



**Sunday, December 24th**  
**Combined Worship Schedule**  
**9am Sunday School**  
**10:30am Worship**  
**6pm Candlelight Service**

# O COME LET US ADORE HIM CHRIST THE LORD

**Christmas@NorthHaven**



**Office Hours:**  
**Monday - Thursday**  
**8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

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Return Service Requested

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**NorthHaven**




## pastor's perspective



"A Few of My Favorite Things"

As Advent and my final month as Senior Pastor of NorthHaven begin this week, my mind continues to drift back to the many precious memories over the last eleven years. It was during Advent 2006 when NorthHaven called me as their new pastor. A few months later, Missy, Cole, Tanner, and I moved all our worldly goods to our new home in Norman, OK. Little did we know during that first Advent season, we were not only preparing for the arrival of the Christ child but we were preparing for over a decade of meaningful ministry, remarkable experiences, and meeting life-long friends.

Therefore, it seems appropriate that I complete my tenure at NorthHaven with a sermon series called "A Few of My Favorite Things." Of course, there were way too many memories to include in such a series, but I will attempt to utilize the plethora of treasures we have accumulated at NorthHaven. Each and every summer, we have experienced a new sermon series with a creative theme prompting us to think, act, and smile. In my final series, I hope to achieve the exact same responses.



*NorthHaven: An inclusive family of Christ followers, inspiring, challenging and equipping each other to participate in God's great story.*

Beginning on Sunday, December 3, the sermon for that day will be "A Motown Christmas." We will celebrate the coming of the Christ child through this inspirational musical genre, as well as come to an understanding why we still need the Prince of Peace in our world. On December 10, the sermon will be "A Disney Christmas." This sermon will address the importance of preparing for and experiencing this Advent season. December 17 will be our special musical Sunday, as the Choir leads the Crossings service and a worship team leads the Intersect service. Then, on Christmas Eve morning, I will conclude the series with "A Broadway Christmas." We will celebrate the arrival of Christmas as we look at the theological purpose behind all the characters within this divine narrative.

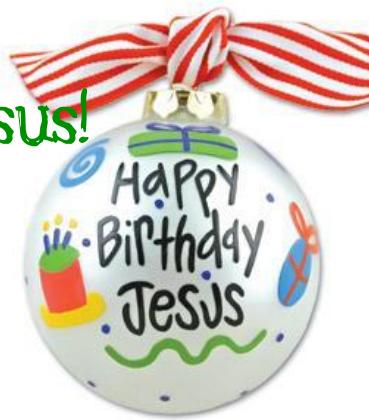
Finally, on Christmas Eve night, in my last worship service as Senior Pastor of NorthHaven Church, we will once again experience the miracle of Christmas. Gathering to remember the reason behind the Lord's birth, we will reflect upon the elements of the Lord's Supper. The children and I will read the story that has brought us all together. And in the end, Missy, the boys, and I will light the Christ candle once last time. As my time as pastor draws to a close and my mind fills with such great memories, I will make certain to absorb every moment of this final month. It has been an honor and privilege to lead this incredible congregation. Thank you for all the memories, I promise to hold each one of them in my heart.

Merry Christmas!

Mitch

## Children's Corner

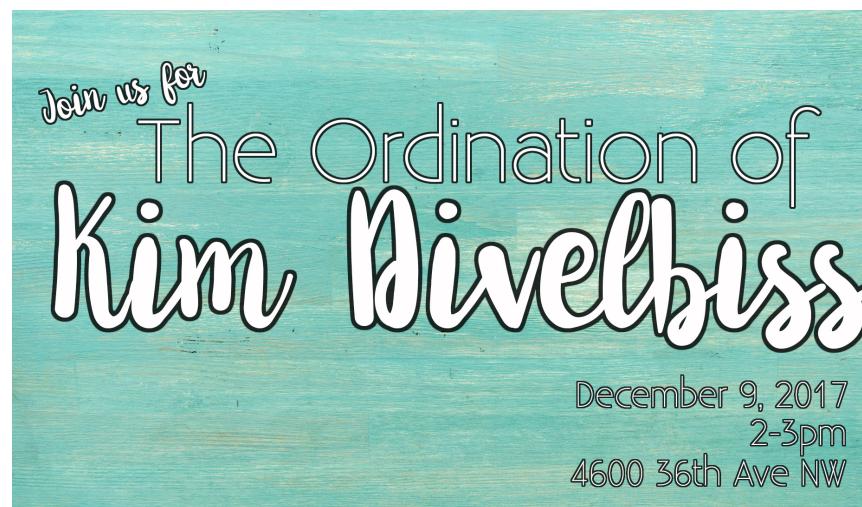
It's a birthday party for Jesus!  
 Sunday, December 24th  
 during the Gathering  
 @ 10:00 am.



## KidsHaven Wish List:

Please take donated items to the KidsHaven Welcome Desk

- ◆ large box of Ziploc gallon size bags
- ◆ large box of Ziploc quart size bags
- ◆ large box of Ziploc sandwich size bags
- ◆ 8x10 heat activated laminating sheets
- ◆ bottles of glue
- ◆ containers of glitter
- ◆ individual snacks
- ◆ thin tip markers



### Who do you know?

By Gala Van Eaton

### A Study of Freedom

The Book of Galatians

Beginning January 2018 for 12 weeks

The only requirement: That you plan ahead to come.

You choose:

**Monday Nights, January 8-March 26, 6:30-8:00pm**

**OR**

**Thursday Mornings, January 11-March 29, 9:30-11:00am**

Do you sometimes feel trapped by life's circumstances?

- with never enough time?
- with never enough money?
- in a dead-end job?
- by thoughts that consume you?
- with no choice?
- in relationships that aren't working?
- in a past of hurt, or abuse, or exposure?

Christ said, "...if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:32) If that's true, why don't we seem to experience that freedom so often in daily life?

Please consider joining this study of freedom as presented in the book of Galatians where we apply ourselves to following the greatest commandment—to love the LORD our God with all our hearts, souls, and minds. (Matthew 22:37)

SIGN UP IN THE ATRIUM

QUESTIONS? Rachael Lester/ 996-6533      Debbie Pratt/ 590-6150  
 Ruth Lawyer/ 615-7451      Peggy Strunk/ 329-3100  
 Susan Wilson/ 626-8869

Painting: Copy of segment of *Les Repas des Amoureux* by Marc Chagall, who often depicted joy by his characters floating in the air.



## Senior Pastor Transition Report from Northhaven Church Executive Committee

The Executive Committee has begun the discussion and work of calling a new Senior Pastor, as well as working through the many steps for the transition until a permanent pastor is found. This work will be an ongoing process that may take a year or more to complete and we will continue to update the congregation regularly on the process and progress being made.

Part of the effort we are engaged in is the immediate need to provide stability and support through this transition period for the staff and for the operations of the church. These are some of the things we are taking action on to provide this support.

1. The Executive Committee brought a recommendation to the church on Sunday, November 19th requesting approval to select and hire a part-time Business Administrator to help in this transition. This position will provide support to the staff with the administrative responsibilities assigned to the Senior Pastor position, as well as provide other needed support for the church staff as needed. This recommendation was unanimously approved and the work to find the person to fill this part-time position is in process.
2. Secure guest preachers for pulpit supply through February 2018.
3. The Executive Committee has asked all of the 2017 church committees' memberships to be frozen for the 2018 as well, to provide needed continuity and support for transition as well as the Senior Pastor search process. In addition, the 2017 Deacon membership has been frozen as well, also to provide stability and support for this process.
4. The Executive Committee continues to work through the transitional process and procedures to address the administrative responsibilities assigned to the Senior Pastor.

As we work on these transitional issues we are also looking forward and beginning the work that will be needed to address the two additional issues facing the church. The first is the effort to research and make a recommendation for a long-term (multiple months) interim pastor. This will provide further stability for the church and the staff.

Lastly, of course, is the process to find a permanent Senior Pastor for the church. The Executive Committee will be working through the details of bringing a recommendation for the search committee to the church to follow through with this final step in the process.



December 2: Michelle Valentine  
Decmeber 3: Jerry Evers  
December 3: Gary Skaggs  
December 4: Chris Canary

December 4: Gina Payne

December 5: Jaden Joyce

December 8: Molly McCutcheon

December 11: Hal Cox

December 14: Connel Smalling

December 14: Abbie Waggoner

December 15: Donna Evers

December 15: Joe Nostrand

December 16: Clint Carman

December 16: Ethan Cox

December 18: Jim Chapman

December 28: David Biles

December 29: Susie Conklin

December 29: John Knowles

December 29: Rose Miller

December 30: Lavonn Brown

December 30: Bruce Prescott

**ARTicle by Don Schooler**



## I Never Thought It Was Such a Bad Little Tree

The Christmas Season makes me really, really happy! I enjoy driving down the street seeing all the lights on the houses, and remembering days past as I'm hanging my boys' hand-made ornaments on our Christmas tree. I love the candle light Christmas Eve service at church and seeing the pride on the small people's faces as they get to hold their own candles. There's the great Christmas music, which, btw, has been playing in the Schoolers' home and cars since the day after Halloween. (Don't hate.) Then there's the joy of spending time with loved ones telling stories and laughing until our sides ache. And the food, oh, the food! Turkey, ham, Angel rolls, raisin square, Grandma McClure's noodles over mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce and cranberry "log" (don't break up the log!), green bean casserole, sweet potatoes with marshmallows, deer jerky, bread stuffing, and don't forget the pumpkin pie with Co'Whip, pecan pie, gooseberry pie (we like our pies), and fudge, both with and without walnuts. That's only about half the food.

As great as all that is, one of the biggest joys of Christmas for me is watching Christmas movies with the family. We Schoolers have our favorites; we like Elf a lot ("We elves try to stick to the 4 main food groups: candy, candy canes, candy corn, and syrup"). I think Kim would watch it year round if we boys didn't tease her mercilessly. And we like National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation ("Oh, Eddie, if I woke up tomorrow with my head sewn to the carpet, I wouldn't be more surprised than I am now"). And A Christmas Story ("In the heat of battle, my father wove a tapestry of obscenity that, as far as we know, is still hanging in space over Lake Michigan"). And so many others, like: White Christmas, The Polar Express, Home Alone, Die Hard (yes, it IS a Christmas movie), and How the Grinch Stole Christmas! (the cartoon).

I know I've probably failed to list one of your favorite Christmas movies, but I think I'd better move on to the reason for this ARTicle. I want to talk about A Charlie Brown Christmas. Such a fun movie, with a wonderful message from Linus explaining the true meaning of Christmas that we all need to be reminded of every now and again. But I don't want to talk about that, let's talk about Charlie Brown's tree.

So, the Peanuts Gang sends Ole Chuck out to get a tree and he comes back with this sickly looking, twig of a thing that bends almost to the ground when he places a single, red ball on its top. His head drops as all his friends berate him with the usual "Block Head!" for picking the sad, little tree. All of them, except Linus. Linus thoughtfully looks at the tree for a bit, and wrapping his blanket around its base says "I never thought it was such a bad little tree. It's not bad at all, really. Maybe it just needs a little love." Miraculously the tree becomes beautiful as the Gang begins to sing "Hark, The Herald Angels Sing."

This little tree reminds me of our dreams. They're really fragile, and most people will fail to see their value. It's important you protect your dreams by surrounding them with loving support and a "Linus" or two until they're strong enough to face the world on their own. There are a bunch of "Lucies" out there who are quick to pull the football out of your reach and laugh as you fall on your back. And there are even more Schroeders, who aren't mean spirited so much as they're focused on their own thing and don't have time for your thing. Ignore the Lucies and Schroeders and find yourself a Linus, someone who supports your dreams, who will stand by you when others won't, who will nurture that dream and encourage you to not lose heart. And then, once that dream has become a beautiful, healthy tree, that even the most jaded Lucy or distracted Schroeder can't ignore, go ahead and put it out there and then stand back and watch what happens. I promise, it'll be A Wonderful Life . . . which is another great Christmas movie btw.



"Get ready! Are you listening?"

The Advent & Christmas season is upon us. As I write this article, preparations for the music of the season are well underway. So, here is what is in store. For his final sermon series, Mitch is calling his series, "A Few of My Favorite Things." Advent 1 will be 'A Motown Christmas.' Advent 2 will be 'A Disney Christmas.' Advent 4 will be 'A Broadway Christmas.' We will have some music reflecting those themes. For Advent 3, we will have special musical presentations during both services. During Crossings the choir will present GOD WITH US, a variety of songs which focuses the Christmas story around the expectation and arrival of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, born on earth, human, yet divine. The musical captures both of these attributes. During Intersect, the story of Christmas will be told from the perspective of the various characters in this wonderful story, having moments of humor scattered throughout the telling. You will actually want to attend both services that day!

By the time we get to our annual evening service on Christmas Eve, you will have been prepped and readied for the arrival of the Christ child. This is a season we find ourselves drawn to the wonder and innocence of children, perhaps because our Savior came to earth as a child. I recently was reminded of a wonderful song which speaks to the importance of what we say and do as adults. It is the song, "Children Will Listen," from the great Sondheim musical INTO THE WOODS. As we enter this season of 'busy' may we adults remember some of the words of this song and remember to 'listen' to the promptings of God.

*Careful the things you say, Children will listen.*

*Careful the things you do, Children will see.*

*And learn.*

*Children may not obey, But children will listen.*

*Children will look to you For which way to turn, To learn what to be.*

*Careful before you say, "Listen to me," Children will listen.*

Check out the whole song. Great musical. Then be sure to participate with us as we celebrate Christmas through music at NHC. O come, Emmanuel!

Cheryl



## WILL THE FORCE BE STRONG WITH YOU?

On December 16th, NHSM will be working to provide Christmas presents for a family in need this holiday! We have Christmas lists together for the 3 kids & will try to do something special for the parents as well! Our students will be going out to shop together for presents. Following our Christmas shopping, we will be seeing Star Wars: The Last Jedi at 9:45pm at the Warren.

Anyone is welcome to sign up to join us for this event. The deadline to sign up for the movie is December 7th. The cost for this will be \$20 (which will help fund our service project & buy a movie ticket).

If you would like to make a donation to help the family we are serving, please see Bryan!