



Our Vision

Rio Rancho United Methodist Church

“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

Though we normally hold 2 services each Sunday, each Sunday in December, we have held one service. I’d like to know your opinion. One service each Sunday? A simple LIKE or DISLIKE will do. You can e-mail me at: Waltbetmax@aol.com

And God Entered the Picture

⁸ Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. ⁹ The Lord’s angel stood before them, the Lord’s glory shone around them, and they were terrified.

¹⁰ The angel said, “Don’t be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. ¹¹ Your savior is born today in David’s city. He is Christ the Lord.” (Lk. 2:8-11 CEB).

I can only imagine what it was like the night of the birth. Angels were working in the fields. They were doing what they had done for years. Many were going about the business of their ancestors. This was supposed to be a routine evening doing a routine job.

As the shepherds settled into their mundane tasks, they were visited by a celestial band of angels. Something happened. The colors, the lights, the music. It all was magnificent. Words could never describe it. The proclamation which came from above to those below all told of the one who was promised to the world. God in the flesh was present. We are told that the shepherds followed the angels’ instructions and visited the Holy family.

This revelation still occurs in the world today. Somehow, we encounter God and are invited into a relationship which includes beauty and awe. We are led to find that which is sacred and divine. Once we have this encounter with God, nothing is ever the same.

May this Christmas lead you to that which calls you to the sacred. May your manger experience be one that transforms you and redeems you. Experience the form of God within us and through us. Your life will never be the same.

Merry Christmas and God’s Blessings Be with You and Yours,

Pastor Joe

Prayer Corner

Sunday, December 24, 2017

No Room at the Inn (from My Winning Words Devotional)

No room in the inn; that's the way the Scriptures put it. There is a heaviness, a pathos, even a sadness about those words. That was the beginning of the Christ child's life—and a scenario which would plague Him for the remainder of His days on this earth: no room. Harry Emerson Fosdick summed it up like this: "The crucial difficulty of Christ's life...was something so simple, so familiar, so little recognized as a tragic evil—so universal among us all, that one almost hesitates to name it—inhospitality!"

Even today, that same tragedy is the indictment against so many of us. Our crowded lives slam the door in the face of the One we need most. For, in the final analysis, we need Jesus far more than we need all the things that keep us from receiving Him with joy and gladness.

Perhaps this poem, penned by an unknown author, best sums it up:

*O little inn of Bethlehem
How like we are to you.
Our lives are crowded to the brim
With this and that to do.
We're not unfriendly to the King
Our intentions are good, no doubt.
We have no hostile feelings,
We just merely crowd him out.*

In spite of all our modern advances and time-saving devices, it is still hard for us to clear out the chambers of our spiritual hearts and minds to make room for the Messiah! Year after year, we vow that next year will be different. Next year, we'll start earlier. Next year, we'll buy less. Next year, we'll find a better way. But Jesus isn't asking for room in our hearts next year, He is knocking at the door of our hearts today!

God is with us. That is the message of Christmas; that is the promise of Christmas; that is the great gift of Christmas. God is with us. This Christmas, the long-awaited Messiah is still looking for room in the inn. And so the question simply becomes: are you willing to open the door and let Him in?

*Grace & Peace,
Judy Brunk*

January Anniversaries and Birthdays

Anniversaries

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

Birthdays

PONTSLEER, Gary 01/02
PARRISH, Michael 01/03
ROGGE, Jim 01/03
CASKEY, Larry 01/04
ELLIOTT, Ken 01/06
PETERSON, Robert 01/08
SHARKEY, Jeri 01/09
BAYLESS, Rachel 01/14
BALTZ, Danielle 01/15
MORYOSEF, Albert 01/16
MACDONALD, Caeleb 01/18
GALLAHER, Betty 01/20
MORITOMO, Reagan 01/22
MACDONALD, Joe 01/23
SHARKEY, John 01/24
CUPRYK, Timothy 01/25
BENSON, Maria 01/26
JOHNSON-CONNELL, Charlotte 01/27
YEAGER, Rachael 01/27
VISEUR, Emma 01/31



Activities and Events

Youth Dinner Schedule

- 12/24 No Evening Youth Group Meeting
- 12/31 No Evening Youth Group Meeting
- 1/7 Selover Family
- 1/14 Sechrest Family



Our Noon Year's Eve party will start at 10 AM, on December 31st, with worship in the fellowship hall. Following worship, we will have a potluck and ring in the New Year, followed by some awesome games. Please bring a potluck dish to share and join in the celebration!

Youth Service Project Tuesday, January 2nd



We will meet at the church at 12:45 and go to Dave & Peggy Stielow's house to help with some backyard landscaping. We will be moving dirt – bring gloves, dress for the weather, and eat lunch before coming. We should return to the church around 5 PM. Everyone working will earn fundraiser credit.

Roadrunner Food Bank Service Project

The youth will be going to the Roadrunner Food Bank on Friday, January 5th. We will meet at the Church at 12:15 and return about 4:45. Remember to eat lunch before coming, wear close toed shoes and a shirt with sleeves. Any adults wishing to join is are welcome!



Merry Christmas
TAGS MITSU



Chile/Salsa Cook-Off & Dessert Auction

Sunday, January 21st

We will start the day with one worship service at 10 AM, followed by our chile/salsa cook-off and dessert auction. We will need chile/salsa chefs & tasters/judges!

Calling all Chile/Salsa Chefs: Who is a chile/salsa chef you ask? Anyone who would like to make a batch of chile or salsa and bring it to the event! If you are interested in making a batch of chile or salsa, please let Kim Peterson know by calling 450-9795 or 892-0404x3. You will need to have your batch of chile or salsa to the church by 11 AM on Sunday, January 21st. You will need to "Name" your dish and indicate a heat index. Then you can encourage the tasters/judges to vote for your chile/salsa!

Calling all Tasters/Judges: Who is a taster/judge you ask? If you are reading this, you are! Our entire church family is invited to attend the Chile/Salsa Cook-Off & Auction. Everyone will have the opportunity to taste each batch of chile and salsa, and then you will vote for your favorites by putting money into the jar next to the chile/salsa of your choice. The Chile and Salsa with the most money collected will be the winners and will have bragging rights for the coming year! All money collected will be used to fund the youth summer mission trip.

DISASTER RESPONSE

APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE

Rev. James Large, our Albuquerque District Superintendent has authorized a district-wide appeal for funds in support of disaster response work we are doing in Belen to clean out and begin the restoration of a home that was flooded out at the end of September. We have helped clean out debris, wet sheet rock, soggy insulation, and we have sprayed the house for mold. But we need to put in a new sub-floor and we don't have the materials to do that. Please pray fully consider making a donation to buy the materials and get the family back in their house before Christmas. Our target amount is \$7000, which will not only pay for the sub-flooring of this house, but also help out at least three additional neighbors that are in need of immediate assistance. Please make your check to **ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT DISASTER FUND**. Any funds over our present need will be set aside to help quickly respond to future disaster and recovery needs.



Famous Quotations

The Spirit of Christmas fulfils the greatest hunger of mankind.

Loring A. Schaler

Christmas is not so much about opening our presents as opening our hearts.

Janice Naeditors

We should give as we would receive, cheerfully, quickly, and without hesitation; for there is no grace in a benefit that sticks to the fingers.

Seneca



"There's one Christmas carol that's suitable for my voice. The one where the dogs bark Jingle Bells."

Advent Quiz



1. What does the word Advent (from the Latin adventus) mean?

- Before Christmas
- Arrival or coming
- To go on an adventure
- A website for online Christmas coupons
- All of the above

2. True or False: Like the 40 days of Lent, Advent is a fixed number of days before Christmas.

- True
- False

3. Which of these Advent hymns was written by Charles Wesley?

- "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"
- "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"
- "Come, O Come, Emmanuel"
- "Hail to the Lord's Anointed"

4. Who originated Watch Night services?

- Martin Luther
- John Wesley
- John the Baptist
- Henry VIII
- President William McKinley

5. According to tradition, approximately how far did Mary travel to visit Elizabeth?

- 10 miles
- 50 miles
- 100 miles
- 500 miles

6. Why are the Advent candles arranged in the shape of a circle?

- They make a wreath, and wreaths are Christmassy.
- It is the easiest way to see all four candles.
- It takes up the least space.
- Circles symbolize eternity.
- None of the above.

7. What is a Jesse Tree?

- Another name for a Christmas tree
- The tree decorated with Chrismons
- A tree that blossoms at Christmastime
- A representation of Jesus' family tree

8. On the third Sunday in Advent, some churches light a pink candle in the Advent wreath. Why?

- Pink (or rose) is a color of joy.
- Pink signifies Mary.
- It represents the positive outlook we have in Christ.
- The rose color symbolizes Jesus' childhood.
- The rosebud is a sign of new birth.

9. Do you know how the Advent calendar began?

- Chalk lines were drawn on the door to mark the days.
- Religious families hung pictures on the wall, one for each day.
- A candle was lit for each of the 24 days in December.
- A mother fixed candies on a cardboard calendar for her son.
- All of the above

10. What is the meaning of the Hebrew word "Emmanuel"?

- Mighty king
- Christ child
- God with us
- All of the above
- None of the above

Answers Below

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|-----|----------------------------|
| 1. | Coming | 5. | 100 Miles |
| 2. | False | 6. | Circles Symbolize Eternity |
| 3. | Come Thou Long Expected Jesus | 7. | Jesus' Family Tree |
| 4. | John Wesley | 8. | Rose is a color of Joy |
| 5. | 100 Miles | 9. | All of the above |
| 6. | Circles Symbolize Eternity | 10. | God with us |