

"Loving God, Serving Others, Changing Lives"

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

REUBEN'S RAMBLINGS

December, 2025, 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 as we reenact the Christmas Story; 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!"

God Bless, Reuben

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 will start a new class on January 7 entitled "David Jeremiah Explains Romans 8:28."*

WEDNESDAY 5:30 PM: *Pastor Reuben will begin a new class by Adam Hamilton, entitled Moses In the Footsteps of the Reluctant Prophet in January.*

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.*

NEW BIBLE STUDY: MOSES

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE RELUCTANT PROPHET

The epic account of his life, together with the deliverance of the Israelite slaves from bondage in Egypt, is the defining story of the Jewish people. For Christians, Moses' life serves as the backstop for much that is found in the Gospels. Throughout history, his story has continued to speak to each successive generation. Join us as we explore the sites of Moses' life, from the Nile River to the Reed Sea, from Mt. Sinai to the desert wilderness. Using historical information, archaeological data, and biblical text, Adam Hamilton guides us in the footsteps of this reluctant prophet who blazed a trail of faith. Join us starting on Wednesday January 7 at 5:30 pm in the sanctuary as we begin this six-week study.

WOMEN WITH PURPOSE

Be sure to attend *Women With Purpose* this Thursday, December 4th at 10:00 AM in the Sanctuary. Our speaker will be Officer Daisy Gomez of the Rio Rancho Police Department, as she accepts our toy donation. We will stuff 100 pairs of socks with Christmas treats for Pastor Joanne Landry's ministry to the unhoused in the International Zone of Albuquerque. Inspiring music will be provided by Aliece Nielson. As always, this will be an enjoyable time of fellowship and delicious refreshments.



DECEMBER SECOND MILE GIVING

FEED NEW MEXICO KIDS

Did you know that many students 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.

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, WWP and other volunteers assemble over 544 food packs per month which are given to over 100 students in five local schools. In addition, we are now working with St. Joseph Mission School in San Fidel to provide food packages to their 38 students. Originally, it cost about \$7 for each food package, but with rising food prices this is going up.

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.

4PAWS PET FOOD

Our Second Mile Giving for December will also go to 4Paws Pet Food. In partnership with the 4Paws Pet Food Bank in Corrales, High Desert UMC is providing free dog and cat food to the clients of the High Desert Methodist Food Pantry each month on the first Friday.

This ministry supports those in our community who are struggling to feed their companion animals. Because of limited financial resources, many Pantry clients give up their personal food to feed their pets. Over the past year, we have been able to help our Pantry clients continue to enjoy the positive benefits of pet ownership by keeping their pets fed and out of shelters. If you would want to support this ministry, please mark "4Paws Pet Food" on the memo line of your check.

SANTA'S POST OFFICE

It has been a tradition of High Desert to share Christmas greetings with each other. In order to do this and to avoid the increased price of postage stamps, Santa's Post Office will be open again this year in the Narthex. Just drop your Christmas cards in the mailbox and volunteers will distribute them each Sunday morning during Advent, prior to and after worship. Of course, this is optional and you may have other ways to share holiday greetings. For example, you may donate the funds you would spend for the Christmas cards to the ministries of the church instead.

Merry Christmas!



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

Lt. Commander Kristina Scott, US Navy

Lt. Colonel Ryan Stanfill, US Air Force,
McConnell AFB, Wichita, Kansas

Thanksgiving Boxes Sent to Haven House

Pictured at right are representatives of Haven House as they picked up 30 boxes, each containing all the ingredients for a complete Thanksgiving dinner.



Thank you to everyone who contributed to this worthy cause. A total of \$1,810 was collected.

MUSIC MINISTRY NOTES

Choir singers always welcome!

The choir rehearses on **Wednesdays, at 5:30 pm**, and sings at the 9 am worship services.

Since there is not a choir at the 11 am service, we enjoy selections by soloists, duets, trios, and quartets. Recently we have



been blessed with vocal offerings by a quartet consisting of Drew Ammons,

Dave & Sue Duranty, and Ron Komatz.

One of Drew's many gifts is encouraging new singers to provide music in the worship services.

If you are willing to sing a special song at the 11 am service, please see Drew.

ASBURY CAFÉ UPDATE:

The Asbury Café is a tradition of the New Mexico State Fair. For over sixty years, volunteers have served homemade pies and ice cream to thousands of fair goers. The proceeds are distributed to non-profit organizations in Albuquerque that are feeding the homeless. Volunteers from High Desert UMC served pies and ice cream on Friday, September 5 and Monday, September 8. Café organizers were able to distribute \$62,000 to the following charities:

CHARITY	AMOUNT
The Storehouse	\$8,150
Meals on Wheels	\$8,150
Good Shepherd	\$8,150
The Rock at Noonday	\$8,175
East Mountain Food Pantry	\$8,175
Silver Horizons	\$9,200
South Albuquerque Coop. Ministry	\$2,000
Family Promise	\$2,000
Rio Grande Food Project	\$2,000
Barrett Foundation	\$2,000
God Cares About You	\$2,000
Lobo Food Pantry	\$2,000

Advent Wreath Making Sunday afternoon, November 30, 2025



HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Invites you and your family to join us for

**Christmas Eve
Pageant & Candlelight Service
4 & 6 pm**



We're located at
1201 Golf Course Road SE
Rio Rancho, NM

Visit our website: highdesertumc.org
for more information

Join us as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

The Church in Mission



HAWAII: ***Linn Carlson*** is currently serving 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.** In 2023, wildfires ravaged Maui, causing significant damage, resulting in over 13,000 people being displaced, over 2,000 buildings destroyed, 102 people perished. **This mission project focus: TO REBUILD!**

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

COSTA RICA:

DID YOU KNOW THAT “ONE OF OURS” IS GOING ON A MISSION TRIP TO COSTA RICA JANUARY 14-23, 2026....AGAIN? *Yes, Linn Carlson is “on the road again”!!*



While in Costa Rica, Linn & her team will once again work with Missionary Lillian Solt (who is under the jurisdiction of the Latin American Mission) & her staff of CEDCAS (means Center for Health Education & Health Services CEDCAS is a non-profit that was established by Lillian in 1985 (50 years ago) & whose goal is to promote & maintain “whole person health care”, meaning, physical, emotional, social & spiritual health for those that they serve.

CEDCAS & the Baptist church in Santo Tomas have begun to build **a youth center.**

SO.... WHAT WILL LINN & HER TEAM BE DOING?

Our team will be working on building, along with at least one welder, from California, who will be joining the team. He’s been on other CEDCAS work teams.

Our work will include:

- Assisting the welder cutting the iron, painting the welded joints, etc. for the second floor & the stairway to the second floor.
- Plumbing including laying the pipes for the drains & bathrooms on the first floor
- Filling in the drain site that will go down under the first floor. It involves moving large rock, smaller rock & then to fill in the drain space.
- Painting at the church
- Assisting with VBS.

Last year, HDUMC provided funds to cover public school uniforms for children who were unable to attend school due to lack of resources to buy their uniforms. We are so grateful for your generosity. If you would like to contribute to this cause again, please see below.

HOW CAN YOU HELP???

- 1) Cover Linn, the team, the families/children that we will be working with **in prayer!**
- 2) Linn will be collecting funds to take with her that will be used to buy school uniforms for some children so that they can attend school every day\all day! If you would like to provide some support for this mission– please write a check to HDUMC with Memo line note: “Mission Trip-Costa Rica”. **Donated funds need to be received by the church by 01/12/2025!**

DECEMBER 2025

HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
MS = MorningStar Worship JAM = Jesus and Music SS= Sunday School						
	1 10:30 AM Bible Study	2	3 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 AM Bible Study 5:30 PM Bible Study 5:30 PM Choir	4 10 AM Women with Purpose	5 11-2 Food Pantry	6
7 9 AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	8 10:00 Feed NM Kids 10:30 AM Bible Study	9	10 Office Hrs: 9-12 10:30 AM Bible Study 5:30 PM Choir	11 10:00-12:00 Emmaus Agape Group	12 Movie Night 5 PM	13
14 9 AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	15 10:30 AM Bible Study	16 9-12 AM Food Pantry	17 Office Hrs: 9-12 No AM Bible Study 5:30 PM Choir	18 1-4 PM Food Pantry	19	20
21 9 AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11 AM Worship	22 10:30 AM Bible Study	23	24 Office Hrs: 9-12 No AM Bible Study 4:00 Christmas Eve Srv 6:00 Christmas Eve Srv	25	26	27
28 9AM Worship & Palmilla Serv. 10 AM SS 10:30 AM MS 11AM Worship	29 10:30 AM Bible Study	30	31 Office Hrs: 9-12 No AM Bible Study No PM Bible Study No Choir Practice			

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
Robert Wussow	The Retreat, 4075 Jackie Rd., Rio Rancho, NM 87124	350-3698



Rusty & Debby Dils	Dec. 3
Bill & Kay Boss	Dec. 23
Glenn & Sue Hinchcliffe	Dec. 23
Paul & Leuretta Lewis	Dec. 24
Jeff & Cindi Bair	Dec. 30



Sandie Fawcett	Dec. 2
Kathy Harrell	Dec. 7
Rose Meyer	Dec. 10
Cindi Bair	Dec. 10
Glynda Samford	Dec. 14
Gloria Lamoreux	Dec. 14
Ezekiel Gamdham	Dec. 15
Marlaine Gaylor	Dec. 16
Edna Billings	Dec. 19
Dorcas Rauri	Dec. 20
Jan Herrington	Dec. 21
Joel Salisbury	Dec. 22
Marie Donat	Dec. 26
Sara Hendricks	Dec. 30

Join us for Movie Night
Friday, December 12 at 5:00 PM
In the sanctuary
The movie: "It's a Wonderful Life"
Popcorn, Candy, & Beverages provided



HIGH DESERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Phone: 505-891-4206

Office Hours: Wednesday 9 AM - Noon

Email: highdesertumc@outlook.com

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

December, 2025 Newsletter

HDUMC CHURCH PANTRY

Distribution dates for December, 2025 are:

Friday, December 6, at 11:00 AM

Tuesday, December 16, at 9:00 AM

Thursday, December 18, at 1:00 PM

December Collection: Small Packets of Oatmeal

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

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