. Everyone is treated like family—different age groups accept each other, we interact and socialize together.

Dave has served in many roles, but his favorite way to serve remains sharing communion, especially as he gets to make eye contact with those he serves.

One of his favorite aspects of UHBC is that we are a congregation that is led BY the congregation—there is no one person in charge. He notes that the long-time leadership of the congregation is trying to transition to our younger members—“because we trust them.”

Frankie Beavers joined UHBC in 1997, along with a large contingent of folks who transferred from First Baptist. She was drawn here initially by her sister and brother-in-law, long time and dearly-missed members Lois and John McCullars. One thing she treasures about her time here at UHBC is the love of the people and being welcomed with open arms.



Frankie says the way our church welcomes people is one of things that stands out, and is a way that our witness is so strong.

Frankie has served in many capacities as a member here at UHBC, but with her background at St John’s Credit Union, one of her favorite ways that she has served in the congregation is on the Finance Board.

When asked what she would want people to know about UHBC if they are not familiar with us, she would want everyone to know that they would always be welcome!



Ann Willingham came to UHBC in 1964 when Dr. Lunn was pastor. She had grown up at South St Christian Church, but when she married Dick Willingham, whose folks had been members here, she joined UHBC—and we are so glad!

She has served the congregation in many ways, in particular through teaching Sunday School—ages infants to 3rd/4th grade. She retired at the end of August from teaching after serving for decades—most recently with the 2 year olds.

Ann says that one of the best things about UHBC is the way everyone is accepted and supported. She would want people who are not familiar with UHBC to know that this is a very sincere, dedicated, and active group of Christians who care about our community.



Nancy and Loren Broaddus came to UHBC sixty years ago, in 1965. Loren was baptized when they joined, and was in fact the last person baptized by Pastor Lunn here at UHBC.

Their story of finding UHBC is heartwarming. They had been seeking a church to blend Loren's Presbyterian

upbringing and Nancy's Baptist heritage, and had visited a number of churches and had felt like giving up. They lived a few blocks away from UHBC on East Elm, and newly pregnant Nancy was out walking when she heard the bells from UHBC, and then visited one Sunday when Loren was on call. She loved it, and he came with her the next time. They both felt immediately that they were "home." They made fast, lifelong friends with Kitty and Jerry Mackey, who were also expecting their first child. They joined the "young married" class, which is now the Searchers class. Talk about having a shared history!

Favorite memories of their time at UHBC include seeing all 3 of their children baptized here, and seeing 2 of the 3 married here. Another memory is of the cantata one year, in which the theme was the Creation story. During the cantata it stormed outside, which added perfectly to the atmosphere of the cantata!

Loren and Nancy have both served in a number of ways during their time here. Nancy loves playing the piano in Sunday School and on Wednesday nights. Loren has served on several different boards, including finance, trustees, and currently, the Board of Missions. He recalls being the chair of the Finance Board one year when the budget was \$24,000, and there was a \$12,000 error, leaving a significant deficit—and then the air conditioning went out. He said he always had faith that God would provide—and of course, He did.

They have also been doing the Fellowship Coffee since the 70's, after it was initiated earlier by Pastor Mugg. Loren and Nancy, the Mackeys, and Jerry and Pam Jones are part of that committee now, and Nancy says they really enjoy it and don't think of it as a job!

They would want people who are unfamiliar with UHBC to know that this is a very positive, friendly, accepting group of people—it's a family, and a support system. They feel this is what UHBC does best—being welcoming and open. They related a story from quite some time ago when an MSU student visited, dressed in an extreme version of the "goth" attire that was popular at the time. They found out later that she was part of an "experiment" to see how she would be treated. Member Jackie Woolsey (not knowing of the experiment, of course) welcomed this young woman warmly, having her sit with her, inviting her to lunch, and really demonstrating that UHBC warmness that we all know! ("We passed with flying colors," Nancy said.)

Excited about The Future



Special Days



On November 4, 1945, a group of individuals from First Baptist Church met at the YMCA. This group was interested in establishing a new church in Southeast Springfield, as well as continuing a dual affiliation with both Southern and Northern Baptist organizations, a practice which was being discontinued at First Baptist. The meeting was called as a result of several previous, informal meetings. It was moved that we proceed to enroll those present who would like to become charter members of a new church, and that the roll of charter members be held open until a date to be decided upon later.

Subsequent meetings were held on November 11 and 18. The name University Heights Baptist Church was adopted on November 18. The first worship service was held on November 25 at the YMCA. There were 92 names on the list of charter members.



Worship in the Stone Chapel



October 1950
Possibly First Service

This new congregation was dually aligned with the Southern Baptist Convention and the Northern Baptists (now American Baptist Churches). (Some years later, after a period of being triply-aligned with SBC, ABC, and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, UHBC ceased its affiliation with SBC and is now affiliated only with CBF and ABC.)

On December 3, 1945, the new congregation voted to hold services in the Stone Chapel on Drury's campus, where they continued to meet until the new chapel was finished. The first service was held in the newly completed chapel on October 22, 1950.

-Ann Willingham



Youth Ministry

This past month has been such an exciting start to my journey with our youth group! We've spent time getting to know one another through games and laughter, and we've begun diving into some meaningful lessons together. So far, we've talked about how to handle anxiety with the truth of Scripture, what it means to follow God's Great Commandment by loving Him and loving others, and how real joy in life comes from knowing our worth—worth that comes from God alone, not from our mistakes or achievements.



Our groups have been small but full of great conversation, and I'm hopeful that more students will join us in the coming weeks as we continue to grow together. Earlier this month, we partnered with the children's ministry for a special service project, helping them create centerpieces for our church's upcoming Thanksgiving meal. It was a great opportunity for the students to serve, be creative, and work alongside some of the younger kids in our church family.

We closed out the month with a fun Halloween Party where students came dressed in costume, played ping pong, ate dinner while listened to music, and played a fun game of Family Feud, Halloween edition.



Looking ahead, parents, please check your emails as we already have exciting camp news for the summer in the works! Deposits and registration will be due by the end of the year, and we don't want anyone to miss out on what's sure to be a life-

changing experience.

Also, if your student wants to go to Tuck Everlasting on Saturday, November 15th, to watch Miles and Alaina perform, I need to know ASAP. We plan to meet at the church beforehand for those who want to ride together.



I'm so grateful to be a part of what God is doing here and excited for the months ahead as we build community, grow in faith, and serve together!



We're so grateful for the ministry of **Kim Woody**, who just retired after serving for decades in the nursery. Her contact info is in the directory, if you want to congratulate and thank her for the great care she gave our children over the years!

**-Heather Twibell,
Youth Pastor**



Well, I can't believe a month has passed since I've stepped into the Children's Ministry role here at UHBC! I'm so thankful for the opportunity to serve our children and young families, and to have an impact on their journey to knowing Christ more. I also want to take a moment to thank Heather Twibell for her 3 years of pouring into our kiddos, loving them, showing them a generous and joyful spirit, and for leading them in their faith. You are so loved and appreciated, Heather! I know you will be a blessing to our youth and I'm excited to partner with you in ministry.

This month we've been learning about wisdom through the old testament books of 1 Samuel, Psalms and 1 & 2 Kings. We emphasized seeking wisdom and knowing what's right through **reading** God's Word, worshiping like David, and by **praying** for wisdom just like King Solomon! We can make wise choices by focusing on God.

We have also been spending time hiding God's Word in our hearts by starting the Bible Bingo Challenge. This has been an exciting way to focus on common verses that we can recall when life gets challenging. Learning to love God's Word starts early, so let's encourage our children to keep working on it! If you see one of our kiddos, ask them about this month's focus verse below.

"It is much better to get wisdom than gold. It is much better to choose understanding than silver."
Proverbs 16:16

Thanks for investing in our children! Please reach out if you would like to volunteer, whether that be in the nursery, assisting me on a Sunday during Children's Church, or in some other way. You are an important part of this ministry!

-Alicyn Jennings, Children's Pastor

Children's Ministry



REMEMBER

"This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord—a lasting ordinance. Exodus

Memories are important. I remember many things - like the taste of my grandma's pumpkin pie, gas lines in the late seventies, and the time my family moved to California, and I discovered rock and roll! The smell of hot asphalt reminds me of theme parks in the summertime. The smell of rain in the springtime reminds me that something new and fresh is right around the corner. When I step foot on the Missouri State campus I go back to my college days, where my faith was formed.

Memories meet us where we are, with glimpses of the people, places, and events that have changed our life. As a community of faith, each of us is here for a reason - maybe we were "born in the church," for others of us, someone has been the hands and feet of Jesus to us. Some of them are still around, and some have passed from this life to the next. Each Sunday, as we gather, we are reminded of possibilities and hope. The people and place recall how we are loved, and that we belong.

Jesus reminded his disciples at the last supper, "when you gather in the future, do this in remembrance of me." We too have been invited into this remembrance. The call to remember is not passive, it is active. As we remember the past, we are reminded of where we've been and that there is new life to live - new faith is ahead of us.

As we enter this new month and celebrate the birth and vision of our church, let's remember well.

1. Remember forward, we were not made to sit. We were made for movement.
2. Tell the story, who invested in you? Why did you choose Jesus?
Who needs to hear your story?
3. Remember the impossible is possible. The resurrection reminds us that miracles do happen.
4. Who's not here that needs to be here? Who needs a church like this?

Let's create that new memory!

Blessings,

-Joe

Continued From Page 1

Looking Ahead: A Season of Opportunity

As we move into November and December, the calendar fills quickly—but each event is a chance to celebrate Jesus and be the body of Christ. Here's a quick look ahead at some of what's coming (please see calendar and weekly bulletins for more detailed information):

- **Rountree Elementary Christmas Market Donations** (now through early Dec)
- **Church Family Thanksgiving Meal – Sunday, November 16** (registration envelopes at Information Desk)
- **Church Decorating for Christmas Day – Sunday, November 23**
- **Global Missions Sunday – Sunday, December 7**
- **Christmas Cantata & Live Nativity – December 21**
- **The Longest Night Service – December 21**
- **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – December 24**

These moments are more than just events on a calendar—they're opportunities to gather, to grow, and to shine the light of Christ in a busy and sometimes weary world.

As we celebrate 80 years, I'm deeply thankful for each of you—for your prayers, your generosity, your service, and your love for this church. The same God who has carried us through eight decades of faithfulness will continue to guide us forward. Let's keep leaning in, growing together, and building for the mission and ministry that lies ahead as a church of thoughtful, gentle grace.

**With gratitude and hope,
Pastor Nolan**

What's Happening?



- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2 Kelsey Herr
Carol Reed | 9 Nathan Edelman | 24 Paul Bass
Gail Smart |
| 4 David Edwards | 12 Violet Losh | 25 Norman Wall |
| 5 Bobbie Kinder | 13 Jeanetta Chrystie | 27 Dan Beach |
| 7 Liam Twibell | 14 Claudia Young | 28 Mark Herr
Amy Stockton |
| 8 Pam Jones | 16 Sonja Baldwin | 30 Bryan Hake |
| | 22 Landon Inmon
Maddie Stephens | |

November 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship & Communion	3	4	5 6:30 CHILI COOKOFF	6	7	8 10 am Christian Writers Group
9 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship	10	11 1pm M&M Meeting	12 6:30 Bible Study Kids/Youth 6:45 Chancel Choir	13	14	15
16 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship	17	18	19 6:30 Bible Study Kids/Youth 6:45 Chancel Choir	20	21	22
23 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship Decorate after worship 4pm Board Mtgs	24	25	26 NO WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES	27 THANKSGIVING	28	29
30 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship						

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH &
ROUNTREE ELEMENTARY CHRISTMAS
MARKET TOY DRIVE



DONATE TOYS NOV 2-NOV 30

— **FOR AGES 0-13** —

**ART KITS - BOARD GAMES - SCIENCE KITS -
SPORTS GEAR - STEM TOYS - LEGOS - NERF -
BARBIES - OUTDOOR GAMES - DOLLS -
MAKEUP KITS - SKATEBOARDS/SCOOTERS -
STOCKING STUFFERS -
PLEASE NO USED TOYS - NO MORE THAN \$50
PER ITEM, PLEASE**



**HELP US EMPOWER PARENTS IN OUR
COMMUNITY THIS CHRISTMAS BY FILLING
THE DONATION BINS AT UHBC WITH NEW,
UNWRAPPED TOYS! PARENTS FROM
ROUNTREE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WILL BE
INVITED TO COME PURCHASE TOYS AT
BARGAIN PRICES WITH ALL PROCEEDS
BEING GIVEN BACK TO SUPPORT THEIR
SCHOOL.**