

*“Loving God, Serving Others, Changing Lives”*

# HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## **REUBEN'S RAMBLINGS**

Here we are just over half way through 2024. So, I think that this is a good time to ask you to do two things for me. First, someone once posed the question: “If your church closed today, would anyone miss it other than those who worship there?” The point of the question is that we as a church are not called to focus internally, but to be in service to the surrounding community in the name of the Lord. Lovett Weems in his book *Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit* stated that “if you want to thrive then serve;” in other words, if we want to grow as a church and build God’s kingdom here in Rio Rancho, we need to continue to reach out and meet the needs of our neighbors and those in need in love and service to the Lord.

I continue to need your help and input into where God is calling us to serve. Look around and see where the needs are and get involved in making a difference. Let each of us make a commitment to pray that the Lord will open our eyes to what is needed and where He wants each one of us to serve. Albert Outler, a scholar of the

Methodist Church, said it best: “The world hears the gospel when it sees it, when Christians are clearly concerned with human existence and care for the needs of those less fortunate.” We are currently involved in a lot of worthwhile outreach projects and are making a difference in the lives of others. I am truly thankful for your continued support, but as I have said before I know there is more that God wants us to do and He will continue to open new opportunities to us if we will only stay focused on Him.

Secondly, one of our former bishops said that we as Christians and congregations get so comfortable with the way we do things that we do nothing. We know what needs to be done to fulfill the Great Commission of make disciples, but we don’t do it. We need to get out of our comfort zone and reach out to the surrounding community. We all know friends, neighbors and co-workers who are not currently attending any church and whose lives would be enhanced by knowing Jesus Christ and becoming part of the fellowship of this church.

It’s simple; all we have to do is reach out and invite them to come join us here at High Desert. As I have challenged you in the past, please invite at least two persons to come to

church over the remainder of this year. As Jesus indicated in the Parable of the Sower in the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, we are all called to sow the seeds of faith, letting them fall where they may. God is responsible for the growth; our job is to sow the seeds. So, in the coming weeks and months, let us go into the fields of Rio Rancho, San Fidel and Gallup, and sow the seeds of the Good News. May God bless your work.

God Bless. Reuben

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### ***Bible Studies Available***

*Although our Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday Bible Study classes are on a break for the summer, we offer the following options at this time:*

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

**ONLINE STUDIES:** We send out a weekly email from Tony Smith discussing Isaiah. You can also participate in Tony’s online studies on Daniel, John & Revelation at [coraleno@aol.com](mailto:coraleno@aol.com).

**PODCASTS:** “Footsteps” Available on the church website.

August, 2024, Issue 8

## BE A KID AGAIN - VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Do you want to be a kid again and relive memories of the past, plus have fun and enjoy fellowship with others? Then join us on Thursday August 8 and Friday August 9. This year we will focus on missions. We will begin at 9 am with a brief worship of hymns and a devotional which will be followed by a mission presentation. Different individuals will lead the devotionals and presentation each morning.

After a break we will have a time of crafts, making items for our various mission projects. Then there will be a time for indoor games. We will end each morning by sharing lunch together.

Here's a great chance to spend a morning having fun with friends. This is also a great opportunity for you to invite a friend or neighbor to join us. Ask anybody who participated last year and they will tell you that they had a great time; you don't want to miss it this year!

## *Testimonies from Kairos Graduates*

*See more information on the Kairos Ministry further in this issue.*

"I was like a balloon with nothing inside. But these Kairos volunteers fed me with the Word of God, and now I hunger after Him.

I will be forever grateful to Kairos for showing me that the way to freedom is through the cross of Christ."

— Kairos Inside Graduate

"By the end of the four days, I saw the light and a new way to live!

I took "God" into my heart and mind, and a big load was taken from me. I felt good inside.

Happy to be alive for the first time in my life that I could remember!!

I saw life could change for me if I tried!"

— Kairos Inside Graduate

## **AUGUST SECOND MILE GIVING:**

Our Second Mile Giving for August will go to the following two ministries:

1. **Faith Comes by Hearing.** This is a local ministry whose goal is to work in partnership with churches to record and freely provide God’s audible Word in every language that needs it by the year 2033. Seventy percent of the world’s population live in oral cultures. That means that 5.7 billion people need to hear the Gospel in order to understand and accept it. Today 1.5 billion still do not have access to God’s Word in a format that they can understand and engage. Their mission is: God’s Word in audio. Their vision: to fulfill the Great Commission. To support this ministry, please mark “Faith Comes by Hearing” on the memo line of your check to the church.
2. **4Paws Pet Food.** In partnership with the 4 Paws Pet Food Bank in Corrales, High Desert is providing free dog and cat food to the clients of the High Desert Methodist Food Pantry each month on the first Friday. This ministry supports those in our community who are struggling to feed their companion animals. Because of limited financial resources, many Pantry clients give up their own personal food to feed their pets. Over the past year, we have been able to help our Pantry clients continue to enjoy the positive benefits of pet ownership by keeping their pets fed and out of shelters. If you would like to support this ministry, please mark “4Paws Pet Food” on the memo line of your check.

### **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

During the month of July and August, we will be collecting school supplies for our local schools, Pantry clients, St. Joseph Mission School in San Fidel, and Gallup Nazarene Church. As we all know there are many families that cannot afford to buy all the items required for their children’s classes. While we are focusing on the basic supplies for the local schools, we are focusing on art supplies for St. Joseph Mission School:

<b>LOCAL SCHOOLS</b>	<b>ST. JOSEPH MISSION</b>
Pencils	Crayons
Canyons	Pencil Boxes
Regular Glue Sticks	Art Paper
Notebooks	Drawing/Sketch Pads
Notebook Paper	Water Colors
Children’s Scissors	Washable Kids Paint
Erasers	Colored Pencils
Backpacks	Crayola Markers

You may place your donation in the bins in the Narthex. Thank you for your continued support for the outreach ministries of High Desert UMC.

## KAIROS Prison Ministry



August 15-18, at the Women's Correctional Facility, 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 25 dozen) as cookies are not only given to the 24 women participating in the Kairos weekend BUT ALSO TO EACH AND EVERY WOMAN INCARSERATED 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!



## **Fellowship Events**

### **A Night at the Opera**

On Friday, August 12, a group of 12 will travel to the Santa Fe Opera for a performance of *Don*

*Giovanni*. We plan to enjoy a box supper on the grounds prior to the performance. Many thanks to Jeff Bair for agreeing to drive the church bus.

### **Fall Baseball Outing**

Join us on Sunday September 1 at 1:35 pm for a great time of fun and fellowship as we watch the Isotopes play the Reno Aces. We have reserved 40 box seats in the upper rows of Section 109 between home plate and third base. Cost is \$16.50 per seat. The Church Bus will be available for those who need a ride. Please make your payment to the Church and mark "Baseball Outing" on the memo line of your check. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

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### **Feed New Mexico Kids**

**The next bagging day for the food packets is Monday, August 12**

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### **Church Library – Check it out**



Have you ever thought about watching a video or movie about Jesus? When the summer sun makes our days just more than warm, try a video. "The Life of Christ: The Revolutionary" is a two DVD set. From the PBS channel, the program "Ancient Roads from Christ to Constantine" is in our library. So pop that popcorn and pull up a chair. The video part of the library collection awaits your perusal.

### **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 1<sup>st</sup> 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



## **New Mexico Annual Conference 2024**

### **Lay Report to High Desert United Methodist Church, Rio Rancho NM**

#### **Summary:**

The New Mexico Annual Conference occurred June 12-14 in Albuquerque, NM with the theme "RE". High Desert UMC delegates Reuben Thomas (clergy) and Lisa Isenberger (lay member) were in attendance. The opening worship sermon was delivered by District Superintendent, Rev. Ross Whiteaker in which he used the story of Lazarus to remind us to unbind each other so that we may go forth and share Christ's love. In the Bishop's Address, Bishop Schnase got down on his knees in a powerful demonstration of the word REkindle and discussed other "RE" words for a time such as this including Reflect, Restore, Rejoice, Refresh, and Revive. Bishop Schnase encouraged all of us to stay focused on mission rather than on divisive matters. He further reiterated that there is room in the UMC for progressives, centrists, and traditionalists alike. A quote from John Wesley sums this up nicely *"Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may. Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences."*

#### **Business Content:**

In combined sessions, noteworthy business decisions included actions to adjust to a reduction in churches by reducing the NMAC budget by ~40%, determining future NMAC budgets based on actual funds received in years prior, and reducing the number of districts in the conference from three to two. The conference also approved an MOU to define our future relationship with the Sacramento Camp as a private entity and granted permission to take initial steps to declare McCurdy Ministries a UMC Historical Site.

Rev Pam Rowley gave an update from the postponed General Conference. It is worth noting that several items such as regionalization will not be brought before annual conferences until 2025 nor be fully approved to go into effect until 2026.

#### **Key Take-aways:**

In the words of Bishop Schnase, "our work is to proclaim the gospel, seek, welcome, and gather persons into the body of Christ and send persons into the world to live lovingly and justly as servants of Christ by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, caring for the stranger, freeing the oppressed and sustaining one another with compassion". This work is evident in the New Mexico Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church as ministries are reaching those who need God's love and new churches emerge.

#### **Recommendation:**

STAY THE COURSE - HDUMC is a thriving mission-focused church, actively doing Jesus's work as a United Methodist congregation. There is no need to deviate from our current path; we simply need to continue living our mission of Loving God, Serving Others, Changing Lives.

Lisa Isenberger  
**Lisa Isenberger, Lay Member, NM Annual Conference**

## BOOKS READ WHILE ON VACATION

July, 2024

*Parables: The Mysteries of God's Kingdom Revealed Through the Stories Jesus Told* by John MacArthur

I found this book to be quite instructional. Although I have read and even preached on many of the parables of Jesus in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and John, Rev. MacArthur provided new insights to what Jesus was teaching. This is an informative and helpful study for those desiring to penetrate the meaning of a dozen of our Lord's precious word pictures.

*No Greater Love, Experiencing the Heart of Jesus Through the Gospel of John* by A. W. Tozer

*No Greater Love* is a study of Jesus' interactions with people throughout the Gospel of John, including Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman at the well, and even the Pharisees. In this book, Tozer includes twenty of over fifty sermons he preached on the Gospel of John presenting his insights on God's love for us. He describes what this love looks like in action, especially with those who are hard to love? Jesus didn't love people because they deserved it; He loved them because He is love. With the problems in our culture today, there is a real need for this "Jesus love" that's available to all who believe. The goal of this book is to help the reader better understand Jesus' love for them, which in the end, will lead you becoming more like Him.

*Nearing Home, Life, Faith, and Finishing Well* by Billy Graham

Billy Graham wrote this book when he was 92 years old and four years after the death of his wife Ruth. He says that "growing old has been the greatest surprise of his life." In this book, Billy explores the challenges of aging while gleaning foundational truths from the Bible. He invites us to journey with him as he considers the golden years while anticipating the hope of being reunited with Ruth in his heavenly home. "When granted many years of life, growing old in age is natural, but growing old with grace is a choice." Billy says: "Growing older with grace is possible for all who will set their hearts and minds on the Giver of grace, the Lord Jesus Christ." The Bible is filled with examples of men and women whom God used late in life, often with great impact – Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elizabeth and Anna, to name a few. They were ordinary men and women who discovered that the latter years of life can be some of the most rewarding and fulfilling. For them, growing older wasn't something to be dreaded, it was to be embraced as part of God's plan for their lives. In this his last book, Billy reflects on his life and contemplates what God still had in store for him. He also shares how he has learned to deal with grief, uncertainty, and loss by focusing on the promises of the Bible. God Bless, Reuben

### ***JAM Sessions (Jesus and Music)***

Join us on Friday afternoons at 4:30 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.

## Judy's Jabber, by Judy Ballard *Are You Too Busy to Pray?*

### 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17



What a loaded question. What an absurd question. And yet . . .

Sometimes we are so focused on our busy lives that we shortchange our conversations with God. Of course, we don't mean to, but that's what it turns out to

be—neglecting our prayer life.

In Paul's first letter to the believers in Thessalonica, he stresses two simple points in chapter 5 verses 16-17: Rejoice always, and pray without ceasing.

Rejoice always interprets to keeping a glad heart. Sometimes that takes effort to be sure, but joy is a definite hedge against the negativity that pulls mankind down. But *pray* without ceasing? That phrase is a bit more daunting. How can a person be in an attitude of prayer all the time? What an unreasonable and impossible task!

Part of the response to that image is not to put too much attention on "attitude" of prayer, e.g., on bended knee, head bowed, hands clasped and eyes closed. All that's required to have a straight connection to our God is '*thinking*' a prayer. If you are already in a posture of rejoicing, you already have a direct conduit to God the Father!

I believe the charge to pray without ceasing means simply not to abandon the practice or act of praying. In this case. The word '*abandon*' refers to never developing a habit of giving thanks or caring about a fellow human being. Whether prayer is uttered aloud or rambling in sentence fragments from our mind, God knows it came from your heart.

Praying continually is not intended as a literal command because it does not permit exclusion of attending to life around us. As children of God the Father, we are expected to give 100% of our attention to the task before us, e.g., driving to a Dr. appointment. God expects you to be a responsible driver. Nothing less will do. But when you get to your destination perhaps you can allow a snippet of thanks to life and rise heavenward. I frequently pray for the caregivers when I have appointments—internally and privately of course; usually before I get out of the car.

Recently I met up with a fellow tenant here waiting for a ride to his dialysis treatment. I told him I would pray for him all day. And I did—as often as I thought about it. I believe that is what Paul is referring to when he admonished his followers to "pray continually, without ceasing."

So, I ask you again. "Are you too busy to pray?" I urge you to adopt the habit of *looking* for an opportunity to pray then follow through with it. I believe that by adopting such an outlook, you can't help but pray "incessantly" as we are all charged to do, and in the process, you will discover the meaning of rejoicing always.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-17 Rejoice always and pray unceasingly. What powerful words to live by.

## OBSCURE NAMES IN THE BIBLE



Who was Vashti of the Old Testament ?  
*Find the answer elsewhere in this issue.*



# AUGUST 2024

## HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
					11-2 Pantry 4:30 PM Jesus & Music	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship			Office Hrs: 9-12	<i>"Be a Kid Again"- Vacation Bible School 9-12</i>	<i>"Be a Kid Again"- Vacation Bible School 9-12</i> 4:30 PM Jesus & Music	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	10:00 KNMK Bagging	6 pm Ministry Team	Office Hrs: 9-12	1:00-4:00 PM Food Pantry	4:30 PM Jesus & Music	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship		9 AM -12:00 noon Pantry	Office Hrs: 9-12		4:30 PM Jesus & Music 5:15 pm Opera Trip	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship			Office Hrs: 9-12			

# Care Ministry

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

<b>Phil Pittman</b>	C/O Ravenna Assisted Living, 3051 Twin Oaks Dr. NW Albuquerque, NM 87120	
<b>Lorra Garner</b>	Genesis, 9150 McMahon Blvd. NW Albq 87114	408-722-6482
<b>Grover Donahoe</b>	766 Hood Way SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	220-3839
<b>Rod Warpole</b>	600 First Street NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	332-9706
<b>Mac Esquibel</b>	4544 Aguila Road SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	891-1469
<b>Ella Jerome</b>	813 Banco Court, Bernalillo, NM 87004	312-2992
<b>Polly Van Lenten</b>	920 Riverview Dr. SE, Apt 280, Rio Rancho 87124	979-277-4852
<b>Vi Ortega</b>	Care Free 10916 Juan Tabo Place NE Albq. 87111	288-2160
<b>Pat McElwain</b>	4536 Ambrose Alday SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	235-7484
<b>Goldie Buckner</b>	920 Riverview Dr. SE Apt. 205 Rio Rancho, NM 87124	828-0486



Lynn and Jana Siverts	August 10
Jeff & Elaine Pratt	August 14
Keith & Diane Witt	August 21
Kent & Kathy Hays	August 22
Wayne & Pauline Walker	August 23
Ken & Sandy Dewbre	August 29

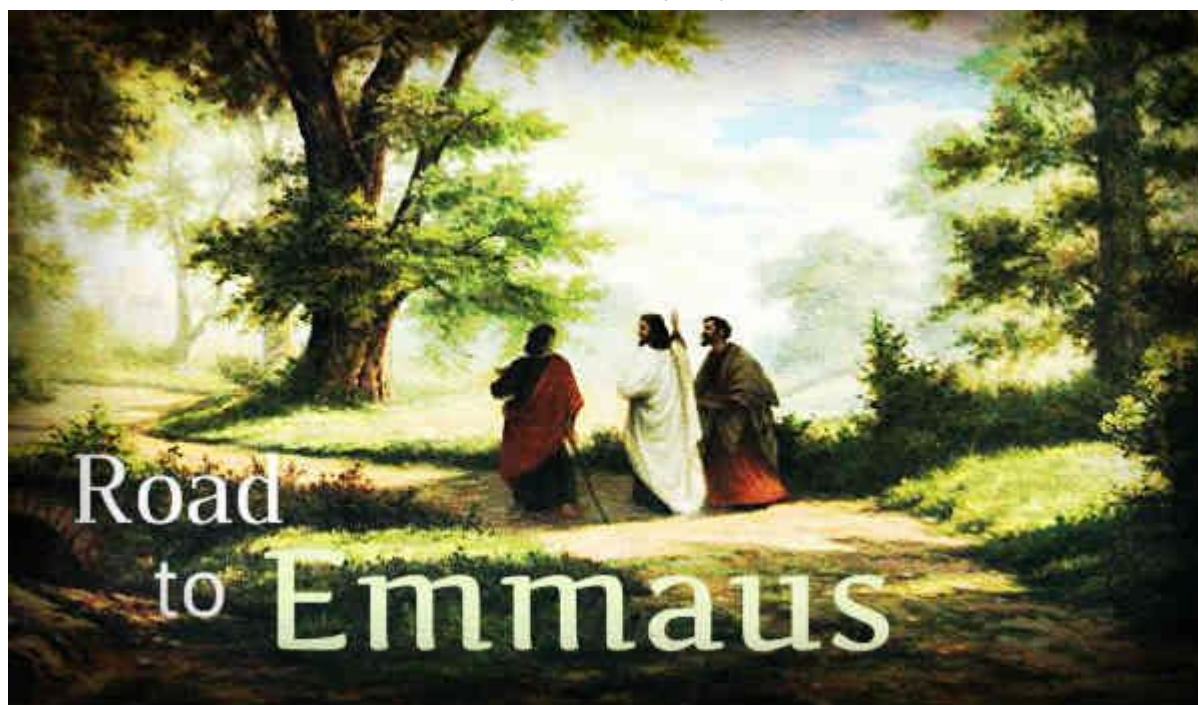
Gordon Golsan	August 2
Cheryl Mason	August 4
Angela Rodriguez	August 6
Ton Creveling	August 10
Lou Williams	August 10
Bobbie Morris	August 11
Roberta Jockheck	August 12
Del Larsen	August 13
Paul Lewis	August 13
Rebecca Just	August 15
Dannye Bristow	August 17
Judy Sampson	August 18
Doris Donahoe	August 20
Ben Kottenbrook	August 22
Jim Bauman	August 23
Jana Siverts	August 25
Lorraine Zapf	August 27
Laverna McGrew	August 27
Debby Dils	August 29

**ANSWER TO OBSCURE NAMES  
IN THE BIBLE:**

VASHTI WAS THE QUEEN/WIFE OF KING AHASUERUS, WHO ORDERED HER TO PERFORM FOR SOME OF HIS PARTYING CRONIES. SHE REFUSED, AND LOST THE RIGHT TO BE QUEEN AS A RESULT.

*ESTHER 1 - 2*

**HAVE YOU NOTICED HOW TIME IS FLYING BY?  
NOW IS THE TIME TO PLAN AHEAD AND REGISTER FOR  
THIS EXPERIENCE!**



**The Men's Walk to Emmaus – April 24-27, 2024**  
**The Women's Walk to Emmaus – May 15-18, 2024**  
**Inlow Retreat Center (in the Manzano Mountains)**

“Walk to Emmaus” is based on the scripture Luke 24:13-35 which tells of the men’s journey on the road to Emmaus and sharing their hearts’ deepest concern about the death of Jesus. They encounter Christ, share a meal and recognize our risen Lord; rushing back to Jerusalem to share the great news. **The Walk to Emmaus is an opportunity to meet Jesus Christ in a new way as he is revealed to you through other believers.** It is a 72-hour experience of Christian spiritual renewal and formation. You will enjoy 3 busy days singing, learning, laughing, praying, worshipping and participating in small groups.

The theme of each talk is God’s Grace, how that grace comes alive in the Christian community, and how it expresses itself in the world. You’ll also discover how grace is real in your life, how you live a life of grace and bring grace to other.

**You are invited to walk with Christ, in a new and different way, for the rest of your life!**

We have numerous persons in our congregation that have gone a Walk to Emmaus. In fact, we have several working on these men and women’s walks!

**If you are interested in learning more about The Walk to Emmaus Weekends or are interested in attending, please contact Linn Carlson (505-450-4152), Judy Ballard (505-240-0912 or Pastor Reuben**

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## HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Phone: 505-891-4206

Office Hours: Wednesday 9 AM - Noon

Email: [highdesertumc@outlook.com](mailto:highdesertumc@outlook.com)

We're on the Web!  
[www.highdesertumc.org](http://www.highdesertumc.org)

August, 2024 Newsletter

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## HDUMC CHURCH PANTRY

**Distribution dates for August, 2024 are:**

**Friday, August 2, at 11:00 AM**

**Thursday August 15, at 1:00 PM**

**Tuesday, August 20, at 9:00 AM**

**August 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.**

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