

“Loving God, Serving Others, Changing Lives”

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

REUBEN'S RAMBLINGS

February, 2023, Issue 2

A distinguished sociologist embarked on a quest to answer this question: “How did the marginal Jesus movement become the dominant religious force in the Western world within just a few centuries?” A movement that started with Jesus and only a handful of followers grew at an amazing rate. This professor was not a believer but was mesmerized by the influence of Jesus’ life on the entire world.

What he discovered in his study of history was a group of very common, ordinary folks who ended up doing uncommon, extraordinary things. These people valued others who were looked down upon. When two devastating epidemics of measles and smallpox wiped out over one-fourth of the population of the Roman Empire, these Christ-followers not only nursed their own but also took in those whose families had cast them out into the streets to die. People flocked to this new community; a community founded on a rare expression of love. Anyone who said “yes” to Jesus’ invitation to life was welcomed.

At the end of the scientist’s

extensive search, he wrote the following: “Therefore, as I conclude this study, I find it necessary to confront what appears to be the *ultimate factor* in the rise of Christianity ... I believe that it was the religion’s particular doctrines that permitted Christianity to be among the most sweeping and successful revitalization movements in history. And it was the way these doctrines took on actual flesh, the way they directed organizational actions and individual behavior that led to the rise of Christianity.”

In a nutshell, the early Christians BELIEVED. They simply, by faith, believed with their whole hearts the powerful truths taught in the Bible. It changed them from the inside out. They practiced what they believed; they walked the talk! Our Wednesday night Bible Study has been studying some of their beliefs and how to put them into practice.

These practices include:

1. **Worship:** We worship God for who He is and what He has done for us. Worship is a stairway on which there is movement in both directions; God comes to us, and we go to God. We come to praise God, experience His presence, and find direction.
2. **Prayer:** Prayer is at the

heart of religion; for in prayer, we stop talking about religion and enter into a personal relationship with God.

3. **Bible Study:** We study the Bible to know God and find direction for our life. It shows us how to become like Jesus. When we pray, we talk to God; when we study the Bible, God is talking to us and that is more important.
4. **Single-Mindedness:** The practice of single-mindedness is putting God first in your life following Matthew 6:33 to seek first His kingdom, giving Him your best.
5. **Biblical Community:** We are created by God for fellowship with other believers, to accomplish God’s purposes in our life, and the lives of others.

In 2023, let’s change our lives by following the above practices and walking the talk. Let Jesus be first in your life and see the difference He will make. God Bless. Reuben

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE



Our January Fellowship activity was brunch at Milly's Restaurant. Just like last year, it was a rousing success. There were 32 happy souls who broke bread together and had a joyous time. We were treated to wonderful food, great service and meaningful fellowship. While it was cool and raining outside we were warm and snug inside. Milly's brunch is always well attended. This is no surprise as we Methodists are known for our love of good food. Hope to see you the next time we go to Milly's. February's Fellowship activity will be our Soup-er Bowl "Tailgate". Until next time, Ken Dewbre, Fellowship Committee Chairperson



A Wish of a Lifetime

One member of our church family will soon have her life-long wish come true.

Recently the *Wish of a Lifetime Foundation* sent representatives to Palmilla to ask residents what were their fondest wishes. Ton Creveling almost didn't attend the meeting, but then decided to attend after all and share her fondest wish. Ton wishes that she could go to Washington, D.C. to see the World War II memorial. And for a very special reason.

When Ton was a child in Holland, World War II was raging. The people of her town were not spared the horrors of war. She emotionally remembers how the liberating forces, American soldiers, marched into town. Some were in tanks, but most were on foot. Ton remembers how tired they looked and she knew they had fought hard to free the people of Holland. She and her friends and family were so very grateful for their sacrifice to save them, people they didn't even know.

To Ton's surprise, her wish was chosen to be granted. Sometime this May, Ton and her daughter will be flown to Washington to visit the World War II memorial. But the good news just keeps getting better. The Foundation contacted Ton and asked if she and her daughter would accompany another person on his Wish of a Lifetime trip. This man wished to go to The Netherlands to visit the grave of his father, a US soldier who had fought and died in Holland during World War II, and is buried near Ton's home town. So, at the end of the Washington D.C. trip, Ton and her daughter will continue on the Amsterdam to meet the gentleman and accompany him to his father's gravesite. Most likely Ton will be able to visit her family in Holland while she's there. Praise God, what a blessing!

Discipleship Corner

A new monthly feature by Lisa Isenberger

Loving Others as Disciples

Loving Others as Disciples (February) Discipleship is about striving to be more like Christ in our daily lives. In John 13:34, Jesus states “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” Agape love is the type of love that Jesus is talking about. And He doesn’t just mean to love those that we already like, but also those who rub us the wrong way. But what does that look like in practice? Paul gives us some insight in his letter to the Corinthians where he lists attributes that describe what love does and does not look like. It is a very familiar passage, but I like the way the less familiar paraphrase from the *Message* words it using modern language. As you read through this list, maybe you can pick one attribute to focus on this month to help you to practice agape love as a true disciple of Christ. “Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn’t want what it doesn’t have. Love doesn’t strut, Doesn’t have a swelled head, Doesn’t force itself on others, Isn’t always ‘me first,’ Doesn’t fly off the handle, Doesn’t keep score of the sins of others, Doesn’t revel when others grovel, Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts God always, Always looks for the best, Never looks back, But keeps going to the end.” -1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (the *Message* paraphrase)

Prayer - Father God, as I strive to be a disciple of Christ, I want to follow His command of loving others. Help me to be more selfless and less selfish in my interactions so that I am always seeking what is best for the other person. Thank you for Jesus, the ultimate example of love. In His name, Amen

FEBRUARY SECOND MILE GIVING

KEEP THE BELL RINGING

Our Second Mile Giving for February will go to providing assistance to St. Joseph Mission School in San Fidel, New Mexico. Over the past year, we have developed a great working relationship with St. Joseph. St. Joseph School is a Pre-K through 8 grade Catholic School that shares the gospel of hope through faith, academics, culture, environment and service. Since 1923 the bell tower at St. Joseph School has rung to begin and end the day, educating and spreading the gospel of hope to local children; currently there are 40 students from the Pueblos of Laguna and Acoma and from the local villages of Seboyeta, Cubero and San Fidel. Tuition is low and does not cover the cost of educating a child. Even at their low tuition rate many families have to rely on tuition assistance from various organizations. The difference is made up through grants and donations. Several times in the 98 years of their existence, St. Joseph has come close to closing its doors, but a higher power has kept it open even when it seemed impossible. If you would like to help “keep the bell ringing,” please mark “St. Joseph School” on the memo line of your check.



February 2023

HIGH DESERT UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

happy
Valentine's
day

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 10:30 Bible Study Office Hours 9 AM–12 Noon 5:30 PM Bible St. & Choir	2 10 AM Women with Purpose 11 AM Fellow- ship Comm.	3 11 AM - 2:00 PM Food Pantry	4
5 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	6 10 AM Bible Study	7	8 10:30 Bible Study Office Hours 9 AM–12 Noon 5:30 PM Bible St. & Choir	9	10 9 – 11 Emmaus Agape group	11
12 Soup-er Bowl Sunday 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship 12:00 "Tailgate" lunch	13 10 AM Bible Study 10 AM FNMK Bagging	14 <i>Valentine's Day</i> 6 PM Ministry Team	15 10:30 Bible Study Office Hours 9 AM – 12 Noon 5:30 PM Bible St. & Choir	16 1 PM Food Pantry	17	18
19 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	20 10 AM Bible Study	21 9 AM Food Pantry	22 10:30 Bible Study Office Hours 9 AM – 12 Noon 6 PM Ash Wed- nesday Service	23	24	25
26 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	27 10 AM Bible Study	28				
		SS = Sunday School MS = MorningStar Worship FNMK = Feed New Mexico Kids				

OBSCURE NAMES IN THE BIBLE



Next month: Who was Ananias? (in the New Testament)

ANSWER FOR LAST MONTH: Bartimaeus was a blind beggar in Jericho who called out to Jesus, "Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus replied, "What do you want me to do?" Bartimaeus replied, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight!" To which Jesus answered, "Go your way, your faith has made you well." Immediately Bartimaeus could see and he followed Jesus as He left Jericho.

Bible Studies Available

SUNDAY 10 AM: Studying a LifeGuide Topical Bible Studies, entitled "Meeting God." Led by Tony Smith.

MONDAY 10 AM: Francie Larsen leads a study entitled "God the Savior".

WEDNESDAY 10:30 AM: Our Wednesday morning class, led by Judy Ballard, is studying the Book of Hebrews.

WEDNESDAY 5:30 PM: A study entitled *Believe, Living the Story of the Bible to Become Like Jesus*. We focus on 30 of the Bible's greatest lessons on living the Christian life.

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

ONLINE STUDIES: We are currently sending out each week an email from Tony Smith discussing a chapter from the Book of Isaiah. In addition, you can participate in one of Tony's online studies on Daniel, John and Revelation at coraleno@aol.com.

Ash Wednesday

Join us on Wednesday, February 22 at 6:00 PM for our Ash Wednesday Service. This is a solemn service to mark the beginning of Lent. Although not required, those who wish may choose to receive the imposition of ashes on their foreheads. All are welcome.

Souper Bowl Sunday

This year, the Big Professional Football Game, the Super Bowl, is on Sunday February 12. Over the past few years, many churches have held a Souper Bowl Sunday on the same day as an opportunity to collect food for their local food pantries. So, between now and Sunday February 12, bring one or more 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 barrels in the Narthex. Let's celebrate this day by feeding the hungry!



Also you're invited to wear the colors of your favorite college or pro football team. Let's have a lot of fun!

Following the 11 am worship service, let's have a "tailgate party" in the fellowship hall. So, bring your favorite football game-watching dish and join us on this national day of football as we worship together and share a special time of fellowship as a church family before going home to watch the game. Please indicate what dish you are bringing on the sign up sheet in the Narthex.

Women with Purpose

Thursday, February 2, 2023

10:00 a.m., Sanctuary

WWP's focus this month is special. For those of you who harken back to the fledgling group we were in the beginning, Haven House was our very first community outreach. It has always occupied a warm place in our hearts for that reason. All women are invited to come help us stuff 15 gently-used purses with necessary items as well as those things that tend to promote confidence and worthiness and hope. In addition to mainstay toiletries (shampoo, soap, toothbrush/toothpaste) we are now including nail polish, manicure sets and lip gloss. Women With Purpose is launching many worthy projects this year to help those in dire need. Come be a part of that special brand of camaraderie!

If Jesus was a College Professor and his Students were Evaluating Him:

- "Very inconvenient class! Always holds lectures on top of mountains, in middle of the Sea of Galilee.."
- "Wears sandals too much. No one wants to see your dusty feet."
- "Not what I expected. They say his area of specialty is carpentry, but we never built anything."
- "Kind of absent-minded. My name's Simon, and he's called me 'Peter' for the entire semester."
- "I wanted to like this class, but on the first day, he submerged us in a river instead of going over the syllabus, and that was kind of a lot."
- "Feels like a class for farmers. Talks a lot about seeds. Wheat seeds. Mustard seeds. Seeds, seeds, seeds."
- "Why did we have to shove a camel through the eye of a needle?"
- "What was with the thing where we had to sort out goats from sheep?"

Care Ministry

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

Sheila Arce	4910 Tramway Ridge Dr. NE, #318, Albq. NM 87111	
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 & Louise Warpole	600 First Street NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	332-9706
Mary Lou Schimke	7927 Jamestown Road NW, Albuquerque, NM 87114-4498	898-5911
Mac Esquibel	4544 Aguila Road SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	891-1469
Sister Barbara Kopecki	3800 W. Peterson Ave., Chicago, IL 60659	
Ella Jerome	813 Banco Court, Bernalillo, NM 87004	312-2992
Wanda Schierling	921 Purple Aster, Bernalillo, NM 87004	970-398-0501



Benny & Wanda Giovengo	Feb 14
Gordon & Wanda Golsan	Feb 17
Dave & Sue Duranty	Feb 20



Lucille Few	Feb 1
Norma Skinner	Feb 1
Earlene Price	Feb 3
Phyllis Thunborg	Feb 6
Mark Isenberger	Feb 10
Lisa Isenberger	Feb 13
Wayne Walker	Feb 14
Mary Mondragon	Feb 16
Virginia Bennett	Feb 17
Karen Brown	Feb 17
Janet Gregor	Feb 18
Vic Holtgrewe	Feb 18
Dylan Smothermon	Feb 18
Lily Smothermon	Feb 18
Ted Thunborg	Feb 19
Katie Fitzgerald	Feb 20
Charlene Brandt	Feb 23
Jane Ferguson	Feb 23
Wilson Maclay	Feb 26
Sue Duranty	Feb 28

Words that should end with 'Amen':

'Don't be concerned about what God has planned for anyone else.'

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

February, 2023 Newsletter

HDUMC CHURCH PANTRY

Distribution dates for February, 2023 are:

Friday, February 3 at 11:00 a.m.

Thursday, February 16 at 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 21 at 9:00 a.m.

February Collection: Spaghetti, Pasta

Contact Mike Fawcett at (715)456-3044

for more information.
