

“Loving God, Serving Others, Changing Lives”

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

REUBEN'S RAMBLINGS

December 2021, Issue 12

Christmas will be here before we know it. Christmas is one of my favorite times of the year with all the holiday activities. Judy and our sons think that I go overboard with all the lights and decorations. But they haven't seen anything until this year. This might be the year Judy will finally let me get that inflatable Santa Claus on a John Deere tractor! Now one of the things I enjoy about Christmas is the family traditions, many of which are inherited from our parents and others that we as a family have developed over the years.

I remember the traditions that we had as I grew up in a small town in South Carolina. All throughout the year as we walked around the family farm, we would keep our eyes out for the perfect Christmas tree, and then right after Thanksgiving, we would cut it down and take it home to place in the living room. We also had holly on the farm that we cut for decorating the house. There was also mistletoe and Dad would take us to the farm and we would shoot it out of the trees with a 22 rifle. I remember that Christmas was a special time when all my aunts,

uncles, and cousins would return to the old homestead to renew acquaintances and reminisce about past Christmases and loved ones who had gone on to be with the Lord. My mother went all out for Christmas to make sure that everybody felt welcomed and at home. She even invited friends who didn't have any family nearby to come and have Christmas dinner with us. In addition to having ham on Christmas, one of the traditional dishes that Judy has adopted from my mother was her oyster casserole.

One of the traditions that we have developed since our sons were born is to attend the Christmas Eve candlelight service which we didn't have in our small church when I was growing up. When we lived in Santa Fe, I was one of the head ushers at St. John's UMC, and so I helped with all three of the Christmas Eve services. Judy and the boys would go walk Canyon Road while I helped with the services. And of course, since we have been in the ministry, our sons understand that we work on Christmas Eve. To me, it's not Christmas Eve without being in

church holding a candle and singing *Silent Night*. I hope that you agree and will come join us this Christmas Eve at either 4 or 6 pm; bring your family and friends; make it a tradition!

What are your Christmas traditions? Were they passed on to you from your parents and grandparents? What traditions are you passing on to your children and grandchildren? While I enjoy and look forward to all of our family traditions, the only one that I really want to pass on to my grandchildren and others is the reason for the season, the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. God shared His love with us on Christmas Eve by sending His Son to save us; so let us share this love with all we meet this Christmas season. Traditions are the stories families write together. So this Christmas continue to write your story!

P.S. Let's put Jesus Christ back into Christmas; whenever someone says "Happy Holidays" to you, respond with a big smile and a big "MERRY CHRISTMAS!" Merry Christmas!

Reuben



Christmas – Alaska 1957

Ella Mares Perry

Four nights before Christmas, Jack
Decided that we needed a Christmas tree for the kids.
He could walk out and chop one – piece of cake!

First, he needed to make a pair of snowshoes.
(The snow was three feet high).
He fashioned them out of copper tubing, rope, and canvas.
By seven the next morning, he was ready to go –
A small hatchet hanging from his tool belt.

He was back by 10:00, ready for breakfast, no tree.
They were frozen solid, the hatchet just bounced back.
Out at 11:00, armed with a hacksaw and a sledgehammer.

2:00 VICTORY! JACK CAME HOME WITH A FIVE-FOOT TREE.
WITH ABOUT TEN WIDELY SPACED BRANCHES.
We had lunch, and he was out again at 3:00.

Back at about 6:30 tired, dragging two trees. Suppertime.
The evening was spent resting and drilling holes in the first tree.
7:00 next morning, he glued the branches from the last two trees
Into the holes drilled into the first tree.
Now we were on our way! Eating breakfast as we worked.

Oh, oh, the soft shushing sounds we hadn't paid any attention to-
Were the sounds of needles dropping off the branches as they thawed.
When we finally got the lights working, the kids were AWED!

Was it worth it? You bet. After fifty some years, it's still the best!



Footsteps

A New Podcast Hosted by HDUMC



Lisa Isenberger, Bonnie Korngiebel, and Bruce Packard are introducing a new podcast hosted by HDUMC. We will be discussing practical issues related to following in Jesus' Footsteps as we Love God, Serve Others, Change Lives.

To join us, subscribe to the podcast by:

1. Go to either Apple Podcast, Spotify, or Google Podcasts



Apple Podcasts Spotify Google Podcasts

2. Search for "HDUMC"
3. Find the Footsteps icon seen above
4. Click Subscribe
5. New episodes will be released every 2 weeks

Also, you can find the episodes on the HDUMC website.

If you need help, contact Lisa Isenberger or Bruce Packard before or after church.



MEMBERS IN THE ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL NEWS

November 5, 2021 "Giving back, one blanket at a time" – Janet Greger started the Alegria Hospital Outreach group which makes blankets and care packets for UNM Hospital and the VA Center

November 8, 2021 "Hats, boots and cowboy crooners" – Twins, Kacey and Jenna Thunborg were interviewed for the ABQ Journal as they traveled to Grand Junction, CO. HDUMC has had the privilege in the past to hear these two talented young ladies at our church.

Check out both positive articles!

Do you order from Amazon.com?? ***Did you know that when you order from Amazon, you can automatically generate donations to HDUMC, (at no additional cost to you) when you have selected "High Desert United Methodist Church, Rio Rancho" to be your charity through Amazon Smile?*** Bulletin insert with all of the information is attached.

A Kottenbrook Christmas in Hawaii

By Jennifer Kottenbrook Landry

Each December, Christmas season would roll around in a warm wave of sunshine and ocean breezes. The average December temperatures generally ranged in the low 80s. Everyone would sing about “Dreaming of a White Christmas”, but everyone knew that this would never happen in Hawaii. Not surprisingly, pine trees were nowhere to be found on the island so if you wanted a Christmas tree, you had to pay an “arm and a leg” to buy one that had been shipped over from the mainland. Back in Louisiana, my brother and I had grown up admiring the elaborate hand-made decorations on our Meme and Aunt Rete’s Christmas trees. They were a splendor to behold! John and I would lovingly help our grandmother unwrap her collection of hand-beaded masterpieces and strategically place them onto her Christmas tree. We would ooh and aah over each one, admiring the tiny scenes that had been meticulously placed on each ornament. Needless to say, we loved Christmas trees. Of course, as pastors, my parents could not afford to buy a Christmas tree, but this did not stop my brother John and I from wanting one.

During the Christmas of 1979, I was 14 and my brother John was 11. We were living in Makakilo in a townhouse on the side of the mountain. My brother and I thought that this townhouse was the coolest place we had ever lived since it was furnished with sleek modern black leather-and-chrome furniture and had shiny silver wallpaper with leopards peeking out from behind purple palm fronds on the walls. In the corner of the room was a large potted palm tree, the only plant that my mother was ever able to keep alive. Perhaps it was drought and plague resistant. I guess shouldn’t poke fun because she has passed down the black thumb of death to me.

This particular Christmas, my Dad told my brother and I that we shouldn’t expect too much out of Christmas because money was tight; however, a few weeks before Christmas, our dad and mom uncharacteristically called us into the living room and proceeded to decorate our potted palm tree with Christmas trimmings. We laughed at the absurdity of it and had the time of our lives. On Christmas morning, my brother and I went downstairs and were surprised to see a small pile of presents under our Christmas palm tree. Before we opened our presents, we all sat down and listened as my dad pulled out his Bible and read the nativity story. Afterwards, he prayed and thanked God for coming to earth to save us from our sins and thanked Him for our many blessings, which included a wonderful family, a roof over our heads, and food on our table.

After the prayer, we opened our presents. I honestly don’t remember what my brother got, but when I opened my present, I found a white leather-bound bible with my name engraved in gold letters on the cover. My parents were beaming as they declared that I was now old enough to have a grown-up bible of my own. I fingered the delicate gold-embossed pages and felt a surge of emotion. I knew my parents didn’t have that kind of money, but they sacrificed to get me that Bible because the Bible was the single most important gift that a Christian parent could give their teenaged daughter.

That Bible guided me through my entire teen years. I read it and marked it with pen and scribbled notes in it. I cried on the pages and found solace in its words. I eventually took it to Mexico where it sustained me through nine years of mission work in the jungle. From the pages of that Bible, I read the stories of Adam and Eve, King David, Daniel, and Jesus to my own children. Then, one day, my precious white leather Bible with gold embossed pages with my name embossed on the cover fell apart. Years of jungle humidity and wear had broken it down. The pages were torn and sticking together. It was beyond repair. It broke my heart to give up that Bible. When I finally bought a new one, I felt like I was losing a part of my life. Today, that Bible that my mom and dad gave me that Christmas day in Hawaii has been gone for over twenty years, but the Word of God that it imparted into my life still remains, not only in my heart but in the hearts of my children...and now my grandchildren. Isaiah 40:8 says, “The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of God endures forever.”

WOMEN WITH PURPOSE

Women With Purpose December 2, 10:00 a.m. HDUMC sanctuary

Once again, The mighty WWP turn their attention to a Christmas project—one we have served before—The Interfaith Bible Center in the International Zone of Albuquerque. Serving the homeless is a task dear to our hearts and we are happy to announce another benevolent group will be contributing to the same project, in the same amount. As before, we will be stuffing 75 generic socks with its mate, toiletries, gum, candy, granola bars and a small flashlight attached with a festive ribbon at the top of the sock. That means, a holiday handout to **150** individuals in lieu of the 75 we served last year. The Rev. Joanne Landry and her trusty cadre of volunteers work tirelessly to make a difference in our community. We hope she will be able to join us at this meeting and share more about her inspiring work in this part of Albuquerque.

ADVENT SERIES

During Advent this year we will be using Adam Hamilton's book *Not a Silent Night* for our Advent sermon series. Imagine Jesus from Mary's point of view – proud of her son, in awe of His gifts and mission, guided by love for Him as a person and so much more. In this book, Adam Hamilton begins at the end, with Mary at the Crucifixion and Resurrection; travels back in time as she witnesses Jesus' life and ministry; and ends at the beginning with the Christ Child born in a stable. This year let's experience Advent and Christmas with Mary. The sermon schedule is as follows:

November 28 – Christmas Concert by Scott & Irma Reeder

December 5 – Beginning with the End
Scripture Text: Acts 1:8-14; the hope of the Resurrection

December 12 – The Piercing of Mary's Soul
Scripture Text: Luke 2:25-35; the meaning of the Cross

December 19 – Mary, Full of Grace
Scripture Text: Luke 1:26-38; grace gift of Christmas

December 24 – It Was Not a Silent Night
Scripture Text: Luke 2:1-20; Jesus the true gift of Christmas

December 26 – Christmas Hymns Selection

RECIPES FROM GLENDA BARBER

Pumpkin Dessert



Yield: 12-16 servings

Temperature: 350 F

Baking Time: 25 to 30 minutes

1 Can (15 oz) Pumpkin

4 tsp Pumpkin Pie Spice

1 Can (12oz) Evaporated Milk

1 package Yellow Cake Mix

3 Eggs

¾ cup Butter, melted

1 cup sugar

1 ½ cup Chopped Walnuts

Mix first five ingredients. Transfer to greased 9" x 13" x 2" pan. Sprinkle with cake mix and drizzle with butter. Top with walnuts. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour or until knife comes out clean.

Serve with ice cream or whipped cream.

Sweet Potato Bake



Yield: 6-8 Servings

Temperature: 350 F

Baking Time: 30 to 35 minutes

3 Cups Mashed Sweet Potatoes

¼ Cup Butter, softened

2 Eggs

2 tsp Vanilla Extract

½ Cup Sugar

1/8 tsp Salt

¼ Cup Half & Half

Topping:

½ Cup Packed Brown Sugar

2 Tbsp Flour

¼ Cup Cold Butter, cubed

½ Cup Chopped Pecans

- 1) In large mixing bowl, combine & beat first 7 ingredients. Transfer to 11"x7"x2" baking dish.
- 2) Topping – Combine brown sugar and flour. Cut in butter till crumbly. Fold in pecans & sprinkle over potato mixture.
- 3) Bake uncovered, at 350 degrees for 30-50 minutes or until knife comes out clean.

OBSCURE NAMES IN THE BIBLE



Next month: Who is Mary Magdalene of the New Testament? Okay, her name may be familiar, but do you know why? *Judy Ballard*

ANSWER FOR JULY: Who is Mephibosheth of the OT?

Mephibosheth is the crippled son of Jonathan and grandson of King Saul. Both feet were deformed by injury, and he was in need of mercy. David honored his covenant commitment to Jonathan by providing for Mephibosheth and family for the rest of his life. Part of this agreement was translated by the permanent invitation to eat at the king's table, which Mephibosheth did.

DECEMBER SECOND MILE GIVING – FEED NM KIDS

Did you know that over 245 children in Rio Rancho are homeless and even more go hungry, especially on the weekend? A hungry child is twice as likely to repeat a grade; three times as likely to be suspended; and a hungry teen is five times as likely to commit suicide. And of course, the past year has been very stressful on our school children.

To address this need, High Desert UMC through Women with Purpose (WWP) has been participating in and supporting Feed New Mexico Kids, a local nonprofit organization, by providing weekend food packs to children in our local community. Currently, and throughout the pandemic, WWP and other volunteers have assembled over 240 food packs per month which are given to 60 students in four local schools. Each food package costs approximately \$7.

Our Second Mile Giving during December will go to the purchase of the food for these packs. You can support this worthwhile ministry by writing "Feed NM Kids" on the memo line of your check to the church. Thanks for making a difference in the lives of these children.

December

HIGH DESERT UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH



2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Bible Study 10:30 AM 5:30 PM	2 Women With Purpose 10 AM	3 Food Pantry 11AM to 2PM	4 Rio Rancho UMC Confirmation Class
5 9 & 11 AM Worship 10 AM SS	6 11 AM Bible Study	7	8 Bible Study 10:30 AM 5:30 PM	9	10	11
12 9 & 11 AM Worship 10 AM SS	13 11 AM Bible Study	14	15 Bible Study 10:30 AM 5:30 PM	16 Food Pantry 1 to 4 PM	17	18 Christmas Concert by Arlene and Frank 1PM
19 9 & 11 AM Worship 10 AM SS UGLY SWEATER	20 11 AM Bible Study Party	21 Food Pantry 9 to Noon	22 Bible Study NO 10:30 AM NO 5:30 PM	23	24 Christmas Eve Services 4 and 6PM	25
26 9 & 11 AM Worship 10 AM SS	27 No Bible Study	28	29 Bible Study 10:30 AM NO 5:30 PM	30	31	

LET'S GO CHRISTMAS CAROLING

To our homebound members and friends.

Wednesdays from 1PM to 2:30 PM

December 1st, 8th and 15th

Meet at the church and carpool. Song sheets are ready!!

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Date: Saturday December 18, 2021

Time: 1 pm

Location: High Desert United Methodist Church

Enjoy songs of the season

Piano solos by Arlene Westgaard

Vocal Solos by Frank Rotolo

And congregational caroling

Invite your family, friends, and neighbors.

SANTA'S POST OFFICE

The Church is our family and many of us like to share Christmas greetings with each other. In order to do this and to avoid the increased price of postage stamps, we are opening Santa's Post Office in the Narthex. Just drop your Christmas cards in the mailbox and the office volunteers with the assistance of the ushers will distribute them each Sunday morning during Advent prior to and after worship. We hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to share Christmas joys with other members of your church family.



Care Ministry

You are invited to call, write or visit our friends in Christ who are homebound or have health issues, and offer your love, support and encouragement.

Sheila Arce	4910 Tramway Ridge Dr. NE, #318, Albq. NM 87111	
Lois Brister	2867 Cripple Creek Drive SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	892-7987
Grover Donahoe	766 Hood Way SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	220-3839
Mac Esquibel	4544 Aguila Road SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	891-1469
Lorra Garner	Genesis, 9150 McMahan Blvd. NW Albq. 87114	408-722-6482
Phil Pittman	C/O Ravenna Assisted Living, 3051 Twin Oaks Dr. NW Room 28, Albuquerque, NM 87120	
Dodie Rossman	The Rio Grande, 2331 Westside Blvd #219, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	300-7499
Mary Lou Schimke	7927 Jamestown Road NW, Albuquerque, NM 87114-4498	898-5911
Norvin Schuman	382 Nicklaus Dr. SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	891-0526
Rod & Louise Warpole	10301 Golf Course Rd NW, #1190, Albuquerque, NM 87114	382-9706
Mae Washburn	Ravenna Assisted Living, 3051 Twin Oaks Dr NW, Albq. 87120	



Happy birthday!	Sandie Fawcett	12/2	Happy birthday!
	Randy Sever	12/3	
	Rose Meyer	12/10	
	Gloria Lamoreux	12/14	
	Glynda Samford	12/14	
	Rohan Ezekiel Gandham	12/15	
	Marlaine Gaylor	12/16	
	Lou Christen	12/17	
	Edna Billings	12/19	
	Pamela Lee	12/20	
	Jan Herrington	12/21	
	Sue Hill	12/24	
	Sity Roach	12/29	
	Sara Hendricks	12/30	
	Clara Mohr	12/31	
Happy birthday!			Happy birthday!



Jack (Rueben Jasper Thomas & Erin Cumberworth	12/12/2013
Bill & Kay Boss	12/23/1989
Glen & Sue Hinchcliffe	12/23/1967
Paul & Leuretta Lewis	12/24/1961

Thank You from Sister Barbara

October 22, '21

Dear High Desert Friends,
Thank You and God
bless you for your Oct
14th card, good wishes
and prayers... Thanks to
your prayers, my broken
ankle of Aug. 9th has been
healed and I can walk
on it again!

Know that I continue
to treasure your friend-
ship and pray with and
for all of you & miss you

Love & Prayers,
Sister Barbara



HDUMC MEMBERS:

Pastor Reuben mentioned in church that Sister Barbara truly enjoys receiving cards. As an extra project at Christmas time, why don't we all take a few minutes and send a Christmas card to Sister Barbara. All it takes is a simple Christmas card and a stamp to brighten up her day. Her address is:

Sister Barbara Kopecki
3800 W. Peterson Ave.
Chicago, IL 60659

High Desert United Methodist Church

1201 Golf Course Road

Rio Rancho, NM 87174

Office Hours: Wednesdays

9AM-Noon

Phone: 505-891-4206.

Email:

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

HDUMC CHURCH PANTRY

Distribution dates for December are:

Friday, December 3rd - 11 am to 2 pm

Thursday, December 16th – 1pm to 4pm

Tuesday, December 21st – 9am to noon

Featured collection for December is: *Dry Seasoning (Packages)*
