

# STEWPT

FAITH MEETING NEEDS IN OUR COMMUNITY



## FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER



### DIRECTOR'S CORNER

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke record the story of an expert in the law asking Jesus to choose “the greatest commandment.”

Jesus famously combines two mitzvahs from the Hebrew Scriptures into one great directive: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength; and love your neighbor as yourself.”

According to all three writers, the question was more of a *test for* Jesus than a true *inquiry of* Jesus, but I’m glad somebody put it out there. In the midst of many demands, it simplifies things, doesn’t it? We can ask ourselves: by doing *this*, am I loving God? By saying *that*, am I loving my neighbor? Jesus’s words can serve as North Star and compass for decisions both big and small.

I once heard someone liken these commandments to the inward and outward breath: loving God is breathing in; loving others is breathing out. We simply cannot live unless we do both. Each is essential to the other.

Believe it or not, this is how I think of Stewpot, too. We have two big missions, each of which is essential to the other. We help meet the basic needs of hurting

people (breathing out), and we provide opportunities for people to live out their faith through serving their neighbors (breathing in).

If we serve food, provide shelter, and help kids and teens after school *with only that end in mind*, we will become more and more of a service agency, and we will be more and more likely to treat people in need like projects.

But if we show up and/or give of our resources with love for neighbor in our hearts, we will become more and more of a community. A community that is full of life and breath and depth and soul. We see it again and again: Stewpot is made complete when volunteers give hands, hearts, gifts, and skills to the work of Stewpot.

My first job at Stewpot was as the Director of Volunteers. I know firsthand the difference volunteers can make. But I’ve also seen volunteers find *their* lives and *their* callings while caring for the people Stewpot serves.

But this is not a surprise. After all, by loving our neighbors, are we not also loving God, the One in whose image we are all made?

Two mitzvahs. One great place.

In It Together,

Rev. Jill Barnes Buckley  
Executive Director

# *Stewpot Business & Professional Leaders Luncheon*

On Thursday, September 28, 2023, Stewpot hosted its annual Business & Professional Leaders Luncheon at The Capital Club in Jackson. This year's speaker was Mr. Steve Jent, Executive Director of Sanderson Farms Championship and Century Club Charities. Stewpot is proud to be one of the top 5 beneficiaries of Century Club Charities.

In addition to hearing from Mr. Jent, guests of the luncheon learned about the current work Stewpot is doing to address critical needs in our community such as food insecurity, housing instability, and homelessness.

Many thanks to our 2023 Luncheon Hosts, Steve Jent, Capital Club staff, Rick and Ann Calhoon, Bernard Bridges, and Mike McRee.



## *2023 Luncheon Hosts*

Alan & Holly Lange  
Baptist Memorial Health Care  
Ben Turnage  
Bill & Kathleen Geary  
Bill & Myra Cook  
Bill & Sally Thompson  
Bryan and Jane Anna Barksdale  
Cal-Maine Foods  
Capitol Street, LLC  
Chad & Margery Van Meter  
Charles & Tara Cannada  
Chris & Holly Wiggs  
David Craddock  
Don & Holley Noblitt  
Dowell Family Charitable Fund  
E.B. & Judy Robinson  
Herrin-Gear Chevrolet  
His Way, Inc.  
James Hood Family Foundation  
Jason & Betsy Greener  
Jim & Pat Coggin  
Jonathan & Caroline Compretta  
John Palmer  
Kane & Betsy Ditto

Kelly & Jean Williams Family Fund  
Kim Hoover  
Kim Tullos  
Leon & Linda Anderson  
Lessa Philips  
Maison Weiss  
Max & Laurie Courtney  
Mike & Manesha Patel  
Mike Mcree  
Paula Calhoon  
The Paschal Foundation  
The Pruet Foundation  
Puckett Machinery  
Randy & Paula James  
Robbie Hughes  
T.H. Etheridge Trust  
Ted & Donna Orkin  
Telos Foundation, Inc.  
Tommy & Suzan Thames  
Upton Holdings, Inc.  
Van Devender Family Foundation  
Watkins & Eager PLLC  
Wirt Yerger, III  
Wise Carter Child & Caraway, P.A.

# FOOD PANTRY PILOT PROJECT



We have known for a long time that our Food Pantry helps families keep food on the table. But, reading Joseph Ewoodzie's *Getting Something to Eat in Jackson* helped us see with new eyes the struggle that some parents are facing when they can't make it to grocery stores, pantries or soup kitchens.

So, we decided to try a new thing: for the months of June, July, and August, we opened the Food Pantry on Thursdays from 4pm to 7pm to provide greater accessibility to people whose schedules don't allow them to come during "standard" pantry hours. And it proved to be helpful. We met 32 new, never-been-here-before shoppers this summer. The average household size increased from 2.1 to 3.2. And, in August we helped more people in one month than ever before.

One obvious result is that our pantry looks more bare on this side of summer than usual, which means we don't have much of a cushion as we head into the holiday season. Based on last year's numbers, we anticipate giving out about 1,200 holiday food baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

So we need your help! Can you rally your neighbors, work colleagues, Sunday School class, book club, sorority sisters, extended family, or tennis team to collect food for us? Your food gifts will go directly to families to enjoy meals at their own tables this holiday season. And if you want to schedule a workday to help us get ready, please reach out to Contyna McNealy at [cmcnealy@stewpot.org](mailto:cmcnealy@stewpot.org).



**VISIT [STEW.POT.ORG/NEEDEDITEMS](https://stewpot.org/neededitems)  
FOR A FULL LIST OF FOOD PANTRY NEEDS**

# Save the Date!

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 28th, at the Belhaven Town Center from 11am-4pm for the 2023 for the BankPlus Red Beans & BBQ Festival! The BankPlus Red Beans & BBQ Fest is a family-friendly festival where neighbors come to enjoy food prepared by local business, restaurants, and congregations in their community who are competing for the coveted title of Best Beans and Best BBQ in town.

This year, teams will not only be serving up delicious red beans and rice. Teams now have the option to participate in another category that we Mississippians know best: BARBECUE! Scan the QR code for information on tickets, cook teams, sponsorship, vendors, and more!



## HEARTWORKS

*"He Works Through Art"*

HeARTworks is an art ministry that meets each Tuesday morning and offers artistic opportunities to friends in our Stewpot community. The program started in 2007 and has been well-loved by our Stewpot community ever since. In 2020, HeARTworks was put on pause to ensure the safety of our Stewpot community during the height of COVID-19. As of August 2023, we are back creating art every Tuesday morning on the 2nd floor of Stewpot!



### **How to Support HeARTworks:**

HeARTworks needs volunteers each week to bring snacks (enough for 20 people), lead a craft, or to help set up and clean up supplies. You can also support HeARTworks by purchasing art! Visit [stewpot.org/heartworks](http://stewpot.org/heartworks) to view art available purchase or come visit the HeARTworks tent at Red Beans & BBQ Fest!

# Stewpot Legal Clinic Reopens

In mid-June, Stewpot welcomed back our Legal Clinic after its long COVID hiatus, thanks to the combined efforts of Linda Seeley, the Pro Bono Counsel at Butler Snow, and Kathleen O'Beirne, attorney and longtime friend of Stewpot.

We may be biased, but we think that, through the leadership of these two, the Legal Clinic is stronger than ever. Since mid-June, 17 volunteer lawyers have counseled 40 people, offering help with expungements, landlord/tenant disputes, divorce, power of attorney, immigration law, foreclosure, bankruptcy, SSDI benefits, and consumer protection.

Because Kathleen established communication with the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project and the Mission First Legal Aid office, the volunteer attorneys can refer quickly and with assurance of follow-up. The new process also allows the volunteer attorneys to flag urgent cases, so that legal assistance can be timely.

Many, many thanks to the attorneys who have staffed the clinic so far: representatives from Butler Snow, Bradley, Forman Watkins, Brunini, Balch, and Entergy. Would you or your firm like to volunteer? Contact Mary Thompson at [mthompson@stewpot.org](mailto:mthompson@stewpot.org) for more information.

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Sign up with your Plus Card and select a local organization you wish to support (Stewpot). Once you're enrolled, you'll earn rewards for your chosen organization every time you shop and use your Kroger Plus Card!

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## **BECOME A MONTHLY PARTNER TODAY!**

By signing up to be a monthly donor at [www.stewpot.org](http://www.stewpot.org), your contribution will immediately be used to help some of the most vulnerable people in and around the Metro area. When you subscribe as a Monthly Partner, you become part of helping us to guarantee:

**A hot meal or groceries for people who are hungry**

**Safe shelter for those who are homeless and vulnerable**

**A safe and nurturing environment for over 100 at-risk children and teenagers each year**

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