



THE CHIMES

The United Church of Los Alamos

United in our Faith Journeys



www.unitedchurchla.org

December 2018 - Vol. 55 No. 12



December 2	1 st Sunday of Advent - Communion
December 5	Everything Christmas Sale
December 6	Advent Brown Bag Class
December 9	2 nd Sunday of Advent All Church Potluck & Meetings
December 10	WCSS Potluck Dinner
December 13	Advent Brown Bag Class Truchas Christmas Party
December 16	3 rd Sunday of Advent Lessons & Carols Worship Service
December 23	4 th Sunday of Advent Caroling @ Aspen Ridge
December 24	4pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 11pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
December 25	MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Holiday Office Hours:

Tuesday, December 25th – Closed

Wednesday the 26th – Friday the 28th

8:30 am - Noon



Contacting the Church

If you have any questions or concerns, you may call the church office at **662-2971**, email us at ucoffice@unitedchurchla.org, or send us a message on Facebook.

Office hours are Monday-Friday
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

You may also reach the pastors at the office number, email, or phone numbers below:

David Elton
979-219-8640 cell
david@unitedchurchla.org

Keith Lewis
505-412-9954 cell
gohorns_99@yahoo.com

Kara Windler
719-930-6563 cell
DCE@unitedchurchla.org



Upcoming Events

- 5th Everything Christmas Sale
- 6th Advent Brown Bag Class
- 9th Congregational Meeting
All Church Potluck
Sangre de Cristo Concert
- 10th WCSS Potluck Dinner
- 13^h Advent Brown Bag Class
Truchas Christmas Party
- 15th Parent's Night Out
Santa Fe Desert Chorale
Concert
- 19th Aspen Ridge Gathering
- 20th Sombrillo Worship
- 23rd Caroling at Aspen Ridge
- 24th Christmas Eve Services
4pm & 11pm
- 25th Christmas Day
Church Office Closed
- 31st New Year's Eve

From the Pastor

Now that we have entered the season of Advent this year, let us take full advantage of this time throughout the first 23 days of December. This season that is recognized on the church calendar is for us. That's right! The church's long tradition of intentional recognition and reflection during Advent isn't following one of the Ten Commandments or any specific law or statute in the Torah. Jesus didn't say anything specific about following a four-week regiment before his birthday. And, as we know, it isn't a way for us to earn or deserve the gift of Christmas.

Advent is a time gifted to us so that we have the opportunity to be a little more prepared for what no one in the history of the Bible or world fully expected. Fact of the matter is; Christmas will come whether we're ready or not! And the impact of Jesus' birth in this world was and is greater and broader than what the biblical writers could comprehend—even decades after the fact!

Advent is a time established for us, to prepare ourselves for the benefits of expectation and the fulfillment of the Incarnation. Advent is a gift for the purpose of the joy of getting ready, and being ready, for God's love of this world with us in Jesus Christ.

Have an enjoyable Advent Season!

David

Advent Brown Bag Class
Thursday, December 6 & 13
12 noon – 1 p.m.
Graves Hall

Bring a lunch and join us the first two Thursdays of December in Graves Hall as we examine scripture passages connected to the Advent themes of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. This study will be led by David Elton.



Sunday, December 16th

You are invited to come and be a participant in a very special worship experience!

This service of Lessons and Carols is fashioned in the traditional British style, using elements such as scripture readings, prayers, and seasonal music – guiding us through the familiar story – from prophecy, the birth of the Christ Child, and beyond.

This Festival of Lessons and Carols (arranged by John Leavitt) will be presented by our **Combined Choirs**, accompanied by Sarah Kelly and Gretchen Amstutz, at 9:30am on Sunday, December 16th.

An added musical treat will be the **Handbell Quartet** (Beth and Tim Johnson, JoAnn Howell, and Faye Moss) who will provide the Offertory Music, as well as opening and closing the worship service

We hope you will plan to join us! Bring your neighbors, friends, and relatives as we prepare our hearts and minds in celebration of the beautiful season!



We are entering a season of giving that makes retailers happy, can be rewarding... and tiring to participate in... a complicated season full of busyness, parties, special foods, beautiful decorations all shouting out "Santa is coming to town and we better be nice" as we pile gifts under glittering trees.

We can however shout with loving words and deeds, "CHRIST IS COMING TO TOWN!" We can **Focus on Him** and on **LOVE**.

***Focus on God's gift of a babe for all of us. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son..."** John 3:1

***Focus on the good we see in each other because God sees the good in us.**



"Love your neighbor as yourself." Mk12:31

***Focus on the beauty of our relationships**, strive for **generosity, reconciliation and the gift of forgiveness** which gives the possibility of liberating us and the forgiven person... bringing peace.

"Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."

Lk 6:27

***Focus on the fact that Jesus was born in a stable to poor parents, reminding us that today many are still needy, lonely, ill, elderly, and/or grieving in this season of abundance, togetherness and joy.**



***Focus on being blessings to others directly and by example.**

"To anyone that has a special tie to a child; there is nothing we can give our children---no toy, no trip, no tuition---that is more important than the gift of our generosity to others. It is the one thing that will not and cannot be taken away from them." PRAYER: God, help me to seize an opportunity to be more generous today, as if young eyes were trained on me because...well, they are. Amen." (Martin B. Copenhaver, 365 Daily Devotions)

***Focus on striving to be like Jesus who said, "By myself I can do nothing."** John 5:30a. Know that whatever difficulty you have in loving others this Christmas; you do not have to do it alone. God's LOVE can and will shine through you.

On Behalf of all good imperfect relationships, Betty Smith

Alternative Giving

As many of you in the United Church know, the three Sundays before Christmas (the 2nd, 9th, and 16th) there will be tables set up in Fellowship Hall, with information regarding Alternative Giving options. Probably all of us have family members or friends for whom selecting a Christmas gift that's unique is almost impossible. "It ain't necessarily so..." The Missions and Service Board is suggesting (urging) you to consider giving a gift (on behalf of that individual who might be difficult to please) a gift-contribution to one or more of the four organizations described below. As was stated in the November Chimes, these are all life-giving projects that the Missions Board considers extremely worthwhile. At the tables, there will be more information and brochures available, as well as gift cards for you to fill out and send to your recipients. We are all aware of the poverty and desperate needs of so many people in the world, particularly when compared with the abundance in our lives. We would urge you to consider an Alternative Giving Project in your gift-giving celebration of Christmas this year.

Baby Box Project is a part of Mission Possible, one of our mission recipients that brings help and the Gospel to those in Eastern Europe who are marginalized and forgotten. The Baby Box Project presents packages to new moms and returning moms who have little resources. Because many of the mothers and families simply do not have the finances to purchase much needed baby items, such as diapers, wipes, clothes, Vaseline, etc., this organization assembles packages and distributes them—a baby shower in a box! Funds generated will sent be to Mission Possible, designated for assembling and distributing Baby Boxes.

Potters for Peace, www.pottersforpeace.com, is a U.S. based nonprofit dedicated to an inexpensive ceramic clean water system, made locally. PFP's founder, Ron Rivera (1943-2008), a Puerto Rican American potter and Latin American Peace Corps volunteer, settled in Nicaragua in 1988, perfecting ceramic pot filters to meet modern health standards while working with local potters to encourage their knowledge and the aesthetics of their ceramic heritage, thereby becoming a bridge to marketing in the developed world. A representative of Potters for Peace spoke to the church a few months, reinforcing how important this project for thousands without adequate clean-water sources.

World Vision, www.worldvisiongifts.com, a goat (\$75), a share of a cow (\$75), a share of a pig (\$50), a share of a sheep (\$50), 2 chickens (\$25) are some of the opportunities of support. When you give any animal through World Vision, a family will get much more than just the animal: breeding stock, offspring, training in animal care and agriculture, extra animals or dairy products to sell. **World Vision**, a Christian-Humanitarian organization, has been helping children and families worldwide since 1950. It is a great way of “helping people help themselves.”

A Peaceful Habitation This organization is involved in helping incarcerated women transition to “normal life” after prison. Obviously, it is a difficult chapter in the lives of these women to suddenly be thrust back into a world that can be cold and prejudiced. There are, understandably, great fears of how to support themselves, where to live, how to acquire all the basic needs that will be facing them, to say nothing of psychological needs. A Peaceful Habitation helps to give each woman the gift of knowing the love and forgiveness of Christ—to give them a sense of hope in a better future life.



Merry Christmas and many Blessings in 2019
to all of our United Church family and friends.
We will miss you!

We moved (next to our daughter):

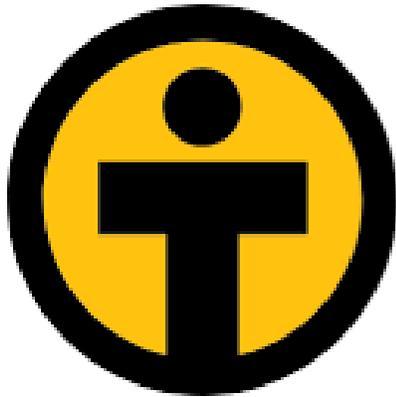
Sig and Andrea Gerstl
2925 Brogans Bluff Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

(719) 598-8050 or (505)662-7857

sig.gerstl@gmail.com & afgerstl@gmail.com



CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING



CWS

Church World Service

Church World Services will be the recipient of our CHRISTMAS EVE SPECIAL OFFERING. The Missions Board feels its focus in helping refugees is of primary importance, as well as its role in providing timely help in areas hit by disasters, such as the recent California fires. CWS has proven itself to have the resources to act quickly and efficiently at times of great need.



Monday Morning Women's Book Study

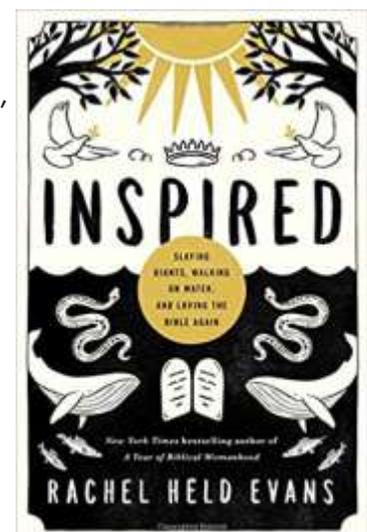
All women of the church and their friends are welcome to attend this group. The books for discussion are selected by the group.

The group will soon be starting "Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible again" by Rachel Held Evans.

Monday Mornings:

11:00 am – 12:30 pm

In the CE Lounge





Everything Christmas Sale



Wednesday December 5 2018



The United Church of Los Alamos



2525 Canyon Rd



Graves Hall



8:30-12:30



Gently used jewelry, Christmas lights, trees, ornaments, clothes, dishes, decorations, candles, cards and much more.



Proceeds benefit Missions in Northern New Mexico.



Contact Jean Picard, 672-3046 to help





WCSS

Women's Christmas Potluck

All women of the church are invited to the
Women's Christmas Potluck

Monday December 10, 2018

6 pm

Graves Hall, The United Church

Please bring a dish according to the first letter of your last name:

A-F Main Dish

G-M Dessert

N-Z Salad or side dish

Come join us for a festive evening of food, fun and fellowship.



WCSS News

There will be a short meeting at the end of the worship service on Sunday, December 9 for the purpose of nominating officers for WCSS. All women of the church are invited to attend. We will be nominating for the office of Chair, Secretary and Nominating Chair. Officers shall serve two year terms beginning in January 2019. Interested individuals should contact Jean Picard, 672-3046. Descriptions of officers are available from Jean Picard. Please prayerfully consider serving in 2019.

As of November 15, the Thrift Shop has taken in over \$50,000 in 2018. Great Job!! A meeting will be held on Friday, December 7 at 2:30 at the church to develop a WCSS Mission Budget for 2019.



Saturday, December 15th

Parents, have you ever wanted several hours during the Christmas Shopping season to simply get things done without driving yourself crazy? Does the thought of time spent doing as you wish make you giddy? Well...let us help make that Christmas dream a reality. On Saturday, December 15th beginning at 4:00pm we will have a Holiday Parents Night Out. How does this work? Simple. Bring your child/children to Craig Hall at 4:00pm, register them with us for the evening. Leave and go about your business until 8:00pm. We will have programming and food for your child/children and they will enjoy their time as well. (We will have NO food that is in anyway shape or form associated with nut allergies!) You can have time to shop, decorate or relax knowing that your child is in a safe spot having a good time. What do you need to do prior to December 15th? Simply call the Church Office to reserve your spot/spots for the evening. This will allow us to adequately plan for time with your children. There is no charge for the event but you may make a donation to the Youth Scholarship Fund which provides young people with assistance to attend Sonlight Camp and Mexico Mission. We look forward to seeing your youngster at Parents Night Out!

Truchas Pre-School Christmas Party

December 13th

One of the holiday events I look forward to each year is the annual Christmas Party at Truchas Pre-School. For well over 50 years our church has partnered with Truchas Pre-School to provide holiday cheer to its students whose ages range from 2-5 years old. We have a connection to Santa Claus through our always cheerful friend John Charles and we always have a great time distributing toys, mittens and warm winter hats to the children who participate in early childhood education at the daycare. This year, the date for the party has been set for Thursday, December 13th. We typically leave the church around 9am and return after lunch. If you are interested in making the trip up

to be a part of the Christmas Party we would warmly welcome your participation. Some folks take their own vehicles and make a fun day out of the event stopping in Chimayo on their way home. One way YOU can be of help to make the party a success is by donating items to be placed in gift bags for students. We will need a variety of things including: coloring books, crayons, balls of



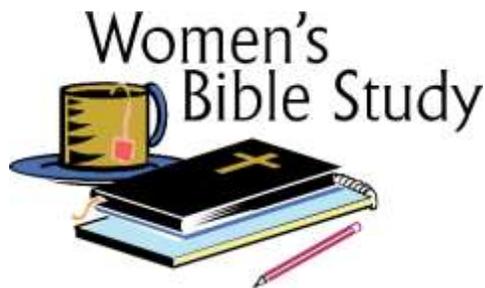
every type and size, toys appropriate for children ages 2-5 (we can fudge to 6 if that helps), gloves/mittens, age appropriate books, play dough. As the date draws near, we will have info on the number of children, ages and gender of the children. The items listed above can always be used at the daycare. We typically will have an older sibling or two so an extra toy or two for an older child is always welcome. If you would like to be a part of this special day of laughter and love, please contact Keith at the Church Office or Mary Venable who is our representative to the Mission and Service Board for Truchas Pre-School. We will begin collecting items on Sunday, December 2nd in Fellowship Hall. This wonderful legacy of joy begun by Virginia Stovall lives on through your generosity!

Friday Morning Women's Bible Study

@White Rock Presbyterian Church, Fridays 10am – Noon

We are largely comprised of women of the United Church
and are all welcome.

We spend time each week in study and, equally as important, in
fellowship and prayer.



For more information, please contact:

Kara Winder at the Church Office



Please continue to hold these persons in your prayers during the
month of December.

Xander Rigg ~ Lesley Olsher ~ Carol Sierk
Albert Romero (Cheryl Warren's Son-in-Law) ~ Norm Wilson



Wayne Hardie	01	Mark Mundt	16	Sarah Hayes	27
Randy Erickson	05	Mark Crawford	17	Jill Forman	30
Kathleen Logan	10	Nicholas Hayes	21	Nan Fife	31
Jen Schmierer	11	Anthony Puckett	24	Joan Upham	31
Larry Luck	13	Ed Van Eeckhout	25		



Men's Koffee Klatch

All men of The United Church are invited to coffee, refreshments, and fellowship! There are no lesson plans, no required or suggested topics, no devotions, no leaders, but there is a lot of fun! Hosting duties are passed around within the group. The wit and wisdom shared cover all sorts of topics and the discussions have proven extremely interesting, informative, and supportive. We laugh a lot! See you there!

Thursdays: 9:30 – 11:30 am in the CE Building Lounge.



Welcome to our Newest Members!

Tony Cecil & LeAnn Purtzer (with Iris Purtzer)



Weekly Word

Weekly Word email: If you would like to receive the email David sends out each week about the upcoming Sunday, please email or call the church office and tell us to add you to the "Weekly Word" list.



Don't forget when you do your holiday shopping you can support The United Church by shopping through AmazonSmile! The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to us. You can either search for The United Church of Los Alamos as your preferred charity or use this address: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/85-0119358>. Just remember, you must shop through AmazonSmile (if you accidentally visit regular old Amazon, they will usually remind you to use their "Smile" site).



United Cares

Our congregation filled (to the brim!) 19 boxes with items for the college and military members during the month of October. The packages were sent out and were received in early November. There were lots of snacks, office supplies, notes and cards for each person. The M&E Board thanks all that helped us with this caring project.

From one happy college student: "Thank you guys and the church soooooooooooooo much for the care package!! It was the best surprise!!!!!"



Thank You!!!

The M&E Board is THANKFUL for the many hands that made a wonderful Thanksgiving meal, Sunday November 18th. Thank you for participating in this fellowship by attending and bringing many delicious entrees that we shared together. We especially thank those that helped extra with the planning, setup, cleanup, and cooking.

December 2018

Subject to Change

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																					
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2525 Canyon Road

Los Alamos, NM 87544

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POSTMASTER PLEASE
DELIVER BETWEEN

November 29-
December 1



Merry Christmas!



*The United Church Staff wishes each of you God's hope, peace, joy and love this
Christmas Season and New Year!*

Cesar Queda

Keith

David Elton

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

Suzanne Johnson