

# A chapel's future, brick by brick

By Holly Hayden

Jim Daly, St. James Chapel board president, gladly responded to questions about the chapel's history and recently launched fundraising efforts for a Commemorative Garden.

## **Who built the chapel, and when was it constructed?**

St. James Chapel is one of the earliest community amenities. St. James founder, Homer Wright, built the chapel to give residents and potential buyers a feeling of community and stability as they drove along the Green Mile. The chapel's exterior was completed in 1991, the interior subsequently followed, and the first service in the chapel was a Thanksgiving service on November 14, 1995. In 1997, Homer deeded the completed chapel to a newly created 501(c)(3) charitable corporation managed by a board of directors.

## **Does the St. James Plantation Property Owners' Association (POA) own the chapel?**

No, and it never did. As the developer of St. James, Homer owned it and then transferred it to a standalone corporation that does not receive funding or building maintenance from the POA or the Town of St. James.

## **Where does the funding come from to run and maintain the chapel?**

The chapel is funded by the residents of St. James, primarily the worshippers who attend services, and by generous people who care about this beautiful amenity. The chapel is now almost 30 years old and is showing signs of wear, thus the reason the board members approved a fundraising program to meet future needs.

## **Is this where the bricks come in?**

Yes, fundraising efforts will focus on creating an outdoor space where St. James residents may honor and celebrate family members, living and deceased, and neighbors, groups, events and special moments in their lives. The commemorative garden will be designed like a Celtic cross and lie between the chapel and the dog park under the current tree cover and landscaping. Purchasing an engraved brick for the garden will provide each donor with a physical connection and an anchor to the community for years to come.

## **I've heard something about pets, so will they be included?**

Market research for this project showed people wanted to honor and remember their pets. A separate section of the chapel's property, under a beautiful canopy of trees, will be devoted to a second commemorative garden for dogs, cats and other pets that bring joy, laughter, fond memories and love to St. James residents.

## **How much do the bricks cost, and how can people purchase them?**

The same company that has done a nice job supplying bricks for the St. James Veterans Memorial will also provide bricks for the chapel gardens. Supporters may purchase bricks for a minimum donation of \$100. Order forms are being distributed to resident mailboxes and are available at the chapel. Donors may also request a form by emailing [sjchapelbrickgarden@gmail.com](mailto:sjchapelbrickgarden@gmail.com).