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Chisholm Heights Baptist Church will have its Christmas Village starting Dec. 5

# CHBC Christmas Village celebrates 21 years

By Traci Chapman  
Staff Writer

At its 21-year anniversary, Chisholm Heights Baptist Church's Christmas Village is as awe-inspiring and magical to area children and their families as it was at the very beginning.

"We have children who come back year after year with their families, and they never seem to get tired of the village and what we do," CHBC Senior Pastor Dr. Dave Bryan said. "It's special to them, to the new people who come each year and to us."

The magic began in 1996 with an idea - to build a Victorian village, something that would bring back the old-time charm of Christmas to Mustang. The dream was presented by CHBC member Alan Schantz, who saw a similar village at a church while on vacation.

"He came home with a plan on creating something similar - it was a little different," Bryan said. "The one he saw was a miniature scale, and he wanted to do something that could be full-scale, yet set up inside the church."

Using leftover lumber the church had from an old stage, Victorian shops were constructed inside the church gym. Starting with a bakery, over the

years the village has grown to include a store, fire station, school, toy and candy shops, carpenter shop, quilting area and more. A stage area presents visitors with entertainment ranging from elementary school choirs to high school instrumental ensembles and church groups.

The village is a fun way for residents to celebrate the holiday season, but it also has a serious purpose - helping to generate donations of nonperishable food items and toys members gather for the holidays.

"There are always those in need and at the holidays it can be more of a strain for people than ever," Bryan said. "This gives us an opportunity to give to those who need it most."

"We always have a core group that loves taking part in getting everything ready and then manning it - and it means so much to us that this has resonated with the community the way it has all these years," he said. "It never gets old for any of us."

Chisholm Heights Baptist Church's Mustang Christmas Village will be held from 6 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. Dec. 5, 7, 12 and 14. There is no cost, and the church is located at 2243 W. state Highway 152. For more information, call 405-376-4531.

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