

Ladies  
Night Out

THURSDAY, 5/11/23  
@ 6PM

PLEASE SIGN UP ON  
FACEBOOK OR AT  
CHURCH

GABERINO'S  
400 ED  
NOBLE PKWY



Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday  
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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NorthHaven  
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Letters to My Church



Jakob Topper  
Senior Pastor

I've spent this morning reading through old newsletters over my past 4.5 years at NorthHaven. We have come a long way. We've been through a lot together, and it hasn't been easy. Pandemics and civil rights and partisan divides and a building move. The last few years have no precedent in the history of our church, and despite all the obstacles, we are still here.

That wasn't always a given. We've made hard decisions and it's cost us, but it's given us a future too. And we get to decide what that future is and how we'll partner with God to shape and mold it into a more life-giving, hope-producing, and love-embracing season than our past.

After two years of a bare bones budget, we placed money from the building sale into an endowment to create more cash flow. In doing so, we were finally able to raise a few staff salaries to a more just position. We added a little bit of money to the ongoing ministries of the church like children and youth. And most ambitiously, we increased our missions giving drastically.

In our proposed 2023 budget, we planned to nearly double our missions giving from 2022. When discussing the proposal at church conference, a motion from the floor was made to increase the missions budget by another 13 thousand dollars, making it nearly three times what it was last year. It was an ambitious motion that passed with unanimous approval. With more money in the budget for missions we began to dream new dreams.

At about this same time,  
Together For Hope, the



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

largest rural poverty initiative in America, began exploring an expansion into Oklahoma. Fifteen of the nations poorest counties of persistent rural poverty are in Oklahoma.

Together For Hope's Executive Director, Dr. Jason Coker, was at NorthHaven twice to present and preach and introduce us to the kind of asset based community development that their coalition creates. It was well received, but it left us with some important questions to answer.

One of those questions is how much can we afford to pledge to Together For Hope without depleting our resources for ultra local mission and ministries?

As we monitor church giving, we are behind on budgeted giving. It's not at all uncommon to be behind on the budget at this point in the year. December is usually a disproportionately good month and January a poor month. These are our historical trends, but we would like to see them improve before we're comfortable making a serious commitment to Together For Hope.

That's one reason we're going to have a **Start Up, Step Up, Double Up Sunday** on **May 7th**, as we've done in years past. No one would like to avoid talking about money more than me, but there's just no way to separate our spiritual lives from our material ones, and there's certainly no way to separate our mission work from it. (cont. on page 2)





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For those who don't yet financially support the church, we're asking you to consider **starting up** by beginning to give something. Anything. The long term health of our church needs you, but we don't need you to give beyond your means. Today, it is enough to start giving what you can with no pressure to give more.

For those who do give regularly but haven't been able to tithe, we're asking you to consider **stepping up** your giving by 1%. Since we're in this journey together for the long haul, we hope that suggesting a 1% increase will require sacrifice, but it won't leave anyone in a bind. If you start at 1% this year and continue to increase it year by year, then in 10 years you'll be tithing. We're giving today toward the church we want tomorrow.

And for those who are able, we're challenging you to prayerfully consider a **double up** by giving an extra gift to our Missions fund. It's from here that we'll consider funding Together For Hope and the good work our mission teams are working on — creation care, food pantry, and a little library to just name a few.

I've been in churches that didn't talk about money and paid the price for it, and I've been at churches that talked about giving each week. I hope we cut a balance here at NorthHaven, because there's so much trauma in general and religious trauma in particular that is tied to finances. I want to be mindful of that, but it is a simple, perhaps unfortunate truth — we can't avoid talking about money at NorthHaven. But we can do so with grace and mercy.

May 5: Edith Duncan  
May 7: Ella Crenshaw  
May 16: Jeffery Knapp  
May 18: Emily Miller

May 26: Chad Duncan  
May 27: Kian Cox  
May 30: Randy Ridenour  
May 30: Grayson Schooler



May 6th

Pride Festival  
11:30-6:00PM AT ANDREWS PARK

May 14

Graduation Sunday  
CHURCH SERVICE @ NORTHAVEN

May 24

End of School Bash  
5:30-7:00PM AT ANDREWS PARK

June 3

NorthHaven VBS  
11:30AM-4:30PM @ ALLEN FARM

June 25

Youth Movie Trip  
RIGHT AFTER CHURCH. MOVIE TBD!

July 14

Movie Night  
INTERGENERATIONAL @ NORTHAVEN

July 17-21

Youth Retreat  
MAKING WAVES @ BRANSON, MISSOURI

Led by Jakob Topper

For all those who are considering joining or have recently joined, and would like to learn more about NorthHaven.

Email Sheri if you would like to attend at [sher@northhavenchurch.net](mailto:sher@northhavenchurch.net)



NORTHAVEN'S NON-VBS, VBS

Many of us have some memories of Vacation Bible School. The rotations from Art, to Music, to Missions, and FINALLY to PE. Singing those iconic songs: I'm in the Lord's Army, the B-I-B-L-E, and "if the Devil doesn't like it he can sit on a tac..." They bring smiles to our faces but, if we are honest, also a few cringes. As adults, we can remember the emphasis on numbers of children attending, how many salvations, the staggering amount of time and effort, etc. and well, nothing is perfect.

Kaitlyn and I wanted to do something different. We know that children do NOT stay in church because they attended VBS. We DO know that children stay in church when the people in church become their family. When THEY know an adult who is OUTSIDE their own family and that adult KNOWS them.

That requires hard work. It requires connection and time. And THAT, is the ENTIRE purpose of NorthHaven VBS! It is to provide opportunities for ALL of NorthHaven to spend time together, to really get to know one another, and build a strong foundation together so that ALL ages will grow in community with Christ!

JUNE 3RD  
11:30AM-4:30PM  
ALL AGES REQUIRED!

ALLEN FAMILY FARM

Pamela Duncan's mom and dad have a little place out in Cogar, OK. It is a perfect spot to grow closer together while having some fun. There are several ways to get there:

#1) Plug the following coordinates in your phone: [35.300641,-98.124151](https://www.google.com/maps/place/35.300641,-98.124151)

#2) Use the following written directions: Travel to Cogar, OK (junction of HWY 152 and HWY 37). Turn left (south) and drive 2 miles (keep track). Then turn left (east) at E1180 Rd for 1/2 mile to the white gate on the right (south) side of the road.

#3) Send a text to Pamela (405) 426-7606 and she will send you a pin for your phone.