Methodist Senior Services

Celebration. Innovation. Hope.

...serving older adults in the spirit of Christian love.

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

We all thrive best in

Loving Community

Join us in a word of prayer as we begin to explore the work of Methodist Senior Services from 2025.

Gracious God,

Thank you for your grace that grounds and guides us, and thank you for those who will be receiving this information—our campus friends and their families, the employees and volunteers at Methodist Senior Services, our generous donors and Board Members, and those who represent this beautiful state and the special industry of senior housing, services and care.

It's been said that "our security lies in our relationships." Help us to remember that no matter our age, our stage or circumstance—***we all thrive best in loving community***.

Today, as we explore the work of Methodist Senior Services, as outlined in this Annual Report, please open our minds to learn more about our programs, discover the true impact of our work, and discover meaningful opportunities to support and strengthen our mission. Use these precious stories and facts to help us grow closer to you and the work you guide within this special ministry.

We pray for every person, caregiver, volunteer, and donor that this ministry touches. Pour out your Spirit and presence on us all. Bring comfort, strength, endurance, and healing to all in need. Enlighten and sustain us.

In your compassionate and steadfast name we pray. Amen.

Guiding Principles

OUR MISSION:

...serving older adults in the spirit of Christian love.

OUR ORGANIZATION: In 1961, the Mississippi Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church established a special committee on aging ministries, leading to the incorporation of Mississippi Methodist Senior Services as an independent, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization in 1962. Decades later, we remain committed to the vision of making Mississippi the best place to grow older.

OUR VISION: To ensure that Mississippi elders and our team members are safe, secure, supported, and loved.

OUR CORE VALUES:

- Servant ministry
- The dignity of elders
- Compassion for those we serve
- Equity and empowerment
- Operational excellence
- Innovative service

OUR PHILOSOPHY:

- Non-denominational
- Services are provided regardless of race, gender, religion, national origin or income
- Service rather than profit-oriented
- The Sunday Fund, is a benevolence fund created to meet the financial burdens of elders who have out-lived their resources and can no longer afford the cost of housing or care.

Community Voices: Where Grace Becomes Joy

with CHRISTIE VANCE *PRESIDENT/CEO*

I want to invite you into the heart of Methodist Senior Services. We are one community, and we are stronger because of one another. As you turn these pages, I believe you will see what makes this ministry so special. You will meet people who have dedicated their lives to serving others, hear stories that will touch your heart, and see what it really looks like to serve older adults in the spirit of Christian love.

Building community comes with purpose and intention. It is not the work of one person. It is the work of all of us using the unique gifts God has given each of us to serve together.

One of the greatest privileges of my role is being able to spend time with team members and elders across our organization. Recently, I joined a group of team members at Traceway for an open conversation. I asked, "How are you doing?" and "How can we better support you?" We talked about their work, what encourages them, and what makes the hard days hard. Those conversations matter because our team members matter.

A few days later I visited with three Traceway elders. We found ourselves talking about the early days of MSS, our mission, and the creation of the Sunday Fund more than sixty years ago. Listening to those stories reminded me that this ministry has always been built by people who simply wanted to love their neighbors well. That same spirit continues to guide us today.

As I look back on 2025, I see God's grace throughout this ministry. As I reflect on where we are today, I also see joy. I do not believe those two things are separate or coincidental. Grace can sustain us and lead us to abundant joy, especially when we choose to walk through life together.

I believe God has placed each of us here to build community and advance His Kingdom. I am thankful He has allowed me to be part of this ministry alongside so many faithful people. Whether you are a resident, family member, team member, volunteer, donor, church partner, or board member, you help make this community what it is. We are stronger together!

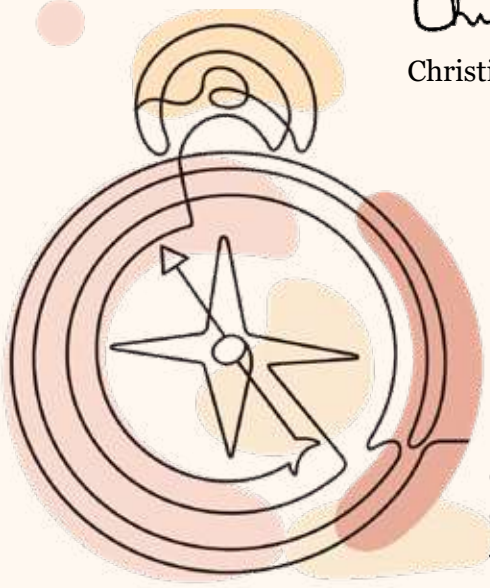
From the first page of this report to the closing prayer, I hope you hear the voices of the people who make Methodist Senior Services remarkable. Their stories remind us that we truly do thrive best in loving community. My prayer is that, somewhere in these pages, you will discover your own place in this story.

Thank you for walking alongside Methodist Senior Services as we continue serving older adults in the spirit of Christian love.

With gratitude,

Christie W. Vance

Christie W. Vance



"Community is first of all a quality of the heart. It grows from the spiritual knowledge that we are alive not for ourselves but for one another."

— Henri J.M. Nouwen

Cover Photo: *Aldersgate resident Joyce Clodfelter and her granddaughter Mary Jordan Clodfelter share a special visit after completing some community service.*

“It’s better to wear out than rust out”

How Wynelle Benson Shapes an Abundant Community

At 90 years young, Wynelle Benson is a hard woman to keep still. In fact, if you ask her about her philosophy on aging, she’ll chuckle and give you her favorite piece of advice: “It is better to wear out than rust out.”

Wynelle proves that purpose doesn’t have an expiration date. Her vibrant life story—stretching from a childhood dream of nursing to her current days as a powerhouse volunteer—perfectly embodies the heart of Methodist Senior Services (MSS): no matter our age, stage, or circumstance, we all thrive best in a loving, abundant community. Community is not just something Wynelle receives at the Traceway Retirement Community; it is something she actively, joyfully gives back every single day.

A Lifetime of Answering the Call

Long before she became a pillar of the Traceway community, Wynelle spent her life in service to others. She credits her deep-seated passion for helping people to her up-bringing. She recalls her father, a mechanic, who refused to ever drive past a stranded motorist on the side of the road, regardless of who they were or the time of day. “Honey, I can’t pass up anybody,” he would tell her. That foundational lesson stuck with her.

Wynelle felt called by God to be a nurse before she was even six years old. The calling was solidified when she was admitted to a tiny, six-bed local hospital to have her tonsils removed. While staying there, a nurse asked the young Wynelle if she would mind holding and bottle-feeding a neighbor’s baby whose mother was too sick to care for him.

“Something tugged at my heart right at that time,” Wynelle remembers. “And I thought, ‘This is what I need to do with my life.’”

Answering that call required immense grit. Wynelle spent decades working as a dedicated Nurse Practitioner, relentlessly pursuing her education as a non-traditional student while balancing full-time work and family. She went back to school in her thirties, her forties, and her fifties, picking up postgraduate certifications in geriatrics and pediatrics along the way. Her spirit of service never stopped at the clock; it was a 24/7 lifestyle. When she later moved to Traceway, she wasn’t looking to slow down—she was looking for her next mission.

Out of the Ashes, Into Abundance

Shortly after arriving at Traceway, Wynelle began looking for ways to plug in and found her passion in volunteering with Meals on Wheels alongside her husband. When her own home church, Moore Methodist,

Stronger Together

tragically faced structural instability and had to be torn down, a spark of creative inspiration was born from the loss. A fellow church member had salvaged the build-ing’s old stained-glass windows and tucked them away in the woods. “Hey, bring them to me,” Wynelle said, recalling a stained-glass class she had taken thirty years prior.

Scrubbing away decades of debris, Wynelle began cutting the glass, firing it in her kiln, and handcrafting beautiful, unique jewelry. What started as a small project to support a church fellowship hall quickly exploded as word traveled. Over the years, communities across the region began bringing her shards and scraps of salvaged

glass from their own historic renovations. Her jewelry box holds a tapestry of local history. She has transformed precious fragments of Tiffany-stained glass hidden for decades beneath a church floor, as well as remnants recovered from the devastating 2014 Tupelo tornadoes. Through Wynelle's hands, literal broken pieces of history have been transformed into symbols of resilience, beauty, and grace. True to her servant's heart, Wynelle has donated every single dollar of the proceeds from her jewelry back to the ministries of Methodist Senior Services since moving to Traceway, raising money to help ensure her neighbors are fed and cared for.

Serving Grace's "Top Salesperson"

Today, Wynelle continues to craft her famous jewelry while dedicating much of her time volunteering at the recently opened Serving Grace Resale Shop (which grew out of early yard sales held on campus). The store has given Wynelle a renewed sense of connection and a platform to do what she does best: love people.

The Serving Grace team affectionately refers to Wynelle as their top salesperson. With her infectious laugh and warm energy, she wakes up with a purpose every day, eager to greet customers, pull together unique outfits, and help visitors find hidden treasures.

"I just love working in that because I feel like it's such a worthy cause," Wynelle says. For her, the store is a place where customers don't just buy items; they get to feel like they are doing their part to give back to others.

Stronger Together

Wynelle's story is a beautiful reminder that retirement is not a withdrawal from life, but an invitation to live abundantly. At Traceway, freed from the burdens of maintaining a house and mowing a lawn, she has been liberated to focus entirely on the servant leadership God placed in her heart as a child.

Methodist Senior Services thrives because donors, volunteers, residents, and employees come together as the hands and feet of Christ. Through her creativity, her tireless days at Serving Grace, and her refusal to ever "rust out," Wynelle Benson is proof that we are truly stronger together—and that a loving community allows each of us to continue making a meaningful difference, at any age.

SERVING GRACE RESALE SHOP
Inspired Finds Faithful Giving

Current Store Hours:
Mon/Tues/Thurs
9 AM-4 PM

Building 6-2,
Tupelo Furniture Market
1879 Coley Rd.
Tupelo, MS, 38801

Thank You to the Volunteers Who Make a Difference Every Day

Across 12 Methodist Senior Services campuses, Meals on Wheels, and Serving Grace Resale Shop, volunteers share their time and talents in countless ways each year. Every act of service helps strengthen our ministry and enrich the lives of those we serve.

2025 by the Numbers

Number of Residents & Outreach Recipients:
1,488

Number of Residents who Received Charitable and/or Government Assistance:
498

Number of Employees:
914

Average Age:
83

Small Moments, Big Impacts

Connection Across Generations

Flowers Retirement Community delights in the visits made by the wonderful children from Free to Be Yoga. Their enthusiasm, smiles, and kind hearts bring so much energy to the campus as they share fun and engaging yoga sessions with the elders. It is a beautiful reminder that wellness has no age limit and that some of life's sweetest moments happen when generations come together. Thank you to the children, families, and instructors of Free to Be Yoga for sharing your time and talents with Flowers.

Love in Action: Serving Others Starts Here

2025 LEADERSHIP

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Hamp Dye*, Vice-Chairman
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Rev. Claire E. Dobbs
Juanita Floyd
Debra Gard*
Lloyd Gray
Diane B. Havard
Jeremy Hill*
Jolee Hussey
Rev. Embra Jackson, II*
Rev. Joe May
Dave Vincent

Serves as Director & Member

MSS MEMBERSHIP

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Bruce K. Calcote
Christy Chain
Rev. Jimmy Criddle
Paula Drungole-Ellis
Rev. James Dye
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Chris Lauderdale
Dustin Markle
Margaret McKenzie
Cynthia Parker
Cheryl Penson
Rev. Dwight Prowell
George Purnell
Frank Sutton
Vera Thomas
Rev. Chris Young

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Christie Vance, *President/CEO*
Van Ray, *Past Chairman*
Bill West, *Past Chairman**
Bishop Sharma D. Lewis

2025 MILESTONES

- Steve McAlilly retired February 2025 and Christie Vance was named President/CEO.
- Loretta Wadlington, Executive Assistance to the President/CEO, was named the “Employee of the Year” by LeadingAge Southeast.
- Plante Moran conducted market studies in Gulfport and Hernando to test the feasibility of growth and service alignment for Seashore Highlands and Wesley Meadows.
- Occupancy hit a post-COVID high in the third quarter at 93.4% with all other quarters above 90% as well.
- MSS refinanced the 2014 Bond Issue with Renasant Bank and the USDA.
- Traceway restored and renovated portions of the Manor following a single apartment fire mid-year.
- MSS completed the WIFI build-out on all campuses.
- Continuing Care Insurance Company held their triennial visit with MSS at Trinity Place Retirement Community. This mutually educational experience helps strengthen our risk management programs.
- MSS formalized a new Sunday Fund policy and application to streamline the application process and review.
- HR hosted a series of seminars for hiring managers and leaders, led by Donna Cutting from Red Carpet Learning, focusing on topics like Workforce Dynamics, Employee Selection Criteria, and Tips for Orientation and Onboarding.
- Serving Grace Resale Shop retail space was obtained in September 2025. The LEAD Grant from CREATE was awarded in October 2025 to assist with start-up costs. The retail shop opened to the public in February 2026. Proceeds benefit Meals on Wheels of Lee County and the MSS ministry.
- MSS began implementation of the Culture Calendar across the MSS Network. The calendar was born from the Celebration of Leadership Classes and is comprised of the Wellness Wheel, EDEN Principles, Here to Help and Awareness Education programs.

There’s a place for you—no matter your interests or experience, your time and talent can make a difference.

The Sunday Fund

Compassionate Giving Creates Lasting Community

"Through Mississippi Methodist Senior Services, I've seen how compassionate care can transform not just a life, but a community. I give to the Sunday Fund because every older adult deserves to live with dignity, safety, and love—regardless of their financial circumstances. The Sunday Fund ensures that when someone outlives their resources, they do not outlive our care.

My sister, who is only 72, lives at Seashore Highlands and is living with dementia. At an age when many are still active and independent, her journey looks very different. And because dementia can be a long road, there is a real possibility she may outlive her resources."

Ruth Bishop, Seashore Highlands Board Member & Resident Family Member

"The Sunday Fund is a quiet promise–that no one will be forgotten, no one will be alone and no one will be turned away."*

"Giving is how I participate in that promise. It's how I help extend Christ's love in a tangible way - ensuring that Elders at Seashore Highlands and across Mississippi remain safe, secure, supported and loved."

** The level of assistance is directly related to the gift balance available in the Sunday Fund.*

Visible Love

What A Loving Community Looks Like

Love becomes visible in ordinary acts repeated faithfully over time.

It looks like volunteers who show up every Sunday.

It looks like staff members who know residents by name and treat them with dignity.

It looks like families who continue visiting through every stage of aging and dementia.

It looks like someone sitting beside a resident who simply needs a listening ear.

It looks like shared laughter, prayers before meals, birthday celebrations, holding a hand during difficult moments, and celebrating small victories.

Love is not only something we say—it becomes something people can experience.

~ Ruth Bishop

2025 Sunday Fund Top Twenty

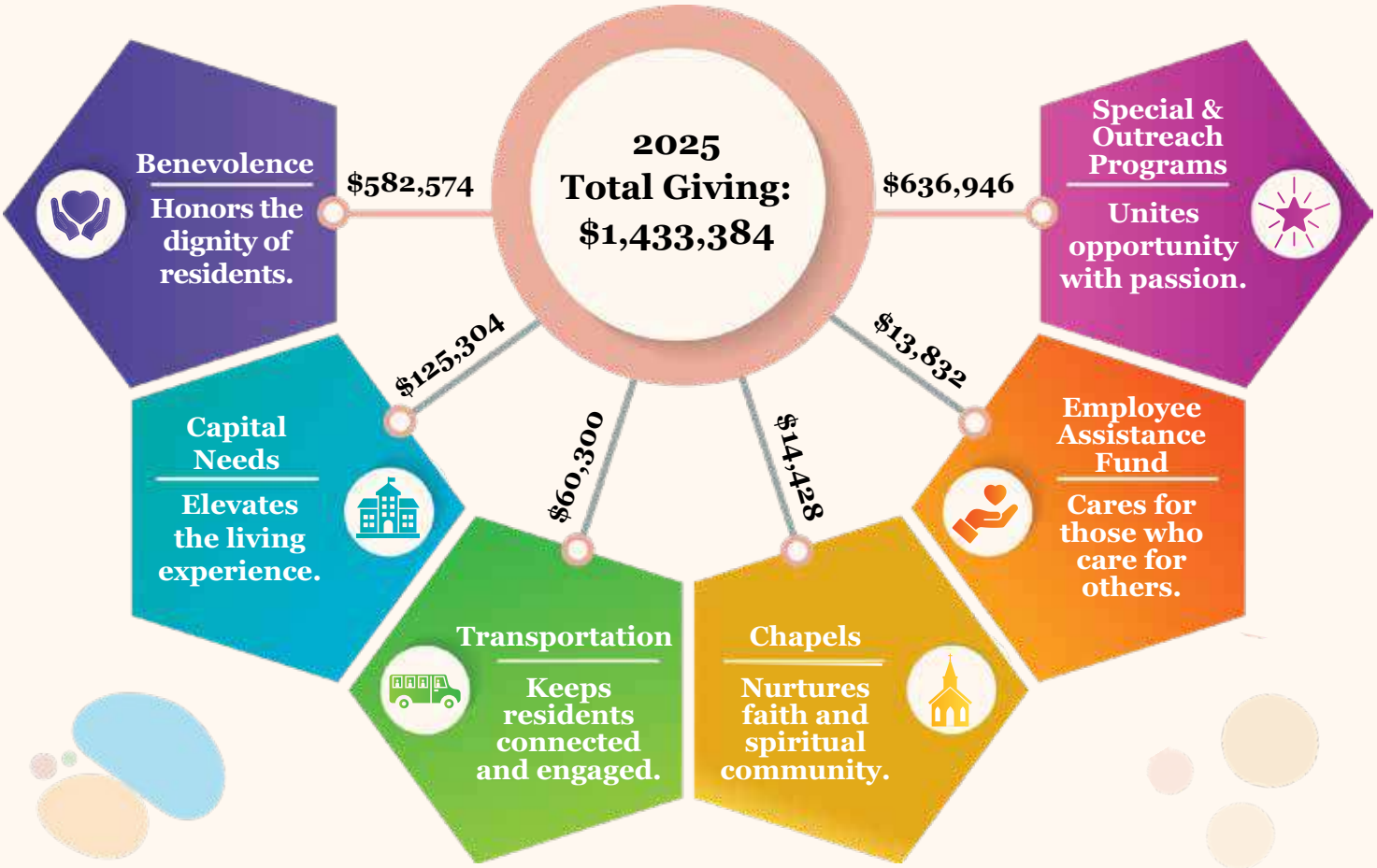
(listed by overall total church giving)

1. **Yazoo City Methodist**
2. **Tupelo First UMC**
3. **Gulfport First UMC**
4. **Independence Methodist - Coldwater**
5. **Meridian First Baptist**
6. **Oxford-University UMC**
7. **Hernando Methodist**
8. **Cleveland First UMC**
9. **Central UMC - Meridian**
10. **College Hill Baptist**
11. **Tupelo First Baptist**
12. **Clinton Methodist**
13. **Trinity Methodist - Gulfport**
14. **Cokers Chapel Methodist**
15. **Main Street UMC - Hattiesburg**
16. **Leavell Woods UMC - Jackson**
17. **Newton Methodist Church**
18. **Galloway Memorial UMC - Jackson**
19. **Long Beach First Methodist**
20. **Aldersgate UMC – Starkville**

YOUR GIFTS. REAL IMPACT.

As donors to the MSS mission, your generosity is woven into the story of Methodist Senior Services. For more than 65 years, faithful partners like you have helped provide compassionate care and share Christ's love with older adults across Mississippi. We are grateful for your partnership. Every gift advances our mission, strengthens our campuses, and supports the people and programs that make Methodist Senior Services a place where residents are cared for with dignity, employees are supported, and hope is shared every day.

The following represents the combined impact of your generosity throughout 2025.



Key Sunday Fund Facts

- The Sunday Fund is a benevolence fund for residents who have outlived their financial resources through no fault of their own.
- 100% of the money donated to The Sunday Fund is used to support elders in need.
- Residents must qualify for Sunday Fund assistance.
- Elders often depend on the support of church families to meet basic needs.
- The level of assistance we can offer is directly related to the gift balance available in The Sunday Fund.
- Last year, financial assistance to residents totaled $604,246.
- Because of the Sunday Fund, no qualifying elder has ever been asked to leave because they have outlived their resources.

Thank you for making a difference that lasts.

Methodist Senior Services
Celebration. Innovation. Hope.

LEGACY CIRCLE

Lasting Gifts of Love and Dignity

Let Your Love Live on for Generations to Come

Ways to Create Your Legacy

Bequests (Wills & Trusts)

Designate a specific amount, percentage, or remainder of your estate to support the causes you care about.

Retirement Plan Gifts

Name MSS as a beneficiary of your IRA or other retirement plan to support your philanthropic goals.

Life Insurance

Designate MSS as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy.

To Learn More

Scan the QR Code to visit our Planned Giving Website.

"Others before me gave so I could live with dignity and joy. Now, I can join this circle of care to sustain MSS's sacred privilege of caring for elders. We don't just leave behind what we have – we leave behind how we made people feel. This is the mark of a meaningful life."

Alice Lute
MSS Campus Resident & Donor

“ Methodist Senior Services is an amazing organization. When my mom could no longer live by herself, we had to find a place for her. She wanted her own place, not living with one of her children. Seashore was there for us when we needed them, so we feel it is important to help make sure it is there for the next family who needs them, and the next one after that, which is why we have included MSS in our wills. Giving back and paying it forward. ”

Margaret McKenzie – Faithful Supporter & Board Member *(pictured with her husband Duncan)*

“I believe that when we give, we don’t become poorer. We become richer.”

~Brittany Cuevas,Vice President of Giving

Some might think of death when they think of legacy. Personally, when I think of legacy, I think of life. Am I living a life that aligns with my values? As St. Irenaeus wrote, “The glory of God is a human being fully alive.” I feel most alive when I sense God’s Spirit working through me. I experience that most clearly when I have the privilege of making someone else’s life a little better.

I’ve shared what legacy means to me. But what does it mean to you?

A legacy gift—whether to Methodist Senior Services or another ministry you love—is a way of ensuring your deepest values continue shaping lives long after you’re gone. While we are living, we have the privilege of making decisions today that will bless others long after we are gone.

MSS President/CEO, Christie Vance and I have both made this commitment ourselves because we long to “serve older adults in the spirit of Christian love” not only while we are here on this earth, but in the future as well.

When I see today’s residents on campuses, I want to prepare a way for residents of the future.

I see Christ in the faces of residents. In the hands and feet of team members. In the smiles of volunteers. In the generosity of donors.

When we give, serve, love… we participate with God to make things right in the world. Everything we have is a gift from our good Lord. When we give with open hands, God has a remarkable way of multiplying the impact of our generosity.

A legacy gift isn’t really about an estate. It’s about a life of faith that continues bearing fruit after we’re home with the Lord. Perhaps the question isn’t simply, “What will I leave behind?” Perhaps it’s, “How might God continue using my life after I’ve finished running my race?”

If serving older adults in the spirit of Christian love is part of the legacy you hope to leave, I invite you to prayerfully consider joining the MSS Legacy Circle.

May God continue to use all of us to serve older adults in the spirit of Christian love—for today and for generations yet to come.

Contact Brittany for all of your planned giving questions:
(662)840-8977 or brittany.cuevas@mss.org

2025 Donors/Honor Club

Thank you to ALL donors, including those wishing to remain anonymous. We love you, and we cannot do this amazing work without your support. YOU make "serving older adults in the spirit of Christian love" possible!

**listed on www.mss.org*

HONOR CLUB LEVELS

Virginia Thomas Founders	$10,000 and above
Partners	$5,000 to $9,999
Associates	$1,000 to $4,999
Patrons	$500 to $999*
Benefactors	$250 to $499*
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**** Given to MSS for 20 or more consecutive years.***

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Mrs. Vicki Sneed
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Mrs. Carol Tatum
Terry & Judy Thomas Foundation
Tombigbee Electric Power Association
Traceway Manor Resident Council
Traceway Manor Sunday School Class
Mr. Howard R. Trawick
Trinity Methodist Church - Gulfport
Tri-State Termite & Pest Control - Clarksdale
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Tupelo First Baptist Church
Tupelo First Presbyterian Church
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Mr. & Mrs. Dave Vincent
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Wadlington
Mr. Lake Waldrop
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Walton
Mr. & Mrs. Ronnie Walton
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West Point First UMC
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Whitehall Church - Louisville
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Whittle
Mrs. Billie J. Wilhite*
William Wells Tire & Auto Store - Starkville
Mr. Charles S. Wright, Jr.
Yazoo City Second Presbyterian Church
Mr. & Mrs. Fred R. Young
Mrs. Sarah B. Young
Mr. & Mrs. Greg Youngblood
The Younger Foundation - Marks*
Jim & Lauren Zuelzke

Please visit **www.mss.org** for a listing of all Honor Club levels.

2025 Memorial Tributes

Mrs. Edith G. Abernathy
Mrs. Betty H. Aldridge
Ms. Lottie A. Allen
Ms. Margaret J. Allen
Ms. Gladys Baggett
Mrs. Margaret Bailey
Mr. Mac L. Baker, Sr.
Ms. Becky Battle
Mr. James W. Bearden
Ms. Bessie Price Beck
Mr. Joe Beeson
Mrs. Donna Belenchia
Mr. Fred Bell
Mr. Tom Bennett
Mrs. Judy Bernhardt
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Mrs. Emma Gretchen Bilger
Mr. Samuel C. Blakely
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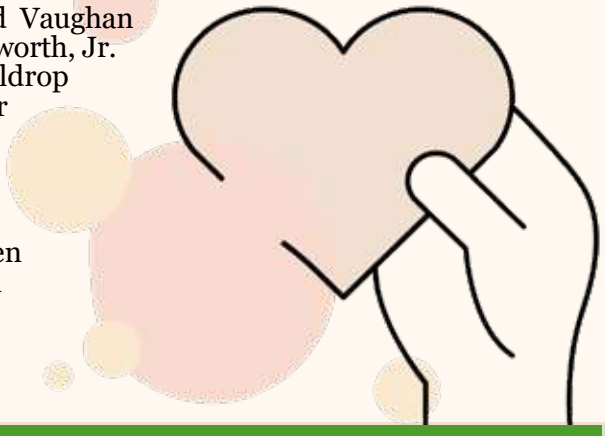
Mrs. Linda Bowlin
Ms. Bonnie Boyd
Mr. Jasper C. Branning
Mrs. Pauline P. Bridgforth
Ms. Agnes Brogdon
Mrs. Betty D. Brown
Ms. Choxie Brown
Mrs. Millie Brown
Mr. Algie R. Bryan
Mr. Mose "Pip" Bryant
Mrs. Willa Dean Bryant
Ms. Fannie Buchanan
Mrs. Sammie Burchfield
Rev. Glenn A. Cain, Sr.
Mrs. Wyonda L. Cain
Mrs. Marilyn Canada
Mr. Malcolm Carlisle
Mrs. Evelyn N. Carroll
Rev. Dr. J. W. Carroll
Mr. and Mrs. Earl V. Catoe, Jr.
Mrs. Eleanor B. Catoe
Mrs. Betty Cayson
Ms. Mary L. Chandler
Mr. Eugene Clement
Mrs. Vera Coker
Mr. John B. Collier
Mrs. Berta Collins
Mr. John F. Collins, Jr.
Dr. Merlin D. Conoway
Mrs. Mary Lou Cooper
Mrs. Louanne P. Cossar
Mr. Milton "Mickey" Crawford
Mrs. Betty N. Crowe
Mr. Max Cullum
Ms. Miriam Elaine Cunningham
Mrs. Annie Laurin Curtis
Mr. John G. Curtis
Mr. Bennie Daniels, Jr.
Ms. Louise Daniels
Mr. Warren Daniels
Mrs. Rebecca Davenport
Mr. Clifford P. Davis
Mr. Gary Davison
Mrs. Gayle B. Dearman
Mrs. Cheryl Denley
Mr. Steve Dick
Ms. Mary Dean Owings Dill
Mrs. Sue Dillon
Mr. Danny Dilworth
Mr. John W. Doddridge
Ms. Georgia B. Dover
Mrs. Betty Maude Downer
Mr. Edwin E. Downer
Mrs. Esther Dunlap
Mrs. Gloria B. Dunlap
Mr. Clark Dunn
Ms. Henri Jane Dyson
Mr. John G. Earhart
Mr. Michael Edmondson
Mrs. Helen Fedric
Mrs. Helen S. Feinstein
Ms. Dorothy Floyd
Mr. Thomas E. Flynn
Ms. Eleanor Fordyce
Mrs. Ruby Forrester
Mr. & Mrs. Ben Gaines
Mr. & Mrs. O. T. Gaines, III
Mrs. Mary M. Gambill
Mrs. Joyce Hamilton Garret
Mr. Eddie Garst
Ms. Virginia Gibson
Mr. David V. Gillentine
Mrs. Pauline Gillock
Mrs. Joyce Goforth
Mrs. Christina O. Gore
Mr. Ray Gore
Mrs. Marie S. Graham
Ms. Mary Fay Green
Morgan Guess
Mrs. Norma Ruth Guy
Mrs. Lois Fern Hackler
Ms. Mellie Chatham Hagwood
Mrs. Elizabeth Hall
Mr. Gerald Hall
Ms. Bobbie Harbour
Mrs. Brenda S. Hardin
Ms. Patricia Harper
Mr. Dave Harris
Mrs. Jean Harrison
Dave & Betty Hawthorne
Mrs. Virginia D. Haynes
Mrs. Marjorie B. Henley
Mr. Smith Henley
Mrs. Gail M. Henson
Mrs. Rida M. Hill
Mr. Robert E. Hill, Sr.
Mrs. Evie Hodges
Mrs. JoAnn Hodges
Mr. Joseph H. Hodges
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Holladay
Mrs. Jo Holladay
Mrs. Emily F. Holland
Mr. Morris B. Holland
Mrs. Eloise Holliman
Mrs. Kresses Y. Holloway
Ms. Margaret L. Holton
Mrs. Joyce Ann Horne
Mrs. Eleanor J. Horning
Ms. Pamela Horton
Mr. Edward R. Hunt
Mrs. Elsie Hutchinson
Mrs. Cynde Ingram
Ms. Pauline Irwin
Ms. Madge Ivey
Mrs. Charlene Jackson
Ms. Elizabeth L. Jackson
Mrs. Ruth S. Jackson
Mrs. Christine W. Johnson
Mrs. Jimmie Nell Johnson
Mutt & Ruby Johnson
Mr. Patrick Johnson
Mrs. Virginia Johnson
Mr. Wendell J. Johnson
Dr. Thomas E. Joiner
Mr. Raymond A. Jolley
Mr. Bob Jones
Ms. Grace Jones
Mrs. Julia Estelle Jones
Mrs. Mable Jones
Mrs. Shirley C. Jones
Mr. Bill Kalinowski
Mrs. Lee Ann Kantor
Mrs. Eloise M. Keith
Mrs. Lillian Ann Kellum
Mrs. Evelyn Kelly
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Kieronski, Sr.
Mrs. Tommie J. Kilgore
Mrs. Lorea McKelvey King
Mrs. Lynn King
Mrs. Gertrude B. Koehler
Mrs. Polly LaFitte
Mr. Robert LaFitte
Mr. Bobby W. Laney
Mrs. Jean Laney
JoJo Lawson
Mr. Robert C. Leake, Sr.
Rev. B. F. Lee
Bishop Clay F. Lee
Mrs. Dorothy A. Lee
Mrs. Delia Leonard
Mr. Ronald Leonard
Mrs. Mary Sue Lewis
Mrs. Joyce Livingston
Mr. Johnny Love
Mr. Charles Lowery
Wiley & Myrtle Lowery
Mrs. Faye Lowry
Ms. Dorothy J. Lyons
Mrs. Bernadette M. Mabry
Mrs. Jessie R. Mabry
Mr. Bob Maddox
Mrs. Gerry Maddox
Mr. John J. Maloney
Mrs. Elowese Marlin
Mrs. Ottie L. Martin
Mrs. Vivian E. Martin
Ms. Marie Mattison
Mrs. Lee C. Mayo
Dr. and Mrs. Robert M. Mayo
Mr. Sam A. McCarroll
Mrs. Helen Marie McCarty
Mr. Joe C. McClammy
Mr. Hal Hick Hartsell McClanahan, III
Mrs. Mildred McCollum
Mr. Paul McCollum
Mrs. Vera McConnell
Mrs. Pat McCubbin

Mrs. Alma McEachin
Mr. John McEachin, Sr.
Mrs. Brucie W. McElroy
Ms. Martha McGahey
Mrs. Rachel McGee
Mr. Gerald McGill
Mrs. Phyllis McGinnis
Ms. Johnnie Myrtle McGowan
Mrs. Ann C. McGowin
Mr. Martino McNeal, Sr.
Ms. Rachel V. McPhail
Mrs. Imogene Measells
Mr. Kenneth Milam
Mrs. Bertha L. Miles
Mrs. Mary Evelyn Miley
Mrs. Mary Monroe
Mr. Joe G. Montgomery, Jr.
Mr. Joseph "Papa Joe" A. Montgomery
Mrs. Louise "Mama Lou" Montgomery
Mother of Jackie Ezell Haines
Ms. Linda Murphey
Mr. Keith Murray
Mr. Kyle Murray
Mrs. Martha Murray
John & Laverne Nisius
Mr. Glenn E. Norwood
Mrs. Lourdes "Lou" V. O'Connell
Ms. Faye Oswalt
Ms. Ruth Owens
Mrs. Bobbie Page
Mrs. Julia R. Parham
Mr. Tommy Lee Parker
Mrs. Helen C. Partlow
Ms. Linda Partlow
Mr. Roy G. Partlow
Ms. Catherine L. Payne
Mr. Ed P. Peacock, III
Mrs. Peggy Ann Peal
Mrs. Willie Lee Pearson
Ms. Hazel Perritt
Mrs. Gladys Pfeiffer
Mrs. Dot Phillips
Mrs. Blanche Poore
Mrs. Eva Nell Porch
Mrs. Ruth W. Powell
Mrs. Nettie R. Purvis
Mr. & Mrs. Archie Raigins, Jr.
Mrs. Pamela Rasco
Mr. Garnett Rather
Mrs. Jeanne Rea
Mr. Stan Rector
Ms. Jo Reed
Mrs. Betty S. Reeves
Dr. L. N. Rhodes, Jr.
Mr. Charles E. Riales
Mrs. Liz Rice
Mr. & Mrs. B. A. Ridder
Mr. Frank A. Riley, Sr.
Mrs. Lucimarian T. Roberts
Mr. Harvey Lamar Rodman, Jr.
Mr. Ike Roland
Ms. Bonnie M. Rolfs
Mr. Ralph Ross
Mrs. Sylvia Ross
Mrs. Eunice Rusch
Rev. Dr. Roy H. Ryan
Mrs. Jean King Simpson Sarsgard
Mrs. Barbara Savage
Mrs. Patricia Schroeder
Mrs. Arlene Schrum
Mr. Harold Schrum
Ms. Kathleen Shackelford
Mrs. Leah Shannon
Mrs. Evelyn Shirley
Mrs. Marilyn Simcox
Mrs. Lois B. Sims
Mrs. Ouida D. Sims
Mr. Billy Paul Sizemore
Mr. Homer D. Skelton
Mr. Bob Smith
Mr. Harold M. Smith
Mr. James P. Smith
Mrs. Mary Inez Smith
Mrs. Mattie Smith
Ms. Pauline C. Smith
Rev. Phillip R. Smith
Mr. Q. N. Smith
Mrs. Mildred Sowers
Mr. Vance G. Sprague
Mrs. Virgile C. Stanley
Mr. Caril V. Stephens
Mrs. Bootsie Stevens
Mr. Joe Stevens
Mrs. Kristen Stevens
Mrs. Carole Stewart
Ms. Drusilla Stewart
Mr. William Clyde Stewart, Sr.
Mrs. Ygondine W. Sturdivant
Mrs. Cheryl Sundbeck
Mr. Willam Davis "Tres" Sutton, III
Mr. Danny Tackett
Mrs. Betty Tate
Mr. Tommy Tate
Mrs. Mamie C. Taylor
Mrs. Sarah Thomas
Mrs. Ginger Thornton
Ms. Nancy L. Townsend
Mrs. Melwood Trawick
Mr. Edward Trygg
Mrs. Donnie Rae Tucker
Ms. Carolyn Tumminello
Mr. Frank R. Turner
Mrs. Helen Turner
Mrs. Jeanne Turner
Mrs. Betty Tuttle
Mr. Charles Tuttle
Mrs. Lillian Tuttle
Mrs. Ruth Umfress
Mrs. Mary "Wootie" Underwood
Mrs. Betty Jean Usry
Mr. Earl Van Dam
Mr. William Richard Vaughan
Dr. Henry M. Wadsworth, Jr.
Mrs. Mary Jane Waldrop
Ms. Dorothy Walker
Mr. Jimmy Walker
Mrs. Eloise Ward
Mrs. Edith Warren
Mr. George Warren
Mrs. Joyce S. Warren
Ms. Martha Watson
Mrs. Anne S. West
Mr. Fletcher West
Mrs. Lottie T. West
Mr. Sonny Whitaker
Mrs. Carolyn Gaskin White
Mrs. Ruth Whitley
Mrs. Pamela D. Whitney
Mrs. Norma Wicker
Mr. Kenneth "Rick" Wilburn
Mr. Elmer Dewayne "Boogar" Williams
Mr. William Williams
Rev. Cecil Williamson
Mrs. Betty Wilson Willis
Mr. Lee Coleman Willis
Mr. Robert L. Wilson
Ms. Tomicene Wilson
Mrs. Martha K. Wiygul
Ms. Mary Wray
Mrs. Jean R. Yarborough
Mr. Charles Youngblood
Mrs. Elizabeth Youngblood
Mr. Everett Youngblood

"When we give generously, with an abundance mentality, what we give away will multiply."

— Henri J.M. Nouwen



2025 Honor Tributes

Aldersgate Employees
Aldersgate Maintenance Team
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Alexander
Ms. Melody Asters
Dr. & Mrs. Joe N. Bailey, III
Mrs. Mary Beth Baker
Dr. Glenn H. Bennett
Ms. Helen Blaney
Dr. & Mrs. Mike Boland
Mr. & Mrs. Lucien L. Bourgeois
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Bowman, Jr.
Ms. Opal Brewer
Mrs. Sylvia Broughton
Ms. Charlotte Brown
Ms. Gigi Bugg
Ms. Jane D. Bugg
Mr. & Mrs. Greg Burks
Rev. & Mrs. Charles J. Bursi, Jr.
Ms. Maria Bush
Ms. Tamika Cade
Mrs. Mary Ann Caldwell
Rev. Pamela J. Cameron
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Carlisle
Ms. Jamie Cliett
Mrs. Myrna F. Crane
Mrs. Doodle Crumpton
Colby & Brittany Cuevas
Mrs. Michelle Daniel
Mr. & Mrs. James R. Diffee
Mrs. Peggy H. Ditto
Rev. Claire Elizabeth Dobbs
Mr. & Mrs. Hamp Dye
Mr. & Mrs. Mitch Ellett
Mrs. Sally W. Elliott
Mr. Richard B. Flowers, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Foy
Rev. & Mrs. Jason Franklin
Mr. & Mrs. Greg Goldberg
Mr. Allen G. Goldman
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Gorman
Dr. & Mrs. Carter Haines
Mrs. Betty Hancock
Mrs. Delores D. Hasselle
Mrs. Sandy Henson
Mrs. Gloria "Goldie" Himelstein
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Hollingsworth
Ms. Lynn Holt
Ms. Dorothy J. House
Dr. & Mrs. Mark S. Huffman
Dr. & Mrs. Tommy Hughes
Mr. & Mrs. Joey H. Hutto
Mr. Robert Jones, Jr.
Mrs. Becky Kellum
Rev. Charlie Laird
Rev. & Mrs. David C. Laird, Jr.
Ms. Gloria Ann Lanoux
Ms. Melanie Livingston

"It's less about doing for people and more about being with them."

An Example of Church Partnership: Gulfport First UMC

Gulfport First United Methodist Church has enjoyed a long and meaningful relationship with Seashore Highlands Retirement Community and Methodist Senior Services. Over the years, members of Gulfport First have been residents, worked as Seashore staff members, and served on both the local Board of Directors and the statewide MSS Board, helping guide and strengthen this ministry.

As faithful supporters of the Sunday Fund, they have provided security of home for elders across the state. Beyond financial support, Gulfport First members are present in the life of the Seashore community. Each Sunday, volunteers lead worship, sharing music, scripture, prayer, and encouragement. Many also participate in campus activities and build relationships with the residents. And for some, the relationship is also personal, as loved ones have found compassionate care and community at Seashore—viewing it as part of their local church family, and as ministry partners in caring for God's beloved children.

The vision of Gulfport First is simple: **Love God and Neighbor**. Serving older adults is one of the clearest ways we live out that calling. Older adults are not simply recipients of our care—they are teachers, mentors, storytellers, and faithful witnesses whose lives continue to enrich our communities. The church's outreach demonstrates their core values through worship, friendship, and practical support. Ultimately, service at Seashore, and in the community at large, fulfills their mission to **Make Disciples of Jesus Christ**. Discipleship happens not only in the sanctuary but wherever love is shared with humility and compassion.

"One of the greatest lessons has been that ministry is less about doing for people and more about being with them," says Ruth Bishop, Seashore Volunteer. "Older adults continue to teach us wisdom, resilience, humor, patience, and faith. Even when memory fades, the ability to experience love, joy, music, prayer, and human connection remains remarkably strong." Bishop points out that ministry is never one-directional. "We may arrive expecting to encourage someone else, only to leave having been encouraged ourselves."

"Over the years, FUMC of Gulfport has cultivated a strong partnership with MMSS and Seashore Highlands," said Rev. Claire Dobbs. "This partnership, which feels like family, wasn't driven by the pastors or church staff, nor was it the result of a strategic plan. Instead, it has grown organically through relationships, shared joy, and mutual blessings. It's heaven-sent!"

Rev. & Mrs. Stanley C. Lobin
Mr. Robert C. Logan, Sr.
Mr. Charles Lowery
Ms. Helen Lowry
Ms. Alice Lute
Ms. Daisy Mabry
Dr. Carole Mangrem
Mrs. Josephine W. Mark
Rev. & Mrs. Chris McAlilly
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen L. McAlilly
Dr. John D. McEachin
Mrs. Ann C. McGowin
Mr. & Mrs. Robin McGraw
Ms. Doris McRae
Methodist Senior Services Residents
Mrs. Dorothy D. Miley
Mrs. Ellen W. Miller
Dr. Marvin & Dr. Bitsy Miller
Mr. & Mrs. Guy W. Mitchell, III
Mrs. Rose Mitchell
Mr. Curtis W. Monts, II
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Morgan
Dr. Clyde Muse
Mrs. Jacquilla Newell
Ms. Suzanne S. Ochello
Rev. & Mrs. Kenneth R. Owen
Mrs. Yvonne B. Owen
Mr. Frank M. Patty, Jr.
Ms. Helen S. Paul
Mrs. Mary Jane Paul
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Pearson
Ms. Jean Pisors
Mr. Bill Reid
Ms. Ann Rice
Mrs. Jane S. Riley
Ms. Pauline Rushing
Mrs. Ann G. Russell
Mr. & Mrs. John Sadler
Rev. & Mrs. Michael D. Sahler
Ms. Bobbie Schreppel
Seekers SSC - Meridian First Baptist
Mr. Floyd Shankerman
Mrs. Elizabeth F. Sistrunk
Dr. Murillo Smith
Dr. & Mrs. Buddy Spencer
Mrs. Sarah Stockmeyer
Mr. Jerry E. Stokes
Ms. Susie Strahan
Strong Methodist Seniors & Caregivers
Mr. Sam Sumrall
Ms. Rachel A. Tackett
Mrs. Cleo Taylor
Mrs. Olivia Thompson
Traceway Leadership Over The Years
Ms. Shelley R. Tuggle
Mrs. Christie Vance
Mr. Marc Wade
Mrs. Loretta Wadlington
Mr. Bill I. Ware
Dr. & Mrs. Richard Warriner
Ms. Betty Whitmire
Rev. & Mrs. Larry D. Wilkinson
Ms. Jasma Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Williford
Ms. Beatrice Woodard
Mrs. Juanita H. Wright

One ministry that beautifully reflects the heart of Gulfport First is Home Under the Dome, a respite ministry for people living with dementia and other cognitive or physical challenges. Twice a week, friends gather for fellowship, music, games, exercise, crafts, devotion, laughter, and a shared meal. Just as importantly, caregivers receive several hours of much-needed respite, knowing their loved one is safe, engaged, and surrounded by compassionate volunteers. Their goal isn't simply to provide activities. It's to create moments of joy, belonging, and dignity while reminding every participant that they remain a valued part of God's family.

Home Under the Dome creates opportunities for connection rather than frustration. Gulfport First's partnership with Seashore Highlands on events, such as the recent Dementia Discussion Panel, has been invaluable.

The measure of a community is often found in how it treats those who are most vulnerable. When we invest in older adults, we strengthen the entire community. Loving community meets some of our deepest human needs—for belonging, purpose, companionship, and hope. That is especially true as we age. We were never created to journey through life alone. The outreach ministry of Gulfport First helps create community belonging.

When people know they are seen, valued, and loved—not for what they can do, but simply for who they are—they flourish.

Partnership

One beautiful example is Shirley, who faithfully leads Sunday worship each week.

With music, scripture, familiar hymns, and a thoughtful meditation, she creates sacred space where residents can worship in ways that are comforting and familiar. You can see faces that brighten as old hymns are sung from memory, even by residents who struggle to recall recent conversations. Week after week, she reminds us that faith is often carried not only in words but through familiar songs, gentle presence, and faithful love.

Shirley's consistency communicates something powerful:

**"You are remembered.
You matter.
God has not forgotten you."**

When the Church Becomes Family

One mission. Countless friendships. Hundreds of priceless moments.

At Martha Coker Green House® Homes in Yazoo City, local churches have done more than volunteer. They have become part of the family. Multiple congregations have adopted one of the six Green House® Homes, returning again and again to worship, celebrate, play, pray, reminisce, and simply spend time together. The result is not just fuller calendars. It is deeper relationships that enrich the lives of residents and volunteers. The beauty of this ministry is its simplicity.

Every church serves in its own way. Some gather residents for monthly gospel sing-a-longs filled with favorite hymns. Others host birthday celebrations with homemade treats, lead Bible studies, offer devotionals, collect prayer requests, or organize games, crafts, and painting activities. Coffee gatherings often become some of the most meaningful moments as residents and volunteers share stories, talk about life, and reflect on the goodness of God through the years. No two churches look exactly alike, and that is exactly what makes the ministry so special.

Some congregations are large. Others are small. Some have thriving children's ministries while others are made up of older adults themselves. Together they demonstrate that every church has something meaningful to offer. The size of a congregation has never determined its ability to make a difference. Residents especially love visits from children.

Christmas caroling has become a cherished tradition as young voices fill the homes with songs that have been treasured for generations. Church youth groups have cleaned patios and outdoor gathering spaces, creating welcoming places where residents can enjoy time outside. One youth group traveling from Kansas made Martha Coker part of its mission trip. Rather than simply completing a service project, the students spent several days interviewing elders about their childhood memories, careers, and life experiences. Together they created keepsake books that captured stories and memories families will treasure for years to come.

The greatest gift these churches bring is not an activity. It is the opportunity to build relationships.

"Every church brings something different, and that is what makes these relationships so special," said Stayce Allen, Life Enrichment Director at Martha Coker Green House® Homes. "The elders love getting to know new people, hearing new stories, and building friendships that continue to grow with every visit."

What often surprises people most is who receives the blessing.

"I started doing Bible Study with the Elders in 2003. I thought I would be a blessing to the Elders," said Rosemary Knox, First Methodist Church volunteer. "However, I was the one who received the blessing. I would encourage all churches to adopt a Green House® Home in your area."

Today, several churches are building meaningful relationships with elders at Martha Coker Green House Homes through the ministry of presence. There are opportunities to do the same at each of the 21 Green House® Homes throughout the Methodist Senior Services organization. Even beyond the Green House Homes, churches can make a lasting impact in assisted living, skilled nursing, memory support, affordable housing, and other care settings across the state.

The invitation is simple—Adopt a home. Share your gifts. Build lasting friendships. Become part of a community where faith is lived through presence, compassion, and genuine relationships.

In 2022, Pat Ellis, member of Trinity Episcopal Church, shared with Gigi Matthews, member of Benton Methodist Church, about her church adopting a Green House® Home at Martha Coker. Gigi brought the idea to our pastor, and several of us who were in a church small group received permission to participate. Gigi and I met with Stacye Allen, obtained all the information we needed. We adopted the Love House! We began gathering to celebrate birthdays, but after a while we brought our talented church maestro, Thomas, our much-loved pianist, Dennis, and others who were willing to pray and sing hymns monthly. The elders loved it, and we did as well! Elders from other Green House® Homes at Martha Coker were brought in and joined right in! So, for three years we have been making a joyful noise, jumping and jiving for Jesus and rocking and rolling for our Redeemer. When the weather permits, we meet in the pavilion where we can bless many more! These elders bless us as much or more than we bless them! We have no regrets on our participation and highly recommend others to do the same."

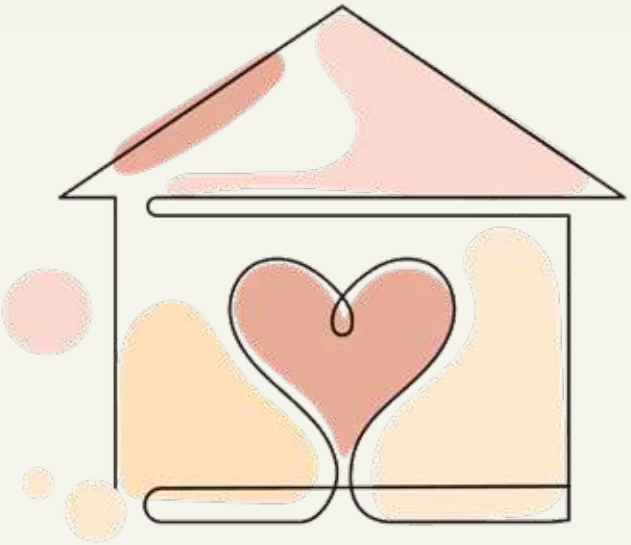
Babs Summerhill –
Benton Methodist Church

Whether your congregation has twenty members or two thousand, you have something meaningful to offer. There is a Methodist Senior Services community nearby that would welcome your church with open arms.

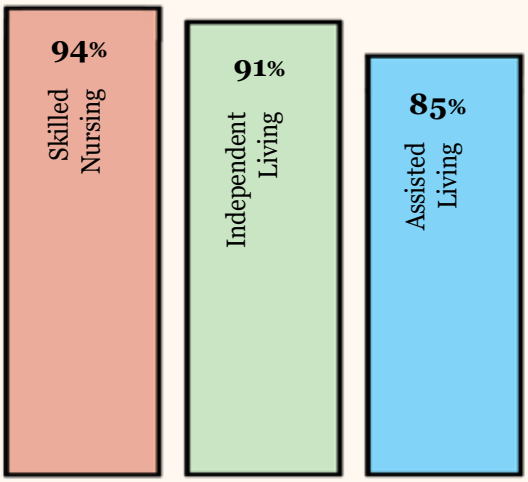
And before long, strangers become friends, friends become family, and a church becomes an extension of home.

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.
~ Galatians 6:10

Adopt A Green House® Home

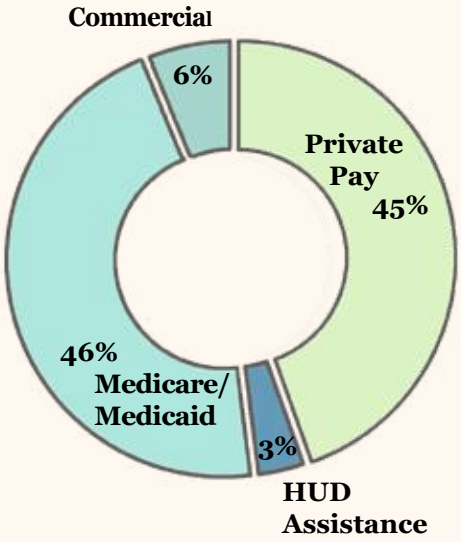


2025 Average Occupancy by Level of Care



Total Occupancy 90%

2025 Revenues by Payor Source

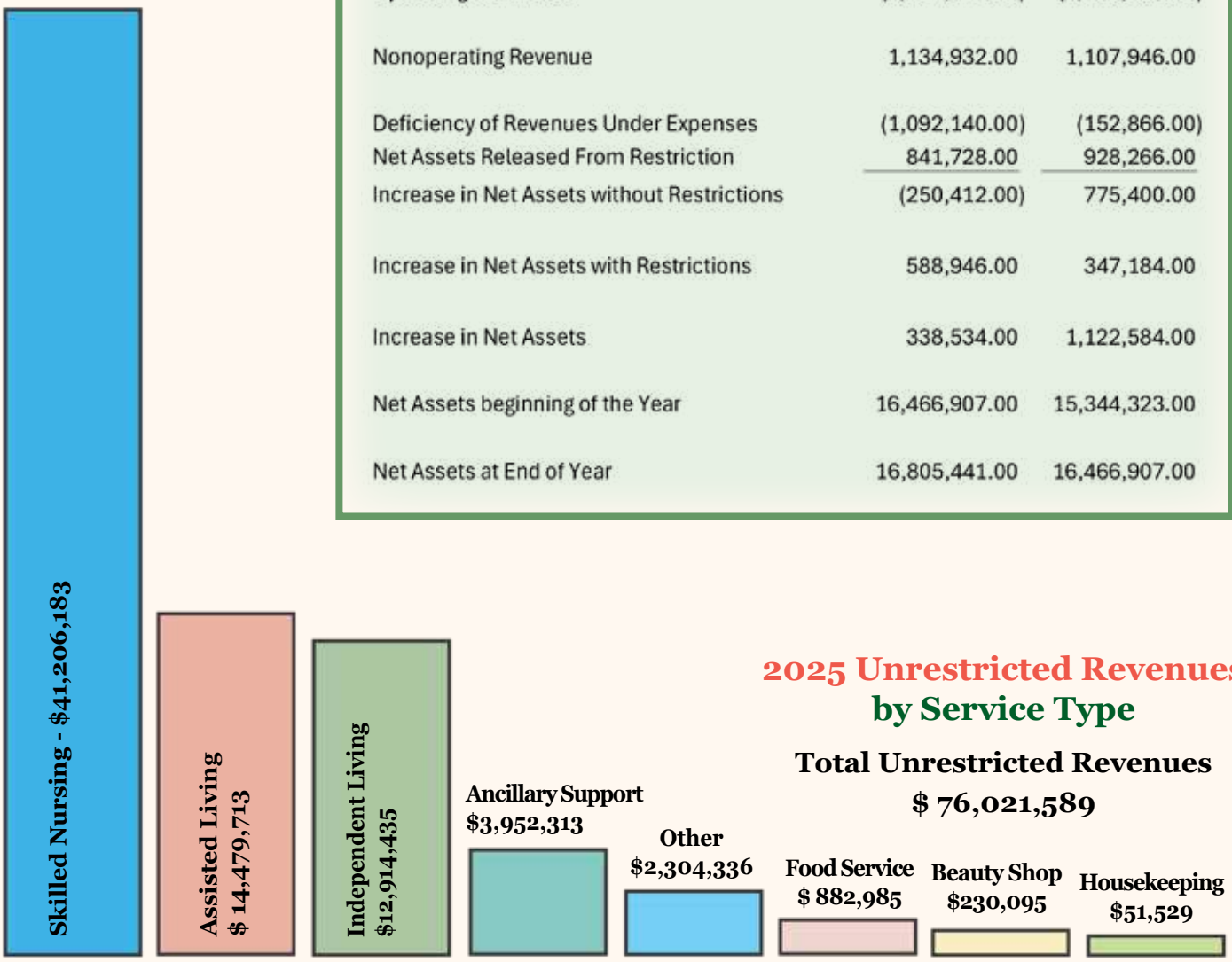


2025 INCOME STATEMENT

	2025	2024
Operating Revenues	76,021,589.00	74,355,354.00
Operating Expenses	78,248,661.00	75,616,166.00
Operating Gain/Loss	(2,227,072.00)	(1,260,812.00)
Nonoperating Revenue	1,134,932.00	1,107,946.00
Deficiency of Revenues Under Expenses	(1,092,140.00)	(152,866.00)
Net Assets Released From Restriction	841,728.00	928,266.00
Increase in Net Assets without Restrictions	(250,412.00)	775,400.00
Increase in Net Assets with Restrictions	588,946.00	347,184.00
Increase in Net Assets	338,534.00	1,122,584.00
Net Assets beginning of the Year	16,466,907.00	15,344,323.00
Net Assets at End of Year	16,805,441.00	16,466,907.00

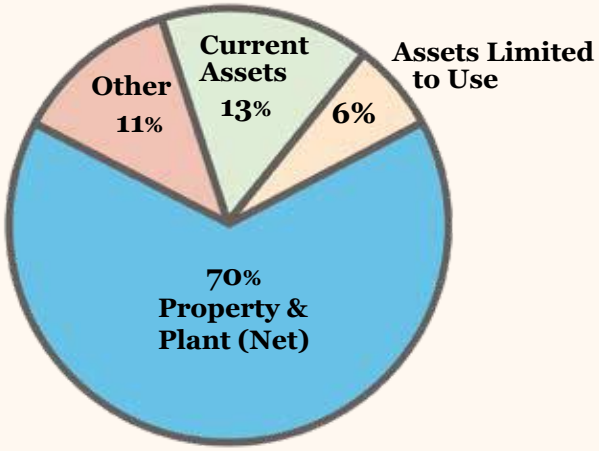
2025 Unrestricted Revenues by Service Type

Total Unrestricted Revenues
$ 76,021,589



2025 Assets by Type

Total Assets $62,184,354

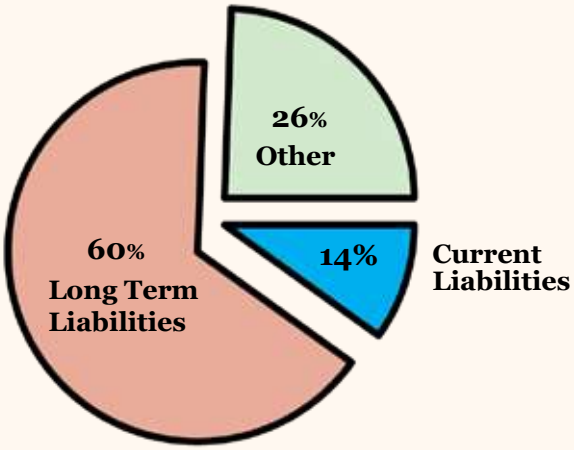


2025 Financial Reports

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen." – 1 Peter 4:10-11

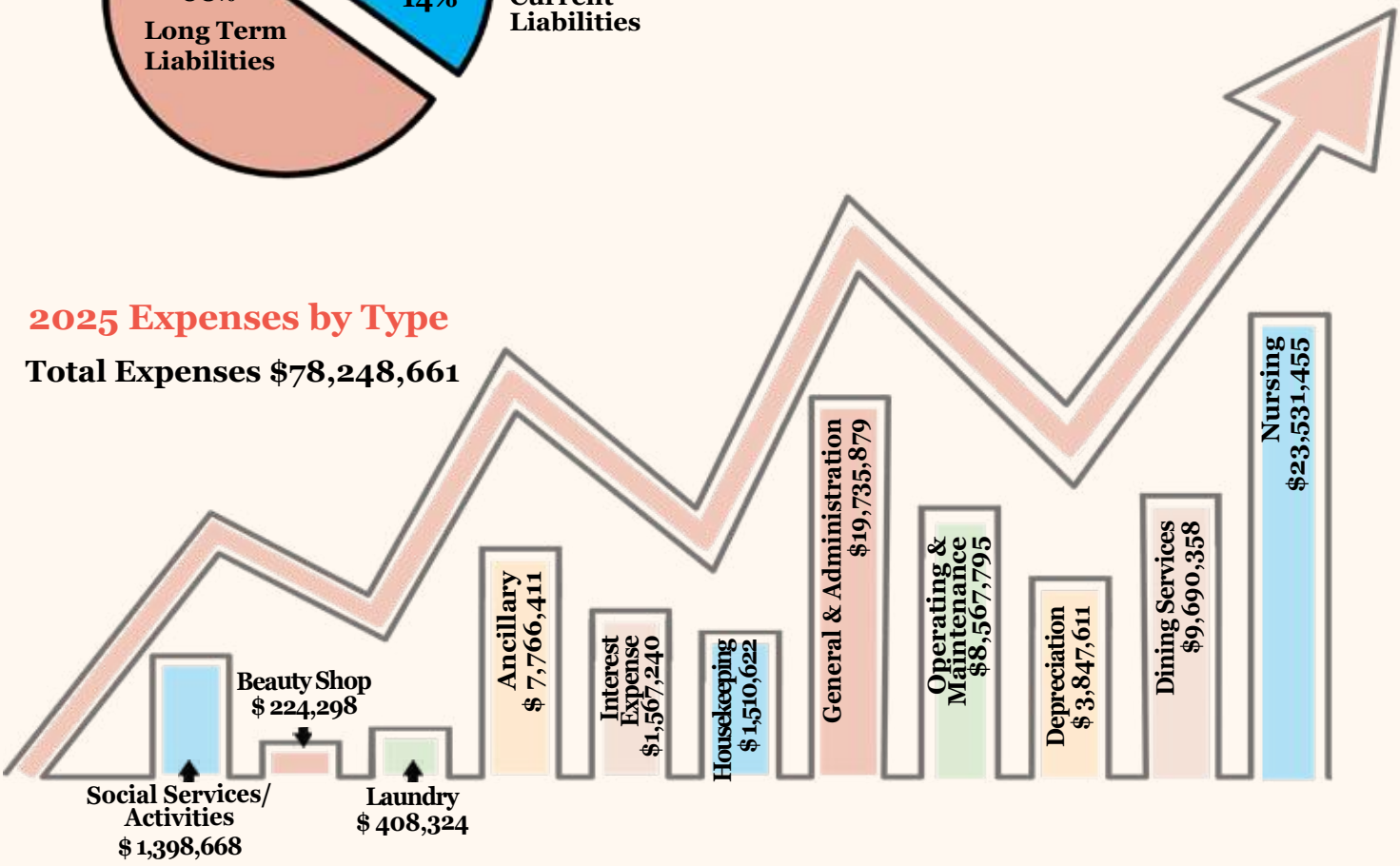
2025 Liabilities by Type

Total Liabilities $45,378,913



2025 Expenses by Type

Total Expenses $78,248,661



Abundant Hearts, Shared Burdens:

The Modern Purpose of MSS Chaplains

In the landscape of senior living, spiritual life is often envisioned through a traditional lens: quiet Sunday mornings, hymnals softly echoing down a hallway, and structured weekly Bible studies. But at MSS, ministry breaks out of the chapel doors. Guided by the organizational philosophy that **no matter our age, stage, or circumstance, we all thrive best in a loving community**, the campus chaplains are redefining what it means to shepherd an elder community. They are orchestrating moments of profound human connection, demonstrating Christ's love through presence, laughter, and an unwavering commitment to carrying life's burdens together.

The Everyday Ministry of Presence

For Jerry Mitchell, the chaplain at Trinity, the work is rooted in active engagement and availability.

"It typically involves just being available for our elders and our team for whatever is happening in life," Jerry shares. While traditional preaching is part of the calling, Jerry views his role as that of a servant leader whose office extends to where the people are.

To combat what the Eden Alternative calls the "plagues of the human spirit"— loneliness, boredom, and helplessness—Jerry infuses campus life with joy and flavor.

"The Lord gave me a Blackstone griddle, so I do a lot of cooking," he jokes. Through hosting men's coffee meetings, flipping pancakes at community breakfasts, and firing up hot dog cookouts, he cultivates spaces where elders feel seen and valued. Beyond the grill, Jerry has developed vital grief and loss programs, facilitating support groups where residents can openly share life's heavy transitions.

"We reflect Christ by letting them know they are not alone," Jerry explains. "Giving a smile, a side hug... letting them know there is hope."

This daily immersion is precisely what distinguishes senior living chaplaincy from leading a standard robed congregation. In a traditional church setting, a pastor operates from an office, preparing for big mid-week or Sunday events and visiting the sick when called. In senior living, the chaplain works among the flock.

"The biggest difference is that I'm with these people every single day," says Jerry. "You're engaged in life on a daily basis. You get to know them in a deeper way."

Deep Roots and Dynamic Growth

At Traceway, Chaplain Terri Armstrong embodies the power of longevity in ministry. Having served the campus for many years, her presence provides a stabilizing pillar of continuity. Over the decades, senior care has evolved, and with it, the nature of spiritual care. Terri's tenure reflects an adaptable ministry that has shifted from structured, campus-centric programming to a deeply personalized, holistic approach to emotional and spiritual wellness.

Her enduring relationships allow her to understand the unique life narratives of the elders she serves. This history creates an environment where trust is automatic and deep connection thrives, reinforcing the truth that we are structurally and spiritually stronger together.

Carrying the Shared Burden

At Aldersgate in Meridian, Chaplain Kenneth Owen views relationship-building as the bedrock of his pastoral care. "The biggest thing that I see in my years here... is about relationship building," Ken says. His role is not to replace an elder's local church home or pastor, but to expand their circle of care. He steps into the gaps, navigating hospital visits, coordinating with local congregations, and leading worship and Holy Communion.

The depth of this communal bond was tested when Ken and his wife, Sue, faced profound adversity. Three and a half years ago, Sue underwent a liver transplant—a harrowing journey followed by hip replacements for both Ken and Sue, and an open-heart surgery for Ken. During these trials, the ministerial dynamic beautifully reversed. The elders and employees of Aldersgate wrapped their chaplain in the very care he had poured out for years.

"They surrounded my wife and me with love, care, and concern because of the relationship that has been built," Ken reflects. Through phone calls, text messages, and endless prayers from across the state, the MSS family carried their shepherd. This reciprocal care proved that in an authentic Christian community, the burden is never carried by one alone.

Joy, Mentorship, and the Holy Spirit

If anyone proves that holy work can be lighthearted, it is Chuck Bursi at Wesley Meadows. Known across campus as a joyful prankster, Chuck infuses his ministry with humor, showing that an abundant life is one filled with laughter.

Chuck's path to the chaplaincy is a testament to the organic way community flourishes at MSS. He began his journey on campuses the maintenance director, fixing physical structures while quietly building spiritual bonds with the residents. Recognizing his pastoral heart, Chuck transitioned into the role of campus chaplain. Yet, even as his title changed, his servant's heart did not. He successfully mentored his replacements in the maintenance department while expanding his capacity to care for the elders he had already spent years serving.

A Vision for Abundant Care

Currently, the presence of these chaplains acts as a spiritual anchor, but the ultimate vision is to ensure this holistic care covers every single corner of the organization.

"It speaks volumes in the retirement community world when you have that chaplain's presence," Ken notes, emphasizing that it signals to families that spiritual well-being is a core priority.

To bring this vibrant spiritual life to every campus, MSS relies heavily on volunteer hearts. The professional chaplains cannot do it alone; it takes a village to ensure every elder experiences an abundant life.

Answer the Call to Connect

We invite you to become an active part of this beautiful, shared ministry. Whether you are called to lead a small-group Bible study, volunteer as a lay chaplain, or bring a youth or church group to share in fellowship and activities with elders, your presence matters. By sharing your time, you help build a community where love, compassion, and connection thrive.

Support

Together, we can ensure that every elder we serve continues to live a life full of purpose, community, and abundant love.

Contact your local MSS campus today to learn how you can get involved.

"The chaplain's role is to assist the elder's spiritual needs, and assist their own local church and pastor."

~ Kenneth Owen, Aldersgate Chaplain

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Join Us in This Prayer for the Heart of Mississippi

As we close this annual report, we invite you to become more than a reader. Become a prayer partner. Will you join your voice with ours? Will you share this prayer with your family, your Sunday school class, your small group, or your church? If you are a pastor, we invite you to consider praying this liturgy during worship on Grandparents Day, September 13, as together we lift up older adults across Mississippi and all who share in this sacred mission. Thousands of hearts. One prayer. One mission.

Lord, *open our eyes* to see every older adult as Your beloved child, created in Your image and deeply loved by You.

All: Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Go before Methodist Senior Services by preparing a way for those who will need us in the days ahead, leading us faithfully to serve older adults in the spirit of Christian love.

All: Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Gather every heart You have called to this mission—our residents, present and future, families, caregivers, team members, volunteers, donors, churches, and friends. Knit us together in Your love, that together we may become the hands and feet of Christ.

All: Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Help us recognize the needs of today and grant us faith to prepare for the needs of tomorrow. Give us wisdom to build, courage to act, and grace to trust that You will provide.

All: Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

As Mississippians grow older, let our compassion grow deeper. Where there seems to be no way, make a way. Where scarcity looms, may we look to You for daily provisions, Kingdom expectancy, and abundant life. Where you lead, help us follow.

All: Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

When an older adult searches for safety, dignity, hope, and love…May they discover that You have already gone before them, preparing a place, a home, a community for them.

All: Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lord, the work before us is greater than we can accomplish alone, yet You have never asked us to carry it alone.

All: Go before us…Prepare the way… Gather Your people. Stir generous hearts…. Strengthen willing hands…Give us the faith to follow wherever You lead.

Until we see that day, shape our hearts to see what You see, to love as You love, and to receive those You are already sending.

All: Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.