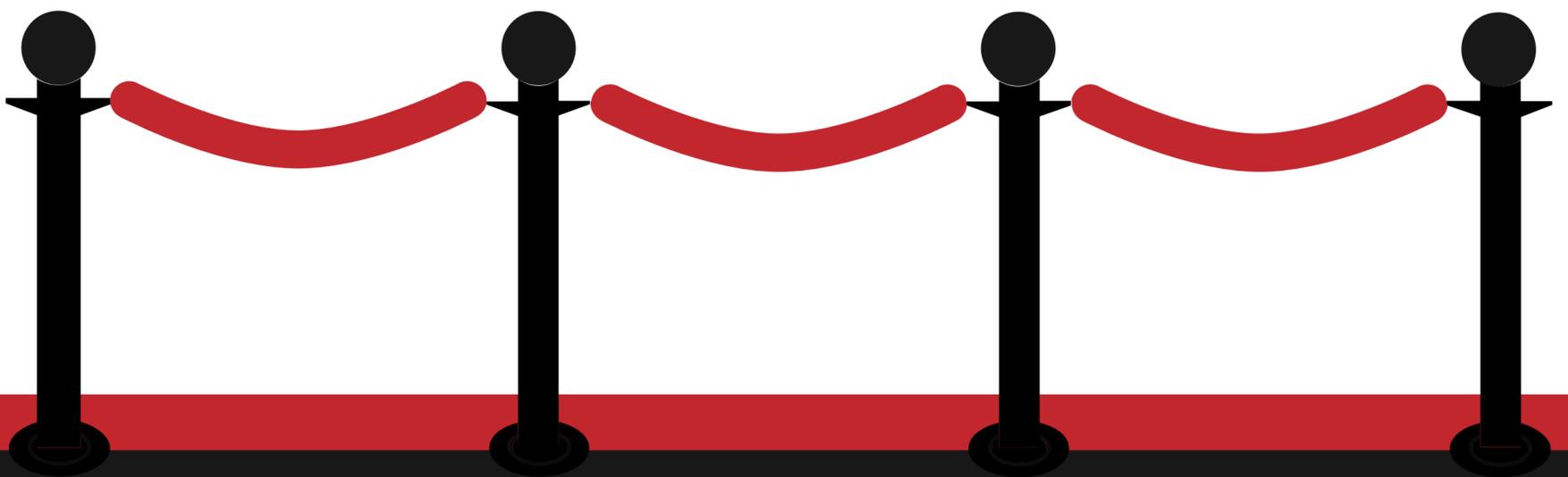


CASA VIDA UNITED METHODIST MISSION INC,
WAHNETA-WINTER HAVEN

History
OF
Casa Vida

(JULY 2018 - OCTOBER 2023)



Misión Metodista Unida

As we approach the fall of 2023, Casa Vida continues to seek God's guidance as the mission and vision grows and changes with each season of life for the community of Wahneta. COVID 19 did have a serious impact on the community, as it did in many places across the country and world. As has been stated, worship was offered online for a long time, but it did take a while before people, especially with children, were comfortable coming back to meet and worship in person. However, by the end of 2021, events at Casa Vida began to get back to normal. In October of that year, the Second Annual Gala was held and the speaker was the Rev. Dr. Larry Rankin. The event was well received and earned a profit of about \$11,000.00 for Casa Vida.

As Casa Vida moved into the years 2022 and 2023, activities and events have continued to be reinstated. A highlight of the summer of 2022 was the Interconfessional and Connectional Women's Conference entitled "Shines." Over 60 women from ten churches across Central Florida participated. Pastor Rodolfo's wife, Idelys, helped to coordinate this event. It was an inspirational day of prayer, reflection, worship, music, and fellowship. In August of 2022, Pastor Rodolfo and his wife, along with several couples from Casa Vida, attended the Couple's Retreat for Pastors and those in Leadership. There were couples from eight churches across Florida who met at the San Pedro Spiritual Development Center in Orlando. Again, this was a motivating and inspirational weekend for the couples who attended.

When the community began to come back to church in person, Pastor Rodolfo restarted his weekly Bible Study. In addition, special celebrations have been held on Mother's Day and Father's Day, as well as other occasions. Food distributions have been and are being held on a regular basis to help meet the needs in the community. A "Give Away" of school supplies has been held every August just before school starts. Approximately 100 bags of supplies have been given out each year. Each December a special celebration is held to honor the restarting of the Wahneta Mission as Casa Vida. Also, December is a special time for the children of Casa Vida. A benefactor "helps Santa" see that all the children of Casa Vida have Christmas presents and Easter Baskets in the spring. And in the midst of all of this, Pastor Rodolfo has continued to work on his educational goal of becoming a Fully Ordained United Methodist Minister. The Board and the Church look forward to that event taking place.

CASA VIDA GALA - OCTOBER 2023

During the last two years, the members of Casa Vida, its Board of Directors, and Pastor Rodolfo and family have worked hard to maintain and upgrade the church facilities and the parsonage where the family lives. Casa Vida will always be grateful for the support of the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church which enabled this Mission to reopen. In addition, Casa Vida will always be grateful for the support of St. John's United Methodist Church, its members, and the St. John's Thrift Store. Pastor Rodolfo has also been able to secure several grants that have made it possible to enhance the work of Casa Vida. Examples are grants for leadership training, enhancing the worship/music experience, pastoral care, technology support, etc. Without the support of all these groups and individuals, it would have been more challenging to work toward achieving the goals of helping the community, both spiritually and educationally.

Because of the continued support that has been mentioned, Casa Vida was able to have their third Gala Event in October of 2022. The speaker for this event was Perry Hansen, the Treasurer of The Casa Vida Board of Directors. This event is always well received and a profit of over \$10,000.00 was made. We are looking forward to this event again in October 2023.

Any updated history would be incomplete without the thoughts of the members of the Casa Vida family. As one member put it, "we are becoming closer as a church family and we like working together." "The faith and spirit are good." Pastor Rodolfo agrees. He sees growth in the faith of Casa Vida members and feels the spirit of God working. He continues to "listen to God" for direction and feels called to minister to the members of this community. He states that the Casa Vida family is becoming more diverse. There are more families from Central and South America. The last family just came from Venezuela. They were drawn to the food distribution and were invited to worship. They have now been coming for several weeks. God continues to work in the life of Pastor Rodolfo and his family and in the lives of the Casa Vida members. We are especially proud of his family who are now United States Citizens. May God continue to be the guiding force for his family and the mission and vision of Casa Vida.

**KITTY WALKER,
SECRETARY OF THE CASA VIDA
BOARD**

CASA VIDA GALA - OCTOBER 2023



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