

**Fifth
Sunday Sing
at the
Pentecostal
Church of God
3rd & Carroll**

**Sunday,
January 30
6pm**

**Come and sing
praise to the
Lord with us!**

The Texhoma Vision

**Texhoma
United Methodist Church
Rev. Rachel Parrott**

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300 Main St/ PO Box 446  
Texhoma, OK 73949  
[www.texhomaumc.org](http://www.texhomaumc.org)  
Church: 580-423-7231  
Parsonage: 580-423-7460  
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January 15, 2011

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*Hebrews 11:1 Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the confidence of things not seen...:8 By faith, Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; as he set out, not knowing where he was going.*

The start of a new year brings reflection on the year past and anticipation for the year ahead. We look forward with a mixture of hope and trepidation. Sometimes we feel the same thing in our faith life. We give thanks God brought us this far, and while we have hope for the future, we are unsure of sure of what it might hold.

Faith allowed Abraham to leave all he had ever known to go to an unnamed land as God had instructed. That same faith offers the same strength and assurance to us as we enter the new

chapters in our lives and the new directions in our faith journeys.

Now, your faith journey may not lead to distant lands, yet you may feel yourself called into the unknown. While you may remain in a familiar place, life itself brings changes as neighbors move and new ones arrive, jobs change, health problems come and go. Life looks familiar yet is always changing.

Further, God may be calling you to step out in new and different ways: reaching out to the new neighbors, volunteering in the community, taking a new leadership role at church, learning a new way to serve.

Take heart: as God calls, God equips. The same faith that strengthened Abraham long ago can strengthen you. God calls us to step up and claim the blessed inheritance God holds for us. This year, be resolved to answer when God calls.

Look forward to this new year and all the possibilities it holds. Be open to the many blessings that God seeks to give you in this year.



## Local Church Leaders Workshop

All church officers and members who are seeking to enrich their leadership skills and grow in the faith journey, are encouraged to attend LCLW. This event provides a forum to share your ideas with other individuals from churches in your district, and also to gain new insights from well-prepared and skilled workshop leaders.

The Woodward District will hold its LCLW on Saturday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, at First United Methodist Church at 1111 Downs Street in Woodward.

In addition to workshops on such topics as UMW, church finance, missions, youth ministry and many others, this event is a wonderful opportunity to spend time with Bishop Hayes.

The day begins with the 10am worship, and includes lunch and two sessions of classes. Mark the date. Carpool from Texhoma is possible. Call the church for more information or go to the OKUMC website [www.okumc.org](http://www.okumc.org). A link to the brochure is found on the calendar.

## Advent and Christmas in Texhoma

Looking back to the Advent and Christmas season, you can see the many blessings of that time. Throughout December, the blessed season was celebrated through fellowship, service

and worship. Here is a sampling of this year's observance in Texhoma:

### *Christmas Cantata*

Beginning with our first practice in October, we knew that this year's community choir and cantata would be special. We had 28 singers and musicians at that first practice. The night of shared worship, we had 30 voices, three musician, two narrators, a dozen children in the Nativity scene, adult volunteers and our wonderful director.

Most importantly, we had the Good News of the birth of Jesus Christ as our song and the focus of our worship. We sang, "The Promised Hope starts with a baby's first cry." Through songs and action, we retold the events of that night long ago and how everything changes because Jesus Christ, Son of God was born.

Our celebration and fellowship continued as we shared refreshments, friendship and the joy of the season.

### *Texhoma Christmas Effort*

The Ministerial Alliance and many faithful volunteers and the donations of the community pulled together again this year in the Texhoma Christmas Effort. Each year this Effort collects food and some other everyday items for families in our community to experience the generosity of others.

Collection boxes and jars placed at Texhoma's churches, businesses and schools held a wealth of non-perishable food items and monetary donations so that many could be presented a Christmas ham along with the box of food for families.

The whole Effort reveals the generosity and caring of the great little community called Texhoma, OK/TX.

### *Advent Study and Fellowship*

During the activity and rush of the Christmas Season, several church members took a time out on Wednesday evenings for an Advent study and a time of merriment.

The four-week study by J Ellsworth Kalas entitled *Songs of Christmas* and was based on some favorite Christmas carols.

After the study, members retired to the fellowship hall for refreshments and some rousing games of "Apples to Apples."

On one Wednesday evening the whole group dismissed after the study and joined our friends at the Faith Missionary Church for their Christmas program. This was a real blessing for everyone.

These Advent Gatherings were occasions for rejoicing.

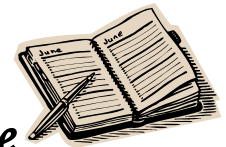
The next Church Family Night is scheduled for February 16<sup>th</sup>. Call the church for more information.

Sue Flemming

### *Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship*

As darkness fell on Christmas Eve, people gathered at the church to worship the birth of our king. We congregated in the choir loft for an intimate service of scripture and song.

We read the gospel's account of the birth of Jesus with angels preparing the young couple to receive the Son of God, their travel to Bethlehem, that humble stable, the angels' song urging the shepherds to go see the baby king, and the shepherds' proclamation of all they had seen and heard. So much activity centered on the baby king. We joined the quiet celebration around that manger-become-cradle.



## *Save the Date*

**Wed. evenings 6pm Hymn Sing**  
gather to sing hymns: both beloved favorites and new offerings

**Jan. 19 Nominations Meeting 7pm**  
**23- Worship Committee 3pm**  
**26- Mission and Ministry 7pm**  
**Saturday January 29 Woodward**  
**Local Church Leadership Workshop**  
District-wide opportunity to gather for worship, learning and fellowship

**February 2-Nurture & Care Meeting**  
**16-Church Family Night**