

*“Changing One Life at a Time”*

# HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## *REUBEN'S RAMBLINGS*

January 2021, Issue 1

Happy New Year! Well by the grace of God we made it through 2020! In my *Ramblings* for January 2020, I stated: “We don’t know what is going to happen in 2020; we don’t know what lies ahead of us in the coming months.” Boy, was that statement on target; none of us had any idea what lay ahead of us. I don’t think any of us could have imagined the impact that a virus like the coronavirus could have on our lives, our community, State and nation. Over the past ten months we have seen lockdowns, restrictions, shortage of toilet paper and other items, the need to wear masks and social distance, changes in our lifestyle and worship, and the loss of so many lives that it breaks your heart. And, unfortunately, we are still in the middle of it, awaiting a vaccine. But I also included the following in my January 2020 article: “But we can be sure of one thing and that is that Jesus Christ is with us.” Remember His final words in Matthew 28:20 – “And lo, I will be with you always, even to the end of the age.” All we have to do is continue to walk in faith; God will take care of us.

Now I try to be the kind of person who always looks for the good in life. And there were some good things in 2020. Of course, one that immediately comes to mind is the relocation of High Desert UMC from the atrium on Meadowlark Lane to a wonderful church building on Golf

Course Road. We now have a beautiful sanctuary, expanded space for the Pantry, great parking, larger choir room and classroom. The new chairs and sound system have enabled us to continue to worship in-person while meeting all the State and CDC guidelines. Due to generous donations, we have added a digital piano/organ to enhance our music program. Another good benefit that came out of the lockdowns is that we are now able to live-stream the 9 am service. Special thanks to all who helped with the move and especially Earl Hester who led the effort; to those who set up and maintain the sound and video system; and to the Return to Worship Team that ensures that we meet all the COVID-19 guidelines for your continued safety. Even with the lockdowns and restrictions, our outreach programs have continued and even expanded in some cases. The number of families being served by the High Desert Methodist Food Pantry continues to increase. While children are currently restricted to home-learning online the need for food for many kids continues to increase. We are now providing weekend food packages to 60 students at three local schools under the Feed New Mexico Kids program. We continue to prepare and serve a meal to the homeless at Community of Hope each quarter.

One of our new initiatives is purchasing food for the Interfaith Bible Center in the International District which serves 100 meals a day during the week to the homeless. We continue to provide Thanksgiving and Christmas boxes to the clients of Haven House. Another new project is providing periodic gift baskets with snacks for the homebound, the nurses’ stations at local hospitals, the local Fire Station and many others. And this year we exceeded all expectations and sent 64 shoeboxes to Operation Christmas Child. Special thanks to all those who help with these projects and for your continued generosity and support as we fulfil Jesus’ command to “love your neighbor.”

Finally, thank you for your continued support in following the guidelines of wearing masks, social distancing, and self-quarantining. Because of your efforts we have been able to continue in-person worship. In closing, as we begin 2021 still with uncertainty concerning the coronavirus, I hope that you will take comfort and assurance in words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:9 – “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived, what God has prepared for those who love Him.” Continue to walk in faith knowing that God loves you and will take care of you. Happy New Year!

*Reuben*

## WOMEN WITH PURPOSE

### **Women With Purpose Meeting –**

January 7<sup>th</sup> at 10.m. in the Sanctuary

A new start in the new year—that's WWP's focus for our January meeting. Crossroads for Women serves recently released incarcerated women and other homeless ladies by providing housing. CFW also educates these women with skills they will need to re-enter the regular population. When asked about their most immediate needs, WWP was surprised to learn that these women wanted regular 'cleaning supplies' from trash bags to mop buckets to Lysol. In other words, they desired a clean environment in which to surround themselves. We can do no less than provide them with the tools they need to bring some brightness into their lives.

## JUST DOING OUR THING

### **Women With Purpose December Meeting**

**Filling stockings for the homeless downtown.**



# “A Short Spiritual Reflection on HOPE

by retired Pastor Ron Komatz

**Hope is mentioned in seventeen (17) different books of the Bible, so it must be a very important concept. Here are a couple of better known references: Psalm 31:24 “Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you who HOPE in the Lord”. And from the New Testament Romans 15:13 “Now may the God of HOPE fill you with joy and peace that you may abound in HOPE”.**

**Wikipedia defines HOPE as: “an optimistic state of mind based on an expectation of positive outcomes”. It goes on to say that used as a verb, HOPE means “to expect with confidence:**

**If you, or someone you know has lost HOPE, give them (or yourself) the gift of encouragement. No matter how dark the situation may seem, HOPE tells us that tomorrow will be a brighter day – “expect with confidence”! Oh, and don’t forget that praying is always appropriate as well.**

**Blessings, Ron**



## **Microphone/Telecoil System Installed at HDUMC!!**

Do you wear hearing aids?

If so, do you know what a telecoil or hearing in loop system is?

**What is a telecoil - and do all hearing aids have telecoils?**

The telecoil, a small wire coiled around a rod located inside your hearing aids, works as an antenna to pick up magnetic signals and streams them as sound into your hearing aids. With this “T-setting,” your hearing aids can stream the sound of a speaker’s voice or the music of the opera directly into your ears from the microphones – without any pesky background noises.

The Telecoil loop has been laid down under the carpet in the outer aisles, center aisle and across the front and back aisles in the church. For best, results – sit within “the loop” or avoid the outer edges of the sanctuary. **Questions – Ask Earl Hester!!**

# Santa Snack Baskets for UNM Sandoval

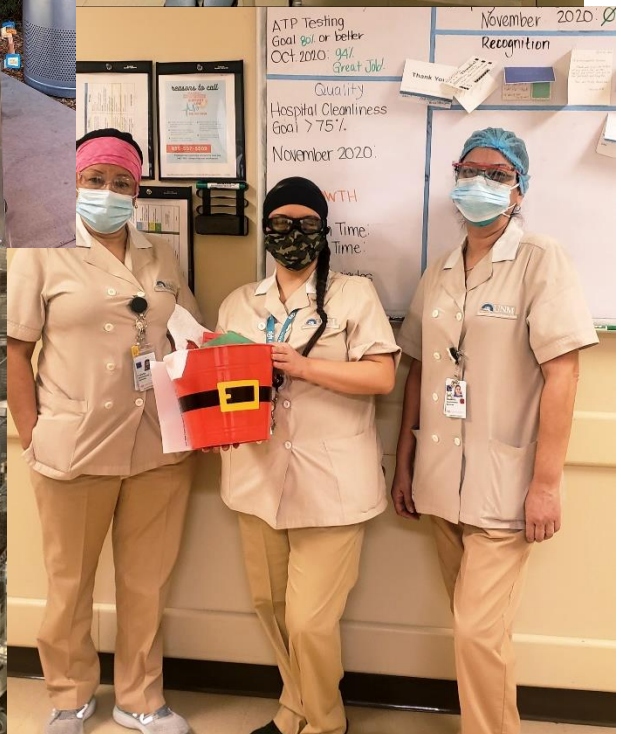
This is  
what we do  
as  
Disciples  
of Christ

The congregation of the High Desert United Methodist Church in Rio Rancho want to express our gratitude for all of your ongoing dedication and important work for your patients and our community. We continue to keep you, your families, your patients and their families in our thoughts and prayers.

UNM Sandoval Hospital personally thanked High Desert UMC on their Facebook page for these Santa Snack baskets which were given to different departments.

Respiratory

1201 Golf Course Road SE  
Rio Rancho, NM 87124  
P.O. Box 45378  
Rio Rancho, NM 87174



# OBSCURE NAMES IN THE BIBLE



Next month: Who was *Megiddo* of the Old and New Testament? *Judy Ballard*

## **ANSWER FOR DECEMBER:**

Who was *Bartimaeus* of the New Testament?

As Jesus ministered to the crowd in Jericho a blind man called out to Him. Basically, those nearby told the man to shut up, but Jesus would not have it. He commanded the blind beggar come to him. Bartimaeus threw off his cloak, stood up and came to Jesus.

Jesus said, “What do you want me to do?”

And Bartimaeus replied, “Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.”

Then Jesus said, “Your faith has made you well.”

## **JANUARY SECOND MILE GIVING**

Our Second Mile Giving for January will go to providing gift baskets for the nurses' stations at local hospitals. The doctors, nurses, and staff are going the extra mile and putting in long hours to ensure our safety and health. We started this ministry back in August and it has now expanded to the local Fire Station, retirement homes, schools and many others. Each basket contains snacks and goodies purchased at local stores to show our appreciation. If you would like to contribute to this mission project, please mark “Gift Basket” on the memo line of your check.



Left: Lovelace West Hospital

Center: Rust Presbyterian Hospital

Right: Eileen and Randy Sever delivering to UNM Sandoval Hospital



**Our “Angel Among Us” this month goes out to Trixie McClay!** There is a person who quietly moves around our church helping in any way she can and that is Trixie McClay. She often is a greeter or an usher and even when she is not, you will still see her moving about the church welcoming everyone with a wonderful smile and she will always remember your name! Trixie faithfully works at the Pantry, Women With Purpose Feed NM Kids and truly anything she is asked to do. Since Covid we do miss her moving about the church with her microphone. Trixie projects such a pride and love in her church and her strong faith in God. We are so lucky to have her as a member. **THANK YOU, Trixie for all you do!**



**UPDATE FROM THE EDITOR:**

Happy New Year! I thought I would try out another new recipe, and don't forget about the new Bible Study below starting on January 20th. It might help with “cabin fever”.

[generations4counseling@hotmail.com](mailto:generations4counseling@hotmail.com) or phone 505-331-8894.

Francie Larsen



**New Bible Study**

**January 20th**

**10 Weeks**

**Wednesday Mornings**

**10:00 AM at the Church**

**To Sign Up Contact Francie**

**331-8894**

# SURVIVING COVID STRESS

Aesop, the ancient Greek storyteller, once said, "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."

Is this true today? Today, is like no other day. Nothing is certain. We are holed up alone. We cannot predict tomorrow and we know anxiety increases with uncertainty. In addition, we feel alone and isolated which adds to our feeling of frustration, stress and worry. Our feeling today do not paint a pretty picture.

What can we do to make our days better? Doing things to make our lives better are more difficult because we experience depression at times and depression robs us of energy. To get our energy back, somehow, we need to act. The best strategy is to take one small step, like washing one dish and forgetting the rest of the dirty dishes in the sink; and then pat ourselves on the back for that success. Maybe tomorrow we can take the next step.

Let me suggest some other strategies that may be helpful during this unprecedented time as we face anxiety, frustration, stress and worry.

To lower **anxiety**, three habits seem to help. First, eat as healthy as possible. Second, get some exercise. And third, get an adequate amount of sleep.

To lower **frustration**, pay attention to Mark 6:31-32. "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." Self care is crucial.

To lower **stress**, try a breathing exercise and do it four times when feeling uptight. Remember a code (4-7-8). That is: inhale through your nose for a slow count of four, hold your full lungs for a slow count of seven and then breath out through your mouth for a slow count of eight. (Four Times) Feel how your body begins to change. An anxious (stressful) mind cannot live in a relaxed body.

To lower **worry**, ponder Isaiah 40:29. "He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak:. A powerful promise indeed!

While getting rid of pain this unprecedented time has produced, we can also look to the future. For me, I try to first look at others just a little differently. Even when I am down, I try to call an old friend and check on him. I try, during the call, to keep all the focus on his life, his family, his activity, his health and then some old memories we share. I do my best to talk about him, not me. When I hang up, I try to reflect on the "courage" I see in him as he is striving to survive this unprecedented time. This small act is a simple act of kindness.

The science of kindness involves two parts: the person who practices the compassion, and the one who is benefited by a kind action. In both cases, the kindness provides benefits for proper brain function as well as promoting balance and harmony in relationships and emotions. I don't understand it but this action seems to give me personal energy and friends report it does the same for them. This new energy helps me to take other steps that help others. A small act of kindness also extends to practical acts of helping others. Repeating acts that help others, like calling friends and focusing on them, sending cards to people in isolation, donating to the many activities of our church that help others, doing hands-on when possible by packing bags or baskets, working in the food pantry, etc., all add to our receiving the benefits of kindness. Research confirms these benefits improve our brain function and help us feel more comfortable living with our emotions. Or as Aesop observes, "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is wasted."

One last bonus that comes from living for others and from giving through small acts of kindness is hope. By taking the step above and by giving in small ways to others, hope brings a new vibrance to our lives. Romans 15:13 assures us of this reality. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Dr. W. Gordon Golsan Jr.  
Counseling Psychology



## COMMUNITY OF HOPE



A HEARTFELT THANKS TO ALL WHO DONATED THEIR FINANCES, FOOD, TIME, HATS, GLOVES, SOCKS, SWEATERS, AND SCARVES, TO THE HOMELESS IN ALBUQUERQUE ON NOVEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup>. THERE ARE TOO MANY TO REMEMBER WITHOUT LEAVING SOMEONE OUT, SO THANK YOU TO ALL.

ECCLESIASTES 11 TELLS US TO CAST OUR BREAD UPON THE WATER. WHEN WE DO SO, NOT ONLY DO OTHERS RECEIVE OUR GIFTS, BUT WE WILL SEE THIS BREAD RETURN. SURELY, WE SHOW OUR LOVE, AND THE LIGHT OF CHRIST THROUGH THIS ACT OF COMPASSION AND GENEROSITY.

PLEASE KNOW THAT SUE AND I ARE OVERJOYED WITH YOUR GIFTS AND YOUR SPIRIT. WE ARE AS ONE BODY IN THIS ONE LORD.

MAY THE PEACE OF CHRIST AND THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT CARESS YOU WITH EVERLASTING JOY.


DAVE AND SUE DURANTY

**Recipe:**

**MOM'S Scalloped Chicken by Sara Hendricks**

- 1 cooked chicken & save broth (**or**)
- 1 lg. (13 oz.) canned chicken (white meat preferred)
- 1 lg. box/can chicken broth or stock
- 10 slices dry bread (more if needed)
- 4/5 stalks celery (cut in chunks)
- chopped onions to taste
- rubbed sage to taste (approx. 3 to 4 Tbsp)
- mushroom bits to taste (optional)

Mix chicken, bread, celery, onions, sage, and mushrooms in a large bowl. Add black pepper, and salt to taste (cook's choice). Add broth over dry mix and stir until bread is moist. Place in baking dish and bake at least 1 hour at 350 degrees depending on how browned is desired.





# 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.

<b>Ella Jerome</b>	813 Banco Court, Bernalillo, NM 87004	206-4894
<b>Lois Brister</b>	2867 Cripple Creek Drive SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	892-7987
<b>Sheila Arce</b>	4910 Tramway Ridge Dr. NE, #318, Albq. NM 87111	
<b>Glen Nesbitt</b>	Advantage Assisted Living, 1729 Wellspring Ave. SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	
<b>Phil Pittman</b>	C/O Ravenna Assisted Living, 3051 Twin Oaks Dr. NW Room 28, Albuquerque, NM 87120	
<b>Mae Washburn</b>	Revenna Assisted Living, 3051 Twin Oaks Dr NW, Albq. 87120	
<b>Lorra Garner</b>	Genesis, 9150 McMahon Blvd. NW Albq. 87114	
<b>Norvin Schuman</b>	382 Nicklaus Dr. SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	891-0526
<b>Grover Donahoe</b>	766 Hood Way SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	220-3839
<b>Rod &amp; Louise Warpole</b>	600 First Street NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	994-9339



Happy birthday! Happy birthday! Happy birthday! Happy birthday! Happy birthday!

Happy birthday! Happy birthday! Happy birthday!

Happy birthday! Happy birthday!



Del & Francie Larsen	1/4/92
Gary & Laurie Smothermon	1/11/92
Don & Sity Roach	1/24/59

# January 2021

## HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Wesley Covenant Service 9 & 11 AM Worship 10 AM SS	4	5	6 5:30 PM Bible Study	7 Women With Purpose 10:00 AM at the church	8 Food Pantry 11AM to 2PM	9
10 Baptism of the Lord 9 & 11 AM Worship 10 AM SS	11	12 Ministry Team Meeting 6 PM	13 5:30 PM Bible Study	14	15	16
17 9 & 11 AM Worship 10 AM SS	18	19 Food Pantry 9 to Noon	20 Bible Study 10 AM 5:30 PM Bible Study	21 Food Pantry 1 to 4 PM	22	23
24 9 & 11 AM Worship 10 AM SS	25	26	27 Bible Study 10 AM 5:30 PM Bible Study	28	29	30
31 9 & 11 AM Worship 10 AM SS						

## HOW I GOT TO HDUMC . . .

When the High Desert United Methodist Church started, we were sent an oversized post card with an Einstein statement on it. We saved the card with a magnet to our refrigerator and thought about going, but had second thoughts because my deceased husband, Gordon was a former banker and had been instrumental in building St. John's Methodist several years ago which was quite time consuming and stressful. He was quite busy with our spice business and his health was starting to fail, so we did not go for quite a while and continued going to Central Methodist where I had gone while living in Albuquerque in the sixties and to other Methodist churches. We never felt very much "at home" in them and decided to try High Desert, which by that time had settled into the atrium of the office complex on Meadowlark. We immediately felt very much welcomed and continued going ever since. Gordon joined the choir and we attended regularly until he became quite ill. I continued to go and then would join him other times at the Nursing Home where he had been taken. After he died, I continued to go to High Desert. About 8 years ago, Lou Christen joined me and we have been regular attendees ever since. We are so happy with Pastor Reuben Thomas!

*Jane Butel*

## GETTING TO KNOW

### YOU (by Dottie Hester)

Don and Sity Roach have been attending HDUMC almost from the time it was organized before the church moved on Meadowlark. Sity was born and raised in Maryland and Don was raised in Billings, MT. Don was stationed in Maryland with the army where he and Sity met and married three months later. Don was sent to Germany as a helicopter electrician soon after their marriage and Sity soon followed him to Germany. They lived in a converted chicken coop with no water or bathroom and had to go through three locked gates to the landlord's house for the bathroom. They carried water to the house and Sity washed clothes on a scrub board. Two of Sity and Don's children were born in Germany. After Germany, Don attended college in Bozeman, MT and Sity says she was always a nurse. Daughter Sheryl was born after they moved back to the states. Don had jobs with several companies before moving to Alaska to work for Atlantic Richfield on the North Slope. He flew back and forth to Anchorage where Sity lived. They retired in Rio Rancho to be close to grandchildren.



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# High Desert United Methodist Church

1201 Golf Course Road  
Rio Rancho, NM 87174  
Office Hours: Tues-Thu  
9AM-Noon & 1-4PM  
Phone: 505-891-4206;  
Email:  
highdesertumc@outlook.com

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[Facebook.com/HDUMC](https://www.facebook.com/HDUMC)

Or

Follow us on Twitter at:

[Twitter.com/highdesertumc](https://www.twitter.com/highdesertumc)

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

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## HDUMC CHURCH PANTRY

**Distribution dates for January are:**

**Friday, January 8th at 11:00 a.m.**

**Tuesday, January 19th at 9:00 a.m.**

**Thursday, January 21st at 1:00 p.m.**

**January Collection: Cereal & Small Boxes of Oatmeal**

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