



Our Vision

Rio Rancho United Methodist Church

December 23, 2018, Volume 13, Issue 25

“Rio Rancho UMC is a body of Christ led and empowered by the Holy Spirit, meeting the needs of God’s people through open hearts, open minds, and open arms.”



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Editor’s Note

All of you that attended the Church Conference last Sunday heard the report of our Church’s activity. You heard the encouraging words from District Superintendent Craig Cockrell.

Dear Ones,

2019 is upon us – just days away. Do you even remember the resolutions you made a year ago? I must confess, I don’t – so I don’t know if I succeeded or not. If I look on the grand scale, did I grow? Did I learn? Am I a better person? I believe the answer is yes, and part of that answer is because of you - - - Rio Rancho United Methodist Church.

I was serving on the Navajo reservation and truly believed I would be there for another year, at least. And here we are, in the middle of a modern city – Wal-Mart just 2 miles away, and so many restaurants in a 5 mile radius, unbelievable!

We couldn’t even imagine our circumstances – buying our own home, having a fantastic view of the Sandias, a 2-car garage and a sewing studio!! Our view was a little limited – thank you, Yeshua. As we approach 2019, I invite you to submit to God’s plan for you, and trust him for the ride. If I were to just look at the mortgage payment, I would be petrified. Our blessings exceed any expectations we had. We are trusting that our home, our position in this church is ordained to be a blessing – not only for us, but especially for you.

Please know we uphold you in our prayers every day so you may know your calling and be blessed as you fulfill it.

Merry Christmas and courage as you prepare for the new year,

Hozho,

Pastor Raquel

**A VERY MERRY
CHRISTMAS
and Happy New Year!**

March to the Manger



This handsome bear accompanied ten bags of beautiful toys and games and a cash donation to St. Felix Pantry. Parents of families being assisted at St. Felix can choose the perfect gift they know will delight their child.

PB&J Adopt a Family



Every gift wished for by our PB&J family and more was delivered to PB&J Family Services in Bernalillo. The staff at PB&J look forward to receiving the generous Christmas gifts for their clients from Rio Rancho United Methodist Church.

Maggie Cordova Elementary Family



The children in our Maggie Cordova family were taken into the hearts of our RRUMC family who gave practical, as well as fun and exciting gifts for them. Appropriately, the staff at Maggie Cordova were dressed as elves when the gifts were delivered to the school. At Maggie Cordova, the staff know RRUMC as “the church”.

December

Anniversaries and Birthdays

ANNIVERSARIES

GALLAHER, Walt & Betty	12/26
WHITE, Billy & Celesta	12/28

BIRTHDAYS

SEEFELDT, Susan	12/26
BRUNK, Judy	12/28
KILBORN, Symphony	12/28
LEGGIERO, Theresa	12/30
MCCONNELL, James	12/30
VEACH, Beckie	12/30
HOLLAND, Megan	12/31
WISEUR-WRIGHT, Kristi	12/31

January

ANNIVERSARIES

BEGLEY, Ivan & Gisela	01/06
BRUNK, Judy	01/29

BIRTHDAYS

PONTSLER, Gary	01/02
PARRISH, Michael	01/03
CASKEY, Larry	01/04
ROOT, Donna	01/06
PETERSON, Robert	01/08
SHARKEY, Jeri	01/09
BAYLESS, Rachel	01/14
BALTZ, Danielle	01/15
MORYOSEF, Albert	01/16
GALLAHER, Betty	01/20
MORITOMO, Reagan	01/22
SHARKEY, John	01/24
CUPRYK, Timothy	01/25
BENSON, Maria	01/26
JOHNSON-CONNELL, Charlotte	01/27
WISEUR, Emma	01/31

Activities and Events

No Youth Group Meetings on Sunday, December 23rd and Sunday, December 30th

Noon Year's Eve Party
Monday, December 31st



11 AM to 1 PM

Attention Youth: On Monday, December 31st at 11 AM, we will play a few games, have lunch and ring in the new year! This is always a fun event. Hope to see you there!



Youth Dinner
Schedule



1/6 Hilborn Family
1/13 Sechrest Family

Roadrunner Food Bank Service Project



Thursday, January 3rd
We will meet at the church at 12:15. Remember to eat lunch before coming, wear close toed shoes and shirts with sleeves. We should return to church around 4:45 PM.

Adult helpers are needed for service projects!

Wednesday Night meals will resume on January 9th.



Souper Bowl of Caring is coming in January! Remember to pick up a couple extra cans of food to participate. All food collected will go to Storehouse West.



Chile Cook-Off & Dessert Auction
Sunday, January 27th

We put it up, now it's time to take it down! We will be taking the Christmas décor down on Friday, January 11th,



White Elephant Gift Exchange



Christmas Program –
December 16th



Scintillating Seniors gathered
at the Holland's for Christmas



One of our “Zip-Line” Snowmen
Youth Group Happy Birthday
Jesus Party



Decorated Christmas Trees

WHY DECEMBER 25?

Did you ever wonder why we celebrate Christmas on December 25? Scripture does not identify a date for the birth of Christ and the New Testament church did not initially celebrate Christ's birth as a holiday. Tradition says that that celebration of the birth of Jesus began in 98 A.D. By 137 A.D., the Bishop of Rome ordered that the birthday of the Christ Child celebrated as a solemn feast. However, by this time any records of the actual date of Jesus' birth had been lost and the church leaders had to determine the date from information available in scripture and tradition.



The gospel of Luke provides some clues to the date of Christ's birth. In Luke 1:5-20, the angel Gabriel, announces the coming birth of John the Baptist to his father, Zechariah, while Zechariah is serving in the temple. This service was especially significant during the Jewish High Holy days (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur). Zechariah was known as a righteous man, so he may have been chosen to serve during that period. If Zechariah's wife, Elizabeth, became pregnant with their son, John, during the Jewish High Holy days, which are in late September, then John would have been born the following June. (The church traditionally celebrates John's birth on June 24.) When the angel Gabriel tells Mary that she will be the mother of Jesus, in Luke 1:26-38, he tells her that Elizabeth is the sixth month of her pregnancy, which would have been in late March. If Jesus was born nine months later, his birth would have been in December.

In order to understand how the early church determined which day in December Jesus was born, we need to understand the idea of "integral age." This is the belief that the great prophets of Israel died on the same date as the date of their birth or conception. This belief, which was widespread in Judaism at the time of Christ, is virtually unknown to modern Christians because it is not taught in the Bible. The early Christians applied this idea to Jesus, concluding that he was conceived on the same day of the year as the date of his death on the cross. In dating Christ's death, the church recalled the gospel of John, in which Jesus' death occurs on the eve of Passover, just when the Passover lambs were being slaughtered in the Jerusalem Temple. Therefore, they examined the calendar to determine a date and year during Christ's lifetime when Passover eve fell on a Friday. By about 200 A.D., the church had concluded that Christ died on Friday, March 25 in 29 A.D. (This was a complex calculation because the Jewish lunar calendar had to be adjusted frequently to conform to the solar year, making it difficult to determine the dates when past Passovers had been celebrated. Modern scholars have concluded that the Passover eves that were on Friday were April 7 of 30 A.D. and April 3 of 33 A.D.)

Once the church concluded that Jesus died on March 25, they applied the idea of integral age and concluded that he was conceived on the same day of the year. Assuming that Jesus was born nine months later makes his birth date December 25. In 350 A.D., Julius I, the bishop of Rome, formally declared that Christ's birth would be celebrated on December 25. By this time Constantine, the emperor of Rome, had made Christianity the official religion of the empire and declared December 25 to be an imperial holiday. Since that time, the birth of the Christ child has been celebrated on December 25.

As a side note, the Eastern Orthodox Church, using a different calculation, concluded that Christ was crucified on April 6. Thus, they believed that Christ was born on January 6, nine months after April 6. The Roman Catholic Church prevailed in the establishment of Christ's birth date as December 25. However, January 6 is celebrated as Epiphany, which is considered a more significant holiday than Christmas by the Eastern Orthodox Church.

(This is adapted from a much more detailed article, entitled, "Calculating Christmas," by William J. Tighe, Associate Professor of History at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and a faculty advisor to the Catholic Campus Ministry. The full article is available on line at <http://www.touchstonemag.com/archives/article.php?id=16-10-012-v.>)

Where our Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes Went

The shoebox tracking information shows that shoeboxes from Rio Rancho UMC were sent to children in Haiti and Mexico. Please pray for the children that received shoeboxes, especially the ones that you packed and sent.



Opening Shoeboxes in Mexico



Opening Shoeboxes in Haiti

Please take the time to fill the section in the bulletin that asks for the names of the attendees, updated phone numbers and address. Our Church Office would like to be sure we have all the correct information on you and your family.

The Children's Bible in a Nutshell

In the beginning, which occurred near the start, there was nothing but God, darkness and some gas. The Bible says, 'The Lord thy God is one.' but I think he must be a lot older than that. Anyway, God said, "Give me a light!" and someone did. Then God made the world. He split the Adam and made Eve. Adam and Eve were naked, but they weren't embarrassed because mirrors hadn't been invented yet. Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating one bad apple, so they were driven from the Garden of Eden....Not sure what they were driven in though, because they didn't have cars. Adam and Eve had a son, Cain, who hated his brother as long as he was Abel. Pretty soon all of the early people died off, except for Methuselah, who lived to be like a million or something. One of the next important people was Noah, who was a good guy, but one of his kids was kind of a Ham. Noah built a large boat and put his family and some animals on it. He asked some other people to join him, but would have to take a rain check. After Noah came Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jacob was more famous than his brother, Esau, because Esau sold Jacob his birthmark in exchange for some pot roast. Jacob had a son named Joseph who wore a really loud sports coat. Another important Bible guy is Moses, whose real name was Charlton Heston. Moses led the Israel Lights out of Egypt and away from the evil Pharaoh after God sent ten plagues on Pharaoh's people. These plagues included frogs, mice lice, bowels, and no cable. God fed the Israel Lights every day with manicotti. Then he gave them His Top Ten Commandments. These include: don't lie, cheat, smoke, dance or covet your neighbor's stuff. Oh yeah, I just thought of one more: Humor thy father and thy mother. One of Moses' best helpers was Joshua who was the first Bible guy to use spies. Joshua fought the battle of Geritol and the fence fell over on the town. After Joshua came David. He got to be king by killing a giant with a slingshot. He had a son named Solomon who had about 300 wives and 500 porcupines. My teacher says he was wise, but that doesn't sound very wise to me. After Solomon there were a bunch of major league prophets. One of these was Jonah, who was swallowed by a big whale and then barfed up on the shore. There were also some minor league prophets, but I guess we don't have to worry about them. After the Old Testament came the New Testament. Jesus is the star of The New Testament. He was born in Bethlehem in a barn. (I wish I had been born in a barn too, because my mom is always saying to me, "Close the door! Were you born in a barn?" It would be nice to say, "As a matter of fact, I was." During his life, Jesus had many arguments with sinners like the Pharisees and the Republicans. Jesus also had twelve opossums. The worst one was Judas Asparagus. Judas was so evil that they named a terrible vegetable after him. Jesus was a great man. He healed many leopards and even preached to some "Germans on the Mount. But the Republicans and all those guys put Jesus on trial before Pontius the Pilot. Pilot didn't stick up for Jesus. He just washed his hands instead. Anyway, Jesus died for our sins, then came back to life again. He went up to Heaven but will be back at the end of the "Aluminum." His return is foretold in the book of Revolution.