

50
years

Pray • Serve • Give
1962–2012

The big 5-0!



Throughout these 50 years, countless people have come through the doors of Sherwood Oaks Christian Church or interacted with our church family in some way.

A few of us have been involved with the church since the beginning. Others have been connected for several years, while others may have just joined us a few months or even weeks ago.

No matter how long you've called Sherwood Oaks "home," we've all been shaped by the stories of those that have come before us.

We hope you enjoy the people and ministries featured - through story and photography - in the following pages. It's fun to recall where we've been, and then look forward to where God is leading us.

Ready? Let's celebrate the big 5-0 for Sherwood Oaks and be quick to give thanks!

Pray • Serve • Give

1960s



SHERWOOD OAKS' SECOND CHURCH BUILDING, 1963

Our first members

TAKEN FROM "THE SECOND CHRISTIAN CALLER" (NEWSLETTER) IN 1962

The success of the work we have begun here at Second Christian is dependent upon the prayers of those who see the need for the establishment of this congregation in a growing city such as Bloomington.

Listed below are the names of those who have been with us at least once since the work was started on December 2, 1962:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Margaret Harsha Eichna | Tracy & Ricky Hennekam |
| Jane Bailey | Cecis Fiscus |
| George Appleyard | Salah Hotar |
| Jan O'Dell | Iva Mitchell |
| Mr & Mrs. Carl Clark (Carla & Paul) | Mr & Mrs. Freddie Robertson |
| Mr & Mrs. Lawrence Brown (Diana) | Tom Tolbert |
| Mr & Mrs. Robert Martin | Barbara Newton |
| Mr & Mrs. Edgar Harmon (Beverly) | Minnie Hedrick |
| Mr & Mrs. Richard Hennekam | Herbert, Jean, David, Alan & Jeri Lentz |

The early days: a dream come true

THOUGHTS FROM MARTHA (CLARK) HOOVER, A CHARTER MEMBER

Fifty years ago, Martha (Clark) Hoover was one of the first people to pray for, envision and support an Independent Christian Church in Bloomington. Her prayers were answered when Herb Lentz and his family began Second Christian Church on Howe Street in December 1962. At this first gathering, a handful of people met to worship.

Martha and her husband, Carl, became members at Second Christian, investing their time, energy and resources into this small but growing congregation. Carl served as the first Elder of the church.

The church only met at the Howe Street location for a few months before moving to the Walnut Street Christian Church building on the corner of Walnut and Grimes. This space had been available for rent, and then the members of Second Christian Church solicited funds and support from area Christian Churches to purchase the building.

Funds were tight for the church during this time. Minister Lentz worked as a school bus driver and his wife worked at IU. Everything that was done at and for the church was done by volunteers.

EVENTS OF THE 60s

IN THE EARLY 1960s:
COST FOR A NEW HOUSE: \$12,700.00
NEW CAR: \$2,600.00
AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME: \$5,315.00
GAS: 25 CENTS/GALLON

IN BLOOMINGTON:
COLLEGE MALL OPENED IN 1965.

NATIONALLY:
HISTORIC CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 PASSED.

IN BLOOMINGTON:
LAKE MONROE CREATED TO HELP WITH FLOOD CONTROL FOR THE WHITE RIVER.

NATIONALLY:
FIRST BEATLES RECORDING, "LOVE ME DO," RELEASED 1962.

But this church body continued to grow. The first service in the new building had 63 people. Martha recalls that a mother and child walked a long distance to church that first Sunday to place their membership. People were excited to be part of this new church family. Martha remembers thinking, "Our dream has come true. God has blessed us."

Throughout the past 50 years, Martha has seen the church grow from just a few members to thousands, and she has experienced the joys and challenges that come in the midst of so much change and growth.

About the early years, Martha says, "We all worked hard. Sometimes it was a struggle. But it was worth it." Martha saw the potential of a church that could truly change the culture of Bloomington and the world. And she continues to see the potential of Sherwood Oaks to this day.

1970s

Messy memories - to connect with kids

THOUGHTS FROM LOIS STEPHENS

Watching kids grow and learn more about their faith has been a huge encouragement for Lois Stephens - an active member of Sherwood Oaks since 1975.

What are some of Lois' favorite memories?

Years ago, during VBX (our Vacation Bible Experience), John Robertson and other leaders were trying to make the world's largest popsicle. It didn't get frozen all the way. The red Kool-Aid ran all over the church's basement floor and was a huge, sticky mess to clean up! We also made the world's largest banana split in a new gutter with the elementary children.

While Lois has many stories to tell from the many years at Sherwood Oaks, her most significant memories are seeing her husband, daughter, son and granddaughter all baptized at the church. Lois is grateful for the faithful, God-honoring teaching at Sherwood Oaks that has changed the lives of many in her family.

These days, Lois can be found singing in the choir, working in the church office, assisting in the kitchen, leading Bible studies and serving wherever there is a need.

Her dreams for the future of Sherwood Oaks are simple. Lois prays that we will continue to preach the Gospel, continue with our outreach efforts, and continue to win souls for the Lord here and throughout the world.



BALLOON LAUNCH, GROUNDBREAKING FOR THE WINSLOW ROAD BUILDING ADDITION

A big heart and big dreams

THOUGHTS FROM BEV PETRY

When Bev and Tom Petry first began attending Sherwood Oaks in 1971, it was a small church with a big heart and big dreams. The Petry family served Sherwood Oaks faithfully through the years, from supporting new ministers and families as they came through the doors to Tom's long-lasting service as an Elder and church leader.

Bev says, "My favorite memory has been watching the church grow through the years with Tom and Elsie leading us. Also, I saw my husband become such a strong Christian. He was an outstanding husband and father, and I attribute a lot of that to his involvement with the church."

Now, as a grandmother, Bev knows that the future of the church is in the hands of the children around her. She says, "My dream for the future of the church is for it to continue to be a light for Bloomington and the world. Without Sherwood Oaks not as many people would have heard God's Word, especially those from other parts of the world taking what they learn here back to their own countries."

EVENTS OF THE 70s

IN THE EARLY 1970s:
COST FOR A NEW HOUSE:
\$23,400.00
NEW CAR: \$3,900.00
AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME:
\$9,350.00
GAS: 36 CENTS/GALLON

IN BLOOMINGTON:
IU MEN'S BASKETBALL WON ITS
THIRD NCAA CHAMPIONSHIP

IN 1976. (COACH BOB KNIGHT'S
FIRST CHAMPIONSHIP.) THIS
TEAM REMAINS THE LAST
UNDEFEATED NCAA MEN'S
BASKETBALL CHAMPION.

NATIONALLY:
PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON
ANNOUNCED HIS RESIGNATION
FOLLOWING THE WATERGATE
SCANDAL IN 1974.

SHERWOOD OAKS' LOGO, 1977



1980s



31 years and counting

THOUGHTS FROM ELSIE ELLSWORTH

In January 1981, Tom and Elsie Ellsworth moved to Bloomington for Tom to begin as the senior minister at Sherwood Oaks Christian Church. They had no idea what God was going to do during the next 31 years (and even beyond).

When Elsie first started serving at the church, there wasn't full-time staff other than Tom. So, she took care of all the music-related items (choirs, worship teams, music programs and children's programs). Tom took care of the youth and adults, and he preached. They averaged 80 people in worship on Sundays, but that would quickly change.

In the 31 years she has served here, Elsie says that Sherwood Oaks has deepened her faith by allowing her to be around and connected to wonderful Christian people. The church has always emphasized spiritual growth, whether that was being a part of a class, being involved in activities or serving together. While there have been leadership changes and people coming and going, Elsie says, "Everyone here is so sincere. You have integrity. You have real leaders. There has always been a lot of unity."

As we look at the first 50 years of Sherwood and look on to the future, Elsie is excited to see what will happen next. Her dream is that Sherwood Oaks "remains faithful and united and that we continue to work together. We have to remain faithful to the Word, especially in today's world. We can continue to make an impact and reach more and more people that need to hear God's message."

EVENTS OF THE 80s

IN THE EARLY 1980s:
COST FOR A NEW HOUSE:
\$68,714.00
NEW CAR: \$7,210.00
AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME:
\$19,170.00
GAS: \$1.19/GALLON

IN BLOOMINGTON:
THE IU MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

WON A FOURTH AND FIFTH NCAA CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1981 AND 1987 WITH COACH BOB KNIGHT.

NATION:
THE FIRST PERSONAL COMPUTER, THE IBM PC, WAS RELEASED IN 1981. THE FIRST MOBILE PHONE, BY MOTOROLA, WAS LAUNCHED IN 1983.



ATTENDANCE RECORD BROKEN WITH TOM ELLSWORTH, BILL MCPIKE, RICHARD SARE AND TOM PETRY, EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 1981.

SHERWOOD OAKS HAD A TRADITION THAT IF A CHURCH ATTENDANCE RECORD WAS BROKEN, THE PREACHER'S TIE WOULD BE CUT. ON TOM ELLSWORTH'S FIRST EASTER AT THE CHURCH, AN ATTENDANCE RECORD WAS BROKEN. THESE THREE MEN ENJOYED THEIR TASK FOR THE DAY!

TOM SAYS, "THE THREE GODLY MEN IN THIS PICTURE WITH ME HAVE NOW GONE HOME TO BE WITH THE LORD. BUT THESE MEN AND THEIR FAMILIES WERE THOSE IN THE CHURCH WHO KEPT OUR CHURCH'S VISION ALIVE FOR THE FUTURE. I'M HOPING SOMEHOW THAT GOD PULLS BACK THE CURTAIN ON ETERNITY AND SAYS TO THE THREE OF THEM, 'HEY, COME OVER HERE AND SEE. THE CHURCH IS CELEBRATING 50 YEARS BECAUSE YOU NEVER GAVE UP ON THE VISION.'"

SHERWOOD OAKS' LOGO, 1984



SHERWOOD OAKS' THIRD CHURCH BUILDING

Finding community and connection

THOUGHTS FROM JIM AND JENNI BOHN

When Jim and Jenni Bohn came to Sherwood Oaks in 1982, they had no idea what the next 30 years would hold - for both the church and for them as a family.

They've both been involved in numerous ministries at Sherwood Oaks. Jenni has volunteered in the nursery, Bible Bowl, a junior high girls' core group, and now serves in choir, drama and Adopt-A-Student.

Jim is the longest-standing member of the church's media ministry (25 years and counting!). When he began, it was called the "visual ministry," and it started with taking Polaroid pictures of new members and posting them on a bulletin board in the foyer.

Through their involvement, the Bohns have found community and connection here. And it's this close sense of community that has helped their family through some challenging seasons of life. Through tears, Jenni says, "The church family has always encircled us. It's made some tough times much easier to get through."

1990s

A wake-up call to reshape all of us

THOUGHTS BY TOM ELLSWORTH

The call came in the middle of the night and jolted me out of my sleep. The next words, “The church building is on fire,” catapulted me out of bed. That was September 17, 1991, and I remember it like it was yesterday.

By the time I reached the church building, the Bloomington Fire Department was working diligently to control the blaze. Later that morning as a crowd of church members assembled to help, the fire moved into the roof over the church office wing. We all stood shoulder to shoulder watching helplessly. When the burning trusses collapsed into my office, I muttered mournfully, “Well, every sermon I’ve ever written is going up in flames.”

There was a pause, and then Ralph Haycraft said, “Well good! Maybe we’ll hear something new for a change.” There was a ripple of laughter that echoed up and down the line. Somehow being able to laugh in the face of destruction became a turning point for all of us.

Unexpectedly, in many respects, the fire pulled our church family together, reinforced our purpose for existence, and confirmed that God works for good in any and all circumstances. Jim Bohn posted a message on the church sign that day which heralded this lasting truth. It said: The building is damaged, but the Church isn’t hurt.

People from the church, community and other congregations pitched in to help us clean out what was left in the building. When the day was nearly over and the initial task complete, we gathered in a prayer circle and through our tears thanked God that all was well.

Bloomington High School South let us use their auditorium the following Sunday (and for the next two years) for our worship services.

My favorite memory of the day came as I was cleaning out my office. Through the open window I was handing down books, desk items and wall hangings to folks outside. Our daughter Rebekah, six years old at the time, looked up and said, “Dad, don’t forget the picture.” I grabbed the last couple pictures hanging on the wall and handed them out. Then she said it again. I was sure I had everything when I noticed what she was concerned about. It was a picture she had colored for me that was taped to the side of my bookshelf. I carefully took it down and handed it to her. She smiled.

I still have that picture tucked away in a safe place. It reminds me of the fire and how it reshaped the life of this congregation. It also reminds me that the little things in life really do count. Most of all it reminds me that genuine love triumphs over tragedy. And while I hope we never go through another fire, I wouldn’t trade that moment in time for anything.



First impressions, lasting faith

THOUGHTS FROM BILL AND REBA BUTLER

Bill and Reba Butler first heard about and then came to Sherwood Oaks through the Moments in the Master’s Life Live Nativity. The church was meeting in the high school, and they were impressed by the resilience of the church after the fire. Bill says, “The effort it took to have a worship service and offer youth programs at Bloomington South High School and the attitudes of those involved were impressive. Everyone worked together so well.”

Bill and Reba’s faith has been deepened by the friendships they have found at Sherwood Oaks. They shared, “You can see how walking with Christ and having others changes lives, gives hope in sickness and even death, and brings great joy.” Bill and Reba are active members, participating in the Beacons class, TopNotch, the gardening ministry, teaching Wednesday night classes and helping people become debt free through Financial Peace University and Hope Financial Counseling.

As leaders and champions of the church’s involvement in Financial Peace University, Bill and Reba dream of a church that is debt free and able to do big things in the name of Christ.

► To read more, go to socc.org/50yearstories

SHERWOOD OAKS’ LOGO, 1994



EVENTS OF THE 90S

IN THE EARLY 1990S:
COST FOR A NEW HOUSE:
\$123,000.00
NEW CAR: \$16,000.00
AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME:
\$28,970.00
GAS: \$1.34/GALLON

NATION:
SEINFELD, A POPULAR TV
SITCOM, RAN FOR NINE SEASONS
ALL THROUGHOUT THE 90S.

IN THE WORLD:
THE WORLD WIDE WEB BECAME
AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

2000s



This place is family

THOUGHTS FROM LISA GUPTON

Lisa shares this story about her family: We had just learned that we would be moving to the Bloomington area in the summer of 2009. We were also expecting our first son, Grayson, in September of that year. To say that we were terrified to move to a place where we didn't know a single person with a brand new baby and a brand new job would be an understatement!

I immediately got online to look for a church. God led me to Sherwood Oaks' website, and I randomly clicked to learn more about Lyne Brown, the then-outreach assistant at Sherwood Oaks. She and her husband, Gary, were our first introduction into the amazing family of Sherwood Oaks.

They welcomed us into their home, even though we were complete strangers, and helped us get settled. We were introduced to Mark and Marilyn Kinkead and many others. Now, we've developed incredible friendships and have so much love and support through the people of Sherwood Oaks. I don't know where we would be without this church. We love raising our family in such a wonderful church home.

Since that first day, Lisa and her family have found their way at Sherwood Oaks, volunteering and serving both inside and outside the church. She currently helps out with the 4-year olds on Sunday mornings and attends the Roof-Crashers Friday Bible study.

When she and her husband finished taking Financial Peace University, she remembers turning to her son, Grayson, and telling him, "You have no idea how much this has changed your life." Since then, they have been huge supporters of FPU and helping other families get out of debt.

Lisa is excited to see where Sherwood Oaks is going next. She sees the church getting bigger numerically with the ability to do more community outreach. Lisa also values the importance Sherwood Oaks has placed on reaching young people and strengthening marriages. As we look to the future, she believes there is a need for even more ministry to help strengthen marriages: both chances to learn and to meet new people.



FOOTBALL SERVICE, 2009



CHILDREN'S MUSICAL, 2004

SHERWOOD OAKS' LOGO, 2001



2006

The launch and impact of HoosiersCare



THOUGHTS FROM CHERYL CLARK AND VICKIE CARMICHAEL, VOLUNTEERS WITH HOOSIERSCARE

Phil Thompson used his diagnosis of cancer as a catalyst. He saw a need and had a vision for how the people of Sherwood Oaks could reach out to those battling cancer. In 2006, HoosiersCare - a ministry supported by Sherwood Oaks - was launched to provide housing and friendship to those seeking treatment through the IU Health Proton Therapy Center in Bloomington.

In the past six years, Sherwood Oaks has helped more than 200 families - nearly 1,000 people - from all over the United States and even world. We've been blessed to connect with and share our homes with people of all walks of life and religious beliefs.

Knowing four-year-old Karsyn

Little Karsyn Bell had energy to spare! She loved animals, picture books, making jewelry and working on puzzles. She once asked if her middle name could be changed to "Frosting" because that was her favorite part of baking. Karsyn would tell you her happiness was because "God loves me!"

Karsyn and her family came to Bloomington two times for proton treatment. Karsyn had a brain tumor.

Our friendship and love for this family - for Karsyn and her parents, Brad and Anne - grew deep. We spent time together both in and out of the hospital. We laughed, cried and found hope together.

On January 23, 2009, we received word that little Karsyn had gone home to be with Jesus. We still hear the echo of her small voice saying, "God loves me!"

God brings the most incredible people with amazing stories right to our door through HoosiersCare. It's a blessing to be part of the journey with them.

2008

The launch and impact of The Pourhouse Café



THOUGHTS FROM DAVID CLARK, JOHN ROBERTSON AND LYNE BROWN

Opened in 2008, the Pourhouse Café is a non-profit coffeehouse near the Indiana University campus launched and supported by the people of Sherwood Oaks.

Church member John Robertson had the dream of opening a friendly place at IU where students, teachers and Bloomington residents could gather, get a good cup of coffee, and simply "do life" together. Today, The Pourhouse Café serves quality coffee while offering an inviting atmosphere and stressing the importance of giving to those in need.

This ministry offers Sherwood Oaks an incredible opportunity to serve others in a non-threatening way by simply selling coffee near IU's campus at 314 E. Kirkwood Avenue.



Every three months, the coffeehouse gives all profits and tips to various outreach organizations, which have included: Agua Viva Children's Home Guatemala, Punjab India Well Project, Haiti Earthquake Relief, Ethiopia Leper & AIDS Relief, South Central Indiana Flood Relief, Local Backpacks & School Supplies (with the Salvation Army), Healthy Families Bloomington, Hurricane Sandy Relief and many more.

2010s



A place to grow and serve – found it!

THOUGHTS FROM JOSELYN SANDS

Joselyn Sands, who just recently joined the Sherwood Oaks family in 2011, says, “I came looking for three things: foundational doctrine, worship, and community. And Sherwood Oaks has that.”

She attends the college/20-somethings group on Sunday mornings, volunteers at the Welcome Center, is part of Roof-Crashers, and is the director of One Girl Conference.

For Joselyn, being part of this church community has not only deepened her faith significantly, but she says, “It has made Bloomington more of a home for me. It’s important to have people that are like-minded, that are pursuing the same things in life.”

One of her favorite things about the church is that “We’re not only global, but we’re also very local. We love the people that are all around us.” Joselyn appreciates Sherwood Oaks’ leadership to develop The Pourhouse Café on the Indiana University campus and the International Furniture Drive, where international college students can get gently used furniture for their dorm or apartment.

Joselyn is also thankful for the opportunity she’s had to build relationships and community at Sherwood Oaks. Specifically, Claudia Mitchell, director of Married Life & Women’s Ministries, and Senior Minister Tom Ellsworth have connected with and challenged Joselyn to help her grow in her faith and as a leader.



Yes2Love comes to life

Sherwood Oaks’ identity with the Yes2Love logo and tagline was developed and introduced in 2011. But bigger than any logo mark, this new communications tool helps our church communicate both within the congregation and to our community and world about who we are and what our central purpose is.

In a society where we hear “no” an awful lot (with so much negativity and criticism), Sherwood Oaks is different. Simply put, we are a people that say YES! We say yes to God’s love, and we say yes to loving and serving others.

Yes2Love’s global impact

From the beginning, Sherwood Oaks has been about reaching outside its walls and impacting the world around us. The very first church bulletin shows that a portion of the offering was given to support mission work - and the same has been happening ever since that time.

In addition to sending funds out to support our 30+ mission partners, we send people into the world to reach the lost, make an impact and share the message of Christ with those who have not yet heard it.

Each year, hundreds from our church take time out of their summers, holidays and weekends to serve locally, nationally and globally.

Our people have served the world through our annual Global Outreach trips to Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Vienna, Romania and the High School trip to the Dominican Republic. We’ve sent people to Uganda, Ireland and Spain to further the Gospel around the world.

In addition, we’ve gone to Arizona to serve on an Indian Reservation and helped the urban poor in New York. In times of crisis, we have provided disaster assistance to Tuscaloosa, New Orleans and Henryville.

Wherever there is a need, the people of Sherwood Oaks are willing to go. As we look to the future, we know that God will continue to send us out into our world - and we’re excited to see where He will send His people next.

Today



SHERWOOD OAKS' BUILDING, 2012

Sherwood Oaks is now, and always has been, a place to call home. We're a family! And through this family, your faith can be encouraged, relationships strengthened, and your commitment to Christ will grow.

As we look at the world today, our aim is to build stronger, committed marriages for the long haul. We are committed to raising up a generation of children who will be sold-out followers of Christ. We want to pass the torch of our faith to current and future generations.

Every person at Sherwood Oaks has been impacted by the sacrifice of those who have come before us. We are here because they prayed that

this would be a church that was a beacon of light in a dark world. We are here because they risked everything to start a new church, a new place, in Bloomington. We are here because someone was willing to give his or her last dollar to further the mission of the church. We are here because they were here.

Our prayer is that the same will be true in five, 10, 20 and 50 years from now. May we be faithful today so that Sherwood Oaks will continue to be a place where the Gospel is preached, where lives are changed, and where everyone is welcome to come and experience new life in Jesus.



Let's act on this defining moment

THOUGHTS BY TOM ELLSWORTH, SENIOR MINISTER

Our 50th year as a congregation is more than a milestone - it's a defining moment. And we set some exciting goals to mark our 50th year. We've called these goals - about prayer, service and giving (to be debt free as a church) - our 50th Year Challenge.

The manner in which you embraced the prayer and service elements of our 50th Year Challenge gives me great hope that you will also join me in the third part of our challenge that involves giving sacrificially.

We're calling it **Unleashed** because there's really no better way to describe the freedom of being out of debt.

Just think of how this will impact Sherwood Oaks' vision for tomorrow!

We will be **Unleashed** to use these freed-up funds to meet more spiritual needs both locally and globally.

We will be **Unleashed** to offer services to those in need and hope to those without our Savior.

We will be **Unleashed** to sincerely say Yes2Love with our actions and resources.

I am amazed when I read that Sherwood Oaks started 50 years ago in a rented building with just a few people and \$50. What God has done in and through this congregation since 1962 is nothing short of incredible.

Regardless of how long you've been part of Sherwood Oaks, you are as much a part of this legacy as those who came before us. We are walking the trail others built; we are the beneficiaries of other's sacrifices. Now is our opportunity to add to the legacy for those who are yet to come.

Unleashed is a spiritual journey of faith and action as God works through each of us to accomplish His goal. I hope and pray you'll make every effort to fully engage in the challenge before us.

The 31 years Elsie and I have experienced with the Sherwood Oaks congregation have been exciting and rewarding. I can't wait to see what God is going to do once we become ... **Unleashed!**

Our dreams for our church

We've lived a lot of life together in 50 years. Celebrations. Laughs. Hard times. Transitions. Tears. Love. Caring. Worship. Growth. Service.

With God's leading, we're focused on the future and looking to current and future generations to lead the way.

Will you take a moment to pray and consider how God might be encouraging you and our entire church family as we look to the next 50 years at Sherwood Oaks? Here are some questions to consider. Please pray about these and write your thoughts on the lines provided.

As we pray about the future, what are your hopes and dreams for Sherwood Oaks?

How might God be nudging you to pray, lead, serve or invest at Sherwood Oaks moving forward?

Share your dreams about our church and hear from others in the coming weeks and months. Please go to socc.org/50yearstories

My hopes and dreams for Sherwood Oaks ...

God is leading me to ...



Our history at a glance

Through the years

OUR SENIOR MINISTERS

Herbert H. Lentz (1962-1965)
Ronald Smith (1965)
George Wasson (1965-1968)
George Sites (1968-1972)

Douglas Hacker (1972-1977)
J. Paul Jasper (1977-1981)
Tom Ellsworth (1981-today)

OUR NAMES AND LOCATIONS

Second Christian Church, Howe Street (1962-1963)
Walnut Street Christian Church, Walnut & Grimes Streets (1963-1972)
Sherwood Oaks Christian Church, Winslow Road (1972-1991)
Sherwood Oaks Christian Church, Rogers Road (1993-today)

1962

It was a cold day in December 1962 when Herb Lentz, his family, and two others met on Howe Street for the first worship service of what would eventually become Sherwood Oaks Christian Church.

It didn't take long for the then-named Second Christian Church to outgrow its meeting location and move to a building that would house the church for almost a decade. Second Christian became Walnut Street Christian Church. Ministers came and went, but the story God was writing in the hearts of these people was just beginning.

1972

Fast-forward to 1972. The church moved again, this time to Winslow Road, and renamed itself Sherwood Oaks Christian Church in reference to the nearby subdivision. During the next decade, attendance fluctuated dramatically, growing and shrinking with each leadership change.

1981

And then, in January 1981, Tom and Elsie Ellsworth began leading the ministry of Sherwood Oaks. What happened next is nothing less than God-sized. Attendance continued to grow, and more and more were calling Sherwood Oaks home. Buildings were renovated and the excitement for the church was contagious. It was clear God had big plans for this little church in South-Central Indiana.

2000s to today

As a growing church family, our core values affirm who we are. We connect to each other and to God, grow in faith and grace, serve the church and the community, share God's message of grace with the world, and worship Him in all we do.

From a church of five, to a potentially devastating fire, to more than 4,500 people who call Sherwood Oaks Christian Church home, it is evident that God is not done building His church in Bloomington through us.

Sherwood Oaks is a vibrant, visionary congregation that is continuing to grow with God and share His Good News with Bloomington and the world.

1991

Everything could have ended when a fire broke out in the early morning of September 17, 1991. Part of the church building was completely destroyed, and what remained was beyond using for a time. Some people might have crumbled under the devastation. But not the people who loved Sherwood Oaks.

Instead, they rallied together, salvaged what could be salvaged and focused on the people of the church instead of the building. This crisis became a catalyst for the future. God used the fire to bring His people closer to each other and closer to Him. Those that were here during those days remember the sorrow, but they also remember the strength. Echoes of this time still linger in the vision and heartbeat of Sherwood Oaks.

Two years later, Sherwood Oaks began worshiping at our current location - with a record 1,307 in attendance. This significant numeric and spiritual growth has continued.



Yes2Love

Sherwood Oaks Christian Church

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