

NICHOLS HILLS

united methodist church



Dr. Trevor Smith

The Shepherds' Story

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ And

suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" -*Luke 2:8-14*

When we think about shepherds, we have a tendency to romanticize them, but let's be realistic about who they were. In the first century shepherds were on the lowest rung of the socio-economic ladder. The Egyptians considered shepherds dirty and unclean, so they wouldn't really have anything to do with them. They needed their work, but Egyptians didn't really associate with shepherds. Jews, however, were from a long line of shepherds. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David were all shepherds. But shepherds were associated with people who were less educated or were generally in poverty. You might own sheep, and that was one thing, but if you were actually tending the sheep at night, you were either the youngest child in the family, or you were a hired hand. So the shepherds were considered to be lower than most people. By the second and third centuries the Jewish Rabbis forbade shepherds to even testify in trials because they were considered to be just a little dishonest. They considered them untrustworthy. People just didn't like them. They liked the fact that they took care of the sheep, but they didn't care much for the shepherds.

In addition to that, they weren't the kind of people you invite to your Christmas party or to the hospital to hold your newborn baby—at least not straight from work because at work, they were arms deep in sheep: sheep's wool, giving birth to sheep, saving sheep from trouble. They tended to have a sheeepy aroma about them.

When I think of the shepherds, I think of people in society who are not really valued, good, hardworking people who are made to feel small and insignificant. Nobody really wants anything to do with them. On Sunday we will talk about just how amazing it is that the first people God invited to come and see the baby Jesus were the shepherds. God finds a way to bring Good News to people who need Good News. I hope you will plan to worship with us at 8:30 or 10:50 a.m.

I want to share with you that Lauren Matthes has resigned from her position as our Director of Children and Family Ministry for health reasons. Lauren's last Sunday will be on December 20. We have appreciated Lauren's contributions to our church and her ministry with our children this fall, and we want to wish her well in her future endeavors. Rosie Matthes has also resigned from her position working in our nursery. We will be opening both positions and hope to fill them as we begin a new year.

I am looking forward to celebrating Christmas with each of you. May God bless you this week.

Blessings,
Trevor

Ministry Calendar

Sunday, December 20

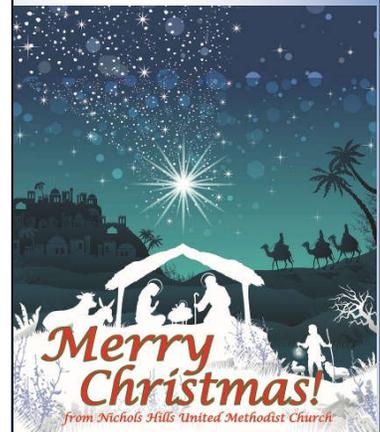
Worship at 8:30 a.m.
Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.
Worship at 10:50 a.m.

Thursday, December 24

Family Friendly Candlelight
Christmas Eve Services at 5:00
Candlelight Christmas Eve Service
at 7:00 p.m.

Friday, December 25

Merry Christmas! Church Offices
and The Learning Center Closed.



Nichols Hills U.M.C.
(405)842-1486
(405)843-1835 Fax
www.nicholshillsumc.org

The Learning Center:
Monday, Wednesday, Friday
9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Tuesday and Thursday
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
(405)842-5325

Ministry Opportunities

Hospitality Greeters

Do you like to smile and talk to people? Are you enthusiastic about our church? If so, please consider becoming one of the Sunday morning Greeters.

Greeters provide a welcoming smile to people walking in the door for our Sunday worship services. They encourage visitors to get involved in a Sunday School Class, direct people to the restrooms or to the children's nursery area as necessary.

You can sign up to serve for 20 minutes on Sunday morning at one of three time slots: 8:15 to 8:35, 9:30 to 9:50, or 10:35 to 10:55. If this seems like an opportunity for you, please see Alfred Walker for more details.

Coffee Hosts

Coffee hosts provide 8-9 dozen cookies. At the close of the 10:50 Service, the host(s) stand by the cookie table in the Narthex and greet people. We have openings for coffee hosts for **December 27 and all of January**. To serve, sign-up on the bulletin board outside the office.

Altar Guild

Serving in Altar Guild this month are: Becky Buchanan, Mary Ann Carmichael, Carol Magness, Ellie Roberts, Marty Smith, Sally Stringer, Kathy Walker, and Jean Warner

Cares and Concerns

Epworth Villa

Bill and Katie Alexander,
Maxine Asch, Joanne Crosby,
and Bonnie Miller

Town Village

Joanna Garnett

The Fountains at Canterbury

Barney and Virginia Brown
Anita Dahlgren

At Home

Roger Etling, Ann and Tom Flesher,
Jess and Bette Harris,
Beth & Dale Jordan, Frances Lewis,
Joye McLain David Mueller,
Maxine Permenter, and Gene Wheeler

Transportation Ministry

Would you like to bring joy to someone by bringing them to church? If you would like to join our transportation ministry contact the church at 405-842-1486. This may just be one of the easiest ways for you to serve in our church and make a Christian difference.

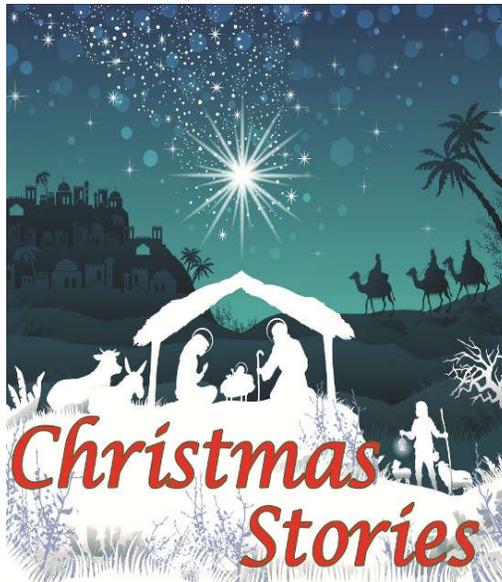
Christmas Eve CANDLELIGHT SERVICES



December 24, 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

This Christmas Eve, connect to the Christmas story like never before. Journey to **the manger** to celebrate the joy and hope that surrounds the miracle of Christmas. It's a chance to hear beautiful Christmas music and old familiar carols with family, friends, and neighbors. Listen as the cherished Christmas Story of Jesus' birth comes alive through music and scripture in the warm glow of candlelight. We will conclude our service with our cherished tradition of passing the lighted candles as we sing *Silent Night*. It's a Christmas tradition you will not want to miss!

Thursday, December 24 at 5:00 p.m. (family-friendly) and 7:00 p.m.
Childcare is available on Christmas Eve.



Christmas Stories

Christmas Stories

In the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season it's sometimes hard to find Christ in Christmas. Join us each Sunday during Advent as we explore the stories of those who sought Christ on that very first Christmas - the Wise Men, the Shepherds, even the murderous King Herod. We'll learn how their Christmas stories help us to find Christ in Christmas.

Pause in the midst of your Christmas preparations to prepare your heart through worship. Each Sunday we'll share familiar carols, scriptures, and messages that offer encouragement and hope as we truly seek to worship Christ.

December 20 *The Shepherds' Story*
December 24 *Mary and Joseph's Story*

Christmas Cards



Lauren Matthes

We had a wonderful opportunity to share the light of Christ with others this month through the Missions Team at Nichols Hills U.M.C. Stephanie Henry led the way with the simple act of a note card. We took note cards and decorated them in our Children's Ministry. We filled them with love and encouraging words to help support the teachers of John Marshall High School and local care facilities. What a great way to express God's love to others in this season and throughout the year! You already know how Christmas cards fill our hearts with so much love. Take some time to make some cards of encouragement for those around you. We all could use the Word of God to help encourage each other! Thank you, Stephanie, for showing our children how powerful their encouragement can be for others! You are a blessing.

-Lauren

We Are The Church

Our church makes a Christian difference through the many wonderful people in our congregation and staff. This week, Ed and Sally Stringer share with us about their life and how Nichols Hills U.M.C. has blessed them.

Ed and Sally were married at Nichols Hills U.M.C. on January 3, 1970, Rev. Richard Gibbens officiating. They met while they were both working in Houston. After being moved around the country for 8 1/2 years, they settled in Oklahoma City and returned to N.H.U.M.C.

Ed grew up in the suburbs of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He attended the Haverford Boys School, played football at the University of North Carolina (where he was All-ACC and an Academic All-American), and received his MBA from Harvard Business school. He was very involved with Heritage Hall School during the 15 years their daughters were attending. He served many years on the Board of Trustees, chairing numerous committees. He co-chaired the Development Committee during the years the school was raising funds to build the Upper School.

In the past, Ed has served on the Administrative Board of N.H.U.M.C., chaired the Evangelism Committee, was president of their Sunday school class and, along with Sally, chaired the Family Life Committee.

Sally grew up in Oklahoma City, attending Harding High School, OU, and Trinity University (San Antonio.) She has served the community in numerous volunteer capacities and has chaired a number of fundraising events. She is a sustaining member of the Jr. League.

Sally needle pointed one of the panels of the *Women at the Tomb* tapestry in 1996 and also worked on a panel of the *Jesus and the Children* project last year. She has taught children's Sunday school, volunteered with Vacation Bible School for many years, and was a mentor for the Nichols Hills U.M.C. B.I.G. Kids program. She is currently serving on the Staff Parish Relations Committee and is a member of the Altar Guild.

The Stringers have two daughters and eight grandchildren. Sarah Butler (Doug) and her family - Luke, Thad, Beau and Blythe- attend NHUMC where Sarah has been very active. Kate Koetting (Jake) and her family - Jeb, Tom, Whit and Gus -live in Leawood (Kansas City), Kansa

Ed and Sally's married life began at N.H.U.M.C. nearly 46 years ago. It has been their church home for the past 37+ years and is where their daughters grew up. They can't imagine worshipping anywhere else. We are happy to have Ed and Sally in our Nichols Hills U.M.C. family!



Thank You

A huge thank you to those who participated in the Angel Tree mission this year. ChildShare is so very grateful for our congregation's generosity. We want you to know that you have touched the hearts of so many foster children and their caregivers.

Tidbits from The Learning Center

This week we have Christmas parties, a Christmas music program, a Staff Pot Luck Brunch, Ugly Sweater Day, and whew, the list goes on. Needless to say we are busy and active with the holiday season. It is such a joy to watch our children make Christmas ornaments, paint with candy canes, create gingerbread men, and learn about their families' traditions. Gifts have been made to our reading areas with more Christian themed stories that are child centered. Biblical toys, such as Jonah and the whale, nativity scenes and other important biblical characters, have also been added to our classrooms. A huge thank you goes out to Lauren Matthes and Stephanie Henry for their many contributions to our Christian curriculum. Most importantly, we want to remember the reason for this season. Jesus' birth gives us all a time to pause, give thanks to God for his gift to us, and celebrate the love of our Savior with one another. You are all welcome to join us for our Christmas Sing at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 16, and our Christmas parties at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 17. T.L.C. will be closed from December 21 to January 3. Our next session is a packed one with over ninety children. It's going to be a wonderful new year!

Serving In Ministry December 13

The poinsettias are given by the Altar Guild in honor of the church staff.

The coffee hosts are the Musser and Fraley families.

Job Openings

Nichols Hills United Methodist Church is currently seeking to fill the following positions:

Director of Children's Ministry to lead a dynamic children's ministry. Part-time.

Nursery Attendant to minister to small children. Sundays and Wednesdays. Part-time.

Childcare Teacher for The Learning Center to minister to small children. 35 hours weekly.

For more information, please contact Dr. Trevor Smith at 405-842-1486, or visit our website at www.nicholshillsumc.org.

Send resumes to revtrevor@gmail.com or 1212 Bedford Drive, Nichols Hills, OK 73116.

Birthdays

- 12/18 Stephanie Derricott
Casey Hill, III
Kay Musser
- 12/20 Mark McLain
- 12/21 Libby Blankenship
- 12/22 Jean Ann Robison
- 12/25 Carol Solomon
- 12/29 Lida Elkins
Joye McLain
Taylor McLain
- 12/30 Abe Malone
- 12/31 Don Wilson
- 01/01 Lisa Franklin
Lauren Harrah
- 01/03 Michael Dean



Nichols Hills United Methodist Church
1212 Bedford Drive
Oklahoma City, Ok. 73116

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Sunday School Classes - Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

The Brew Class: *Meets in the Room 131* - The Brew will talk about the shepherds who came to visit Jesus the night he was born in Bethlehem. Teachers: Tim and Christie Baker. Tim (405) 209-5467 and Christie (405) 922-5154

KIVA Class: *Meets in the Parlor* - Linda Rosser McDaniel will present *Christmas in Oklahoma*. Leaders: Allen and Sherron Evans.

Reveille Class: *Meets in the Library* - Do you like to see how your faith impacts your everyday life? Join us for a discussion of how the Bible speaks to the current events in our lives. Teacher: Tom Fraley

Open Circle Class: *Meets in the Archives Room* - Our lesson will feature Christian customs on the use of "candles" at Christmas plus some of the Jewish customs. Teacher: John Marshall.

Roundtable Class: *Meets in Room 124* - Sunday the Roundtable Class is looking at Exodus 13:13-15 and Luke 2:22-32. These scriptures talk about the dedication of the firstborn. Our lesson celebrates the climax of God's long plan of salvation in the birth of Jesus. While we may have trouble with the Exodus understanding, Luke helps us understand and apply the scripture to our lives. Join us as Dr. Jerry Perryman leads our discussion. Teacher: Dr. Jerry Perryman.

Youth Class: *Meets in the Youth Basement* - Join us for fun, fellowship, and a lesson that will bring you closer to God. Student Pastor: Rev. Matt Patrick.

Children's Class: *Meets in the Children's Area*. - Join us for a child-friendly lesson, snacks, and crafts as we learn about the Christmas Story together. Director: Lauren Matthes.

Dr. Trevor Smith, Senior Pastor

Rev. Matt Patrick, Student Pastor

Michael Wylder, Director of Church Music

Lauren Matthes, Director of Children and Family Ministry

Delaney Sheffield, Administrative Assistant

Dr. Antone Godding, Organist

Kathy Smith, Bookkeeper/Treasurer

Louise Glass, Financial Secretary

Denise Buthion, Director of The Learning Center

Michael Hall, Maintenance/Custodian

Alfred Walker, Sunday Host

Randall Blair, Sunday Host