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## SANDIA FELLOWSHIP WEEKLY NEWS

December 11, 2025

### A Sacred Longing

Long ago in the bustling city of 19th-century Hamburg, Germany, a Lutheran pastor named Johann Hinrich Wichern sat in his study thinking about how to help the children in his care count down the days until Christmas. His life's work was helping the poor, traveling throughout Germany teaching the Bible and establishing mission homes and schools for children. His mission school in Hamburg was named Rauchen Haus ("Rough House"), which he envisioned to be a loving family-style home for neglected and delinquent boys who would otherwise be living on the streets. Though Pastor Wichern prided himself as a man of patience, lately the excited boys had wearied him with the constant question: "How much longer until Christmas?"



So it was on a cold winter day in 1839 when Pastor Wichern came up with an idea to help the children mark the passage of time until Christmas. He converted a large wooden cartwheel into a festive



wreath, decorating it with 24 candles: four large candles to symbolize the four Sundays of Advent, along with 20 smaller red candles to mark the days in between. [The Christ candle came later in history.] He told the children that the four larger candles represented hope, peace, joy and love, and the smaller red ones represented the light of Christ which would increasingly dispel the room's darkness. Every day as the children saw another candle being lit, they witnessed tangible evidence of John 1:5: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

For the boys living in Rauchen Haus, the wooden "waiting wheel" was more than a visual countdown to Christmas Day, it was a picture of increasing hope in the darkness. A powerful imagery that the days of waiting were not infinite but would have an end; that the darkness would soon be overcome by the light and with that, the much-anticipated day of Christmas would arrive. Undoubtedly Pastor Wichern read from the Christmas story these words of hope from the prophet Isaiah:

*"The people living in darkness have seen a great light;  
And on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."*

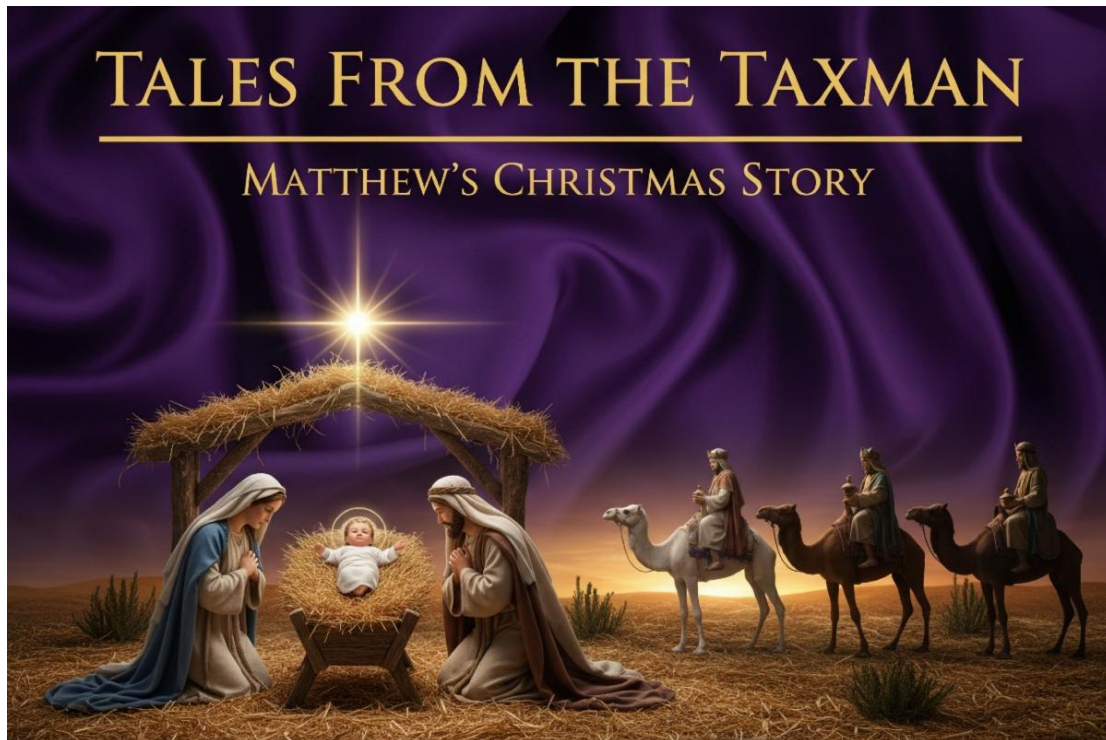
It isn't difficult to imagine how those young boys must have felt as they sat around the glowing wreath almost 200 years ago, watching the candlelight flicker on the walls and dance across one another's faces. The light from the wreath reminding them that God was with them and was mindful of them. The beautiful candles arranged on the repurposed wheel of a discarded cart reminded them that they too had a purpose. And the glowing candles represented a circle of light that pushed back the darkness and whispered that God had not forgotten them. And perhaps in the light of the Advent wreath their impatience for Christmas Day was somewhat lessened as they saw tangible evidence of God's love even in the bleakest of times.

Perhaps this is why the popularity of the Advent wreath continues to this day: it reminds us that God is present in the waiting. St. Augustine famously observed, "Lord, You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You." Advent embodies that sacred longing and restlessness, offering the assurance that Christ is coming, has come, and will come again. It whispers to every heart, "You are waiting ... and Someone is on the way." In the glow of the Advent candles and especially the Christ candle, we remember that our deepest longing can only find its answer in the One who created us.

Blessings,

Holly Klein





# TALES FROM THE TAXMAN

## MATTHEW'S CHRISTMAS STORY

**MESSAGE FOR THIS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14**

**"Joseph: Quiet Strength"**

**Matthew 1:18-25**

Our Christmas Advent series *Tales from the Taxman: Matthew's Christmas Story* continues as we are looking at the Christmas story from Matthew's vantage point. This Sunday we will be focusing on Matthew 1:18-25 and taking a closer look at Joseph and how his experiences with the unexpected news from Mary and an angel can speak life lessons to us today about our call to discipleship.





## CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON AND NEW CHURCH INTERIOR DESIGN

We want to thank everyone who joined us for our largest gathering ever with over 90 in attendance for our Christmas luncheon. We also had a great response providing suggestions related to the interior decoration for our new church building. The majority of the responses were requesting lighter color tones as we will have very little exterior lighting in most rooms. Thanks again for your input that will be passed on to our Leadership Team.











### WITH SYMPATHY AND PRAYERS

Please keep the family of Betty A. Miller in prayer as she passed away last week.

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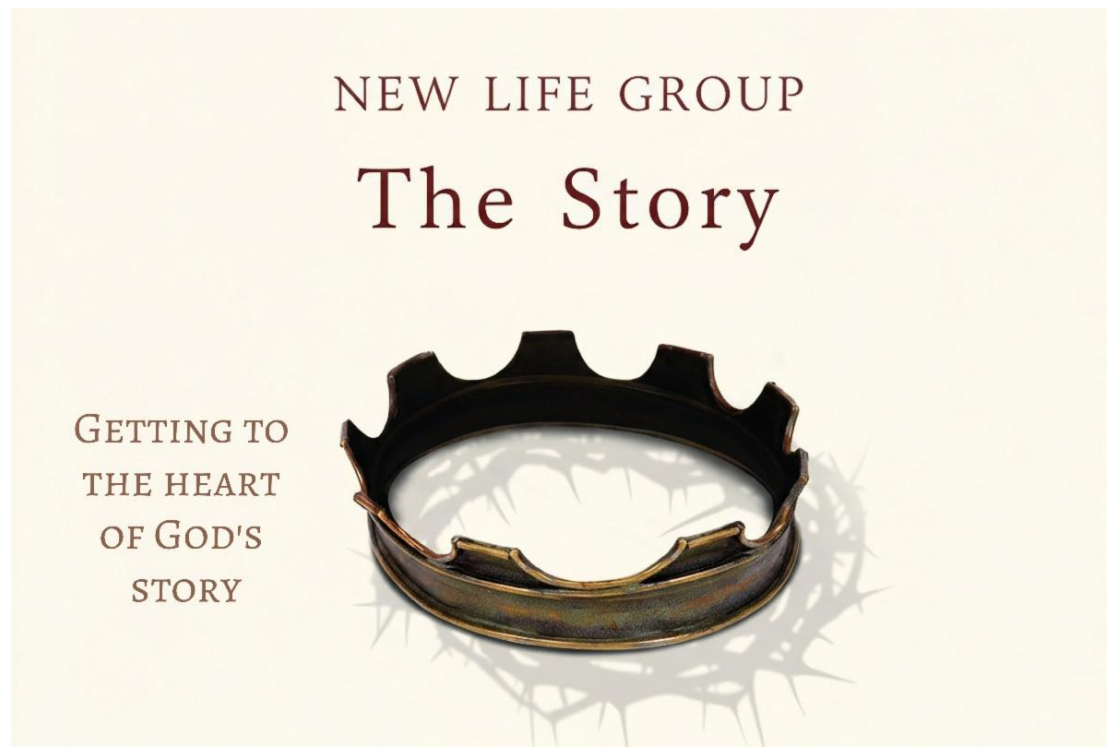
### A LIFE GROUP RESOLUTION FOR 2026

If there was ever a great time to start involvement in a Life Group and for us to grow in our call to discipleship, then the beginning of a new year is a great time for this. Beginning in 2026, we will have eight Life Groups for anyone to join in and get to know and grow with other members of Sandia Fellowship.



Life Groups are the best way to develop friendships in our church and offer your gifts and graces to be a blessing to others. If you are interested in joining a Life Group, click [here](#) to find a particular Life Group that you would like to participate in. Then, [email us](#) the name of that Life Group and Holly will put you in contact with the leader of that group. Some groups meet at night, some during the day, and some on weekends.

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### NEW LIFE GROUP: THE STORY

There is a new Life Group starting this January that is based on *The Story* which is an abridged, **chronological Bible** that reads like a novel. For those intimidated or overwhelmed by reading through the entire Bible in a year, this is a great option. *The Story Life Group* will be meeting on the **first and third Monday of each month at noon** at our church office building. We will offer a **Zoom option** if you are unable to travel to meet in person. *The Story* book will need to be purchased in advance of the first meeting that will be on January 5. If you are interested in participating in this class, **PLEASE SIGN UP** by clicking [here](#) today.

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**SANDIA  
FELLOWSHIP**  
Global Methodist Church

**Join us for our  
Christmas Eve Service**

**Wednesday, December  
24th, 2025 at 4pm at**

**Ramada Plaza**  
2020 Menaul Blvd NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87107







### BUILDING OUR FUTURE - UPDATE

We are waiting on a few final estimate costs, one of them being the fire alarms. Once those estimates are in, we should start construction next week or the following and the construction will move along at a constant pace according to Lorenzo Delgado (our general contractor). Lorenzo also commented that he was in the building this week and was really encouraged seeing all the Scriptures and prayers throughout the building.

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**CHILDREN'S CHURCH**  
Every 1st and 3rd Sunday



We now offer Children's Church on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month. This program is for children in kindergarten through 6th grade and takes place during the message portion of the morning service.

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## THERE'S A LIFE GROUP FOR YOU!

Sandia Fellowship has several LIFE Groups regularly meeting in homes throughout Albuquerque, as well as two that meet in local restaurants:

**Tramway Group:** This LIFE Group meets every first and third Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 PM. Contact: **Ed Boucheron**

**Northeast Group:** This LIFE Group meets every first and third Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 PM. Contact: **Tim Ownbey**

**Women's Group:** This LIFE Group meets every second and fourth Saturday at 10:00 AM at the church offices (2609 Texas St NE). Contact: **Lindy Rech**

**Foothills Group:** This LIFE Group meets every first and third Tuesday from 2:00-3:00 PM. Contact: **Jim Turner**

**"The Story" Group:** This LIFE Group meets every first and third Monday from 12:00-1:00 PM at the church offices. Contact: **Pastor John**

**"The Chosen" Interactive Bible Study Group:** This LIFE Group meets seasonally using an interactive guide that follows along with the popular TV series. The group meets on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 PM at the church offices (2609 Texas St NE). Contact: **Gina Rivera**

**Men's Breakfast:** This group meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays at 7:00 AM at Sunnyside Up (6909 Menaul Blvd). Contact: **Ed Boucheron**

**Women's Breakfast:** This group meets the second Tuesday of each month at 9:00 AM at Dave's High Desert Grill (5200 Eubank Blvd ). Contact: **Linda Hess**



All of these groups welcome new members! If you're interested in information about any of these, please contact the person listed or send an email to the church [here](#).

Visit our [LIFE Groups page](#) on our website to learn more!

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Listen **EVERYWHERE**

## NEED ASSISTANCE WITH HEARING AT CHURCH?

If you are needing assistance with hearing, please download the Listen Everywhere app on your cell phone.

When you arrive at our service, please connect to our Wi-Fi.

The password is: **17x9c9s0ua**

On your hearing aid, make sure your Bluetooth is turned on. If you do not want to use the app on your phone, we have two devices available. It has a headphone that goes over your ear and you can adjust the volume on the provided phone. Please ask an usher if you need one of these devices.

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## VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

Have you visited our website lately? There's always fresh content being added: [announcements](#) and church news, current [sermons](#) as well as [past sermon series](#), weekly [newsletters](#), and more.

You can also [submit a prayer request](#), learn about our various [Life Groups](#), read about the [missionaries and outreaches](#) we support, set up [online giving](#), learn more about the [mission and vision](#) of Sandia Fellowship as well as the [Global Methodist Church](#), and so much more!

Bookmark our site and check back regularly!

[www.sandiagmc.org](http://www.sandiagmc.org)



SEND US YOUR PRAYER REQUESTS!



Sandia Fellowship has a dedicated Prayer Ministry that intercedes weekly for various needs and requests. The Apostle Paul wrote, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

There is no prayer need "too small" or "too big" for the Lord. If our hearts are burdened by anything, God wants us to bring it to Him in prayer -- and He promises us His peace when we do.

You can submit a prayer request in one of three ways

- Send a request through our **website** or click the red button below.
- Email us at **[prayer@sandiagmc.org](mailto:prayer@sandiagmc.org)**.
- Fill out a **Prayer Request card** available at the Welcome Tables on Sunday mornings.

If you'd like to be a part of this Prayer Ministry, please email Holly at **[hklein@sandiagmc.org](mailto:hklein@sandiagmc.org)**.

SUBMIT YOUR PRAYER REQUEST  
HERE

A promotional banner for Sandia Fellowship. The background is dark with a bright light source in the top right corner, creating a lens flare effect. In the center, there is a blue circular logo with a white cross and a stylized mountain range below it. To the right of the logo, the text "SANDIA FELLOWSHIP" is written in large, bold, white capital letters, with "Global Methodist Church" in smaller white text below it. In the bottom center, there is an image of an open book with white pages, resting on a dark wooden surface. Below the book, the text "Sundays @ 10 AM" is written in large, white, sans-serif font. On the left side, the address "SHERATON ABQ UPTOWN 2600 Louisiana Blvd NE" is written in white. On the right side, the text "VISIT US ONLINE" is written above the website address "www.sandiagmc.org", both in white.

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Global Methodist Church

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UPTOWN  
2600 Louisiana Blvd NE

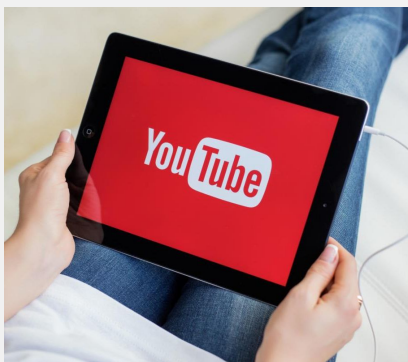
VISIT US ONLINE  
[www.sandiagmc.org](http://www.sandiagmc.org)

**Sundays @ 10 AM**

**Join us for worship this Sunday!**

Childcare is available for ages six months through five years old.





## SANDIA FELLOWSHIP YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Did you know you can subscribe to the Sandia Fellowship YouTube channel? All of our weekly sermons are uploaded to our YouTube channel [here](#) as well as on our [website](#).

Search [@sandiafellowship](#) on YouTube (or just click the photo).





**SANDIA  
FELLOWSHIP**  
Global Methodist Church



## PARTNER WITH US!

This exciting venture in faith would not be possible without God moving upon the hearts of people to give towards this work. Your generosity helps create a church where we can bear witness to the transforming power of the Gospel. The mission of Sandia Fellowship is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly. We strive to humbly serve others as ambassadors of Christ.

Click [HERE](#) to give safely and securely online.

NOTE: Donations can be made to either the **General Budget** or the **Building Fund** by choosing from the dropdown menu. You can also make a donation to our monthly **Communion Offerings** via the dropdown.

Checks can also be mailed to

Sandia Fellowship GMC  
P.O. Box 16702  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87191



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