

NEWS

OKC church that left during Methodist disaffiliation has thrived in new denomination



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Key Points AI-assisted summary

A new Global Methodist congregation in North Oklahoma City is hosting a tent revival to celebrate its growth.

The church formed after a split from the United Methodist Church over theological issues like same-sex marriage.

The "Rooted and Renewed Weekend" includes a family event on Sept. 20 and a renewal and revival service on Sept. 21.

A local congregation affiliated with a relatively new Methodist denomination that grew from a small group of laypeople to a thriving congregation in less than two years is celebrating that growth with a tent revival on the church's newly purchased property.

North OKC Methodist Church, founded by a group of former United Methodists, will host "Rooted and Renewed Weekend," which includes two community outreach events Sept. 20-21 at 12800 N MacArthur.

The church is one of four Oklahoma City metro area houses of worship with ties to the Global Methodist Church, a denomination that was launched in 2022 to uphold traditional Wesleyan theology, such as conservative stances on issues like same-sex marriage and the ordination of gay clergy, which diverged from the United Methodist Church's stance that appeared to become more progressive over the

years. The new denomination was founded as the ever-widening rift in the United Methodist Church evolved into a full-blown split over same-sex marriage and gay ordination, along with other issues such as the authority of scripture.

More: What happened when members of a new Methodist denomination gathered in the OKC metro area?

Local attorney Cara Nicklas, along with other North OKC Methodist members, said their congregation grew from a small group of laypeople to the current thriving congregation in less than two years, so they have much to celebrate. They said they recently hired their first full-time pastor, the Rev. Bryan Wardroup, and they also purchased the property on N MacArthur, where they plan to build a church. The special weekend of activities is a major outreach designed to help the church connect with and get to know the surrounding community.

A family oriented event featuring hot dogs, snow cones and inflatables is set for 5 to 7 p.m. Sept. 20, and a renewal service will be held under a big tent at 5 p.m. Sept. 21, with dinner provided by North OKC Methodist's sister church St. Andrew's Community Church, which will supply pulled pork sandwiches. A revival service with the Rev. Robert Hayes will be held after the renewal service. Hayes served as bishop of the Oklahoma United Methodist Conference and Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference from 2004 until his retirement in 2016. He is currently bishop emeritus in the Global Methodist Church.

More: Oklahoma Methodists' celebration for retiring bishop includes tears, joy, gifts and service

Amid Methodist disaffiliation in Oklahoma, a new church group emerges

North OKC Methodist Church began in late 2023, joining St. Andrew's Community Church and other Oklahoma City area Global Methodist congregations including St. Mark's Methodist Church in Bethany, and New Creation Global Methodist Church in Norman.

The North OKC Methodist's founding members said they left their United Methodist congregations in hopes of preserving their Wesleyan roots. By the time the new church formed, the United Methodist Church in Oklahoma had undergone a season of disaffiliation, along with numerous United Methodist regional conferences around the world. In Oklahoma, 127 congregations, mostly conservative, chose to cut ties with the denomination during a designated time period that allowed them to exit with their church buildings and other assets.

In the past few weeks, North OKC Methodist welcomed Wardroup as pastor after relying on guest pastors and volunteer leaders. Wardroup said he was a licensed local pastor when he led a United Methodist congregation in the Texas Panhandle through the disaffiliation process. The congregation eventually affiliated with the Global Methodist Church and he was ordained as a deacon in the Global Methodist Church in 2023. Wardroup said he was ordained as a Global Methodist Church minister in June 2025.

He said the coming outreach activities were planned before he and his wife Jordan and their children came to Oklahoma but he is grateful for the congregation's groundwork and logistical preparations for the events. He and many of the church members planned to fan out into the neighborhoods surrounding the church to invite residents to join them for the weekend of activities.

"It's kind of a jumpstart on meeting some of those folks and developing some of those relationships," Wardroup said.

The minister said he is focused on moving forward from the United Methodist schism.

More: An OK church left their history and United Methodist Church behind. It transformed their spiritual journey

"The last several years in the Methodist world has been difficult and messy and there's been so much controversy," he said.

"One of the things that I'm most excited about and one of the things that I think we're really focused on with this revival is that we are looking forward. We're looking ahead as a congregation. We understand that we've come out of a tumultuous season and so much of what people do as human beings is to look back and keep dwelling on the hurts and rehashing those old wounds and that's not what we want to do."

Several members of the North OKC Methodist congregation echoed his sentiments.

Nicklas said the The Global Methodist Church formed in 2022 out of a desire for a renewed emphasis on the authority of Scripture, personal holiness and global connection. At its convening General Conference in San José, Costa Rica, in September 2024, leaders from around the world gathered to set the denomination's doctrine and discipline and Nicklas was among them, serving as a delegate. She said the denomination has placed a high value on global connection and partnership, unlike many independent church movements.

Nicklas said North OKC Methodist members are "really all about moving forward" together in lock step with their denomination and not interested in rehashing the past.

"I think the congregation has moved on," she said.

Stacey Trupiano, who has been helping lead the church's youth group, said she wanted her children to be part of a youth group where they would learn the Bible and not just be entertained.

"But, I also wanted a church where they wouldn't get lost in the crowd," she said. "At North OKC, youth and children are connected to the whole church family. Older members encourage them, share their wisdom, and model faith. It's not about chasing fads — it's about reclaiming our Methodist roots with a passion for holiness, worship, and mission."

Susan Wilson said she looked forward to a future with like-minded church members in a denomination they have all embraced.

"It's exciting and it's focused on Jesus and reading what he has for us and it's filling with a lot of people who are looking for the same things, looking for meaning in their life that's focused on him," she said.

"This denomination is standing on the truth, not a watered-down version of it."

Treasured 'Wesleyan heritage'

For his part, Hayes said he's looking forward to preaching in Oklahoma City, where he will undoubtedly see many of the Oklahomans he came to know during his tenure as Oklahoma United Methodist bishop.

Hayes, 78, said his title as a bishop emeritus of the Global Methodist Church means he has become a part of a new expression of Methodism. He is currently part of the leadership at The Woodlands Methodist Church just outside Houston and affiliated with the Global Methodist Church denomination. He said he is still retired but he preaches at three traditional Sunday worship services at the church, which he said has 15,000 members and seven campuses.

"I'm still doing ministry, it's just under a different heading," Hayes said.

The bishop emeritus said he knows that some churches remained United Methodist, while some that exited the United Methodist Church became independent and others became part of the Global Methodist Church. He said he was drawn to the Global Methodist denomination because it comes from the Wesleyan movement.

"I just believe and really treasure the Wesleyan heritage that I inherited as a third-generation Methodist preacher in my family," he said.

"I'm just delighted to be part of this new expression of Methodism and all those who are Methodist, regardless of what camp they're in, I wish them well."

To learn more

North OKC Methodist Church's Rooted and Renewed Weekend will include a family event from 5 to 7 p.m. Sept. 20, and a renewal service at 5 p.m. Sept. 21, both at 12800 N MacArthur, followed by a revival service. For more information, go to www.northokcmethodist.church.