

“Loving God, Serving Others, Changing Lives”

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

REUBEN’S RAMBLINGS

March, 2025, Issue 3

After almost seven years here at High Desert UMC, I hope that by now you recognize how important missions are to me. I truly believe that the Church is called to missions. There is no mission apart from God, and there should be no church without missions. We are called to be the hands and feet of God, His faithful workers, to a world desperately in need of love. Missions was throbbing in the heart of God when He sent His Son Jesus Christ to die for our sins. As someone once said: “Missions didn’t begin with the Great Commission. It began with God so loved the world that He sent His only Begotten Son.”

Missions is one of the lifelines of the church; it is so critical that failure to practice it in some form results in the deterioration of the church’s vitality and ability to make disciples for Jesus Christ. Missions and outreach are what drives the life and energy of a church. When churches turn inward, using all their time and resources for their own survival

and caring only for their own members, then the spiritual life of the church disappears, and it will soon die.

In the third chapter of the *Book of Revelation*, Jesus writes a letter to the church at Philadelphia commending them for their work. In Revelation 3:8, Jesus says: “I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.” I call this the Door of Opportunity that is placed before each church and every Christian – the opportunity of service in the name of the Lord; to love our neighbors as ourselves; the opportunity to fulfill the call of the Great Commission to make disciples.

Based on this verse, I am always asking God to open new doors of opportunity for us at High Desert. At our Ministry Team meeting on February 11, the team unanimously approved a new mission project. For the past two years, we have been working with Pastor Chris Davis of the Gallup Nazarene Church as she provides food for the homeless in Gallup, and to the residents of the Navajo Nation. We have been providing her snack food and water

to put in bags to hand out to those in need.

God is now leading us to expand our outreach to the elder residents of the Navajo Nation. Beginning this month, we plan to initially provide 24 food boxes to be distributed by Pastor Chris to Navajo residents. Pastor Chris is starting Bible studies at the Prewitt and Twin Lakes Senior Centers where she will hand out food boxes to those in need after the class. Each book is estimated to cost \$30 and will include cans of vegetables, fruits, proteins, soups, pasta & sauce, rice, pinto beans, and crackers.

I hope that you will join us as we fulfill Jesus’ instructions in Matthew 25:35 – “I was hungry and you gave me something to eat.” You can support this new Door of Opportunity by marking “Navajo Food Boxes” on the memo line of your check. Thank you for your continued support of our mission and outreach programs.

God Bless, Reuben

MARCH SECOND MILE GIVING

UNITED METHODIST COMMITTEE ON RELIEF

Through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), the United Methodist Church extends loving care to suffering people throughout the world; currently working in more than 80 countries worldwide including the United States. UMCOR works in partnership with United Methodist Churches and other local partners to address immediate relief and achieve sustainable recovery. The mission of UMCOR is grounded in the teachings of Jesus Christ and seeks to alleviate human suffering – whether caused by war, conflict or natural disaster, with open hearts and minds to all people.

UMCOR programs seek to alleviate human suffering by providing:

1. Relief, response, and long-term recovery grants when disasters overwhelm a community's resources and ability to recover on their own.
2. Technical support and training for partners to address emerging and ongoing issues related to disaster relief, recovery, and long-term health and development.

UMCOR is usually one of the first relief agencies to arrive at a disaster. Almost every dollar donated goes directly to relief projects for natural disasters. If you would like to support this worthwhile ministry during March, please mark "UMCOR" on memo line of your check.

Please join Women with Purpose

Thursday, March 6, 10:00 AM

You do not want to miss our March 6th Women with Purpose meeting! We will be assembling baskets filled with laundry and cleaning supplies for *A Peaceful Habitation* which supports women recently released from incarceration. Leticia Paulette, founder, will join us. 'See you at 10:00 AM in the sanctuary.

Military Family Prayer List

Many men and women are faithfully serving our country in the armed service all over the world to protect our country and ensure our freedom. Please pray for the safety of:

Master Sergeant Gary Carter, US Army

Prya Chino, US Navy

Sergeant Major Reginald Daniels, United States Marine Corp, United Arab Emirates

Petty Officer 1st Class Owen Garcia, US Navy

Cadet Master Sergeant Darien Garcia, US Air Force Academy

Staff Sergeant Brock Henning, US Air Force

Major Herbert Jockheck, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Liberty, NC

Captain Brian Koa Yee, United States Air Force

Gunnery Sergeant Jesse Perkins, United States Marines, Bangkok

Captain Shelli Schimke, USAF Intelligence

Lieutenant Kristina Scott, US Navy

Lt. Colonel Ryan Stanfill, US Air Force, McConnell AFB, Wichita, Kansas

JAM Sessions
(Jesus and Music)



Join us on Friday afternoons at 3:30 in the Sanctuary for a time of playing instruments and singing some of our favorite Christian songs. Everyone is welcome. For details, see Drew Ammons or John Kottenbrook.

GRADUATES



High Desert UMC would like to present a Bible to each High School and College graduate as they begin a new journey in their life. If you have a child or grandchild graduating this spring, please provide the following information to the Church Office: student name, where they are graduating from, parent/grandparent.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: SPRING BASEBALL OUTING

Plan to join us on Sunday May 18 at 1:35 pm for a great time of fun and fellowship as we watch the Isotopes play the Tacoma Rainiers. We have reserved 40 box seats in the upper rows of Section 113 between home plate and third base. Cost is \$17 per seat. The promotion for May 18 will be *Salute to the Services*. The Church Bus will be available for those who need a ride. There will be a sign-up sheet available in April.



A New Record of Shoebox Gifts

Samaritan's Purse reports that worldwide efforts in 2024 yielded 11,927,439 shoeboxes of Christmas gifts for children the world over. This is an all-time high! Thank you for your generous support of this, and many other, mission opportunities at High Desert UMC.

Church Library – Check it Out!



Christian movies! Do you have time to watch one? We have plenty! Try “Putting Jesus First in Your Life.” Or maybe you want to think about “Saving One Soul at a Time.” "Gods and Generals of the Civil War" made by Warner Brothers is interesting. Take a look!

A New Mission Project

We are currently assembling food boxes to be distributed by Pastor Chris Davis at the Twin Lakes and the Prewett Senior Centers on the Navajo Nation at the conclusion of her Bible Study classes. Each box contains canned vegetables, spaghetti & sauce, rice, dried beans, peanut butter, fruit cups, canned meats, crackers, and Ramen noodles. These items are bought in bulk and the contents of each box is identical. If you are interested in contributing to this ministry, please mark your check “Navajo Food Boxes.” Thank you.



Before you speak: **THINK**
Is it **True**?
Is it **Helpful**?
Is it **Inspiring**?
Is it **Necessary**?
Is it **Kind**?



This year, Ash Wednesday occurs on March 5th. Our annual Ash Wednesday worship service will be held at 5:30 that evening. Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent, which lasts for 40 days prior to Easter, excluding Sundays. Pastor Reuben plans to offer a sermon series on the book of James during the Sundays of Lent.

LENTEN SERMON SERIES

Lent is a forty-day period between Ash Wednesday and Easter, excluding Sundays. It is a time of self-examination, repentance, and spiritual growth for Christians. It is a time to ask questions: "What do I believe? Who is Jesus Christ to me? What is my personal relationship with Him? What must I do to grow closer to Him? During Lent this year, we will be studying the Book of James and the practical guidance it provides for living the Christian life in today's world. During Lent, we will discuss the following:

March 9 - James 1:16-25 *Just Do It*

March 16 - James 2:1-13 *Does God Have Favorites?*

March 23 - James 3:1-12 *What Did You Say?*

March 30 - James 4:13-17 *You Are Going to Do What?*

April 6 - James 5:7-11 *Wait! I Said Wait*

April 13 - Palm Sunday, Antonio Trujillo Preaching

April 20 – Easter Sermon "*Good News from the Graveyard*"



OBSCURE NAMES IN THE BIBLE

Who was Titus in the New Testament?

Find the answer elsewhere in this issue.

Bible Studies for Everyone

Do you want to grow closer to the Lord in 2025 and experience His presence in your life? One of the best ways to grow in your personal relationship with the Lord is to participate in a weekly Bible study. If you are not currently participating in a weekly Bible study, please join one of the following studies:

SUNDAY 10 AM: Studying the *Book of Revelation*. Meets in the classroom and is led by Tony Smith.

MONDAY 10:30 AM: Studying *The Parables of Jesus*. Meets in the classroom and is led by Marie Donat.

WEDNESDAY 10:30 AM: Currently studying the history & backgrounds of our favorite hymns. Meets in the classroom and is led by Drew Ammons and Bruce Packard.

WEDNESDAY 5:30 PM: Studying *Be Like Jesus, Am I Becoming the Person God Wants Me to Be?* by Randy Frazee. Meets in the sanctuary and is led by Reuben Thomas.

FAIRWINDS: Tony Smith is also leading a class at Fairwinds on Tuesdays.

ONLINE STUDIES: You can participate in one of Tony Smith's online studies on Isaiah Daniel, John and Revelation at coraleno@aol.com.



NEW WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY – BEGINNING IN APRIL “24 HOURS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD”

The Gospel writers devoted most of their writing to the last three years of Christ's life; with their primary interest on one particular day – the day He was crucified. They believed this 24-hour period changed the world. Beginning Thursday evening after sunset and lasting through Friday, Jesus would eat the Last Supper with His disciples; pray in the Garden of Gethsemane; be betrayed and deserted by His friends; be convicted of blasphemy by the religious authorities; be tried and sentenced for insurrection by Pontius Pilate; be tortured by Roman soldiers; and undergo crucifixion, death, and burial.

Beginning in April, our Wednesday Night Bible Study will start studying Adam Hamilton's book *24 Hours that Changed the World*. Over seven weeks, we will discuss the Last Supper, the Garden of Gethsemane, condemned by the righteous, Jesus, Barabbas and Pilate, the torture and humiliation of the King, the Crucifixion, and Christ the Victor.

If you would like to join us as we journey through Holy Week, please contact the Church Office or Pastor Reuben at rjthomas@msn.com. This will help us determine how many books to order.

The Church in Fellowship

Our Second (but not annual) Chili Cook-off

On February 9th, Super Bowl Sunday, we celebrated as a church family with a chili cookoff for the 2nd time in recent memory. Six excellent chili cooks submitted their chili dishes for sampling and judging. The winner was Dave Duranty's uniquely delicious chili, which we were told contained prickly pear cactus!

By popular demand, Dave's recipe is available in the church office upon request.



MARCH 2025

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
SS = Sunday School MS = MorningStar						1
2 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	3 10:30 AM Bible Study	4	5 Office Hrs: 9-12 9:00 AM Mission Comm. Mtg. 10:30 Bible Study 5:30 PM Ash Wednesday Service	6 9 AM Fellowship Comm. Mtg. 10 AM Women with Purpose	7 11-2; Food Pantry 3:30 PM Jesus & Music	8 10 AM Service for Jenny Kottenbrook
9 Daylight Saving Time 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	10 10:00 FNMK Bagging 10:30 AM Bible Study	11 6:00 PM Ministry Team Mtg	12 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 Bible Study 5:30 Bible Study 5:30 Choir Practice	13 10 AM Emmaus Agape Gr.	14 3:30 PM Jesus & Music	15
16 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS <u>11 AM Worship</u>	17 10:30 AM Bible Study	18 9-12 Food Pantry	19 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 Bible Study 5:30 Bible Study 5:30 Choir Practice	20 1-4 PM Food Pantry	21 3:30 PM Jesus & Music	22
23 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	24 10:30 AM Bible Study	25	26 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 Bible Study 5:30 Bible Study 5:30 Choir Practice	27	28 3:30 PM Jesus & Music	29
30 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	31 10:30 AM Bible Study	Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on Saturday night, March 8th... 'Spring Forward'!				

Care Ministry

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

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
Mac Esquibel	4544 Aguila Road SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	891-1469
Polly Van Lenten	920 Riverview Dr. SE, Apt 280, Rio Rancho 87124	979-277-4852
Lucille Few	920 Riverview Dr. SE, Rio Rancho 87124	
Vi Ortega	Care Free 10916 Juan Tabo Place NE Albq. 87111	288-2160
Pat McElwain	4536 Ambrose Alday SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	235-7484



Drew & Sheela Ammons	March 4
Mark & Lisa Isenberger	March 18
Paul & Shirley Rexroth	March 19



Damon Bruce	March 2
Sharon Johnson	March 2
Jude Sadel	March 2
Glenda Barber	March 3
Rusty Dils	March 3
Sally Scarlott	March 3
Elaine Pratt	March 4
Dan Foley	March 5
Nina Brown	March 6
Nancy Perry-Sebrell	March 7
Ruth Bookless	March 14
Pat McElwain	March 14
Chuck Schimke	March 17
Rita Riddle	March 19
Cynthia Gandham	March 21
Marion Sanderson	March 21
Phil Pittman	March 24
Guy Brister	March 27
Ella Mares	March 30
Melissa Bruce	March 31

ANSWER TO OBSCURE NAMES

IN THE BIBLE:

TITUS WAS ONE OF PAUL'S TRUSTED EMISSARIES TO PREACH IN CORINTH. HE WAS ALSO A MINISTER IN CRETE.

(SEE TITUS 1)

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1201 Golf Course Rd
P.O. Box 45378
Rio Rancho, NM 87174

Phone: 505-891-4206

Office Hours: Wednesday 9 AM - Noon

Email: highdesertumc@outlook.com

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

MARCH, 2025 Newsletter

HDUMC CHURCH PANTRY

Distribution dates for March, 2025 are:

Friday, March 7, at 11:00 AM

Tuesday, March 18, at 9:00 AM

Thursday, March 20, at 1:00 PM

March Collection: Canned Fruits

Containers are in the Narthex & Fellowship Hall for these donations.

**Contact John Samford at (505) 870-0667
for more information.**
