

“Loving God, Serving Others, Changing Lives”

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

REUBEN'S RAMBLINGS

August, 2023, Issue 8

Let's take a trip down memory lane. Can you remember the fun you had at Vacation Bible School (VBS) when you were growing up? In the small southern town where I grew up there were only two churches – the Baptist and Methodist. Of course, we had a friendly competition, but we worked together on many projects. I enjoyed going to the VBS at each church. It gave us something to do during the summer time, especially in a small, rural town where there was nothing to do.

I learned a lot about God, Jesus and the Bible from the dedicated teachers and sang some wonderful old songs. There were always games and a great time playing with my brothers, friends, and neighbors. And I especially remember building shoeshine kits and birdhouses. Does this bring back memories for you?

When our sons were growing up, we made sure that they participated in VBSs at our churches in Virginia, Georgia, and Santa Fe either as participants or volunteers. Since we entered the ministry in 2002, we have had VBSs at all

four of the churches that we have served. Unfortunately, we have not had one for the last few years here due to a lack of children.

While Judy and I were driving down to Las Cruces to attend the New Mexico Annual Conference last month, I had this wild, I mean wild idea. Why not relive our childhood and have a VBS for us seniors. We are calling it “Be A Kid Again Vacation Bible School.”

It will be a two-day event. We are planning to hold it on Wednesday August 23 and Thursday August 24 from 9 am until around 12:30 pm. There will be a gathering time from 8:30 – 9 am for coffee and donuts. We will start at 9 am with worship each day, which will include selecting your favorite hymns and a brief devotional. Earlene Price will give our devotion on Wednesday and Judy Ballard on Thursday. This will be followed by a Bible Study from 9:30 – 10:15 am. Rev. Kathy Harrell will discuss “People of Faith” on Wednesday and Lisa Isenberger will discuss the woman at the well on Thursday. We will have a short break following the Bible study to chat and get some coffee and snacks. Keeping with the traditions of VBS, from 10:30 – 11:15 am, we will have crafts, making items for our various mission projects. Then we will have indoor

games from 11:15 to 12 noon.

Finally, we will all sit down and enjoy a meal together before going home.

Now I know some of you may be thinking that this is silly and ridiculous. But if you don't come, you are going to miss out on a lot of fun and feel bad when everybody else is talking about the great time they had. I see several reasons for this event. First, to provide a time of fellowship. It will give us a chance to get out of the house and interact with others. You may even meet some new people. Second, to attend a Bible study. And third, an opportunity to invite your friends and neighbors. I hope that you are willing to be a kid again and have fun.

God Bless, Reuben

Operation Christmas Child

Here are some suggestions for ways to prepare for the next few months to fill your showboxes with fun and useful items:

August: school supplies (crayons, markers, rulers, paper tablets)

OBSCURE NAMES IN THE BIBLE



Who was Jabez? (Remember the sermons from July 23rd and 30th?)
Find the answer elsewhere in this issue.

Bible Studies Available

To help us grow spiritually in our personal relationship with Christ, High Desert UMC is offering the following Bible studies this fall. Please join one of the following studies in the classroom.

SUNDAY 10 AM: Studying The Gospel of Luke, Topical Bible Studies, Led by Tony Smith.

MONDAY 10 AM: Beginning September 11, "40 Days Through the Book of Acts" by Randy Frazee. Class is led by Francie Larsen.

WEDNESDAY 10:30 AM: starting September 6. Led by John Kottenbrook, will begin studying the Holy Spirit and the Psalms

WEDNESDAY 5:30 PM: On August 30, will begin a 9 month study of the entire Bible using "The Story", by Max Lucado and Randy Frazee. Led by Reuben Thomas

AT FAIRWINDS: Tony Smith leads a Bible Study at Fairwinds each week.

ONLINE STUDIES: We are currently sending out each week an email from Tony Smith discussing a chapter from the Book of Isaiah. In addition, you can participate in one of Tony's online studies on Daniel, John and Revelation at coraleno@aol.com.

PODCASTS: "Footsteps" Available on the church website.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE



A Night at the Opera: On Sunday, August 20, those who have reserved tickets in advance will meet at the church at 4:45 PM and travel to Santa Fe for a tailgate box supper and a performance of "Apprentice Scenes" at the Santa Fe Opera. Ric Speed has graciously agreed to drive the bus, plus some folks will take their own cars. The performance starts at 8:00 PM and plans are to return to the church at about 11:45 PM or so. The September outing is an afternoon at the **baseball game:** September 10th at the Isotopes. Until next time, Ken Dewbre, Fellowship Committee Chairperson

Words that should end with "Amen": Don't worry, God has gone before you; keep walking.

Discipleship Corner

A monthly feature by Lisa Isenberger

Encouraging Others

The book of Hebrews encourages us to keep living our faith no matter what difficulties we may be facing. Living our faith as disciples means more than simply knowing and believing; it requires following and doing. The following passage also reminds us to consider how we can motivate others to do the same.

Hebrews 10:23-24 - 23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,

One of the ways we can spur one another toward love and good deeds is through words of encouragement. When encouragement is absent, people can feel unloved, forgotten, and unimportant. However, with encouragement they are reminded of the strength of God's grace, the power of His presence, and the future that He promises. Words of encouragement can be the catalyst that gives others the confidence they need to act boldly in acts of kindness that shine the light of His love into the world.

Maybe there is someone specific that you can encourage this month. I encourage you to be intentional in finding opportunities to shine light into the lives of others through words of encouragement. If someone has been a blessing to you, let them know. If someone has stepped out in faith, encourage them to continue. If someone is struggling, remind them of God's loving presence.

Eternal God, Thank you for the hope of your promises and for those who have been an encouragement to me when I have needed it most. Please guide me toward opportunities to encourage others in the same way. Help each of us to spur one another on to spread your love into the world. In Jesus' name. AMEN.

Answer to "Obscure Names in the Bible":

Jabez was recognized for his honorable life and his prayer. Read 1 Chronicles 4: 9-10. The book, [The Prayer of Jabez](#), by Bruce Wilkinson, was a best seller in 2001.

AUGUST SECOND MILE GIVING

Our Second Mile Giving for August is Heifer International. Its mission is to work with communities to end world hunger and poverty and to care for the Earth. Heifer International was founded by Dan West, a farmer from the Midwest and a member of the Church of the Brethren, who went to the front lines of the Spanish Civil War as an aid worker. He found that giving refugees a cup of milk was not enough; what if they had a cow?

Thus the Heifer Project adopted the philosophy of “teach a man to fish,” by providing animals to families instead of handouts. The animals provide both food and reliable income, as agricultural products such as milk, eggs and honey can be traded or sold at the market. Families are empowered to turn hunger and poverty into hope and prosperity. Since 1944, Heifer International has provided livestock and environmentally sound agricultural training to improve the lives of those who struggle daily. They have been in ministry for 75 years providing animals to 20.7 million families in 125 countries. The goal of every Heifer Project is to help families achieve self-reliance.

Your contributions will be used to purchase animals. The current price is as follows: heifer - \$500; goat - \$120; sheep - \$120; rabbits- \$60 or flock of chicks - \$20. Due to your generous contributions, we were able to purchase 11 heifers last year. Thank you for your continued support to our mission program.

Women with Purpose

Taking a break for the summer. Plan to join us the first Thursday in September at 10:00 AM.

THE STORY

The Bible as One Continuing Story of God and His People

Starting on August 30, 2023, our Wednesday Night Bible Class will begin a nine-month journey through the entire Bible using the *The Story* by Max Lucado and Randy Frazee. Condensed into 31 accessible chapters, *The Story* sweeps you into the unfolding progression of Bible characters and events from Genesis to Revelation. *The Story* is different from your traditional versions of the Bible in that it is written as a novel with all the duplication taken out, allowing you to more easily follow the story of the Bible in a chronological order. The texts were chosen to retain the overall flow of the narrative, so that you get a sense of the “big picture” of the Bible. *The Story* will help you understand who God is, who we are, and the meaning and purpose of life. Each Wednesday night, we will discuss each chapter in detail. If you want to learn more about the Bible, the greatest story ever written, then come and join us.

AUGUST 2023

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Office Hours : 9 AM-12 Noon	3	4 11 AM – 2 PM - Pantry	5
6 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	7 Bag Ladies 12:30 – 3:00	8 9:00 Fellowship Comm	9 Office Hrs 9-12	10	11 10 AM Emmaus Agape Group	12
13 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	14 10 AM FNMK Bagging	15 9 AM Food Pantry	16 Office Hrs: 9-12 Ministry Team Mtg 6 PM	17 1 PM Food Pantry KAIROS Weekend	18 KAIROS Weekend	19 KAIROS Weekend
20 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship 4:45PM Outing to the Opera KAIROS Weekend	21 10:00 Bible Study	22	23 Office Hours: 9 AM – 12 Noon “Be a Kid Again”, Adult VBS: 9-12:30	24 Adult VBS: 9- 12:30	25	26
27 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	28 10:00 Bible Study	29	30 Office Hours: 9 AM – 12 Noon Bible Study 5:30 PM	31		
SS = Sunday School; MS = MorningStar Worship; FNMK = Feed New Mexico Kids						

New Mexico Annual Conference 2023
Report to the Congregation
High Desert United Methodist Church, Rio Rancho NM

Summary:

The New Mexico Annual Conference occurred June 14-16 in Las Cruces, NM with the theme “Come to the Table”. High Desert UMC delegates Reuben Thomas (clergy), John Samford (lay leader), and Lisa Isenberger (lay member) were in attendance. Bishop Schnase presided over worship and business sessions, acknowledging the challenging times we're experiencing as a denomination, but also reminding us of all the great work local churches are doing in the community as the hands and feet of Jesus. Bishop Schnase remarked that most of these churches never entered into the discernment process since Jesus' work was on-going and the divisive nature of the process was recognized.

Business Content:

Clergy met to complete their business requirements at the Clergy/Executive Session while the Laity listened to Julia Sharp's presentation on becoming transformational lay leaders. In combined sessions, business decisions included the disaffiliation of three additional churches, discontinuance of five churches, ratification of a conference budget and spending plan, commitment to Creation Care, and agreement to pursue a negotiated settlement regarding the future of Sacramento camp. On behalf of NMAC Trustees, Rev. Josh Kouri presented encouraging statistics related to churches remaining in the UMC. Conference Chancellor, Cari Neill provided an update on the Boy Scouts settlement and other legal matters.

Ministry Reports:

Hap Escue discussed plans for a \$2 million UMCOR grant to help those in northern NM who were impacted by last year's wildfires. Deborah Yazzi shared progress in the Four Corners areas to help their homeless relatives. One Matters Award recipients from each district shared highlights of their ministries to the community. Rev. Gavin Rogers of Corazón shared his personal experience involving the homeless and other underprivileged groups in San Antonio. Rev. Dr. Scott Sharp facilitated a panel discussion between Gavin and three pastors from NMAC involved in ministries serving marginalized populations.

Key Take-aways:

God is at work in the New Mexico Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. We returned home inspired to seek out new ways to fulfill Jesus' command to love our neighbors. The future is bright as long as we stay true to our mission of loving God, serving others, and changing lives.

Recommendations:

- 1) Remain UMC - There is no need to enter into the discernment process toward disaffiliation from the UMC. Our church is actively and successfully doing Jesus's work as a United Methodist congregation.
- 2) Creation Care - Share a monthly Creation Justice Tip from UMCreationJustice.org in the Newsletter to fulfill the requirement of Creation Care resolution.

John Samford, Lay Leader

Lisa Isenberger, Lay Member

This report was approved unanimously by the Ministry Team on July 12, 2023.

Care Ministry

You're invited to call or send cards to these of our church family, to offer words of support and encouragement.

Sheila Arce	4910 Tramway Ridge Dr. NE, #318, Albq. NM 87111	
Phil Pittman	C/O Ravenna Assisted Living, 3051 Twin Oaks Dr. NW Albuquerque, NM 87120	
Lorra Garner	Genesis, 9150 McMahon Blvd. NW Albq 87114	408-722-6482
Grover Donahoe	766 Hood Way SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	220-3839
Rod Warpole	600 First Street NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	332-9706
Mary Lou Schimke	7927 Jamestown Road NW, Albuquerque, NM 87114-4498	898-5911
Mac Esquibel	4544 Aguila Road SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	891-1469
Sister Barbara Kopecki	3800 W. Peterson Ave., Chicago, IL 60659	
Ella Jerome	813 Banco Court, Bernalillo, NM 87004	312-2992
Wanda Schierling	921 Purple Aster, Bernalillo, NM 87004	970-398-0501



Lynn & Jana Siverts	Aug 10
Chuck & Mary Lou Schimke	Aug 13
Jeff & Elaine Pratt	Aug 14
Wayne & Pauline Walker	Aug 23
Ken & Sandy Dewbre	Aug 29



Gordon Golsan	Aug 2
Gloria Sims-Graham	Aug 3
Cheryl Mason	Aug 4
Angela Rodriguez	Aug 6
Doris Wells	Aug 9
Ton Creveling	Aug 10
Bobbie Morris	Aug 11
Roberta Jockheck	Aug 12
Paul Lewis	Aug 13
Del Larsen	Aug 13
Rebecca Nordhoff-Just	Aug 15
Dannye Bistow	Aug 17
Judy Sampson	Aug 18
Doris Donahoe	Aug 20
Benjamin Kottenbrook	Aug 22
Jana Siverts	Aug 25
Laverna McGrew	Aug 27
Lorraine Zapf	Aug 27



July, 2023 Mission Trip - Gallup, NM



Volunteers from High Desert spent three days in Gallup working with Pastor Chris Davis of the Nazarene Church. Participating were Leslie Barnett, Wanda Golsan, Carolyn McDowell, Wanda Whittlesey-Jerome, and Judy Thomas.



After Carolyn instructed Rev. Davis in how to use the donated sewing machines, we helped set up a sewing center. One day was spent on the Navajo Reservation, visiting

with the elders at the Twin Lakes Senior Center where they received lovely bags of snacks furnished by Val Forbes. Another day we taught a one-day Vacation Bible School to 17 children of the community. Wanda W.J. played her guitar and sang with the children, Leslie taught crafts, and Wanda G and



Judy led games. It was certainly a "Mountaintop Experience" and we look forward to going back!

*Thank you Damon Bruce for loading the bus, refilling the windshield wiper fluid and making sure the HDUMC bus was good to go... You are the **BEST!***

"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me" Matthew 25: 40





KAIROS Prison Ministry

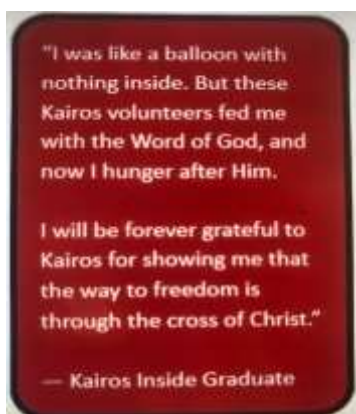
August 17th– 20nd at the Women's Correctional Facility in Grants, NM

Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World!

“KAIROS” is a Greek word that is used in the sense of a time set by God for a particular occurrence or “God’s Special Time”. The purpose of Kairos is to establish strong Christian Communities among the populations of correctional institutions. The mission is to bring Christ’s love and forgiveness to all incarcerated individuals, their families and those who work with them and to assist in incarcerated in the transition to becoming a productive citizen. The KAIROS weekend is similar to the “Walk to Emmaus” and “Cursillo” weekends but conducted inside a prison setting. The weekend is the first step in a spiritual journey for these ladies as team members commit to returning to the prison on a monthly basis to continue to work with them.

Linn Carlson will be working this Kairos weekend and would like you to have the opportunity to support this life-changing ministry. You can participate in any of the following ways:

- If you would like to bake **cookies** (**Each** team member needs to take in **36 dozen**) as cookies are not only given to the 18 women participating in the Kairos weekend **BUT ALSO TO EACH AND EVERY WOMAN INCARCERATED AT GRANTS AS WELL AS EACH AND EVERY FACILITY STAFF MEMBER** – a physical demonstration of agape love. Please see Linn about the *special instructions* related to making cookies. More information to come regarding when the cookies are due to Linn right before the weekend.
- Sign up to **pray** for 30 minutes for the women participating in the weekend as well as all the volunteers who are working the weekend. A prayer chain is developed so that from the time we walk into the prison on Thursday until we leave on Sunday afternoon – that we are covered in prayer around the clock and without interruption!
- Financially support the weekend by:
 - 1) making a **financial donation** (Marked “Kairos” on the memo line) to help with the expenses to put on the weekend (i.e. supplies, meals are provided Thursday through Sunday for all residents and team, Bibles for residents, etc.). Due to institutional regulations and safeguards, commercially purchased food is now required for all meals served to participating residents and team rather than being able to cook the food ourselves. Obviously, this has dramatically increased the cost of conducting a KAIROS weekend.
 - 2) **Donate \$5.00 or \$10.00** towards “Meal Tickets” which goes towards providing a meal for one of the prison inmates participating in the weekend. At each meal, the meal ticket with your first name and the city you live in is placed on their placemat – again reminding them that someone who doesn’t know them loves and cares about them.
- If you would like more information about this ministry, please feel free to call or talk with Linn Carlson at church or call at 450-4152. **God Bless You and Thank You!**



HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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We're on the Web!
www.highdesertumc.org

August, 2023 Newsletter

HDUMC CHURCH PANTRY

Distribution dates for August, 2023 are:

Friday, August 4 at 11:00 a.m.

Tuesday, August 15 at 9:00 a.m.

Thursday, August 17 at 1:00 p.m.

August Collection: Beans and Rice (small bags)

There is a container in the Narthex for these donations.

Contact John Samford at (505) 870-0667

for more information.
