

## RELIGION

## SATELLITE BRANCH



The Revs. Tom Gray (left) and Wayne Hardy, co-pastors of the Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian, pose in the sanctuary of the church. They are planning a satellite church in Jenks at which Hardy will be the lead pastor. MICHAEL WYKE/Tulsa World file

## Kirk of the Hills plans a branch in Jenks

BY BILL SHERMAN  
World Religion Writer

The leadership of Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian approved plans Tuesday to build Kirk Crossing, a satellite church in Jenks.

"We've had a dream since 1992 to start a new church," said co-pastor Wayne Hardy. "We're really excited about it."

Unlike a traditional church plant, in which one church starts another church that eventually will be independent, Kirk Crossing will remain part of Kirk of the Hills, a prominent south Tulsa church.

"We're calling it one church in two locations," said Hardy, who will be the lead pastor at the new location.

The satellite church concept

is catching on across the United States. It offers a less expensive way for a church to expand its influence into another community. First Baptist Church downtown recently announced they were establishing a satellite campus in Sand Springs.

"It's a wonderful trend. It's working," Hardy said.

Kirk Crossing will be located on U.S. 75 between 111th and 121st Street on part of 80 acres that the church owns.

The church will have a strong emphasis on young families and children, Hardy said. Worship will be contemporary, and preaching will be live, not by video as in some satellite churches.

Plans call for a \$7 million to \$9 million building with a 500-seat worship center, a large children's area, and combination lobby/cof-

fee shop area.

Part of the 80-acre site will be sold to retail businesses to form a community of which the church will be a part.

"It's kind of the old-style of church as the center of the community," Hardy said.

Neighborhoods are springing up all around that area, he said.

The church's outdoor recreation fields and building will be available for community use.

Church leaders have met with civic leaders and participated in parades and other community events.

"We recently held two events out on the property, and had a wonderful turnout from the residents in that area. They are as excited as we are to provide them a place where they can get to know their neighbors, and

most importantly, hear the word of God on a regular basis," Hardy said.

Kirk of the Hills plans to raise funds beginning in January, and to begin services on Easter in a temporary location while the building is under construction.

"Many people would question why we should spend money developing a new congregation ... in difficult economic times," Hardy said.

"All we can say in response is that as believers in Jesus Christ, we are called to spread the word throughout the world and even here in our own backyard.

"After much prayer and consideration, this is the direction we feel God is directing us to go. There is never an ideal time to build a new congregation, and we are called to make sacrifices and

give back to God as he directs and encourages us to," he said.

Investors in the church bought the 80-acre parcel in 2007 when Kirk of the Hills was in a court battle to keep their property, and was facing possible relocation.

The church earlier left the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. over concerns that the denomination was drifting from its biblical foundation, and then sued the denomination to retain its property at 4102 E. 61st St. When they lost the suit, they reached an agreement to buy back the property from the denomination.

The church has since joined the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, a smaller, more conservative denomination.

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## Still time to climb aboard Christmas Train



This 1943 narrow-gauge locomotive lets off steam at Christmas Train, a holiday program at Dry Gulch USA, Church on the Move's youth camp on U.S. 69 just north of Pryor. Courtesy

BY BILL SHERMAN  
World Religion Writer

About 55,000 tickets were sold this season to the Christmas Train, Church on the Move's annual Christmas camp that features genuine old-fashioned steam locomotives.

Christmas Train opened in late November, and concludes the season Tuesday at Dry Gulch USA, the church's youth camp on U.S. 69 just north of Pryor.

A few tickets are still available for Monday and Tuesday nights at the weekday rate of \$12 for adults and \$10 for children.

Saturday and Sunday nights are sold out.

Advance tickets are recommended and are available online at [tulsaworld.com/christmas-train](http://tulsaworld.com/christmas-train) or by calling 234-8100.

In addition to the trains, Christmas Train offers family activities that include

go-karts, a carousel, bumper cars, stage coach rides, shops, restaurants, a bakery, a coffee shop, pony rides, Santa's palace with photos with Santa, a saloon with an Old West music show and arcade game rooms.

The Rev. Willie George, founder of the church and its Dry Gulch USA camp, said the four steam locomotives at the camp were all restored by the men of the church.

The original Dry Gulch train was purchased in 1994

from a plantation in Mississippi where it was used for logging and mining.

The second was purchased along with the narrow-gauge track from an amusement park in Richmond, Va.

It was transported to the Oklahoma site in 50 tractor-trailers.

"We think this is the only functional narrow-gauge railway in Oklahoma," George said.

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## this week

## SERVICES

Christmas Eve services. 4 p.m. Thursday, children's pageant and music with Eucharist; 10 p.m. Midnight Mass, **Church of the Holy Spirit Anglican**, 12121 E. 41st St.

Christmas Eve candlelight service with jazz vocalist Tavis Minner. 6 p.m. Thursday, **Unity Church of Christianity**, 3355 S. Jamestown Ave.

Christmas morning prayer service and community breakfast. 9 a.m. Friday, **St. Peter's Episcopal Church**, 9100 E. 21st St.

## MUSIC

Eve of Christmas musical

concert. 7 p.m. Wednesday, **Dove Ministry**, 2833 W. Main St., Jenks.

Rick Fraley, presenting a free concert of acoustical Christmas piano music. 6 p.m. Sunday, **Asbury United Methodist Church**, 6767 S. Mingo Road.

## PROGRAMS

Bringing Christmas Home holiday productions. 7 p.m. Saturday and 6 p.m. Sunday, **Woodland Acres Baptist Church**, 5511 S. Harvard Ave. Also, Christmas Eve service 5 p.m. Thursday.

## OTHER

When Christmas Hurts, a service of comfort for those

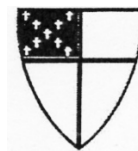
experiencing loss, sorrow, pain, depression, addiction or anything else making the holidays difficult. 4:30 p.m. Sunday, **St. John's Episcopal Church**, 4200 S. Atlanta Place.

Lecture and discussion on process theology and its implications for Christmas. 6 p.m. Tuesday, **Community of Hope United Church of Christ**, 2425 S. Yale Ave.

This Week column offers churches and other groups an opportunity to publicize news items and upcoming events that may be of interest to people outside their organization. Continuing events may be published once when they begin. All articles are subject to editing and will

be printed on a space-available basis. Items must be received in writing by 5 p.m. Wednesday for Saturday publication. Mail to Bill Sherman, religion writer, P.O. Box 1770, Tulsa, OK 74102; e-mail to [bill.sherman@tulsaworld.com](mailto:bill.sherman@tulsaworld.com); or fax to (918) 581-8353.

**CHURCH OF THE OPEN DOOR**  
James Tedder, Pastor  
Sunday's Message  
11am  
"The Janasseries are Coming"  
1916 East Archer at Xanthus  
Since 1948  
371-5038



## THE EPISCOPAL CHURCHES OF GREATER TULSA INVITE YOU TO CHRISTMAS SERVICES

**St. Luke's**  
4818 E. 9th • 834-4800  
Eve: 4pm Blessing of Creche & Eucharist  
11:00pm Festival Celebration of Holy Eucharist

**Church of the Holy Cross**  
9309 N. 129th E. Ave., Owasso 272-1035  
Eve: 10:30pm Holy Eucharist  
Day: 10:00am Holy Eucharist

**Christ Church**  
10901 S. Yale • 299-7510  
Eve: 5pm Children's Pageant & Holy Eucharist  
10:30pm Carols & Midnight Christmas Mass  
Day: 10am Holy Eucharist

**St. Paul's**  
1310 N. Sioux, Claremore • 341-0168  
Eve: 6:00pm Family Eucharist & Service  
11:00pm Midnight Service  
Day: 10:00am Holy Eucharist

**St. Peter's**  
9100 E. 21st • 627-2713  
Eve: 7:00pm Eucharist and Wassail Party  
Day: 9:00am Morning Prayer & Community Breakfast

**Church of the Good Shepherd**  
1420 E. Dewey, Sapulpa • 224-5144  
Eve: 10:30pm Christmas Mass

**St. Matthew's**  
601 Lake Dr., Sand Springs • 245-7552  
Eve: 7:00pm Eucharist

**St. John's**  
4200 S. Atlanta Pl. • 742-7381  
Eve: 4:30pm with Pageant, 9:00pm, 11:15pm Holy Eucharist  
Day: 10:00am Holy Eucharist

**St. Aidan's**  
4045 N. Cincinnati • 425-7882  
Eve: 8:30pm Holy Eucharist

**Trinity**  
501 S. Cincinnati • 582-4128  
Eve: 5pm with Pageant  
9pm & 11pm  
Day: 10am Holy Eucharist

**St. Anna's Chapel**  
@ St. Simeon's Home  
3701 N. Cincinnati • 425-3583  
Day: 10:00am Holy Eucharist

**St. Bede's**  
Hwy 64 & 238th W. Ave., Westport 743-2686  
Eve: 6:00pm Holy Eucharist w/carols

**St. Patrick's**  
4250 W. Houston, Broken Arrow 294-9444  
Eve: 5:30pm Holy Eucharist  
10:30pm Holy Eucharist  
Day: 10:00am Christmas Day Holy Eucharist

**Grace**  
218 N. 6th, Muskogee 687-5416  
Eve: 11:00pm Holy Eucharist  
Day: 10:00am Holy Eucharist

**Church of the Redeemer**  
213 N. Seminole, Okmulgee 756-2384  
Eve: 7:30pm Holy Eucharist w/ reception following  
Day: 10:00am Morning Prayer

**St. Dunstan's**  
5635 E. 71st • 492-7140  
Eve: 7:00pm Children's Service with Communion  
11:00pm Holy Communion (Carols at 10:30)