

My Dad, Cleve C. Wheelus started a new church development sponsored by Grace Presbytery and Preston Hollow in January of 1979, the middle of my junior year. Dad made me move 9 miles from Richardson, and made me go to PSHS. I hated it there. It was too big, and I had a hard time making friends. But, a friend from PSHS introduced me to Dwight on a blind date in Austin where we attended UT. If Dad hadn't made me attend PSHS, would I have met Dwight? God at work – through that painful move to Plano, through friends connecting me to Dwight.

It was the community at Grace (Doug Fenn) that advised me when I wanted to change my major at UT. It was the community of Grace that got me an interview that landed my first job. God at work through community here at Grace. It is here at Grace that I have grown as a musician. Tracy DePue said it best – church music became the soundtrack of my life. After graduation, I joined the choir to help motivate me to attend worship. I took my first voice lessons with Jerry Jones, our choir director. I learned to ring handbells. And it was the community at Grace (Doug Fenn) that invited me to join our first praise team. Believe it or not, I found contemporary music “so repetitive”! Still makes me laugh. Definitely God was at work, and had SO much more music to teach me!

Part two:

Our sanctuary holds so many dear memories for me. It is where my dad officiated our wedding, and where he baptised Austin, Dwight, and Anna. It's where I was ordained as both deacon and elder. It's where I have served and received communion. It's where I learned that Cursillo (now Pilgrimage) had finally started in North Texas. When I see the butterfly stained glass, I am reminded of not only how we are a new creation, but how much my dad loved butterflies.

Pastor David Sparks introduced marriage retreats and family retreats at Pine Cove that had profound impacts on me and my family. Trinity Sunday School class not only taught me, but it is where I learned to teach. The most amazing blessing that Trinity brought is in connecting us to our small group who are so dear to us, and truly are an amazing way to see Christian community at work. The Davenports, Nichols, Raams, Rutherfords, Thates, Turners and Urechs are dear friends and bring so much love to our lives. It's here at Grace that I attended many adult bible studies that grew me in my faith: Bethel, Koinonia, Disciple, the Journey, and that continues with The Story. God at work in my life and in this church that my father dragged me to kicking and screaming. Thank you Lord for loving us so much and revealing yourself to us here at Grace Presbyterian Church.

Emily Nichols