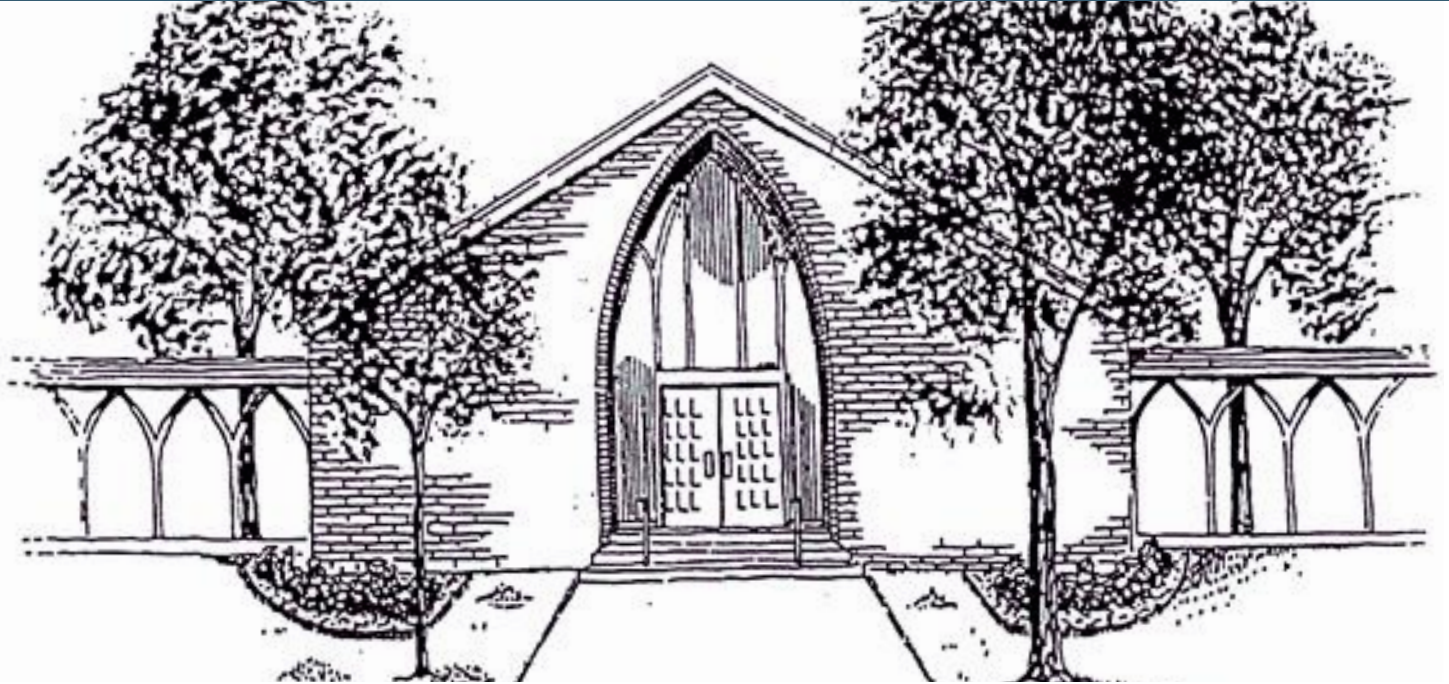


St. Bartholomew's

Episcopal Church

2701 Old Greenwood Road Fort Smith Arkansas



A Season of Gratitude and Growth at St. Bart's

Dear Friends,

We're delighted to share all that St. Bart's has been up to—moments of service, connection, and joy that reflect the heart of our parish. As you read through this newsletter, we hope you'll celebrate the many ways our community continues to grow and live out God's love in meaningful ways.

We encourage you to help us welcome new faces, reconnect with familiar ones, and extend invitations to those we haven't seen in a while. Every warm greeting and open door strengthens the sense of belonging that makes St. Bart's so special.

As we look ahead, we also ask you to consider how you can support the life of this parish—through your presence, your prayers, your gifts, and your willingness to serve. St. Bart's thrives because of the generosity and participation of its people.

We're grateful for each of you and hope this newsletter inspires you to stay connected and engaged.

With gratitude,

Rev. Stephanie Fox and Your St. Bart's Vestry

In this issue

Welcome Message

Articles from the Vestry

St. Bart's Outreach

Upcoming Events

Year in Review

St. Bart's Food Project

Pledge In Gathering

A New Chapter in Faith and Fellowship

A Message from Senior Warden, Scott Monroe

“It's a new dawn, it's a new day ... familiar lyrics that are particularly applicable now to St. Bartholomew's. Mother Stephanie Fox arrived this Advent season to lead our parish toward a bright future. Your fellow members who have met her are unanimously excited as she takes the helm of a church that is already thriving, and her gentleness, kindness and insight promise to guide us to even greater accomplishments.



We have endured for 13 months via the best efforts of your Vestry, our outreach groups, and, most importantly, every one of you. In faith, you have maintained and enhanced the parish as a place that welcomes everyone, and is devoted to service. Remember that you could have stood aside and let others pull the wagon through the challenges. Yet instead, you saw that, working together, we can do amazing things, even though our numbers are not large. You have consistently supported our community with a willingness to give all that you can to keep us vibrant.

Now we have a new rector, whom I know you will soon grow to love. Mother Stephanie is such a perfect fit for us that we must believe that God has given her to us as a precious gift. But she will not be able by herself to advance us to fulfill our destiny. She needs the same support of which you have proven yourselves so capable in this past year. We ask you to prayerfully and diligently uphold our mission by continuing to offer your gifts; financial support, to be sure, but equally important, active participation in both worship services and work that benefits all of our neighbors. If you will walk that path with me, the new dawn and new day promises to be brilliant beyond our imagination.

A Season of Service and a Summer of Joy

Vestry Member Ashley Morrison

Another year flies by. I'm reminded once again how quickly time moves when I sit down to gather all the love, energy, and triumphant accomplishments we've shared as a church. Last year at this time, I remember feeling unsure of our future as Fr. Michael accepted his call to Texas.

After all, he was the one who nudged (and lovingly pushed!) me to start a summer program—something I had no real experience doing. Yes, I babysat as a teenager... and yes, I once convinced a handful of neighborhood parents to let me host a one-week day camp. But nowhere in my wildest dreams did I imagine that, decades later, I'd be celebrating five years of leading a Summer Program so deeply cared for by this parish. I say this each year, but it remains true every time: thank you for sharing your building, your enthusiasm, your prayers, and your encouragement. But this year, being the first without the shoulder I had grown so used to leaning on, I wasn't sure how it would feel. And yet—it was a wonderful, smooth, joy-filled summer.

My fellow Vestry members were quick to show up whenever I had a concern or needed support. Ed Lovelace coordinated the Mobile Library to visit weekly so the children could check out books—such a gift. Church members stopped by with words of encouragement, offers of help, and the sweetest compliments about seeing little faces fill our halls again. An unrelated person, who learned of our program; brought by a horse from Manes for Miracles! And last, but certainly not least, Maranda—thank you for everything you do behind the scenes, for your creativity, your countless hours, your heart for outreach, and the quiet, steady ways you help pour life into this program. I am truly grateful.



A Season of Service and a Summer of Joy

Vestry Member Ashley Morrison

Summer 2025 welcomed 38 children, 10 teachers, and 5 high school volunteers, and together we Time Traveled Through the Ages! We journeyed through the prehistoric era, medieval times, the Wild West, the decades, and even into the future. We hosted a talent show, cooled off on the best water day ever, and—most importantly—built friendships and memories the kids will hold onto forever.

As many of you know, this year also marks my final year serving on the Vestry. It has been one of the greatest honors to serve this parish in that capacity—through transition, celebration, challenge, and renewal. I have grown so much from working alongside leaders who love this church deeply and faithfully. I step off the Vestry with immense gratitude, confidence in the direction St. Bart's is headed, and a full heart for the community we continue to build together.



Investing in our community

A letter from Ashley Morrison and Maranda Leeper

Saint Bartholomew's members and students in our summer program truly rose to the occasion this year, embodying the heart of our mission to serve and uplift our community. Through your generosity, compassion, and willingness to step forward, we have witnessed the very best of what a church family can do together.

This summer, our church and summer school students partnered with River Valley Education Solutions to provide backpacks and school supplies to local students in need. Led in part by the tireless compassion of Maranda Leeper—who continually pours her heart into numerous ministries—we packed 38 of the 45 donated backpacks and still had supplies to spare. In total, our members and students contributed over 900 individual school supply items—from pencils and erasers to markers and highlighters—a remarkable testament to your generosity and love for our neighbors.

That same spirit of service carried into our Thanksgiving outreach. We are especially grateful for the “elves” who spent time shopping and preparing Thanksgiving baskets for 35 families. These meal kits were delivered to our food pantry families and 31 veteran families, ensuring that homes across our community could gather around a warm and plentiful holiday meal. We are blessed beyond measure to have members who care so deeply about the wellbeing of others.

As we reflect on this season of gratitude, we are reminded of the many blessings within our own St. Bart's family. This is what churches are called to do, and we are honored to share in this work with you.

As Scripture reminds us:

“I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.” – Psalm 9:1

We pray each of you has a joyful holiday season and offer our warmest wishes for the year ahead. May God continue to bless this church, this community, and every act of love you share.

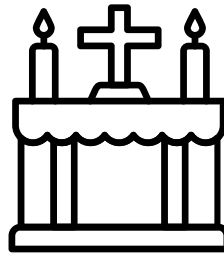


How to get involved at St. Bart's

The Altar Guild has continued to perform our duties, faithfully attending to the needs of all our supply celebrants.

We have been joined by one of our new confirmands, Anita Kirsh who is doing an amazing job! We can always use extra help, especially during busy times like Advent and Easter, so if you're looking for a way to give time and talents come see what we do!

Contact Lucy Hill - Lhill81376@aol.com

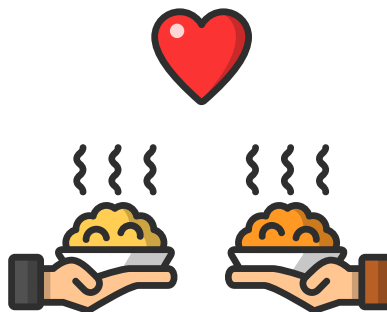


POTLUCKS/PARISH MEALS

Several times a year, we enjoy a potluck to get our church family together for great food and fellowship. We have purchased new silverware and some new serving pieces, like bowls and platters!

These will also help a lot with Parish meals like Thanksgiving and Easter, if it's one thing we know how to do is feed people with panache!

Contact Bella Dalzell - dalzellb@gmail.com



A Year In Review

A look at some of the events St. Bart's has hosted this past year

April 2025

Civil Air Patrol working in our field collecting data for NASA as part of a nation-wide mission.



April 2025

Easter Feast and Egg Hunt



May 2025
Mothers Day Brunch



June 2025
Angus' Memorial Service



June 2025
St. Bart's Host Boy Scout Troop 464



A Year In Review

A look at some of the events St. Bart's has hosted this past year

Summer 2025
St. Bart's Summer Program



June 2025
St. Bart's host Boy Scout
Troop 414



October 2025
St. Bart's Talent Show
Fundraiser



A Year In Review

A look at some of the events St. Bart's has hosted this past year

October 2025
Blessing of the Animals



November 2025
Thanksgiving Feast and Welcome for Rev. Stephanie



October 2025
Trunk or Treat



December 2025
Angel Tree
18 families with a total of
91 people, 59 children



St. Bart's The Food Pantry, More than Just a Meal

Article written by our Food Pantry Coordinator, Maranda Leeper

Our Food Pantry is so much more than a place to get a meal. Often, we meet individuals who come in seeking more than food—they're looking for a kind ear, a prayer, or simply someone who cares. It is a profound honor to be trusted with their stories and their needs, and it's a responsibility we hold close to our hearts.

We see people's spirits lift when they realize we're here not just to meet physical needs, but to affirm their worth as beloved children of God. No one is treated as "less than." Every person who walks through our doors holds value, and we strive to make sure they feel it.

Some of our clients have been visiting us for years now. We've watched children grow up, celebrated new babies, and rejoiced in the good things happening in their lives. We've also stood with families through cancer diagnoses and treatments, job losses, health challenges, and, this past year, we mourned the loss of a woman who had been a long-time off-and-on client. Relationships take root here. They grow, change, and deepen. Offering a bag of food is only a small part of what we do—there is so much more to it than that.

While I am able to come in during school holidays, the day-to-day operations are faithfully carried out by Betty, Joan, and Irene. I may be behind the scenes, but these ladies are the true heart and hands of our food pantry.

They are remarkable, and I cannot imagine doing this without their steady ministry week after week. I may not get to connect with every family the way I once did, but each chance I do have feels like a gift—just as it is a gift to watch these women interact with those we serve.

Our Food Pantry is about nourishing both body and soul, and every person who comes through our doors becomes part of our family.

Food pantry numbers

October 2024 - September 2025

Families: 521

People: 1837

Adults - 1157

Kids - 686

Veterans: 121

Total Bags of Food Given: 1511

Total Bags of Pet Food Given: 519

Total # of Pets: 808

Number of First time Families: 171

Hours Volunteered: 1262

Number of Volunteers: 4

How can St. Bart's parish members contribute to the success of the Food Pantry?

The most impactful way parishioners can help is through donations. Although food donations are appreciated, monetary contributions allow us to buy items directly from the food bank and address our specific needs at any given time.



2026 Pledge In Gathering

This year's St. Bart's Pledge In Gathering information is presented below. We hope you feel inspired and encouraged to contribute with your gifts after enjoying this newsletter, which highlights the impactful work made possible by the wonderful families who consider St. Bart's their parish.

Wishing you a blessed remainder of the year, a joyous holiday season, and good wishes for the upcoming new year.

With God's love and Blessings,

St. Bart's Vestry Members



NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

PLEASE CONTACT ME ABOUT:

- ☐ setting up payments from my checking account/credit card.
- ☐ including the church in my estate plans.
- ☐ making my gift through stocks or securities.



My promise for 2025-26: Acknowledging that we Tell out our Soul, I/we promise \$_____ for ministry.
I/we plan to fulfill this pledge ☐ weekly ☐ monthly ☐ quarterly ☐ annually



It takes more than money to operate ministry in our church.

With gratitude we accept the many gifts of our members as volunteers, servers, ambassadors, and friends in and outside our community.
Thank you for all you do!

☐ I/my family would like to volunteer:

☐ I/my family would like to learn more about these ministries or opportunities:

☐ I/my family have skills and interests we would like to share or teach to our church:

Vestry Members

Senior Warden- Scott Monroe
Co-Senior Warden - Lucy Hill
Junior Warden - Ed Lovelace
Clerk - Ashley Morrison

Michael Morton
Bella Dalzell
Stevi McCain

Reverend Stephanie Fox

Weekly Services

Saturday Chapel Service
4:00 pm

Sunday Church Service
8:00 am
10:30 am

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Upcoming Events

February 1st - Annual Meeting

