



*Christmas Eve*  
 CANDLELIGHT SERVICE @ 6:00PM  
 Pre-Service Music by Emily Miller @ 5:30pm

NorthHaven 4600 36th Ave. NW | Norman | www.northhavenchurch.net

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

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Return Service Requested

NorthHaven  
 P.O. Box 72272  
 Norman, OK 73070



### Letters to My Church



Jakob Topper  
Senior Pastor

There's a hilarious and insightful scene in the 2006 cinematic masterpiece, *The Ballad of Ricky Bobby*, when Will Farrell's character, Ricky Bobby, is praying before the Thanksgiving meal.

At first he prays "dear lord baby Jesus," but as the scene progresses, his prayer becomes more and more absurd. His wife even stops him to point out that Baby Jesus did grow up, and it's off putting to keep praying to baby Jesus. But Ricky Bobby doubles down, asserting that he can pray to whoever he wants and he likes the baby Jesus the best.



Next they go around the table taking turns talking about all the different ways that they like to imagine Jesus. With eagles wings, singing lead vocals at a Leonard skinnard concert, wearing a t-shirt tuxedo, etc.

Ricky Bobby ends the prayer by praying to "dear 8 lbs, 6 ounce baby Jesus, who doesn't even know a word yet, all cuddly..." It's an absurd scene, as hilarious as it is an actually astute piece of social commentary. It illustrates our propensity to recreate Jesus into images that we are more comfortable with, who won't confront our own lifestyle and choices, as is especially evident in the movie scene. We do it when we paint pictures of the middle eastern Jesus with white skin and blue eyes and make Jesus a pale

skinned, freckle-faced, red-head in the nativity scenes we display.



This tendency is especially true during the Christmas season, when the emphasis on the Advent of Christ into our world in the form of a helpless baby breads such sentimentality. And it should, because the incarnation of God is Love on full display. In Jesus's birth God is already saying that it is good to be human, and God is on our side.

But sentimentality can also be a hindrance to building a real relationship with the living Christ. That's why the season of Advent always carries with it a second purpose as well. The season uses the first advent of Jesus as a baby to also talk about the second advent of Jesus as King and Lord of all. It's a clever double entandra built into the liturgical season, but that second meaning, the emphasis on the second coming, is overshadowed more and more each year. Whether it's because the commercial Christmas industry grows larger and larger taking up more and more space, or because thoughtful Christians are embarrassed by the second coming. Too much pie in the sky and supernatural mumbo jumbo to take seriously.

But we can and we must take this second emphasis of the Advent season seriously, not because it's something that will happen in the distant future, but because it is something that is happening right now all around us. There's too much pain and suffering in the world to settle on a simplistic, sentimental faith that confines Jesus to the manger and to the periphery of our lives and world.

Jesus came to us incarnate as baby and then as a man, but the story doesn't end there. He comes into our world today, filling his children and his Church with divine purpose and supernatural strength to endure hardship, sit in solidarity with the suffering, and be the bearers of the Advent message in all the places where people are in pain. Christ has come, and Christ will come again.

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

# KidsHaven

December 2021

Monthly Newsletter of NorthHaven Children's Ministry

DECEMBER 10TH  
6:30-7:30 PM

## The Inn Crowd

By Lee Dengler and Susan Naus Dengler

The infamous census of the ages has made Bethlehem a busy and crowded spot, and there are some guests at a local inn who aren't very happy. By the end of this 20-minute musical, we learn that Jesus came for everyone, and that because of Him, we're all included in God's Kingdom.

DESSERT RECEPTION TO FOLLOW - PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU CAN BRING A DESSERT FOR THIS EVENT!

DECEMBER 18 **Christmas Cookie Party**  
10:00 AM



Join us at 10:00 am to help us make cookies for our homebound church members. Please RSVP with Pamela if you would like to attend.



IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU NEED, PLEASE CALL/TEXT/EMAIL/ US NO MATTER THE TIME!  
PAMELA@NORTHHAVENCHURCH.NET  
KAITLYN@NORTHHAVENCHURCH.NET

## JOYOUS



Christ the King Sunday

NATIVE AMERICAN CHURCHES

COLLECTING TOYS FOR CHILDREN 12 AND UNDER WITH A \$15 LIMIT FOR EACH TOY. BRING TO CHURCH UNWRAPPED.

# TOY DRIVE

SUNDAY, 11/28 - SUNDAY, 12/12

## Christmas Cookies Baking Party

JOIN US SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18TH AT 10:00AM TO BAKE CHRISTMAS COOKIES FOR OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS! IF YOU PLAN ON ATTENDING EMAIL PAMELA@NORTHHAVENCHURCH.NET



"Here we go a caroling!"

Email Sheri if you and your loved ones would be interested in caroling to those NorthHaveners who are homebound!

OFFERING FOR GLOBAL MISSIONS

BECAUSE PRESENCE MATTERS

## NHC GOAL

\$2,021 In 2021



- December 3: Jerry Evers
- December 3: Loneta Hayes
- December 4: Christopher Canary
- December 8: Caroline Whitaker

- December 10: Jamie Whitaker
- December 14: Connel Smalling
- December 15: Donna Evers
- December 16: Ethan Cox
- December 20: Merry Dorean
- December 21: Nevaeh Abbott
- December 28: David Biles
- December 30: Lavonn Brown