



## Honoring 2024 Humanitarians Of The Year: Jim & Joanie Calhoun

For decades both Jim and Joanie Calhoun have had a heart for those suffering from injustice, racism, poverty, stigma, and marginalization. Jim repudiated the segregation and prejudice he experienced in his early years of life in Georgia. He embraced inclusiveness in ministry, serving as senior pastor with distinction at Park Hill UMC for many years.

Joanie has worked side-by-side with him and engaged in endless mission opportunities in the church to encourage work in many countries in the world. They especially focused on the country of Kenya, where they were instrumental in building volunteer networks of financial support to create Kenya Methodist University. They headed that organization of supporters for many years.

They helped initiate contacts that started the Center's Gift of HOPE program that now sustains 315 AIDS orphans. With the Center for Health and Hope, they have always been generous supporters of their time, talent, and treasure. Whether it was Jim sitting out in the sun of the golf course to check on hole-in-one competitors or Joanie faithfully selling silent auction items from left overs of the golf tournament, the two of them have sought to mobilize friends and funds to enhance the vision of the Center.

After one church AIDS Conference in Denver, it was discovered an undocumented Hispanic woman with HIV had attended the conference from Georgia and could easily be deported if she flew home. Jim and Joanie quietly volunteered at their own expense to drive her home to be with her children rather than risk deportation. Even that had risks, since at the time there were efforts to arrest people at the borders of Colorado.

Their lives epitomize anti-racism and anti-discrimination as they have quietly labored nationally and internationally to create a more humane and just world.