

Brothers in Christ,

During this time of Lent as we focus our mind and heart on growing closer to God, we should always remember that God is with us all. Read below a story from Harold Richardson, president of the Saint James United Methodist Men, as he shares his personal story of a simple but loving man.

Jim Chaffin

WHERE'S YOUR HEART?

Growing up in Portsmouth, Virginia there were always a few persons with mental disabilities living in the community. They would go about their day without any serious jeopardy to their welfare.

My first most intense, intimate encounter with a person with intellectual disabilities was with my brother-in-law, Buck Smith.

Well-known, as he walked throughout several neighborhoods, his cheerful disposition, and congenial personality endeared him quickly to the most hardened and reluctant neighbors.

Though he could not speak, he could communicate in a limited fashion with most people. I quickly learned that Buck, while limited in virtually every aspect of what was deemed, normal acceptable social behavior – was aware, attuned, and willing to work hard at whatever task he undertook. His passion for electronics amazed me, as he repaired radios, television sets, and transistor radios with ease, while exhibiting an uncanny affinity to “fix stuff”.

Today, Buck is 76, and is living comfortably in an assisted living facility. My weekly visits with him are punctuated by a comparison of wrist watches, watching the Price Is Right, and an affectionate hug.

Heart Havens represents an opportunity to allow persons, such as Buck, to live in a family setting while making personal choices, achieve their goals, and make contributions to their surrounding community. It's about helping people to thrive in a safe and nurturing environment; while promoting dignity and respect.

I am proud that my church, St James United Methodist Church in Hampton is an ardent and fervent supporter of Heart Havens. Our gifts to Heart Havens have been constant, intentional, and purposeful throughout St James' history

If you haven't done so already, commit to this cause underwritten by the York River United Methodist Men, with your gifts to the Morrison Heart Havens Home. Buck and I will always be grateful.

Harold Richardson, President
St James United Methodist Men