

“Loving God, Serving Others, Changing Lives”

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

REUBEN'S RAMBLINGS

January, 2026, Issue 1

Happy New Year! Can you believe that it is already 2026? O how time flies! 2025 was a great year for High Desert. We continue to grow in our membership and worship attendance. We are financially stable and have been able to make several improvements in our facility and worship services. Participation in our many Bible studies continues to increase. We have expanded our worship services to Pamilla Senior Living. Our mission programs and outreach continue to expand as we fulfill Jesus' command to love our neighbor. I am truly thankful and grateful for your continued support and participation in making a difference here in Rio Rancho and throughout New Mexico and the world for the Lord. Each year brings new opportunities and new challenges. We don't know what is going to happen in 2026; we don't know what lies ahead of us in the coming months. But we can be sure of one thing and that is that Jesus Christ will be with us. Remember His words of

assurance in Matthew 28:20 – “And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of age.” All we have to do is walk in faith. Let me give you some suggestions for walking in faith in 2026.

First, if you have not already done so, set aside a quiet time with the Lord each day. Find some time each and every day to be alone with the Lord in prayer and reading the Bible. Let the Bible be your roadmap or compass as you navigate the ups and downs of 2026. You could make it a goal to read through the Bible this year or to study certain books such as the Gospels or the Apostle Paul's letters. Or you could be like me and use different devotional books to guide your daily scripture readings such as the *Upper Room*, *Daily Bread*, and *My Utmost for His Highest* by Oswald Chambers.

I would also encourage you to get involved in a weekly Bible Study. We currently have four studies: Sunday morning at 10 am studying *Gospel of Matthew*; Monday at 10:30 am studying various books of the Bible; Wednesday morning at 10:30 am studying *David Jeremiah Explains Romans 8:28* and Wednesday evening at 5:30 pm studying *Moses In the Footsteps of the Reluctant Prophet*.

Next, find where you can best serve the Lord and get involved. We have many opportunities for you to serve such as the Choir, Pantry, Feed New Mexico Kids, Women with Purpose, St. Joseph Mission School, Gallup and Navajo ministries, Asbury Café, prayer chain, MorningStar and Pamilla. Another way you can support our ministries is through our Second Mile Giving each month.

Finally, make it a habit to be in worship each Sunday because nothing compares to Christian fellowship. It is my hope and prayer that each one of us will grow closer to the Lord in our personal relationship with the Lord in 2026. Happy New Year!

God Bless, Reuben

A note from Samaritan's Purse: *“Thank you for your generous gift to Samaritan's Purse. Your investment in what God is doing through this ministry means more than you know.”*

Franklin Graham

Bible Studies for Everyone

Do you want to grow closer to the Lord in 2026 and experience His presence in your life? One of the best ways is to participate in a weekly Bible study. Please join one of the following studies:

SUNDAY 10:00 AM: *Jeff Bair is leading a new discussion-based class entitled: "Matthew Plus."*

MONDAY 10:30 AM: *Marie Donat is leading a class on 2nd Timothy.*

WEDNESDAY 10:30 AM: *Francie Larsen will start a new class on January 7 entitled "David Jeremiah Explains Romans 8:28."*

WEDNESDAY 5:30 PM: *Pastor Reuben will begin a new class by Adam Hamilton, entitled Moses In the Footsteps of the Reluctant Prophet in January.*

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

Pamilla: *Dave and Sue Duranty are leading a class at Pamilla on Wednesdays.*

NEW BIBLE STUDY: MOSES

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE RELUCTANT PROPHET

The epic account of his life, together with the deliverance of the Israelite slaves from bondage in Egypt, is the defining story of the Jewish people. For Christians, Moses' life serves as the backdrop for much that is found in the Gospels. Throughout history, his story has continued to speak to each successive generation. Join us as we explore the sites of Moses' life, from the Nile River to the Red Sea, from Mt. Sinai to the desert wilderness. Using historical information, archaeological data, and biblical text, Adam Hamilton guides us in the footsteps of this reluctant prophet who blazed a trail of faith. Join us starting on Wednesday January 7 at 5:30 pm in the sanctuary as we begin this six-week study.

WOMEN WITH PURPOSE



Be sure to attend *Women With Purpose* on Thursday, January 8th at 10 AM. Our speaker will be Candace Gould, of New Mexico Heart Gallery. We will assemble "Baby Showers in a Bag" for the new moms and babies served by this worthwhile organization. As always, this will be an enjoyable time of fellowship and delicious refreshments. Come, and bring a friend!

JANUARY SECOND MILE GIVING

For January, our second Mile Giving will go to support the Navajo Reservation Relief Fund. For over fourteen years, Rev. Chris Davis of the Gallup Nazarene Church has worked to meet the needs, both practical and spiritual, of those on the Navajo Nation and her community in Gallup. As part of our ministry to Gallup, we provide snack lunches that Chris distributes to the homeless throughout Gallup along with compassion and prayers. In addition, last year we started providing 25 boxes of groceries that are distributed each month to the homebound residents of the Navajo Nation. Through Women with Purpose, we provide supplies to Chris for her ministry. In 2025, we made two mission trips to Gallup to assist Chris in providing food for the homeless and the grocery boxes to the homebound. To support this ministry, please mark "Navajo Food Boxes" on the memo line of your check to the church.

SOUP-ER BOWL SUNDAY



This year, the Big Professional Football Game, the Super Bowl, is on Sunday February 8. Over the past few years, many churches have held a Soup-er Bowl Sunday on the same day as an opportunity to collect food for their local food pantries. So, between now and Sunday

February 8, bring cans of soup for the High Desert Methodist Food Pantry. Think of the difference we can make if each person brought at least one can! You may place your donations in the corner of the Narthex.

Also on Sunday February 8, wear the colors of your favorite college or pro football team.

Following the 11 am worship service, we will have our second "Chili Cookoff." There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex for those who want to enter their chili. Please join us to sample some great chili dishes and vote for your favorite. A great time of fellowship before going home to watch the game. Let's have a lot of fun!

Excerpts from a letter from Sister Jane: *"Greetings...my new (life) twist finds me a resident in Buffalo, New York. I live in the big convent with (about) 50 retired sisters... On football Sundays, everyone gathers after Mass to watch the beloved Buffalo Bills. My new ministry is volunteering at Villa Maria College, including Bible studies and ...prayer celebrations...I thank God for you. ...Blessings of peace, love and joy."* Sister Jane Mary Gawlik

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

Second Lieutenant Darien Garcia, US Air
Force

Staff Sergeant Brock Henning, US Air
Force

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

Major Brian Koa Yee, United States Air
Force

Lt. Devin Marshall, Ft. Novosel, AL

Gunnery Sergeant Jesse Perkins, United
States Marines, Bangkok

Captain Shelli Schimke, USAF
Intelligence

Lt. Commander Kristina Scott, US Navy

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

MUSIC MINISTRY NOTES

Choir singers always welcome!

The choir rehearses on **Wednesdays, at 5:30 pm**, and sings at the 9 am worship services.

Since there is not a choir at the 11 am service, we enjoy selections by soloists, duets, trios, and quartets.

One of Drew's many gifts is encouraging new singers to provide music in the worship services. If you are willing to sing a special song at the 11 am service, please see Drew.



NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

In Luke 5:16, we are told that Jesus would often withdraw to out-of-the-way places for prayer. Mark 1:35 tells us that very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up and went to a secluded place to pray. Jesus made it a habit to spend a daily quiet time with His Father. As you consider making resolutions for 2026, give serious thought to adopting Jesus' practice of a daily quiet time. Set aside at least 30 minutes each day for time alone with the Lord in prayer and reading the Bible. There are three devotionals in the Narthex to assist you in selecting your daily readings: the *Upper Room*, the *Daily Bread*, and *My Utmost for His Highest*. Take one home and grow closer in your personal relationship with the Lord in 2026.

The Church in Mission



HAWAII: *Linn Carlson* recently served on a Mission Team by responding to the rebuilding needs resulting from the **2023 Lahaina fires on Maui, Hawaii**. She served for 3 weeks on the island from **11/30-12/20/2025**. In 2023, wildfires ravaged Maui, causing significant damage, resulting in over 13,000 people being displaced, over 2,000 buildings destroyed, 102 people perished. **This mission project focus: TO REBUILD!**
In next month's newsletter, Linn will share photos of the Hawaii Mission!

COSTA RICA:

LINN IS GOING ON ANOTHER MISSION TRIP, TO COSTA RICA JANUARY 14-23, 2026....AGAIN? Yes, Linn Carlson is "on the road again"!!



While in Costa Rica, Linn & her team will once again work with Missionary Lillian Solt (who is under the jurisdiction of the Latin American Mission) & her staff of CEDCAS (means Center for Health Education & Health Services CEDCAS is a non-profit that was established by Lillian in 1985 (50 years ago) & whose goal is to promote & maintain "whole person health care", meaning, physical, emotional, social & spiritual health for those that they serve.

CEDCAS & the Baptist church in Santo Tomas have begun to build **a youth center**.

SO.... WHAT WILL LINN & HER TEAM BE DOING?

Our team will be working on building, along with at least one welder, from California, who will be joining the team. He's been on other CEDCAS work teams.

Our work will include:

- Assisting the welder cutting the iron, painting the welded joints, etc. for the second floor & the stairway to the second floor.
- Plumbing including laying the pipes for the drains & bathrooms on the first floor
- Filling in the drain site that will go down under the first floor. It involves moving large rock, smaller rock & then to fill in the drain space.
- Painting at the church
- Assisting with VBS.

Last year, HDUMC provided funds to cover public school uniforms for children who were unable to attend school due to lack of resources to buy their uniforms. We are so grateful for your generosity. If you would like to contribute to this cause again, please see below.

HOW CAN YOU HELP???

- 1) Cover Linn, the team, the families/children that we will be working with **in prayer!**
- 2) Linn will be collecting funds to take with her that will be used to buy school uniforms for some children so that they can attend school every day\all day! If you would like to provide some support for this mission– please write a check to HDUMC with Memo line note: "Mission Trip-Costa Rica". **Donated funds need to be received by the church by 01/11/2026!**

The Church in Mission - in Pictures



Toy drive for Rio Rancho Police benefit



Rio Rancho Police Officers visited to accept toy donations



Grocery boxes delivered to Prewett Reservation



Donation of hams to Rio Rancho families in need



Pastor Chris Davis and Gordon Golsan unloading grocery donations



Delivering groceries to a grateful family

JANUARY 2026



HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>MS = MorningStar Worship JAM = Jesus and Music SS= Sunday School</p>						
				1 Happy New Year!	2 11:00-2:00 Food Pantry	3 10 AM Celebration of Life for Sity Roach
4 Epiphany Sunday 9 AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	5 10:30 AM Bible Study	6	7 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 Bible Study 5:30 Bible Study 5:30 Choir Practice	8 10 AM Women with Purpose	9	10
11 9 AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	12 10 AM KNMK bagging 10:30 AM Bible Study	13 6:00 PM Ministry Team	14 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 Bible Study 5:30 Bible Study 5:30 Choir Practice	15 1-4 PM Food Pantry	16	17
18 9 AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	19 10:30 AM Bible Study	20 9 AM-12 noon Food Pantry	21 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 Bible Study 5:30 Bible Study 5:30 Choir Practice	22	23	24
25 9AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11AM Worship	26 10:30 AM Bible Study	27	28 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 Bible Study 5:30 Bible Study 5:30 Choir Practice	29	30	31

Care Ministry

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

Grover Donahoe	766 Hood Way SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	220-3839
Rod Warpole	600 First Street NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	332-9706
Lucille Few	920 Riverview Dr. SE Apt.#223, 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
Judy Ballard	Ridgmar Place, Apt. 3405, 2151 Green Oak Rd., Ft. Worth TX 76116	240-0912
Robert Wussow	The Retreat, 4075 Jackie Rd., Rio Rancho, NM 87124	350-3698



Del & Francie Larsen	Jan. 4
Gary & Laurie Smothermon	Jan. 11
Raj & Cynthia Gandham	Jan. 16
Steven & Ruby Hunyady	Jan. 22



Robert Wussow	Jan. 2
Wanda W-Jerome	Jan. 6
Sheree Osborn	Jan. 8
Lucinda Trujillo	Jan. 9
Paul Rexroth	Jan. 10
Bailey Siverts	Jan. 11
Jearlene Savell	Jan. 13
Helen Hill-Stephens	Jan. 18
Jane Komatz	Jan. 20
Jan Torres	Jan. 23
Bonnie Korngiebel	Jan. 24
Valerie Forbes	Jan. 25
Ian Colbert	Jan. 28
Holly Benson	Jan. 30
Jeff Pratt	Jan. 30
Liz Thompson	Jan. 30



Pantry volunteers sorting delivery from Roadrunner Food Bank

**HIGH DESERT UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH**

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

January, 2026 Newsletter

HDUMC CHURCH PANTRY

Distribution dates for January, 2026 are:

Friday, January 2, at 11:00 AM

Thursday, January 15, at 1:00 PM

Tuesday, January 20 at 9:00 AM

January Collection:

Dry beans & rice, small bags

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

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