

“Loving God, Serving Others, Changing Lives”

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

REUBEN'S RAMBLINGS

January, 2024, Issue 1

Right now, I am working on the annual statistical reports that are due in the Conference Office in January. It is not my favorite thing to do, but it's a requirement. However, since I have to go through this experience, I thought why not use it to give you a State of the Church Report. The country, state, and city give an annual report of how things are going, so why not the church.

First, I want to thank you for your continued support and generosity to the church, and your dedication to the service of the Lord. We have come a long way over the past five years. Despite the passing of several of our wonderful saints this past year, we continue to grow in membership and worship attendance. Fifteen new people joined the church in 2023, bringing our total membership up to 161. It has been a joy to welcome so many new individuals and families into our fellowship. I hope that you will continue to invite your friends and neighbors and make everybody feel right at home here at High Desert. Worship attendance went from an average of 99 in 2022 to 119 in 2023. And this does not include MorningStar which

averages 11 each Sunday. Special thanks to the six teams that lead worship there each Sunday.

The choir continues to grow with new voices as they inspire us each Sunday morning at 9 am. And we are blessed with outstanding singers at the 11 am service. Special thanks to Frank Rotolo for leading the choir and Lori Kottenbrook for stepping forward as our pianist at both services. Over the past year, we have made improvements to our sound/video system. Special thanks to the crew for enhancing worship each Sunday and the online 9 am worship service. I am thankful that more and more of you are participating in a weekly Bible Study. These are essential to your spiritual growth and I encourage all of you to get involved a weekly study.

Due to your generosity, the finances of High Desert are in the best shape that they have ever been. Special thanks to the Finance Committee for their leadership and investment strategies. Our pool of weekly counters has expanded and Sandra Keller has assumed the duties of our Treasurer. Our Second Mile Giving has exceeded expectation with over \$40,000 given to special mission projects. This represents approximately twenty percent of all our contributions going to missions and loving our neighbors. I will be

honest; most churches don't even come close to this!

We continue to love our neighbors through the Pantry, Feed New Mexico Kids, Interfaith Bible Center, Operation Christmas Child, Basket Ministry, mission trips to St. Joseph Mission School and the Nazarene Church in Gallup, Prayer Shawl Ministry, and Women with Purpose.

Finally, we could not accomplish all we do without the outstanding dedication of our volunteers. We are truly blessed with so many unseen heroes. There is no way that I can name them all, but I hope and pray that you realize how much I appreciate all your work behind the scenes to serve the Lord and to keep things going at High Desert. Again, thank you for your continued support. Judy and I love this church and serving you. Happy New Year! Reuben

Correction: In last month's issue, I misspelled the name of our former web designer: her name is correctly spelled **Jody Meyer.**

Judy Thomas, Editor

OBSCURE NAMES IN THE BIBLE



Who was Jedediah in the Old Testament? Find the answer elsewhere in this issue.

Bible Studies Available

To help us grow spiritually in our personal relationship with Christ, High Desert UMC is offering the following Bible studies this fall. Please join one of the following studies in the classroom.

SUNDAY 10 AM: Studying The Gospel of Luke, Topical Bible Studies, Led by Tony Smith.

MONDAY 10 AM: Studying *Christian* by Andy Stanley, led by Francie Larsen.

WEDNESDAY 10:30 AM: The Book of Psalms, led by John Kottenbrook.

WEDNESDAY 5:30 PM: The entire Bible using “The Story” led by Reuben Thomas

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.

PODCASTS: “Footsteps” Available on the church website.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE



Our next Fellowship Outing is scheduled for January 18, 2024, at K’Lynn’s Southern and Cajun Restaurant at 4300 Ridgecrest Drive, Suite 0 on the north side of the Albertsons and Target shopping center. We will meet at 11 am. The Church Bus will be available for those needing a ride and will leave the church at 10:30 am.

After lunch, we can go to the used book store. Their proceeds go to our two local libraries. Come join us for a time of great food and fellowship.

Until next time, Ken Dewbre, Fellowship Committee Chairperson

*Thank you
for your gifts
of love for
St. Joseph’s.
Antonio*



*Thank you
for the gift
cards. May
God bless
you.
Manuel*

St. Joseph's students on the day they received their Christmas gifts from High Desert UMC

Making a Difference

Christmas Giving:

Thanks to your generosity we were able to spread the joy of Christ in tangible way during the Christmas season.

Christmas gifts for the 40 children of Pastor Chris Davis' ministry in Gallup
Each child received a gift bag containing a felt hat, a felt scarf, and a stocking filled with treats and small gifts, plus a \$10 gift card to McDonalds.

Care Packages for our college students

During exam week our 8 college students received in the mail a box containing snacks and gift cards to Starbucks and McDonalds.

Christmas gift cards for the 41 students at St. Joseph's Mission School in San Fidel

Each child received a \$50 gift card, so that they can purchase the gifts they truly desire for Christmas, when so often they only get what others think they might want.

Awards for our Mission/Outreach Projects:

Feed New Mexico Kids receives \$7,000

Thank you, Wanda Golsan for writing the grant proposal.

Food for Pets of Pantry Clients project receives \$4,000

Thank you, Lisa Isenberger for obtaining the grant.

Thank You Letters:

"Dear Snack Sack Volunteers,

Thanks so much for continuing to support the Cielo Azul Elementary School snack sack program. Our snack sack students so look forward to Friday afternoons! Your generosity of time and money blesses many students.

Thanks much, Judy Reynolds & Maricarmen Saldana"

"Dear High Desert UMC,

Thank you for your gracious donation of \$655 to the ReadWest Adult Literacy Center. We have applied your donation to our Giving Tuesday campaign, which has been matched by one of our sponsors. We are grateful for the continued support you give us and our students. Your donation will go towards helping students with learning difficulties and differences...

...Your support has made it possible for us to serve our community safely. Again, we are grateful for your donation and support.

Kindest regards, Cindy Ratliff, Executive Direction, ReadWest, Inc."

JANUARY SECOND MILE GIVING:

For January, our Second Mile Giving will go to support the Navajo Reservation Relief Fund. For thirteen 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. Her church has become a gathering spot where young people can play games, take art and music lessons, and learn to sew. In 2023 we made two mission trips to Gallup to teach Vacation Bible School, provide supplies to the people on the Nation, and distribute food to the homeless in Gallup. Through Women with Purpose, we provide supplies to Chris. At Christmas, we gave 40 stockings to children in the local neighborhood. To support this ministry, please mark "Relief Mission" on the memo line of your check to the church.

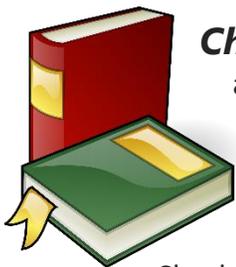
ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE

Winter Clothing Collection. Each winter we collect gloves, stocking caps, blankets, sleeping bags, coats, sweaters, and new socks for the homeless. If you wish to contribute, you may place your donations in the barrel in the Narthex.

Women with Purpose

Thursday, January 4, 2024 10 a.m. Sanctuary

What better way to start off a new year than addressing the needs of children? This time another one of our repeat favorites—Bears and Blankets. Plan now to join other HDUMC ladies in assembling 50 Komfort Kits for children not having their best day. These 'goodie bags' contain a handmade stuffed animal, a soft fleece blanket (child size), essential toiletries such as toothbrush, toothpaste, Ivory soap and whatever else we can think of. Local law enforcement groups (NM State Police, Cities of Rio Rancho, Corrales, and Gallup, et.al) will distribute these especially prepared Komfort Kits to children experiencing emotional upheavals in their lives.



Check it out! Our church has a library. It is only one bookcase in the coffee area, but it is there for you. There are Bibles, Bible study books, devotional books, self-help books and a few fictional books with positive messages. Have you read the Father Tim series by Jan Karon? Father Tim may be a retired pastor but everywhere he travels, he takes on ministerial duties. He is continually reminded to trust God.

Check out is easy! On the clipboard in the bookcase, write the name of the book you select to read as well as your name and phone number. You are in charge of when the book is due back to the library. Some study books take more time! Joanna Jones

Christmas 2023



Caroling at MorningStar



Scott & Irma Reeder in Concert



Christmas Baskets for Rust Hospital staff



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Kottenbrook family lighting the Advent candle



Boxing gifts for Operation Christmas Child

January
2024

HIGH DESERT UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

**Happy
New Year!**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Happy New Year	2	3 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 AM Bible St. 5:30 PM Choir and Bible Study	4 10 AM Women with Purpose	5 11:00 AM Food Pantry	6
7 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	8 10 AM Bible Study, 10 AM FNMK Bagging	9	10 Office Hrs: 9-12 9:00 Mission Comm. 10:30 AM Bible St. 5:30 PM Choir and Bible Study	11	12 10 AM Emmaus Agape Gr.	13
14 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	15 10 AM Bible Study	16 9:00 AM – 12:00 noon Food Pantry 6 Pm Ministry Team	17 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 AM Bible Study 5:30 PM Choir and Bible Study	18 1:00 -4:00 PM Food Pantry	19	20
21 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	22 10 AM Bible Study	23	24 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 AM Bible Study 5:30 PM Choir and Bible Study		26	27
28 9 AM Worship 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	29 10 AM Bible Study	30	31 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 AM Bible Study 5:30 PM Choir and Bible Study			

Care Ministry

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

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 Warpole	600 First Street NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	332-9706
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
Polly Van Lenten	920 Riverview Dr. SE, Apt 280, Rio Rancho 87124	979-277-4852
Vi Ortega	517 Dartmouth Pl SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106	985-0953



Del & Francie Larsen	January 4
Gary & Laurie Smothermon	January 11
Raj & Cynthia Gandham	January 16
Steven & Ruby Hunyady	January 22
Don & Sity Roach	January 24



Wanda Whittlesey-Jerome	Jan. 6
Dayton Molzen	Jan. 6
Paul Rexroth	Jan. 10
Bailey Siverts	Jan. 11
Jearlene Savell	Jan. 13
Helen Hill-Stephens	Jan. 18
Jane Komatz	Jan. 20
Bonnie Korngiebel	Jan. 24
Valerie Forbes	Jan. 25
Ian Colbert	Jan. 28
Ken Schierling	Jan. 28
Holly Benson	Jan. 30
Ella Jerome	Jan. 30
Liz Thompson	Jan. 30
Mac Esquibel	Jan. 30
Jeff Pratt	Jan. 30

ANSWER TO OBSCURE NAMES

IN THE BIBLE:

JEDEDIAH, ALSO KNOWN AS
SOLOMON, WAS THE SECOND SON
BORN TO DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

2 SAMUEL 12: 24-25

“Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy ... What we are asked to do is to love, and this love itself will render both ourselves and our neighbors worthy.”

Thomas Merton

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

January, 2024 Newsletter

HDUMC CHURCH PANTRY

Distribution dates for January, 2024 are:

Friday, January 5, at 11:00 AM

Tuesday, January 16, at 9:00 AM

Thursday, January 18, at 1:00 PM

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.**
