Baptist Calhoun dedicates new chapels and prayer cross

When Baptist Calhoun joined Baptist Memorial Health Care in fall 2016, they were not previously affiliated with a religious organization; therefore, they didn’t have any chapels on their campus.

When Collin Cheek, Baptist Calhoun’s CEO and administrator, arrived a few months later in early 2017, adding a chapel was at the top of his list.

“We are lucky to work for an organization that allows us to demonstrate our faith and follow a faith-based mission,” said Cheek.

Since Baptist Calhoun has several buildings on its campus, Cheek wanted to work a chapel into two of the buildings. After being granted funding from the Pastoral Care Endowment Fund, Cheek moved forward to make that happen.

The Pastoral Care Endowment Fund was founded in the early 1990s for this exact purpose, to help build Baptist hospital chapels, pay for new furniture, refurbish carpets and just general upkeep to continue to make the spaces welcoming.

“The Pastoral Care Endowment Fund fits neatly with the spiritual mission of our organization,” said Anthony Burdick, system director for pastoral care. “We consider chapels and prayer rooms an integral part of our hospitals. We want to provide a quiet place to pray and reflect, for patients, visitors and our team members.”

At the hospital, they used the old ambulance office, which has since moved to the rehab building, as space to build a chapel. They removed cabinets and added carpets, prayer kneelers and cross paintings on the wall along with scripture plaques. Carpenters on site handmade a wooden cross to hang in this chapel as well.

In the nursing home, they used an old office space to make a chapel, giving it similar touches as the hospital chapel. Chaplain Joe Young donated the brass cross from the chapel in Baptist North Mississippi’s old hospital chapel.

Lastly, Baptist Calhoun added a 3D prayer cross in their lobby with a slot for patients and visitors to submit written prayer requests.

All three spaces were dedicated on April 4, with an event involving the community and Baptist team members.

“There are a lot of decisions made in the hospital system, all of which are made at the center of patients and God,” said Cheek. “It is appropriate that we have chapels in which to reflect and pray.”