



HEARTS OF PALM CENTER

A Capital Campaign
of St. Mark's Episcopal Church

HOPC News & Notes, March 31, '24

It was in that moment that Jesus picked me up by the back of the neck and went, "I've got you. You're mine now." And everything changed.

Rev. Bonnie Q. Jones

See the HOPC video online



Donor Spotlight

The Rev. Bonnie Q. Jones has graciously donated to the Hearts of Palm Center. She agreed to delve deeper into her intertwined journey of philanthropy and the priesthood, shedding light on their interconnectedness.

Bonnie. Could you provide some history on becoming a priest?

I'm a car dealer turned priest...Not your typical transition! On my father's death in January 1985, I took over the management of his dealership and ran it for more than 40 years. My husband, raised Southern Baptist, was no longer a fan of church, we became CEO Christians.



One year, I attended a business prayer breakfast. A Colorado senator shared his journey to Christianity. Unlike the usual narratives of hitting rock bottom, his life was prosperous, yet he felt something was missing until he encountered Christ. His story resonated deeply with me. In the end he asked, if we were willing to say a prayer with him. It was in that moment that Jesus picked me up by the back of the neck and went, "I've got you. You're mine now," and everything changed.

Initially, I was caught between Baptist and Episcopal practices, I found clarity through a priest who transitioned from Baptist ministry to Episcopalian priesthood. After a transformative year marked by personal loss and spiritual growth, I felt a calling to priesthood, a realization that took five years to fully embrace. I went to seminary in Kentucky while still running my car dealership. After 9 years as an Associate Rector, I was asked by the Bishop to start a new church in Lexington, and this was the birth of St. Martha's Church.

There seems to be a strong correlation between your background starting St. Martha's and your passion for Hearts of Palm Center.

I chose the name St. Martha on the belief that it was a church created to serve others. We were to give ourselves away in community outreach and support. *(Cont'd on back)*

Rev. Jones Interview Cont'd

“Stewardship, to me, is about recognizing the skills and resources we've been given by God and using them to serve others. I believe we're vessels for God's work, entrusted with the responsibility to make a positive impact.”

Rev. Bonnie Q. Jones

But, after my husband had a serious heart attack, I retired from full-time ministry and began spending time in Florida with him. It was here at St. Mark's that I learned about the Hearts of Palm Center and felt drawn to support its mission. After being a supporter of Karen Cook's work with Hearts of Palm, supporting the new Center was a no brainer.

St. Martha's embodied service. I also have a foundation that prioritizes basic human needs like food, shelter, and clothing, aiming to empower individuals to improve their lives. The Hearts of Palm Center aligns perfectly with these values.

The timing of Jim and I working together at St. Mark's, and the development of Hearts of Palm Center, feels significant. This congregation has deep compassion for humanity and a desire to create meaningful change. Stewardship, to me, is about recognizing the skills and resources we've been given by God and using them to serve others. I believe we're vessels for God's work, entrusted with the responsibility to make a positive impact.

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