



NEWSLETTER

OF THE

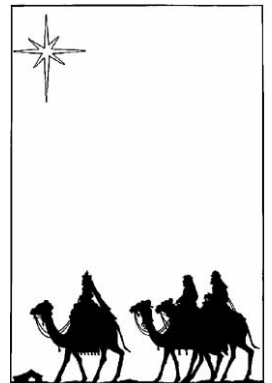
Estancia United Methodist
Church

600 Williams, Estancia, New Mexico

<http://www.estanciamethodist.org>



DECEMBER, 2015



Estancia United Methodist Church

www.EstanciaMethodist.org
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From the desk of Pastor Bonnie

Jesus is Born... with a Purpose!

At Christmas, we remember and celebrate the birth of the Savior. But many think of Jesus as merely a historical figure – not the Son of God, not the One who would save us from our sins. But there was GREAT PURPOSE in Jesus' birth. His purpose in coming was not to do whatever He wanted, but *to fulfill the Scriptures*. Fulfilling the Scriptures was one of the most powerful evidences of Jesus being the Jewish Messiah who would be a light to the

gentiles and the glory of Israel.

Roy Lessin writes: 'Think about who Jesus is, what He did, and what He said. It will help us to understand the importance Jesus placed upon the Scriptures. If the Scriptures were only man's words He would have rejected them; if they were lies He would have refuted them; if they were opinions He would have dismissed them; if they were irrelevant He would have ignored them.

But what did He do with the Scriptures and how did He respond to them? He validated them, honored them, taught them, preached them, obeyed them, fulfilled them, and affirmed them as words from His Father.

Jesus fully submitted Himself to the authority of the Scriptures through His words or His actions.'

Jesus' incarnation was according to the Scriptures, Matthew 1:22-23.

The place of His birth was according to the Scriptures, Matthew 2:5-6.

He was brought up in Nazareth according to the Scriptures, Matthew 2:23.

He taught in parables according to the Scriptures, Mark 4:11-12.

He did many miracles, yet many did not believe in Him, according to the Scriptures, John 12:37-38. He entered Jerusalem according to the Scriptures, Matthew 21:4-5. His was betrayed according to the Scriptures, Luke 17:12.

He was arrested and stood trial according to the Scriptures, Matthew 26:53-56.

His was pierced on the cross according to the Scriptures, John 19:36-37.

His garments were divided and a lot cast for His coat according to the Scriptures, John 19:23-24.

He died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 1 Corinthians 15:3.

We are believers in Jesus Christ, not according to hearsay, not according to a point of view, not according to

speculation, but according to the Scriptures: *These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. John 20:31 (NKJV)*

Speak T.R.U.T.H.:

How to Make Bible Stories Come Alive for Your Kids

by Jessica Wolstenholm

I've watched my children grow from a simple interest in Bible stories and characters to an understanding of bigger faith concepts that directly apply to their lives.

It's exciting to make Bible stories come alive for our kids so they can apply what they learn to their own lives.

But it can feel daunting to find ways to translate history into applicable encouragement.

When sharing the Bible, its stories and key concepts with my children, I'm following these simple steps that I pray will lead them to the T.R.U.T.H. while building their faith.

T – Tell the story.

R – Remind your child of their place in it.

U – Uncover big ideas that apply to their life.

T – Take action by modeling and showing your child how to model.

H – Hide it in their hearts through memorization and ongoing discussion.



Did you know that there's an easy way to remember the order and purpose of the candles lighted during advent?

The **first candle** is for the Old Testament **Prophets** who proclaimed **HOPE** in a Messiah who would come to save His people.

The **second candle** is for the **Herald Angel**, who told Mary, 'Fear not, **Peace** be with you!'

The **third candle** is for **Mary**, who expressed overwhelming **JOY** for her opportunity to be the handmaid of the Lord, giving birth to Jesus. Mary gets a **PINK** candle!

The **fourth candle** is for **Joseph**, who **LOVED** Mary, even when others said he should put her away.

The **white candle** stands for purity and holiness. It's the **Christ candle**, celebrating Jesus, God's perfect gift.



The "W" in Christmas

Author Unknown

Each December, I vowed to make Christmas a calm and peaceful experience. I had cut back on nonessential obligations, extensive card writing, endless baking, decorating, and even overspending. Yet still, I found myself exhausted, unable to appreciate the precious family moments, and of course, the true meaning of Christmas.

My son, Nicholas, was in kindergarten that year. It was an exciting season for a six-year-old. For weeks, he'd been memorizing songs for his school's "Winter Pageant."

I didn't have the heart to tell him I'd be working the night of the production. Unwilling to miss his shining moment, I spoke with his teacher. She assured me there'd be a dress rehearsal the morning of the presentation. All parents unable to attend that evening were welcome to come then. Fortunately, Nicholas seemed happy with the compromise.

So, the morning of the dress rehearsal, I filed in ten minutes early, found a spot on the cafeteria floor and sat down. Around the room, I saw several other parents quietly scampering to their seats. As I waited, the students were led into the room. Each class, accompanied by their teacher, sat cross-legged on the floor. Then, each group, one by one, rose to perform their song.

Because the public school system had long stopped referring to the holiday as "Christmas," I didn't expect anything other than fun, commercial entertainment, songs of reindeer, Santa Claus, snowflakes, and good cheer. So, when my son's class rose to sing, "Christmas Love," I was slightly taken aback by its bold title.

Nicholas was aglow, as were all of his classmates, adorned in fuzzy mittens, red sweaters, and bright snowcaps upon their heads.

Those in the front row, center stage held up large letters, one by one, to spell out the title of the song. As the class would sing "C is for Christmas," a child would hold up the letter C. Then, "H is for Happy," and on and on, until each child holding up his portion had presented the complete message, "Christmas Love."

The performance was going smoothly, until suddenly, we noticed her; a small, quiet, girl in the front row holding the letter "M" upside down, totally unaware her letter "M" appeared as a "W."

The audience of 1st through 6th graders snickered at this little one's mistake. But she had no idea they were laughing at her, so she stood tall, proudly holding her "W." Although many teachers tried to shush the children, the laughter continued until the last letter was raised, and we all saw it together. A hush came over the audience and eyes began to widen. In that instant, we understood the reason we were there, why we celebrated the holiday in the first place, why even in the chaos, there was a purpose for our festivities.

For when the last letter was held high, the message read loud and clear:

C H R I S T W A S L O V E .

And, I believe, He still is. Amazed in His presence... Humbled by His love.

May each of you have a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year as you reflect on His Amazing Love for us.



Is Your Definition of "Church Budget" Sabotaging Your Vision?

Posted on [August 11, 2015](#) by [Gina Calvert](#)

With the help of our friends at [PSK, CPA](#), an accounting firm that specializes in churches, we're talking about church budgets this month.

Most projects can benefit by starting with definitions, to make sure everyone is on the same page.

According to Verne Hargrave, one of the PSK partners, if you were to look for a definition of a budget, you might come across something like these:

- An **accounting device** used to plan and **control resources** of operational departments and divisions. (Warren, *Survey of Accounting*)
- **A plan of financial operation** consisting of an **estimate of proposed expenditures** for a given period and the proposed means of financing them. (Beams, Brozovsky & Shoulders, *Advanced Accounting*)
- One of the most **effective internal controls**... (ECFA, *Accounting & Financial Reporting for Christian Ministries*)

If you look at the bolded words in these definitions, you would notice a theme of *CONTROLS & CONSTRAINT*. Typically, that's how many people think about personal budgets in general...they're there to cramp our style. Come to think of it, that's how some view the Word of God.

Viewing the Word as a love-letter from God and not as a fun-busting rule book produces different results. In the same way, a similar shift in thinking on church budgets can completely change the outcome of our financial plans and execution of those plans.

So, let's look at some new definitions. Do you see the words that can help us make this shift?

- A strategic budget guides the church in allotting and spending its money in congruence with its deep, defining core values to accomplish a specific, biblical mission and a clear, compelling vision. It focuses on where God is taking the Church." (Malphurs & Stroope; *Money Matters in Church*)
- "A church budget is simply the vision of the church for the next twelve months expressed in dollars, rather than words." (Verne Hargrove, PSK)

Did you spot them? Perhaps you saw *core values*, *mission*, **vision** and *focus*. A budget concerned only with controlling things and not including the vision and mission of the church is not adequate. A church budget that focuses on where a church is going will have a completely different outcome.

Perhaps, a good starting point for your 2016 budget is to ask all stakeholders to define a church budget, because, *whether stated or not, whether conscious or not*, those definitions **will** affect the direction your budget takes your church.

And that may not match where God wants to take it.

Christmas and Lent Preparations



Rev. Brooks Ambos and Director of Lay Servant Ministries, Rev. John Millholland.



TRUNK OR TREAT!!

What a great night at the Estancia United Methodist Church. There were ghosts, witches, pirates, Thing 1, and even Princess Leah from Star Wars! It was amazing. Besides candy galore, there were hotdogs, chips and drinks for everyone. Some of our church members were very busy handing out food & candy. This event is aimed at the younger trick or treaters and begins at 5:30pm until 7:30pm. However, there were quite a few "older" folks enjoying the show. Thanks to the Widners for coordinating the event. Special treats inside the yard were s'mores over a fire, a cupcake walk and pumpkin decorating. If you missed it this year, put it on your calendar for 2016. It's called HALLOWEEN !














December



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Nov. 29 Estancia Day of Prayer First Sunday in Advent - Hope  Altar Color – Purple	Nov. 30 6:30pm Christmas Cantata Rehearsal	December 1 <div style="border: 2px solid purple; background-color: #c8e6c9; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Pastor Bonnie in California - Christmas with Family. </div>	2	3	4	5
6 Second Sunday in Advent - Peace  Altar Color – Purple	7 6:30pm Christmas Cantata Rehearsal	8	9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ <input type="checkbox"/> 11:30 Faith @ Work in ABQ <input type="checkbox"/> 1:30 Prayer @ Moore's (303 N Walker) 	10	11 <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 5px;"> Lay Servant School, First UMC ABQ 5-9pm Fri. & 8am-5pm Sat. </div>	12 10am - Cantata 'dress rehearsal' @ Manzano Mt. Arts bldg. 4pm - Gather in Estancia for the Christmas Parade!
13 Third Sunday in Advent - JOY 2pm Christmas Cantata in Mountainair Altar Color – Purple	14	15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 11am Pastor's meeting with the DS <input type="checkbox"/> 2-6pm Promised Land / Road-runner Food Bank 	16 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ	17 11-2 AMA – Pastor Bonnie	18	19
20 Fourth Sunday in Advent - Love  Altar Color – Purple	21	22	23 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ	24 Christmas Eve - 6pm Candlelight Worship in Estancia 	25 Jesus is Born! 	26
27 First Sunday of Christmas Altar Color – White	28	29	30 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ	31 		



Sent with a prayer to:



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11 Simple ways to get into God's Word daily with your Kids

No matter the time of year, reading the Bible is fun and exciting and even more so when you shake it up with these suggestions!

- Read aloud before or during a meal to develop a daily habit of getting into the Bible.
- Keep a perpetual devotional calendar or verse of the day calendar on the kitchen counter or dining room table.
- Read on rest periods. Pausing for a few moments of rest during an activity is a great time to enjoy God's Word.
- Have an old-fashioned Sword drill. Call out the book, chapter and verse and have the kids search their Bibles to find it. First one to find it begins reading it.
- Do a word search on your daily Bible reading passage. Read the passage before your children, then write a list of words for them to find and check off the list as they read. This exercise provides the opportunity for them to slow down and reflect on the passage a little more.
- Choose a phrase or sentence from the passage and make a list of as many words as possible in five minutes.
- Pick up a devotional you haven't finished and choose a random reading.
- Listen to Bible verses in song as you ride in the car.
- Play a memory verse popcorn game. Have each person take a turn and as a group, say as many verses as you can in 6-8 minutes. Set a timer and keep count of the verses.
- Choose a focus word or use your child's name and find a Bible verse that begins with each letter.
- Check out Bible apps for kids and enjoy God's Word on digital devices.

