

"Loving God, Serving Others, Changing Lives"

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

REUBEN'S RAMBLINGS

November, 2025, Issue 11

Over the past few years, the Albuquerque District has moved from individual Church Conferences to Combined Church Conferences. Our Combined Conference was held on Tuesday October 21 at Grace UMC with these churches: Bernalillo UMC, First UMC Albuquerque, Mesa View UMC, Paradise Hills UMC, and Rio Rancho UMC. One of the disadvantages of this approach is that many of you don't have the opportunity to attend. Listed below are some of the highlights from my report to the Conference for your information:

1. I continue to be amazed by the enthusiasm and support of the congregation.
2. I am impressed by how many of our congregation volunteer in service for the Lord.
3. We welcomed our new pianist Aliece Nielson and interim choir director Drew Ammons.
4. Weekly in-person worship attendance has remained steady at 117 despite our "on the road congregation" and the passing of several members.
5. A dedicated team of lay speakers provide Sunday morning worship at the MorningStar assisted living facility, with a weekly average attendance of 12.
6. Have started providing a Sunday worship service at Palmilla Senior Living.
7. Providing weekly Bible studies at Fairwinds, MorningStar and Palmilla.
8. Since last Church Conference, 9 individuals have joined the church.
9. Conducted our third "Be A Kid Again" Vacation Bible School for seniors on August 14-15.
10. Continue to provide bus service to Fairwinds, other retirement communities, and special fellowship outings. Now have three dedicated bus drivers.
11. Fellowship outings included two Isotopes baseball games and two church cookouts.
12. Providing 25 boxes of groceries each month to homebound residents of the Navajo Nation.
13. Constructed 88 feet of new sidewalk and concrete slab at St. Joseph Mission School.
14. For the third year, we are providing each student at St. Joseph Mission School with a \$50 gift card for Christmas.
15. Two teams went to Gallup on mission trips to assist Pastor Chris Davis.
16. Continue to provide snack baskets to staff at local hospitals, schools, Fire and Police Departments, and residents and staff of retirement communities.
17. The High Desert Methodist Food Pantry continues to serve the local community.
18. Purchased 5 heifers, 4 sheep, 3 goats, and 42 flocks of chicken for Heifer International.
19. Second Mile Giving to date totals over \$80,000.
20. Providing over 500 food packages each month to 60 students at 5 local schools.
21. Purchasing \$450 of food each month to feed the homeless at the Interfaith Bible Center.
22. Two teams from High Desert served at Asbury Café September 5 and 8.
23. Last year we sent 158 boxes to Operation Christmas Child; goal of 160 boxes this year.

Thanks for your continued support. Happy Thanksgiving!

God Bless, Reuben

Thanksgiving Potluck

Are you looking for an opportunity to share your Thanksgiving dinner with friends? Then come join us for a potluck Thanksgiving dinner in the Church Fellowship Hall on Thursday November 27 at 12 noon. Ice tea & water will be provided.



There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex for the dish that you plan to bring. We need someone to provide the turkey; see Reuben if interested. Take out boxes will be available so that you can take leftovers home. This is a great opportunity to enjoy a great meal and wonderful fellowship. Happy Thanksgiving!



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

Second Lieutenant Darien Garcia, US Air Force

Staff Sergeant Brock Henning, US Air Force

Major Herbert Jockheck, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC

Major Brian Koa Yee, United States Air Force

Lt. Devin Marshall, Ft. Novosel, AL

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

Bible Studies for Everyone

Do you want to grow closer to the Lord in 2025 and experience His presence in your life? One of the best ways is to participate in a weekly Bible study. Please join one of the following studies:

SUNDAY 10:00 AM: *Jeff Bair is leading a new discussion-based class entitled: "Matthew Plus."*

MONDAY 10:30 AM: *Marie Donat is leading a class on 2nd Timothy.*

WEDNESDAY 10:30 AM: *Francie Larsen is leading a new class entitled "The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem."*

WEDNESDAY 5:30 PM: *Pastor Reuben has begun a new class by Adam Hamilton, entitled John the Gospel of Light and life.*

FAIRWINDS: *Tony Smith is also leading a class at Fairwinds on Tuesdays.*

Pamilla: *Dave and Sue Duranty are leading a class at Pamilla on Wednesdays.*

WOMEN WITH PURPOSE

Our October meeting was extra special as we were blessed to hear from the Rev. Dr. Jenee Noriega of Kansas City, MO. Dr. Noriega shared her story of growing up in the "War Zone" of Albuquerque. Through the grace of God and with the help of Christian friends, she overcame homelessness and addiction to become a pastor with a focus on ministry to homeless and addicted young people. During the worship period of our meeting, we were treated to a beautiful vocal and piano solo by Aliece Nielson.



L-R: Rev. Chris Davis, Rev. Dr. Jenee Noriega, and Aliece Nielsen

Following the program, we prepared a "Birthday in a Bag" project for Saranam, a local United Methodist program benefitting unhoused families. We were happy to be joined this month by several "Men with Purpose."

Make plans to join us for our next meeting, **Thursday, November 6, 2025**, as we assemble winter bags for the unhoused of Albuquerque and Gallup. As always, we will have an inspiring speaker, yummy refreshments, and an enjoyable time of fellowship.



OBSCURE NAMES IN THE BIBLE

Who was Joab in the Old Testament?

Find the answer elsewhere in this issue.

NOVEMBER SECOND MILE GIVING

CHRISTMAS HAMS



For several years, High Desert has been providing hams for Christmas for the clients of the High Desert Methodist Food Pantry. If you would like to support this ministry, please mark "Christmas Hams" on the memo line of your check to the church.

We will purchase the hams and distribute them prior to Christmas.
Your contribution will ensure that these families have a wonderful Christmas.



TOY DRIVE

Again this year, we will be collecting toys to be distribute by the Rio Rancho Police Department to families in our area. You may place your donation in the bins in the Narthex.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Midwinter's Promise – Celebrating the promise of God's love found in the music of the season... the frosty air, the silent snow, the quiet frozen earth.

WHEN: Sunday

November 30, 2025

Both 9 and 11 am services

WHERE: High Desert United Methodist Church

1201 Golf Course Road Rio Rancho, NM

WHO: Scott and Irma Reeder

WHAT: Traditional Christmas carols from many countries, contemporary songs celebrating the season, haunting airs and hymns with roots in the Celtic heart of the British Isles, and foot-stomping Irish and American fiddle tunes. Scott and Irma will be playing the Celtic harp, mountain and hammered dulcimers, bowed psaltery, Irish tin whistles, renaissance recorders, guitars, bodhran (Irish frame drum) and more!

Come join us as we begin celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!



Choir singers always welcome:

The choir has resumed practicing on **Wednesdays, at 5:30 PM.** All singers are welcome. We are looking forward to an exciting year of music, as the choir plans to sing every Sunday at the 9:00 AM service. Any questions...see Drew Ammons.





In light that **OCTOBER** was “**Disability Awareness Month**”- if you haven’t read Joanna Jones book -ask her for a copy.

Legacy of Advocacy

Classroom experiences with third grade teachers and students at Creekside Elementary, Spearfish SD, inspired Jim Hoxie and Joanna Jones to write **Grandpa's White**

Cane. The book has accurate illustrations of cane usage and is a practical guide to help both children and adults understand the importance of the tall white cane.

In **October 2025**, **Jim** received two awards: the **State of South Dakota's Outstanding Individual with a Disability (Governor's Award)** and the **Champion for Independent Living Services Award (Statewide Independent Living Council's Award)**. **Jim's guide dog Dax has received his own recognition.** The Blinded Veterans Association (BVA) features **Dax** in the October newsletter as **Ambassadog**. Dax will also be featured in the 2026 Fidelco Guide Dog Calendar.

What began as a challenge with blindness has evolved into a legacy of advocacy that continues to touch many lives.

Food, Fun, and Fellowship

Scenes from our fall cook-out, Friday, October 17, 2025:



Trixie Maclay and friends



L-R: Earl & Dottie Hester, Del & Gay Smart, Wayne & Pauline Walker, and Cheryl Mason



L-R: Harry & Frankie Combs, Carol Lamkin, and Joanne Claybrook



Bruce Packard and John Samford

RECOGNITION OF OUR VETERANS

On Sunday November 9, 2025, we are planning a special recognition for the veterans of our congregation. There will be a brochure listing all of our veterans in the bulletin. If you are a veteran, please provide the following information to the Church Office or Reuben. To ensure accurately, please print or type.

NAME: _____

EMAIL OR PHONE NUMBER: _____

BRANCH OF SERVICE: _____

SERVICE TIME: From _____ to _____

Also, if you are willing, to share the following (optional):

RANK AT TIME OF DISCHARGE: _____

METALS & AWARDS RECEIVED: _____

SERVED AT FOLLOWING LOCATIONS: _____



The Church in Mission

October saw High Desert volunteers carrying out three mission projects.

Gallup Ministry - October 3-4: A team of five ladies traveled to Gallup to assist Pastor Chris Davis with her work with the unhoused people living on the streets of Gallup and the seniors at the twin Lakes Chapter of the Navajo Nation. On Friday, thirty boxes of non-perishable groceries were delivered to the Twin Lakes Senior Center, to be distributed to home-bound seniors. Mission Team members broke bread with the seniors having lunch at the Center and shared a time of fellowship. Friday evening saw the team assembling sack lunches for the people on the streets. Saturday morning everyone rode with Pastor Chris in her van through downtown Gallup, handing out lunches and praying with the grateful recipients. Thank you to Sheela Ammons, Carol Lamkin, Lou Williams, and Linn Carlson (our bus driver.) We want to rotate team members so that more people can experience this mission project. If interested, see Judy Thomas, Mission Committee Chairperson, to be placed in the rotation for future trips.

St. Joseph Mission School - October 6-9: A dedicated team of five guys constructed a loading dock for the cafeteria at St. Joseph Mission School. Since the school is over 100 years old, there are many improvements needed to the buildings and grounds in order to maintain a safe environment for the staff and students. Many thanks to Kent Hays, Lynn Hood and Bruce Packard, who worked along with Lester from the Acoma community.

Hoodies for High Schools – October 8 & 15: Thanks to donations from our generous congregation, the Mission Committee was able to purchase 180 hoodies for local high school students. The Mission Committee members sorted, boxed, and delivered the hoodies as follows: 78 to Rio Rancho High School, 78 to Cleveland High, 20 to Independence High, and 4 to Rio Rancho Middle School. (Why 4? Because 4 hoodies arrived in a smaller size than the others, so they were given to a Middle School.) The school counselors were delighted to get these hoodies, to be given to students in need of warm clothing. Thank you to Linn Carlson, Val Forbes, and Wanda Golsan for their hard work on this project.



Linn Carlson is looking to serve again on a Mission Team by responding to the rebuilding needs resulting from the **2023 Lahaina fires on Maui, Hawaii**. She will be serving 3 weeks on the island from **11/30-12/20/2025**. This is an opportunity to work again with some people that she previously served with in St. Croix USVI. She will be working with the Mennonite Disaster Services (MDS) as the sponsoring agency. **Who is MDS, you might ask?**



RESPOND. REBUILD. RESTORE

Mennonite Disaster Service recruits, organizes and empowers volunteers to repair and rebuild the homes of those impacted by disasters in the United States and Canada. As we respond with Christian love to serve people who would not otherwise have the means to recover, our goal is to restore hope and bring people home.

MDS Vision: Is to strive to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those affected by disasters.

Faith Meets Hope: Caring, compassionate service fulfills a Christian value for many volunteers, whose presence assures disaster survivors that they have not been forgotten. MDS serves homeowners who would not otherwise have the means to recover.

In August 2023, wildfires ravaged Maui, causing significant damage. The Hawaiian town of Lahaina experienced the deadliest U.S. wildfire in more than a century resulting in over 13,000 people being displaced, over 2,000 buildings destroyed, 102 people perished and the town was turned into ashes.

This mission project focus: TO REBUILD!

PLEASE KEEP LINN, THE TEAM AND THIS CITY & RESIDENTS IN YOUR PRAYERS!



NOVEMBER 2025

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 All Saints Sunday 9 AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10:00 SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	3 10:30 AM Bible Study	4	5 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 AM Bible Study 5:30 PM Bible Study 5:30 PM Choir	6	7 11-2 Food Pantry 4:30 PM JAM	8
9 Veteran's Sunday 9 AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	10 10:00 Feed NM Kids 10:30 AM Bible Study	11 6:00 PM Ministry Team Mtg	12 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 AM Bible Study 5:30 pm Bible Study 5:30 PM Choir	13 10:00-12:00 Emmaus Agape Group	14 4:30 PM JAM	15
16 9 AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	17 10:30 AM Bible Study	18 9-12 Food Pantry	19 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 AM Bible Study 5:30 PM Bible Study 5:30 PM Choir	20 1-4 PM Food Pantry	21 4:30 PM JAM	22
23 9 AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	24 10:30 AM Bible Study	25	26 Office Hrs: 9-12 No AM Bible Study 5:30 PM Bible Study 5:30 PM Choir	27 Happy Thanksgiving 12:00 noon Potluck	28 4:30 PM JAM	29
30 9AM Worship/Concert & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11AM Worship/Concert	MS = MorningStar Worship JAM = Jesus and Music SS= Sunday School					

Care Ministry

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

Grover Donahoe	766 Hood Way SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	220-3839
Rod Warpole	600 First Street NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	332-9706
Lucille Few	920 Riverview Dr. SE Apt.#223 , Rio Rancho 87124	
Vi Ortega	Care Free 10916 Juan Tabo Place NE Albq. 87111	288-2160
Pat McElwain	4536 Ambrose Alday SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124	235-7484
Judy Ballard	Ridgmar Place, Apt. 3405, 2151 Green Oak Rd., Ft. Worth TX 76116	240-0912



Ian & Shawn Colbert	Nov. 10
Sean McElrath & Aliece Nielson	Nov. 12
Brian Kassel & Joanna Jones	Nov. 25



Ciera Lucero	Nov. 1
Robin Foley	Nov. 2
Christine Jones	Nov. 4
Jeff Bair	Nov. 6
Marlene Fraser	Nov. 10
Drew Ammons	Nov. 10
Keith Witt	Nov. 11
Charlotte Bullock	Nov. 17
Gary Smothermon	Nov. 17
Elaine Marshall	Nov. 20
Gary Cowles	Nov. 22
Frankie Combs	Nov. 22
Mel Lora	Nov. 23
Bruce Packard	Nov. 23
Sue Hinchcliffe	Nov. 25
Laurie Smothermon	Nov. 25
Laura Minoletti	Nov. 28
Ruby Hunyady	Nov. 29
Sean McElrath	Nov. 29

ANSWER TO OBSCURE NAMES IN THE BIBLE:

JOAB WAS DAVID'S NEPHEW, WHO COMMANDED HIS ARMY. HE KILLED ABNER; HER INTERCEDED FOR ABSOLOM EARLY ON, BUT LATER KILLED ABSOLOM OUT OF LOYALTY TO DAVID. HE ALSO DIED BY ORDER FROM DAVID.

(FROM 1 CHRONICLES AND 1 KINGS)

**HIGH DESERT UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH**

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Email: highdesertumc@outlook.com

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

November, 2025 Newsletter

HDUMC CHURCH PANTRY

Distribution dates for November, 2025 are:

Friday, November 7, at 11:00 AM

Tuesday, November 18, at 9:00 AM

Thursday, November 20, at 1:00 PM

November Collection: Canned Soup/Stew

Containers are in the Narthex & Fellowship Hall for these donations.

**Contact John Samford at (505) 870-0667
for more information.**
