

NICHOLS HILLS

united methodist church



Dr. Trevor Smith

Christmas Joy

³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." -Luke 1:39-45

While Zechariah and Elizabeth had prayed for years for God to bless them with a child, fourteen year old Mary was not hoping to get pregnant during her year long engagement to Joseph. So, when the angel Gabriel came to Mary and told her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you," ²⁹ she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. When Gabriel told her that she had found favor with God and would get pregnant with a son named Jesus who would be called Son of the Most High, she asked Gabriel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" So, Gabriel told her that the Holy Spirit would overshadow her and her son would be called Son of God. Gabriel also told her that Elizabeth was pregnant in her old age, *for nothing will be impossible with God.* And Mary said, "Yes," to God's plan for her life.

It was a lot for a young woman to ponder, so Mary made a nine day journey to visit Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's voice, the child in her womb leaped for joy, signaling to Elizabeth that God was at work in Mary's life. It was Elizabeth who helped Mary find joy in this unique Christmas calling to be the *Theotokos, the God Bearer or the Mother of God.* She told Mary, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." It is never easy to live out God's call on your life. It will take you to places you never thought you would go and put you in situations in which you never thought you would be. Mary had never dreamed of becoming pregnant during her engagement, but this was God's plan for her life and God's plan to save the world. Wise, old Elizabeth saw that Mary was blessed. She was blessed to be chosen and called by God. This calling would also bring her great joy, and when Mary understood this, she sang. She sang with joy of all that God had done for her. This Christmas we could use some joy in our lives. Join us in person or online for worship as we find Christmas joy together.

I want to say, "Thank you," for the generous way so many of you have committed to support our church's ministry in the coming year. As of today, 45 families have pledged a total of \$282,808 for ministry in 2021. If you have not filled out an Estimate of Giving Card and returned it to the church, I would encourage you to take the time to do this and help us complete our annual stewardship campaign. We would be grateful to receive any remaining Estimate of Giving Cards for 2021. Thank you so much for your generosity.

Have a great week, and I will see you on Sunday.

Blessings,
Trevor

Ministry Calendar

Sunday, December 6

In Person and Online Worship Services at 8:30 and 10:50 a.m.
Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.
What Christmas Is All About
Sunday School Class at 9:45 a.m.
Girl Scouts at 1:30 p.m.

Monday, December 7

Women's Alcoholics Anonymous Group at 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 9

Praise Band Rehearsal at 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 13

In Person and Online Worship Services at 8:30 and 10:50 a.m.
Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.
Christmas Pageant at 9:45 a.m.
Girl Scouts at 1:30 p.m.

Monday, December 14

Finance Committee at 5:30 p.m.
Women's Alcoholics Anonymous Group at 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 16

Praise Band Rehearsal at 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 20

In Person and Online Worship Services at 8:30 and 10:50 a.m.
Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.
What Christmas Is All About
Sunday School Class at 9:45 a.m.

December 23 through January 3

The Learning Center Closed

Thursday, December 24

Candlelight Christmas Eve Services at 3:00, 4:30, 6:00 p.m.
Reserve Your Seats at nicholshillsumc.org.

Friday, December 25

Church Office Closed

Nichols Hills U.M.C.

(405)842-1486

(405)843-1835 Fax

www.nicholshillsumc.org



Chancel Flowers

December 6: The chancel flowers are given by Clark and Kay Musser in celebration of the marriage of Hunter and Courtney Fountain.

December 13: The chancel flowers are given by Carla Hill in memory of Layton (Casey) J. Hill, III.

Mission Candle

December 6: The mission candle is available.

December 13: The mission candle is available.

Acolytes

December 6: Gabriel Ireland, Avery Smith, and Lucy Ann Sylvester

December 13: Gabriel Ireland, Charlotte Smith, Louis Fraley, And Regan Miller.

Tithes and Offerings

Your gifts and tithes make a Christian difference and help us share the ministry of Jesus Christ with people in our church and in our community.

Checks may be mailed to
1212 Bedford Drive,
Nichols Hills, OK 73116.

To make an online donation,
visit www.nicholshillsumc.org.

To set up an electronic funds transfer
contact the Church Office.

Thank you for your generosity and
faithfulness.

Worship Online

Join us online for worship! You can view our livestream at 8:30 or 10:50 a.m. on Sundays on our Facebook page, [facebook.com/nicholshillsumc](https://www.facebook.com/nicholshillsumc). You can also view the worship service throughout the week. Please send us a message on Facebook to let us know you are participating. We will also post the Sermon Notes and the Prayer and Study Guide on Facebook as well as our website, www.nicholshillsumc.org.

Christmastime Is Here

Christmastime is here. It's the most wonderful time of the year... a time to remember that God loves us so much that he sent his only Son to live with us, to save us from our sins, and offer us the peace that passes all understanding. This Advent, join us online or in person for worship as we sing your favorite Christmas carols, offer hope and encouragement, and talk about what Christmas is all about.



December 6 *Christmas Joy*

December 13 *Prepare the Way of the Lord*

December 20 *Home for the Holidays*

December 24 *What Christmas Is All About*

December 27 *A Christmas Promise*

January 3 *The Christmas King*

What Christmas Is All About

Join our Youth and Adult Sunday School classes in the Fellowship Hall as we gather at 9:45 a.m. on Sundays to take a closer look at some of your favorite Christmas movies to see what they teach us about the real meaning of Christmas and how the babe born in Bethlehem can change our hearts and give us joy.

Our **Children's Christmas Pageant** will be part of our time together on Sunday, December 13 at 9:45 a.m.



Tausha
Davison-Beverly
Children's
Ministry Director

Children's Ministry

This year's Christmas pageant, "*The New Star*", will be held on Sunday, December 13th at 9:45 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. If you have a child who would like to participate, please contact me at 405-842-1486. Practices for this year's play will be on Sunday mornings during Sunday School, and during our 10:50 worship service. We look forward to seeing you and your family in attendance.

Blessings,
Tausha

Christmas Blessings

At Christmas we all want to give a gift that will bless children who may not experience the joy of Christmas. During Advent you can give a gift to one of our missional ministries that will bless children in our city and around the world.

- Give \$45 to sponsor one of our Compassion International children for one month.
- Give any amount to purchase items for our toiletry kits for John Marshall High School.
- Give \$150 or any part of this amount to help purchase food baskets or provide for emergency needs for families of John Marshall High School and Nichols Hills Elementary School students.

Person to be honored or remembered: _____

Your name: _____

Relationship of the person to you: _____

Amount of Gift: _____

Candlelight Christmas Eve

This Christmas Eve, journey to **the manger** to celebrate the joy and hope that surrounds the miracle of Christmas.

Listen as the cherished Christmas Story of Jesus' birth comes to life through music and scripture in the warm glow of candlelight.

Experience our cherished tradition of passing the lighted candles as we sing *Silent Night*.

It's a Christmas tradition you will not want to miss!

Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship Services
Thursday, December 24 at 3:00, 4:30, and 6:00 p.m.

Seating is limited to allow for social distancing.
Reserve your seats online at www.nicholshillsumc.org
Childcare is available on Christmas Eve.



End of Year Giving

2020 Donation Deadlines

As the end of the year approaches, we wanted to share some information with you about end of year giving. If you have questions, please contact Louise Glass, our Financial Secretary, in the church office. Thanks for your generosity.

Mail: Mailed donations must have a postmark date no later than December 31st on the envelope to qualify as a 2020 donation.

Electronic: On-line donations made via the church website must be entered on or before December 31st to qualify as a 2020 donation.

In Person: Donations delivered to the church office must be received by 4:00 p.m. on December 31st.



Ending the Year Well



Get a head start on your year-end tax planning.

✓ **IRA Charitable Rollover**

Congress made permanent the law that allows people age 70½ or older who own an IRA to make cash gifts directly from their IRA to charity. For many people, this is the best tax-wise way to give. An IRA rollover gift will not be included in your taxable income and will qualify for your required minimum distribution.

✓ **Outright Gift of an Asset**

If you wish to make a gift to support your church this year, but are concerned about preserving your cash resources, consider a gift of an appreciated asset. A gift of securities, business interests or real estate can provide you with significant income and capital gains tax savings, often exceeding the benefits of a cash gift.

✓ **Donor Advised Fund (DAF)**

If you are looking for an end-of-year deduction but want more time to make thoughtful giving decisions, consider a donor advised fund (DAF). The Foundation can use your tax deductible gift to establish a DAF in your name. You can make grants from your DAF now and in the future to support the work of your church or chosen ministry.

✓ **Zero-Tax Gift and Sale**

If you are planning to sell an asset like securities, real estate or a business, before you sell, consider a "zero-tax" charitable gift and sale. By making a gift of part of the asset before the sale, you can use a tax-saving charitable deduction to significantly lower or eliminate the capital gains tax on the sale.



Helping You Invest in Lasting Good

THE OKLAHOMA UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION
4201 N CLASSEN BOULEVARD, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73118
WWW.OKUMF.ORG • 800-259-6863 • 405-525-6863

This information is not intended as tax, legal or financial advice. Gift results may vary. Consult your personal financial advisor for information specific to your situation.

Consider these worthwhile strategies before the year's end.

Selling securities, real estate or a business this year?

Consider planning strategies to avoid capital gains tax

Age 70½ or older?

Check on your IRA required minimum distribution

Own an IRA and/or 401(k)?

Maximize your deductible contributions

Expect to be in a higher tax bracket?

Talk to your tax advisor for solutions to manage taxes

Expect to be in a lower tax bracket or can control income?

Shift income to this year

Have investment losers?

Sell to offset winners and lower your capital gains tax

Extra medical expenses?

Establish a health savings account (HSA)

Have state taxes, property taxes, medical bills?

Accelerate deductible expenses

May We Help?

If you would like further information, please contact us. We can help you create a plan that meets your needs and goals.

The names and images shown here are representative of typical donors and may or may not be actual donors to the organization. Under federal rules your benefits may be different from this example. Please contact us for your specific benefits.

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Making Change



Less Is More



Stress Is Bad



Giving Is Good



Tomorrow Matters

Nichols Hills United Methodist Church

Estimate of Giving Card

In response to God's love and as a concrete expression of my faith in Christ and my commitment to Christ's church, I plan to **Take One Step Up** in my giving.

_____ **Step Up Beyond Tithing**

My desire is to do more than the Biblical standard.

_____ **Step Up To Tithing**

I will give one tenth of my income to God's work.

_____ **Step Up Toward Tithing**

I am not yet a tither, but I will move toward that goal.

My Commitment to the General Fund is

\$ _____ **Weekly for 52 weeks**

\$ _____ **Monthly for 12 months**

\$ _____ **Quarterly**

\$ _____ **Annually**

My Total Commitment for 2021: \$ _____

_____ This represents an increase over last year.

_____ I would like to learn about electronic giving.

_____ I would like information on how to include Nichols Hills UMC in my will and estate plans.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Tidbits from The Learning Center



Denise Buthion,
T.L.C. Director

Talking to your children about the Coronavirus is very important. They worry more when they're not informed about what's happening. In an age appropriate way we need to welcome their questions. Whatever they ask we must take seriously. We need not express our own fears but let them know that we will care for them. Ask them what they know about the virus to help guide your conversation. Asking open-ended questions will provide you with more information than simply asking, "Are you worried?" Over the holidays our traditions may be different than in years

past. Explain the goal of the changes whether it is to keep everyone safe and healthy or there is not enough time to do some of the things you might typically do. Most children are very intuitive about what is going on around them. Doing your best to answer their questions will help you build trust with your child. TLC teachers use these tips with the children in their classrooms. We hope this helps your family, too.

-Denise

Birthdays

- 12/04 Ronald McLeod
- 12/06 Jackie Hall
- 12/06 Nancy Rowntree
- 12/07 Charlotte Brown
- 12/07 Reid Robison
- 12/08 Maddy Eales
- 12/09 Larkin Warner
- 12/09 Phil Withrow
- 12/10 Denise Buthion
- 12/11 Kelsey Lyle
- 12/12 Joe McClendon
- 12/12 Katie McNeill
- 12/14 Stephen Heine
- 12/15 Tom McLain
- 12/16 Gary Vaughn
- 12/18 Stephanie Derricott
- 12/18 Kay Musser
- 12/20 Mark McLain
- 12/21 Libby Blankenship
- 12/22 Jean Ann Robison
- 12/25 Carol Solomon
- 12/29 Lida Elkins
- 12/29 Casey Harrah
- 12/29 Taylor McLain
- 12/30 Abe Malone
- 12/31 Don Wilson

Cares and Concerns

Town Village

Bette Harris

The Fountains at Canterbury

Anita Dahlgren

StoneCreek

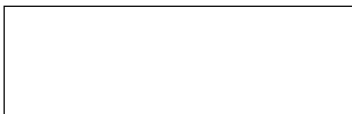
Ray and Lynn Greene

At Home

Roger Etling, Frances Lewis,
David Mueller

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 Room 131* - Join us for our All Church Sunday School class, "What Christmas Is All About", in the Fellowship Hall.

KIVA Class: *Meets in the Parlor* - Join us for our All Church Sunday School class, "What Christmas Is All About", in the Fellowship Hall.

Reveille Class: *Meets in the Library* - Join us for our All Church Sunday School class, "What Christmas Is All About", in the Fellowship Hall.

Open Circle Class: *Meets in the Archives Room* - Join us for our All Church Sunday School class, "What Christmas Is All About", in the Fellowship Hall.

Youth Class: *Meets in the Youth Basement* - Join us for our All Church Sunday School class, "What Christmas Is All About", in the Fellowship Hall.

First Graders through Fifth Graders: *Meets in Room 124.* Join us for our All Church Sunday School class, "What Christmas Is All About", in the Fellowship Hall.

Children's Class: *Meets in the Children's Area.* - Join us for our All Church Sunday School class, "What Christmas Is All About", in the Fellowship Hall.

Dr. Trevor Smith, Senior Pastor

Michael Wylder, Director of Church Music

Delaney Sheffield, Director of Communications

Tausha Davison-Beverly, Director of Children and Family Ministry

Hunter Patman Fountain, Director of Youth Ministry

Dr. Antone Godding, Organist

Kathy Smith, Treasurer

Louise Glass, Financial Secretary

Denise Buthion, Director of The Learning Center

Brandon Price, Custodian

Alfred Walker, Sunday Host

Jeremy Gossett, Audio Visual Team Leader

Dustin Davis, Sunday Host and Audio Visual Tech

John Nacher III, Audio Visual Tech

Julie Keller, Nursery Attendant

Patricia Harris, Nursery Attendant