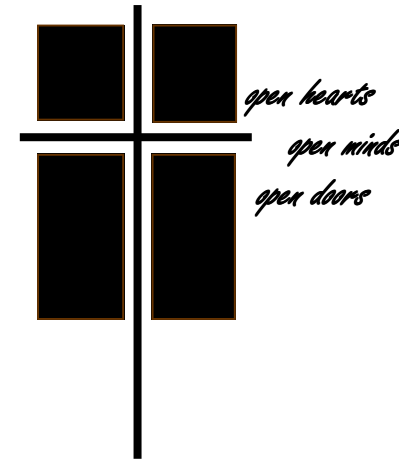


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The Grapevine

December 1, 2011 OUMC Newsletter, Volume 14.12



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Sunday Morning Schedule

Breakfast 8:00 am
Traditional Worship Service: 9:15 am

Sunday School for All Ages: 10:30 am
Contemporary Worship Service: 11:30 am

Church Staff

The Rev. John G. Hargis, Pastor
pastorjohn@oxfordumc.org

Michelle G. Carey— Director of Communications & Programming
michelle@oxfordumc.org

Dave Sygeel - Minister of Youth & Business Manager
bigdave@oxfordumc.org

Doug Boldt - Traditional Music Director
doug@oxfordumc.org

Pat Carey—Contemporary Music Director
pat@oxfordumc.org

Rosana Orr—Mother's Day Out Director
mdo@oxfordumc.org

Teri Boldt— Program Assistant
teri@oxfordumc.org

Juana Martinez— Nursery Director

Jose Moya—Custodian

Office Hours

Monday thru Thursday 9 am to 4 pm
Friday—9 am to Noon

Our Mission: "To bring people to Jesus and the Church, build them up to Christian maturity, train them for their ministry, and send them out in mission, that whosoever will, may glorify God and enjoy Him forever."



December at Oxford UMC

Pastor's Perspective



Over the course of my life I have heard the occasional insistence that we "keep the 'Christ' in 'Christmas'." There are any number of reasons why folks find it necessary to say this. We all-too-often get caught up in all the secular parts of the holidays. Over the last number of years people want to be so inclusive that the nativity is removed. A couple of years ago a neighborhood association near where I live promoted a Festival of Santa and Snow – both fictional entities in our part of the world! I've even heard people get put-out about "X-mas", not understanding that the "X" is not an "ex", but a "chi", a Greek letter with a "ch" sound that begins the word "Christos" and an abbreviation for it.

That's all well and good, of course, but I'd like to suggest that it's not only good to keep the "Christ" in "Christmas", but it's a good thing to keep the "mas" (mass) in it as well. The real way to keep Christ in Christmas is to offer him our worship, to attend the "mass", the liturgy.

We're having two services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Our Christmas Eve service starts at 7:30 pm. We're not having a separate children's program that evening; however, as we usually have a Children's Time near the beginning of regular 9:15 Sunday morning service, so we will have a Children's Time in this service, though it will be a little more elaborate than on those other occasions. Our band will be present and contributing to the children's portion and then will assist us in segueing into a more traditional worship service in which the choir will lead us in singing some of our favorite Christmas carols. Following a brief sermon, communion will be received, and we will conclude the service with candlelight.

On Christmas morning we will have one service of worship at 10:30 am, and there will be no Sunday School. This will be more-or-less a traditional Christmas service with familiar carols as we are led in our singing by our Chancel Choir.

I encourage you to keep the "mass" in "Christmas", because that's the way to keep "Christ" in it. I know that many people will be traveling at Christmas time and won't be able to be at Oxford. Still, for those for whom this is the case, I urge you to be in worship with your families elsewhere.

Merry Christmas,

Pastor John

Staff Gifts

It's hard to believe another year is wrapping up! What a blessing that it is one of the most beautiful and generous times of the year, a time when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. God gave the world His only son as a gift to be ever mindful of His love and affection for us. It is always a time of excitement and wonder as we marvel at the miracle of His birth. It is also a time when we thank the Lord for the blessings in our lives, one of which is our dedicated and caring Oxford Staff. At Oxford we have a tradition of collecting donations of cash or checks that is distributed among our staff to show our appreciation. Last year our congregation was very generous and we hope that we are able to be as generous this year. Please place your gift into the collection plate in an envelope marked "staff gifts" or you can place it in the basket marked "staff gifts" located in the narthex. You are also welcome to drop it off or mail it to the church office. The SPRC will be distributing these gifts to the staff on behalf of the Oxford congregation. The deadline for donations is Sunday, December

18th. Thank you and Merry Christmas... *Terry Tearney, SPRC Chairperson*

Emmaus News

NWSA Emmaus/Chrysalis Group meets December 16, 6:45 P.M. at Trinity Methodist, 6800 Wurzbach Rd. , SAT 78240. Join us for the last Emmaus Gathering Of 2011. We will celebrate the season by singing traditional Christmas carols, have an inspiring 4th Day speaker, and end with Holy Communion. All are invited to attend the fellowship afterwards. Children and guests are always welcome. Food agape appreciated for the fellowship is appreciated.

To receive NWSA email updates send an email to nwsaemmaus-group@yahoo.com.

LOOKING AHEAD - SA - NWSA hosts a Women's Walk to Emmaus #1656, April 19 - 22, 2012, at Mt. Wesley. Register your pilgrims early! For complete Walk and Flight information visit www.umcswtx.org or contact the Emmaus Registrar at 408-4528 or toll free 888-349-4193. For sponsorship information and pilgrim registration forms, visit www.umcswtx.org.

Meals on Wheels

Thank you to our dedicated Meals on Wheels volunteers. They have delivering meals faithfully Monday through Friday for the past 5 years. There are two routes that we serve, each with about 14 meals per day. As a group they have served an average of 7383 meals per year or 492 meals per month.

Join me in thanking these persons who have or are currently delivering Meals on Wheels: Gary and Joan Barr, Sandra Peterson, Marty Donohue, Martha Ormand, Julie Thibodeaux, Linda McClullers, Laurel Olson, Susan Gaches, Warren Ward, Jerry and KayeLynn Ingold, and Vicki Russell. Please let them know how much you appreciate them being the hands and feet of Christ in our community.

Laurel Olson

POINSETTIAS

Poinsettias are on sale now! Purchase a plant in honor or memory of a loved one. This year's poinsettias will be substantially larger than last year's. The cost per plant is \$14, please make your check payable to Oxford UMC. Join in this lovely Oxford Christmas tradition. Special thanks to Barbara Maxwell and the worship committee for coordinating our poinsettia sale.

SAVE the DATE

The Church Council 2012 Planning Session is scheduled for Saturday, January 7 from 10 am to 1 pm . Bring your 2012 calendars!

All outgoing and incoming Oxford UMC leaders are strongly encouraged to attend.

New Year's Resolutions?

How about participating in our new "Zumba" class? "Zumba" is the latest most popular exercise program. "Zumba with Vanessa" will begin in January 2012 on Mondays at 6:30 pm in the Family Life Center. Childcare will be provided by reservation. For more information contact Michelle Carey in the church office or via email at michelle@oxfordumc.org



Kid's Night Out

T.G.I.K.N.O.!!!!

First Fridays at 6 pm.
The cost is \$5 per child.

Kids, come for fun with friends, games, snacks, and arts & crafts! Kids from infants to elementary school aged are welcome. Older siblings may also come and serve as helpers.

Parents may enjoy an evening out while the children are cared for by the church's professional child care staff.

Please call the church office to reserve a spot for your child. Spread the Word about this great opportunity for parents. For more information, contact Michelle Carey in the church office.

The December date is Friday, December 2! January date is January 6!



Praying for each other is a privilege we at Oxford take very seriously. But our list is growing and growing —So please advise us when a name should be removed from the list. Names will remain for one month but will be renewed at your request. Thanks.

Our World
 Our Service Men & Women
 Our Nation & its leaders
 Our Bishop and all clergy
 Oxford UMC staff & volunteers
 Residents of The Heights on Huebner
 St. Mary's Indian Orthodox Church
 Amber Tennel
 Helen Hoffer
 Donta, Lydia, Alecia & Robert
 Janie Martinez
 Ray Record
 Billy Flores
 Sandra Stendebach
 Margaret Mason
 A son who needs a job
 Dennis Moses
 Natalie & Rylie
 Kevin Scherzinger
 Becky & family
 Family of Lee McFarland
 Felicia & Jason Washington & family
 Laura Curtis
 Mary Gail Schoenert-Flake
 Cindy Bryant
 Mike
 Tameka
 Rick Flake
 Howard Flake
 Uncle Dan
 Jordan, Whitney, Dustin, Joshua & Kayla

Margaret Holloway
 Dale
 Elvie Rizzo
 Vanessa
 The Parnell family
 Anthony Gonzales
 Mia Carey
 Little Hailey
 Great grandmother Dukes
 Mattie Pruski
 Cambrey Sullivan
 Aiden
 Michael Stine
 Peg Stover
 Richard Buchanan
 Rose Cervantes
 Cindy Rapsik
 Kayla Boucher
 Rick Smith
 Jan
 Thelma & Jim Barnes
 Garcia Family
 Sarah
 Susie McClung
 Inge Bailey
 Anne Lee
 Matt, Monica & premature baby girl
 Ronni Magnuson
 Andrea Mustain
 Eva Tisenler
 Melissa & Walt Willis
 Cathy Sauri
 Lara Curtis
 Sienna Bela
 Bernice & Lance
 Karen Barr
 Alisandra Fernando Soto
 Juanita Soto
 Betty & John Krepelka
 Donald Green
 Dave Smith
 Sandy Martinez
 Catherina Woytek
 Kay Dawson
 Sara Beth Orr
 Alex Alexander
 Jan Luse & family
 Lloyd Wainscott
 Colton



All Active Men and Women
Iraq — Charlotte Shell, Jason St. Clair, James Hoke, Chris Ellis, Phil Crow, Stephen Ross, Don Born, David Taliaferio, Erik Stauffer, Michael Shoemaker, Jr., Ken Meyer, Carl, David McCartney, Mr. Swafford, Ivan Watson
Afghanistan— Eric Barton, Captain Burgess, Army National Guard— ABT 3, Isaac Suydam, Sean Mulligan
Deployed -Tyler Wynne

Angelina Patino
 Joan Andress
 Craig & Evelyn Davis
 Ernie Garibay
 Margaret Thornton
 Bill Williams
 Ralph Fritz
 Bernice Adanietz
 Bret Hunt
 Patricia Ruiz
 Frona McGuire
 Ann Cherek
 Pamela
 Donna Kowall
 Kaden Kruciak
 David Wessels
 Dottie Schrumm
 Mark Humpher
 Kelly Mireles
 Robin Fisher
 Daniel

*Send us your praise reports!
 Send them to Marty at
 marthadonohue@sbcglobal.net*

FINANCIAL SNAP-SHOT Of the Budget

NOVEMBER NEED.....	\$38,000
RECEIVED 11/07/2011	\$11,776
RECEIVED 11/13/2011.....	\$ 8,450
RECEIVED 11/20/2011.....	\$ 7,292
RECEIVED 11/27/2011.....	\$ 3,895
RECEIVED NOVEMBER....	\$31,413
NOVEMBER SHORTFALL.	\$ 6,587

APPORTIONMENTS MIRACLE

In 2010, Oxford was unable to pay our apportionments in full. In 2011, we made a commitment to tithe all of our income towards paying apportionments. We have been faithful to that commitment. We are, therefore, much closer to paying apportionments in full. However, do to income levels, even with our tithe we are behind pace for paying apportionments in full for 2011. If you would like to be part of an "Apportionment Miracle" and help us complete our fair share for you may make a special gift by marking your check or envelope "apportionments." All gifts so marked will be added above our tithe. Help us return to being a 5-Star Church and fulfill our commitment to the greater United Methodist Church. Thank you!

Worship Attendance

Psalm 95: 6-7
"Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care."

Sunday, November 6

9:15 a.m.....	117
11:30 a.m.	109
Nursery.....	2
Children's Church.....	10
Total.....	238
Sunday School.....	87

Sunday, November 13

9:15 a.m.....	111
11:30 a.m.	100
Nursery.....	7
Children's Church.....	9
Total.....	227
Sunday School.....	89

Sunday, November 20

9:15 a.m.....	110
11:30 a.m.	58
Nursery.....	5
Children's Church.....	7
Other.....	32
Total.....	212
Sunday School.....	78

Sunday, November 27

9:15 a.m.....	92
11:30 a.m.	85
Nursery.....	5
Children's Church.....	5
Other.....	n/a
Total.....	187
Sunday School.....	68



New Advent Study!

Oxford regularly has a mid-week study during Advent. This year the study will be based on a book by Michael Slaughter called *"Christmas Is Not Your Birthday—Experience the joy of Living and Giving Like Jesus."* Slaughter is the much-respected lead pastor of the Ginghamburg United Methodist Church in Ohio and a very well-known author. The class will be from 6:15 pm -6:55 pm on Wednesday evenings, November 30 through December 21. Four separate teachers will be leading the study; Kristi Forister, Gary Barr, Billy Ivens, and Dave Sygeel. There will be no cost to attend the course. However, books are available for \$10 each. Please contact the church office to purchase a copy. For more information contact John Hargis or Michelle Carey in the church office (696-0192).

Walk to the Manger Christmas Offering

Each year during Advent and at Christmas Oxford takes a "Walk to the Manger" Christmas offering. During each worship service people will be given the opportunity to come forward and place a gift in the manger in honor of our Savior. These gifts, which are to be in addition to one's regular offering, will be used to help the church meet important year-end expenses, including our obligations to the denomination to help meet its missional objectives (apportionments).

All Oxford members ought to give serious thought and prayer to what it is that they need to give. As Christmas is a time in which we celebrate God's gracious gift of himself to us in the Christ child, so it is a time in which we think about how it is that we can give back to his work in the world.



Blood donation gives the gift of life to many in our area. Since our first blood drive May 23, 2009, we have had the Bloodmobile at Oxford UMC twelve times averaging 12 people entering the bus to donate. I want to personally thank all who have donated over the past few years and pray that you will continue to support the Blood Bank with your donation of blood. As you can see the list is long of donors and I have included how many units they have given.

Fred Wright (9) Gina Ivens (9) Marsha Huggins (5) Paul Peterson (5) Laine Lee (3) Dave Eddlemon (2) Judy Gray (4) Linda Hays (3) Julie Thibodeaux (3) Tommy Hitsman (5) Naomi Smith (2) Oilve Malesky (1) Rebecca Lopez (1) John Holloman (3) Brian Fitzgerald (1) Kevin Jones (1) Marium Kahn (1) Carol Glassie (1) Pat Carey (7) Tim Shaw (3) George North (1) Melissa North (1) Lula Sweat (4) Teresa Fields (2) KayeLynn Ingold (3) Bill Lieber (1) Adam Barton (2) Meghan DeLeon (1) Claude Ross(1) Ricci Ross(1)Angee Shelburn (5) John Meier (1) Judie Meier(1) Janette Jackson (1) Teri Boldt (3) Corey Chinn (1) Clara Curtis (2) Mary Gayle Flake (1) John Nichols (1) Aaron Tarr (2) Kevin Wilson (2) Kayla Boldt (1) Roland Martinez (1) Pamela Smith (1) Cambrey Sullivan (1) Diane Waldron (1) Kevin Slattery (2) Laurel Olson (12)

The Bloodmobile is no longer available on Sunday due to their budget restraints, so please continue to give the gift of blood at any of the local donation centers, school, or through your work. Students remember that you can earn a red cord for graduation if you donate six times before you graduate.

THANK YOU BLOOD DONORS, *Laurel Olson*

December Birthdays

12/3— Elizabeth Clegg	12/20— Janice McGuire
12/3- Patty Clegg	12/21— William Ingram
12/7— Gary Barr	12/23— Mitch Thibodeaux
12/7— Jeff Davis	12/26— Joan Barr
12/7— Heather Hitsman	12/26— Marium Khan
12/7— David Keeler	12/28— Warren Ward
12/10— Reed Hayes	12/29— Joshua Forister
12/11— Lois Cole	12/30— Kyle Faulkner
12/12— Rosana Orr	12/30— Kristen Ryan
12/13— Daniel Charbonneau	12/31— Beverly Davis
12/17— Donald Hays	12/31— Audrey Howard

****If we missed your Birthday this month, please inform the church office of your birth date. Thanks!*

Women's Weekend Retreat "Seaside Escape"

~ Friday-Sunday, January 20-22, 2012, at the *Haven River Inn*, Comfort, Texas. This will truly be a time away from it all, relaxing and being refreshed through peaceful solitude as well as fulfilling teaching and a rich connection with other women of the church. Total cost is \$120 which includes the two night stay, two breakfasts, and the entire "Seaside Escape" kit. Reserve your spot now, and payments can be made in any increment. The remaining balance simply needs to be paid by the day of the retreat. A great deal and a wonderful time is awaiting you in "Comfort"! For questions or other information on any of these events for women, contact Teri Boldt at 210-696-0192 or teri@oxfordumc.org



It's Women's Christmas Tea Time

The Christmas Tea is just around the corner ladies (December 10th) and I need to know who would like to serve as table hosts this year. As a table host you would completely decorate your assigned table with table cloth, china or your best dishes, silverware, and a lovely centerpiece. You can recruit a friend to help you decorate. The table should be set for 7, yourself and 6 others. You can invite other Oxford women to sit at your table, you can also invite friends and family members. The table would need to be set either on Friday afternoon, December 9th or before noon on Saturday December 10th. If you are interested or need more information, please contact me at the church 696-0192 or teri@oxfordumc.org

BATTERED WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S SHELTER CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Every Christmas the Shelter has a big Christmas party for the women and their children at the Shelter. Should you have any Christmas tree ornaments or lights, wall or table decorations you would like to pass on to the Shelter, please bring them to the church library in the Education Building before Dec 12th. Any questions, please call me at either 522-1414 or 685-3300. Big or small, they are very appreciate of our love for these families.

CHRISTMAS FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE BATTERED WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S SHELTER

Again, this year my heart is heavy for those mother's and children/teens who find themselves seeking refuge at The Battered Women & Children's Shelter. The trauma their lives have endured thru this year and now the hope of feeling safe at the Shelter. We are so blessed to have our loving church family around us day by day giving us smiles, kind words, hugs and sincere friendship. Now it is that time of year for us to give smiles to the moms and their children who are having to call the shelter home.

This year the shelter is in need of toys for the young – suggestions – dolls that are made of the material that can be washed, toys that do not have pieces that can be easily swallowed or stepped on by a toddler. Trucks that don't come apart, Nerf footballs, basketballs for the boys, Frisbees, play microphones, jump rope, washable dolls for the girls, They have shared with me that they can no longer receive stuffed animals because of bedbug problems. HEB and Wal-Mart have precious, soft, washable, cuddly dolls that cost \$6.00. For the kiddo's 10 to 17 years old: gift cards – Old Navy, Gap, Wal-Mart, Target, HEB, McDonald's in any amount \$10.00 and up.

I will have the sleigh in the narthex for toys and a special box for the gift cards. Please specify the dollar amount on your gift cards.

There are approximately **185 residents** at the shelter today. Thru giving the joy in your heart is overwhelming. I thank you and may God richly bless you for your giving to these moms and their kiddo's. Any questions, please call me at either 522-1414 or cell 685-3300.

Blessings to all,

Barbara Maxwell

Church Structure and Nominations, 2012

Charge Conference, November 15, 2011

Church Council

Board chair: **Audrey Howard** Lay Leader: **Gary Barr**, Membership Secretary: **Patricia Tarr**, Members of Annual Conference: **Patricia McFaul, Michelle Carey**, alt. **Louise Taylor**, UMW president, UMM president, Finance chair, Treasurer, Trustees chair, SPRC chair, church historian, and a representative from the youth and each of the following working groups: Bringing, Belonging, Maturity, Glorification, and Prayer.

Church Council Agenda Committee

Pastor, Church Council Chair, Lay Leader, Director of Communications and Programming, Director of Youth and Business, Programming Assistant.

The Administrative committees (SPRC and John, Trustees and Dave, Finance and Dave, Nominations and Leadership Development and John) have responsibilities as defined by the Book of Discipline (2008).

SPRC, chair: **Phil Forister**

11-12	12-13	13-14
Eloise Lindemann	Linda Solis	Dave Holloman
Charlene McGuire	Victor Rangel	Phil Forister

Finance Committee, chair: **Tom Jackson**

11-12	12-13	13-14
Don Hays	Van Clegg	Paul Peterson
Victor Rangel	Doris Keeler	Tom Jackson

Board of Trustees, chair is selected by the Board

11-12	12-13	13-14
Ana Davis	Rory Bigger	
Jim Hinkel	Patricia McFaul	
Rawle Barker	Corey Chinn	

Committee on Nominations and Lay Leadership, chaired by Pastor

11-12	12-13	13-14
Mary Gail Flake	Margaret Mason	Milton Lindemann
Linda Faulkner	Don Hays	Felix Solis

This group is responsible for "Oxford 301: Training for Ministry."

Church Treasurer: **Russ Tracy**

Church Historian: **Louise Taylor**

Bringing (staff liaison: Dave, Michelle) Leader: **Lay Leader**

This working group is responsible for such things as apartment ministries, marketing and advertising, visits to first time guests, two time attendance follow-up, van service, Alpha, Drive through Nativity, Easter Egg Hunt, Home for the Holidays, and the like. It is responsible for "Oxford 101: Introduction to Oxford."

Belonging (staff liaison: Teri, Michelle) Leader: **Camille Smith**

This working group is responsible for church picnics, Wednesday night dinners, potluck dinners, Sunday morning breakfast, fellowship time in the narthex at worship time, and the like.

Maturity (staff liaison: Michelle) Leader: **Jerry Mason**, (**Patricia McFaul** is the Sunday School Superintendent)

This working group is responsible for Sunday School, varied studies, Vacation Bible School, devotional resources, Lenten and Advent studies, spiritual growth groups, and other activities to do with spiritual maturity. It is responsible for "Oxford 201: Our Beliefs."

Missions (staff liaison: Dave) Leader: **Kristi Forister** This working group is responsible for sending Oxonians out in mission, and for such things as the food pantry, SAMM, blood drives, CROP Walk, Habitat, Wesley CC, School Supplies, Angel Tree, remembering troops, mission suggestions for Christmas, mission education, adopt a missionary, adult mission trips, UMCOR promotion, disaster relief, and the like. It is responsible for the class "Oxford 401: Being a Missionary."

Glorification (staff liaison: John, Doug, Pat) Leader: **Barbara Maxwell**

This working group is responsible for the enhancement of worship.

Prayer (staff liaison: John, Michelle) Leader: **Marty Donohue**

This working group is responsible for ensuring that we are a praying church, organizing the prayer ministry including intercessory prayer groups, prayer vigils, Healing Services and the like. They will keep up with a prayer list and ensure its dissemination.

Youth Council (Dave) (Dave meets periodically with parents of the youth.)

This group is responsible for youth Sunday School, UMYF, Wednesday night youth activities, mission trips, retreats, relationship training, evangelism among youth populations, confirmation (in partnership with the pastor), and the like.

Emmaus Community (John), Leadership is selected by the community.

Reflections from Doug

It was Christmas of 1984, Teri's and my second one together, but our first as a married couple. And having both been raised in homes rich with holiday customs, we had already begun a list of our own traditions that we had come to enjoy even as newlyweds. And still to this day, 28 years later, most of them still make their appearance sometime in December. Inspired by her Grandma Castle, Teri still gives each of the children a new set of pajamas on Christmas Eve, and stuffs their stockings for Christmas morning. We watch "White Christmas" multiple times throughout the season, and we always sing "Tennessee Christmas" together. We decorate the house the day after Thanksgiving, and I bake Christmas cookies on the Monday of the first week of Christmas vacation – and yes, it does get that exact, and we love and cherish every split second of it. Ah, the wonderful traditions. But then there are those with a painful twist....

Almost immediately after Teri and I were married, we had decided that we wanted to have children right away. We concluded that since I was already 24 and she was 23, we had better get going, seeing as how the biological clock was ticking away (oh the skewed perspective of youth!). We had been married in February, made our "family starting" decision that summer, and had hoped to be making a "baby announcement" that Christmas. It was going to be so exciting! We had even planned different ways of telling our families during the anticipated holiday gatherings. We practically giggled with delight at the very thought of it all. But there would be no announcement to make....

The holiday season of 1984 was fast approaching, yet there was no baby on the way. Nor would there be in 1985 or 1986 or even 1987. We attempted to camouflage our sadness and disappointment by appearing to be career people that were enjoying life and unconcerned about starting a family. It was a feeble attempt at best to deflect the "when are you going to have a baby?" questions and few of those closest to us fell for the act. But nonetheless, that's when the tradition started....

While hanging stockings by the fireplace is not something unique to our family, it did take on a meaning that had special significance for us that Christmas of '84. That year, in our disappointment that there would be no big news to tell our families, we hung two stockings, one for Teri and one for me. But we hung a third one as well. It was one of those little ones, the type you'd hang for a pet or a small decoration, but for us it represented hope. We kept the meaning to ourselves (we would tell people it was for our cat), but quietly we'd say to each other, "maybe this will be the year a child will come into our home. Maybe next year, this stocking will be for our baby." We hung that same little stocking for the next three years, each Christmas saying, "maybe this will be the year..."

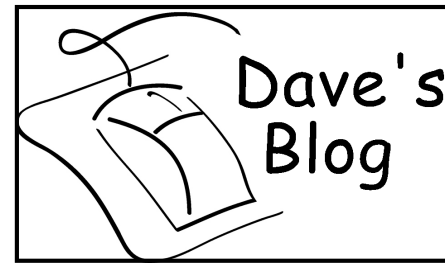
And so it was with the people of Israel those many years ago. The prophets had foretold His coming, and every year they waited. And then one night, it happened. A baby was born.... after all that time. And they called His name "Immanuel" – God is with us.

And that's why we celebrate Christmas. The promise has been fulfilled. God is with us. And He will never leave us nor forsake us.

By the way, we hung that little stocking above the fireplace again for the Christmas of 1988, but this time it was for our son Jordan. He didn't come into the world the way we had thought he would, but he was ours nonetheless.

And so still today, we hang five stockings above the fireplace every year at Christmas for our five adopted children. For us, when we place the gum and candy and little trinkets in those stockings (and our children are far beyond the "wonderment" years, only the youngest one still living at home), it is not merely tradition. It is a reminder of promises fulfilled. God is truly with us.

Have a blessed and wonderful Christmas! ~*Doug and Teri Boldt*



Dave's
Blog

As most of you are aware the Advent Study we are doing this year on Wednesday Nights is titled "Christmas is not Your Birthday." The class is being taught over four weeks with each lesson being led by a different teacher. I am doing the fourth segment, and I have already begun preparing for the class. So, as I was driving to Oklahoma this past

week to spend Thanksgiving with my wife who is caring for a family friend in Durant, I was thinking about this book and this idea which I am sure that the American retailers hope will never catch on.

What came to mind as I drove along is the fact that the definition of the word "need" has changed drastically between the time of my Depression era parents and the youth I work with at church. A speaker on the radio summed it up in a humorous way when he spoke of a shopping expedition he had with his teenage son, who after perusing the shelves came back with a pair of Nikes costing \$100. When he told his dad that he "needed" this particular pair of athletic shoes, his dad explained to him the true meaning of the word "need" when he responded: "Son, I have \$40 to buy you a pair of sneakers. If you want that pair of shoes what you "need" is 60 more dollars."

One of the new catch phrase when talking about today's young adults and teenagers as a group is the "Entitlement Generation." But the fact is, this feeling of entitlement has been growing in our country much longer than that. I know it is certainly alive and well within me. I experience it every Sunday evening when after a day of church and Jesus I sit down at the kitchen table and begin looking at the newspaper. I believe the devil is in the Sunday paper in the want ads. I find myself lusting after so many things. I will pull out the Harbor Freight ad—and all of a sudden there are a host of tools I need—I must have, even though I have no love of doing the things one usually needs tools for, and the reality is I would be hard pressed to tell you what some of them are even used for.

Another part of this past weekend was Black Friday. A reflection of the hold consumerism has upon us in a celebration of all things new, shiny, and on sale. Two-thirds of our country's citizens indulging ourselves in stuff because Christmas is coming and our economy requires this excessive consumption so we can feel good about our gluttony because we are putting America back to work—as if I needed any help.

Micah 6:8 has always been a verse that I have found convicting when I fall into this trap of imagining needing things for which I have no need whatsoever. "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." The fact is there are still many things I might want for holidays, but there is only one thing I believe I need this year—a broken heart for those less fortunate than myself—the hurt, the hungry, the lost—God's people. That is where I will find Christmas.

Peace, Dave

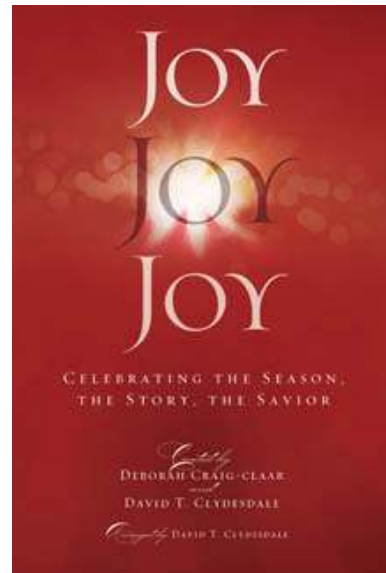
December 2011

Oxford's Mission: "To bring people to Jesus and the Church, build them up to Christian maturity, train them for their ministry, and send them out in mission, that whosoever will, may glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 9:00 am District Professionals' Meeting 6:30 pm—Men's Ministry Meeting 7pm—Praise Band Rehearsal	2 12 noon Senior Meal (FLC) 6 pm -Kid's Night Out (EB, DG)	3 11:30 am UMW Christmas Potluck
4 8 am—Breakfast (DG) God's Plan Class (EB) 9:15 am—Traditional Worship 10:30 am— Sunday School for all ages 11:30 am—Contemporary Worship 5 pm—YOUTH! (DG)	5 12 noon—Senior Meal (FLC) 6:30 pm—Trustees (EB)	6 10:30 am—MDO Chapel 7:00 pm- SPRC 7 pm—Co-ed Volleyball (DG)	7 12 noon Senior Meal (FLC) 2-4 –Food Pantry (EB) 5:30 pm—Supper (DG) 6:15 pm— Advent Study 6:15 pm—Children's Choir 6:30 pm—YOUTH! (DG) 7 pm—Chancel Choir	8 5:15 pm—T-Tones 7pm—Praise Band Rehearsal	9 12 noon Senior Meal (FLC)	10 1 pm—3 pm Ladies' Christmas Tea
11 10:30 am Christmas Cantata Worship 12 noon—Tamalada and Silent Auction 5 pm—YOUTH!	12 12 noon— Senior Meal 2:30 pm—The Heights Worship 6:30 pm- Caroling on the River	13 10:30 am—MDO Chapel 7 pm—Finance 7 pm—Girl Scouts	14 12 noon Senior Meal (FLC) 2-4 Food Pantry (EB) 5:30 pm—Supper (DG) 6:15 pm—Advent Study 6:30 pm—YOUTH!	15 5:15 pm—T-Tones 7pm—Praise Band Rehearsal	16 12 noon Senior Meal (FLC)	17
18 Sunday School Stuffs the Pantry 8 am—Breakfast (DG) God's Plan Class (EB) 9:15 am—Traditional Worship 10:30 am— Sunday School for all ages 11:30 am—Contemporary Worship 6:30 pm— Drive-Thru Nativity	19 12 noon Senior Meal (FLC) 2:30 pm—The Heights Worship 6:30 pm—Drive-Thru Nativity YMCA CAMP	20 10:30 am—MDO Chapel 7 pm—Co-ed Volleyball (DG) YMCA CAMP	21 12 noon Senior Meal (FLC) 2-4 Food Pantry (EB) 5:30 pm—Supper (DG) 6:15 pm—Advent Study 6:30 pm—YOUTH! (DG) YMCA CAMP	22 7pm—Praise Band Rehearsal YMCA CAMP	23 12 noon Senior Meal (FLC) January Grapevine Newsletter Deadline YMCA CAMP	24 <i>7:30 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service</i>
25 <i>Christmas Day</i> <i>10:30 am- Worship</i>	26 Office Closed 12 noon— Senior Meal (FLC) 2:30 pm—The Heights Worship YMCA CAMP	27 10:30 am—MDO Chapel 7 pm—Co-ed Volleyball (DG) YMCA CAMP	28 12 noon Senior Meal (FLC) 1 pm—Grapevine folding party 2-4 Food Pantry (EB) 6:30 pm—YOUTH!	29 7pm—Praise Band Rehearsal YMCA CAMP	30 12 noon— Senior Meal (FLC) YMCA CAMP	31
1 8 am—Breakfast (DG) God's Plan Class (EB) 9:15 am—Traditional Worship 10:30 am— Sunday School for all ages 11:30 am—Contemporary Worship 5 pm—YOUTH!						(FLC) - Family Life Center (DG) - DeKing Gym (EB) - Education Building All Worship Services, Music Rehearsals and Chapel Services are located in the Sanctuary

EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS AT OXFORD UMC

We have so many opportunities for you and yours to celebrate the joy of the season.



JOY, JOY, JOY

Celebrating the Season, the Story, the Savior

On Sunday, December 11 at 10:30 am in the Oxford UMC sanctuary, the Chancel Choir under the direction of Douglas C. Boldt, will be presenting "Joy, Joy, Joy" for the Annual Oxford UMC Christmas Cantata. "Joy, Joy, Joy" is arranged and orchestrated by David T. Clydesdale. In a time of year often marked by commercialism and bustle, this glorious new musical breaks through the busyness of the holiday season to proclaim the joy of worshipping our Savior.

Majestic, engaging, and tender, "Joy, Joy, Joy" thoughtfully celebrates the joy of "the most wonderful time of the year," the joy of the first Christmas, and the continuing joy that is found only through Jesus. Highlighted in this musical are four songs from Michael W. Smith's newest Christmas project, "It's a Wonderful Christmas," as well as two new songs written for this musical by Michael Farren of Pocket Full of Rocks. In addition, David T. Clydesdale has fashioned a spectacular magi procession from Paul Baloche's beloved worship song "Offering," and has created a soaring praise finale for the listener combining "Joy to the World," "Joy, Joy, Joy" and a new Christmas version of "Ode to Joy." Make plans to attend, invite a friend, and experience the joy of worshipping our Savior.



Christmas
Sunday
Morning
Worship
10:30 am

Tamalada and Silent Auction



Sunday, December 11 immediately following the 10:30 am Christmas Cantata, Oxford will be hosting the Annual Tamalada Luncheon and Silent Auction. This wonderful fellowship event will be held in the De King Fellowship Center. Everyone will enjoy a delicious tamale lunch complete with desserts and drinks. A love offering will be accepted to cover the cost of the meal. To make the afternoon even more enjoyable, the Silent Auction will be going on throughout the luncheon. You can browse and purchase great buys from lovely collectibles, to great gift certificates, and even some delectable desserts. All proceeds of the silent auction go to fund the church's ministries. If you have an item to donate or if you know of a business who will make a donation, there is still time to act. Please contact Sandra Peterson at 210-367-7967 or Julie Thibodeaux at 210-696-6630 or drop off your item(s) to the church office by Friday, December 9. There's nothing like shopping for a good cause. Plus, you will be getting some Christmas shopping done in the process! Please make plans to attend this wonderful event.

Drive-Thru Nativity



Sunday and Monday,
December 18 and 19 2011 from
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Helpers are needed for the annual Drive-Thru Nativity. This ministry has always been a blessing for all who have participated and driven through. Below is a list where help is needed to organize this year's event. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Linda Faulkner at 210-387-1437. Below is a list of the different work areas. There will be opportunities to sign up in the narthex.

- **Cast Members**
- **Kitchen Hostesses**(Bethlehem Café)
- **Advertising**
- **Setting up the different sets**
- **Costumes-helpers with dressing characters**
- **Lighting**
- **Help fixing some set pieces**
- **Welcome & Farewell Greeters**

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

*"O COME, LET US ADORE
HIM"*

Oxford UMC Christmas Worship Services are scheduled for Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24 at 7:30 pm. This will be traditional candlelight service featuring a child-friendly Children's Time with special music from the Oxford UMC Chancel Choir and the Oxford Praise Band.

Christmas Morning Worship will be on Sunday, December 25 at 10:30 am. Sunday School classes will not meet and breakfast will not be served. There will be cookie and coffee fellowship available in the narthex following the service.

Merry Christmas from Oxford UMC