NEWSLETTER

OF THE
Estancia United Methodist Church
600 Williams, Estancia, New Mexico
http://www.estanciamethodist.org

JANUARY, 2015

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Your Church Staff

Chairperson of Church Council	Melanie Chavez
Recording Secretary	Vickie Coburn
Organist	Morrow Hall
Lay Member of the Annual Conference	Elaine Darnell
Lay Leader	Elaine Darnell
Chairperson: Board of Trustees	Bill Simms
Worship Team Leader	Julie Griffo
Education	Julie Griffo & Melanie Chavez
Care and Outreach Team Leader	Barbara Simms
Chairperson: Pastor Parish Relations	Nick Griffo
Food Pantry	Butch McGee
Financial Secretary	Vickie Coburn
Church Treasurer	Vickie Coburn
President UMM	Nick Griffo
McMurry Rep	Julie Griffo
Sacramento Camp Rep	Melanie Chavez

Bishop: Bishop W. Earl Bledsoe
District Superintendent: Rev. James E. Large
Visit our website at:

http://www.estanciamethodist.org

Sunday Worship 9:00 AM

From the Desk of Pastor Bonnie…

Happy New Year ! The Calendar on the wall begins anew with January 1 – but the new Christian year began with the season of Advent. As Christians, we're already a whole month into the new year!

Each Advent, Christians throughout the world begin a new year by reading the SAME scriptures – the Old Testament prophecies about the coming of Jesus and the New Testament stories of His birth. We all start off on the same foot, so to speak; because Scripture speaks to us all – all persons, all races, all cultures, all nations, all circumstances throughout all ages with a common

Message of HOPE:

God has triumphed through the birth of our Savior, who is Christ the Lord!

The Herald Angel has proclaimed: "Fear not, for I bring good news…" And the goodness of God transcends the space-time continuum to touch our hearts in the here and now. Christ is alive and well, living securely within YOUR heart! God is still in charge – no matter what our earthly circumstance. And He reminds us once again, that…

- He has a plan for us
- He loves us
- He goes before us
- He strengthens us
- He guides us
- He delights in us
- He will always be with us
- He provides for us
- He will answer us
- He wants to bless us
- He will give us rest
- He has everything we need because He is everything we could ever ask for.

*Now **THAT's** the way to start a NEW YEAR… AMEN !!*

Pastor Bonnie

Healthy Church Initiative

for more info http://www.nmconfum.com/Equipping/Five-Practices/

The leadership of Estancia and Mountainair UMCs recently approved participation in the Healthy Church Initiative process offered by the Office of Congregational Vitality in the New Mexico Annual Conference. What is church ***vitality*** & why would we seek it? I looked up the word vitality & found… **vi·tal·i·ty (noun):**

1. Liveliness: abundant physical and mental energy, usually combined with a wholehearted and joyous approach to situations and activities… YES, I think we want that!
2. Durability: the ability of something to live and grow or to continue in existence, e.g. the vitality of cherished traditions… YES, I think we want that, too!
3. Vital principle: philosophy the nonmaterial force that, according to vitalism, distinguishes the living from the nonliving… AND we certainly want our churches to be ALIVE !

This is what we desire for our churches and for our lives in Christ!

As designed by the Conference, the Healthy Church Initiative Process focuses on:

1. Leadership Development - The pastor and a group of lay members commit to three Sunday afternoon leadership development sessions spread over six months in which the participants will study and learn together about the steps needed to be a vital, healthy church. We will be meeting in February, April, and June – specific dates TBD. You are welcome to attend.

2. Church Self-Study Assessment: - Each church will complete a self-study while participating in the six-month leadership development sessions.

3. Weekend Consultation – After the completion of the leadership development sessions, a two to three person team will spend a weekend at our churches to:

- interview church members
- lead a Saturday congregational workshop on church vitality
- prepare and present a full written report on Sunday during each church's worship service, naming the church's strengths, areas for improvement, and strategic recommendations for becoming a healthier, more vital church.

4. Congregational Discernment - The congregation holds a meeting within 30 days after the consultation weekend to discuss the report from the consultation team and decide whether or not to move forward with the recommendations.

5. Implementation of Recommendations – If the church decides to accept the recommendations of the consultation team, then each church will prepare a plan for implementing the consultation team's recommendations.

6. Monthly On-Site and/or Phone Coaching – A coach will talk with the pastor monthly to further develop and implement the action plan. The coach may also conduct church workshops as needed.

What can a congregation expect to get from participating in the Healthy Church Initiative?

- **Focus** on what is essential to being a relevant, passionate, life changing church.
- **Increased momentum and enthusiasm** for embracing the changes needed to be more effective in ministry, outreach, faith development, and financial stability.

What can each person expect to get out of participating in the Health Church Initiative?

- Personal spiritual growth
- Development and enhancement of leadership skills in a church setting
- Increased ability to be more effective at partnering with God to share the good news of God's grace and saving love through Jesus Christ.

We'll begin in January by reading 2 books by Rev. Robert Farr:

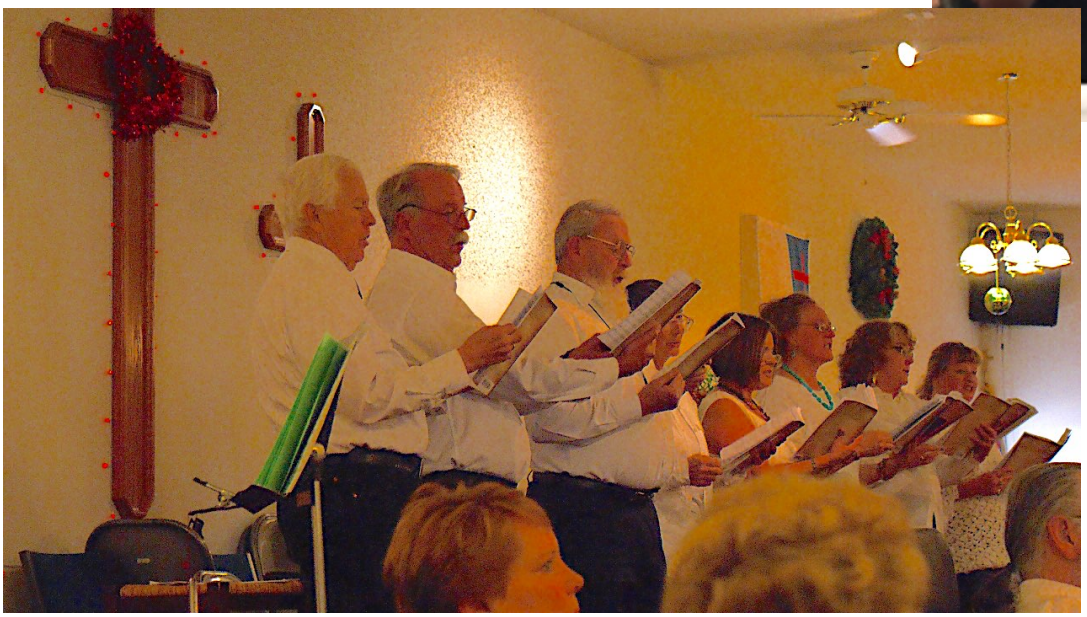
- ***Renovate or Die***
- ***Get Their Name***

I hope you'll join this effort to help improve our churches' vitality. Everyone is invited to buy the books and participate in conversations about the future of Estancia and Mountainair UMCs. Periodic process updates will be provided via newsletters and bulletins, **so *please stay tuned!***

Overheard: I was thinking about how people seem to read the Bible a whole lot more as they get older. Then it dawned on me. They're cramming for their finals! As for me, I'm just hoping God grades on the curve.

On December 14, the Manzano Mountain Community Chorus presented their annual cantata, Canticles in Candlelight. Except for a certain someone fainting in the middle of "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus", it went well. We think there were about 175 people in attendance. Participants included Jon and Joanie Shiveley, Kent Potter, Patty Mahoney, Bonnie Hardesty (flute), Anna Hopping, Amy Downey, Marcia Fitzner, Jan Cool, Ross Carder, Keith Loepere, and Elaine Ramsey.

- Patty Mahoney



Let's Start a Revolution…

Have you seen that ad on TV where an adult is sitting with 4 children in a classroom? The adult asks, "Is it better to be more reliable or less reliable?" All the children immediately reply, "MORE RELIABLE!" Then one child adds, **"Because then you can keep your New Year's REVOLUTION."** In this age where RESOLUTIONS are forgotten almost as quickly as they're made; perhaps a New Year's REVOLUTION is a better idea! Jesus came into the world to fulfill what was spoken by the prophets, to serve as our example of perfect obedience to God, to give His own life as atonement for OUR sins… nothing short of an earth shattering REVOLUTION, if you ask me.

A friend of mine recently shared Christian author Jim Wallis's New Year's Resolutions (abbreviated, below) with me. **Do you think Estancia and Mountainair United Methodist Churches could start a REVOLUTION of Christian Faith in Action if we earnestly and eagerly pursued these Five Spiritual Resolutions for 2015?**

1. Return to the gospel. Gordon Cosby, the founder and pastor of The Church of the Saviour in Washington, D.C., passed away in early 2013. In his last sermon - from his death bed - he spoke of Jesus' "clear and frightening statement that the last shall be first and the first shall be last." What constitutes a good life, a successful life in our culture is exactly the opposite of that to which Jesus calls us. Success for Christians is always returning to the gospel that turns the world upside down.

2. Find the courage to speak the gospel. Will Campbell, the iconic southern preacher and writer also passed this year. He would often finish his sermons in big, rich churches by telling them to *sell their buildings and give the money to the poor.* Will regularly surprised and irritated people on all sides of the political and theological spectrum, by simply speaking the gospel as he saw it in the scriptures.

3. Never forget the hope of the gospel. "It always seems impossible until it is done," said Mandela. This man knew oppression like few others, and his 27 years in prison formed him spiritually into the leader he became. He not only taught us the ways of justice, but also the way of forgiveness — and that is the gospel that few revolutionary leaders ever learn. "Hope is believing, in spite of the evidence, and then watching the evidence change."

4. Remember that gratitude is the best response to the gospel. When I got a diagnosis of cancer, my first very human response was "Why me and why now?" But after finally accepting what was happening to me, being loved by my family, prayed for by my friends, and cared for by my wonderful doctors, the frustration and denial turned to gratitude. I was extremely fortunate that my doctors found the cancer early and removed it completely. It has made me more thankful and grateful than ever before!

5. Smile and laugh more often. Gratitude, humility, and fun can make *us* more human as we try to make the world more human. A sign I now have up on my bookshelf, at eye level in my home office where I often work, simply says, "Don't Postpone Joy." I want to increasingly learn to enjoy the world while trying to change it. And perhaps doing both makes God smile too.

Jim Wallis *is president of Sojourners. His book,* On God's Side: What Religion Forgets and Politics Hasn't Learned About Serving the Common Good*, is now available.*

A New Year's Prayer

Lord, as a new year begins, we come to You and ask for Your blessing.
We pray that you would give us joy to fill our days, peace to fill our hearts, and love to fill our lives.
Thank You for the plans You have for us in this new year.
We wait in anticipation to see all You will do!

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Overheard: Employment application blanks always ask who is to be called in case of an emergency. I think you should write, 'An ambulance.'

Thank You Church:

This year's UMC #GivingTuesday

raised more than $2.5M

Pastor Bonnie hosted Tanzanian Missionaries Ngoy and Umba Kalangwa at Sabbath House during November this year while they itinerated in the Albuquerque area. Here's how last year's **#GivingTuesday** contributions benefitted their ministries:

Ngoy Kalangwa established and now oversees an income-generating sewing project at Emmanuel Center for Women and Children.

Church leader training, one of Umba Kalangwa's ministries in Mwanza Tanzania was made possible through UMC #GivingTuesday donations!

Last year's #GivingTuesday gifts of nearly $15,000 carried many the Kalangwa's Tanzanian ministries for almost the whole year! The donations allowed them to:

- Conduct lay leader training for all of our churches.
- Launch the Emmanuel Center for Women and Children, Advance #3021924, which is already impacting lives.
- Finish construction on Ingrichini United Methodist Church and begin foundation work at Mtana United Methodist Church through funds received through Church Construction and Development Advance #3021923.
- Kick-start the process of establishing a college in Tanzania, made possible through donations to Wesley College and Education Center, Advance #3021925. This also included the hiring of an engineer to design a master architectural plan.

It was such a blessing to have a budget for their ministries, and for the first time, really dig into some new areas because they had the funds to see things through to completion. They hope to see those same benefits once again.

Construction of Ingrichini United Methodist Church was completed, thanks to gifts from generous donors.

In 2015, they are hoping to receive sponsorship for children's education; sponsorship for women in empowerment programs through the Emmanuel Center; expand the land for Wesley College; see more church homes completed, and equip church leaders to do development themselves in their own villages.

ESTANCIA CHRISTMAS LIGHT PARADE

Butch McGee hooked up two trailers to his Tractor, covered them with Christmas lights, Luminarias, and Christmas scenes, and joined the parade. Rumor has it that our Methodist Church entry won first place, but we have not seen the paperwork yet! We did it again on Dec. 21st for our Christmas Caroling trip around Estancia to many of the shut ins.

The Robert Chavez Family participating in the Advent candle lighting service

Pastor Bonnie telling **Butch** that even when things don't go as planned or the lights go out on the Christmas float, God is always with us and loves us.

On December 14, 2014, **Shawn Hart** came to visit and told everyone that as a young boy he grew up in the Estancia church. When he was older and driving by Moriarty, he had a calling from God telling him he needed to call home (The Estancia church). He had to come and preach the gospel not only to what he calls home but to go to Africa and spread the good news there. He said he was to tell everyone that God has the authority over our life and that God is always with us. (Matthew 28:18)

Baby Reagan Lavon Widner. Her first visits to church.

We are all children
of God!

Kings Kids
Dec 21st

The Dec.21st
Sunday Morning
Message was a
Spontaneous
Christmas
Pageant!

Pencil it in! Get ready for February:

- Estancia Ad Council 2/1 – Discuss Summer Youth Programs
- Estancia resumes Wed. Family Nights 2/4 @ 4:30-6:30pm
- Lay Leadership and Pastor @ Rev. Bob Farr retreat, SMA 2/6 - 2/7
- Healthy Church Initiative Kick Off, meeting date TBD
- Valentine's Day 2/14 Flash Mob… details TBD
- Promised Land Food Distribution @ MtAir, 3pm 2/17

Welcome 2015 !

Mark Your January Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 **Epiphany Sunday** ☐ Wesley Covenant Services at both Churches ☐ 1pm Ad Council in Estancia Altar Color - White or Gold	5 6pm Pastor's Bible Study, ABQ	6 ☐ 11am Pastor's meeting, ABQ ☐ 1pm Wesley Study, ABQ	7 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ **No** Family night in Estancia	8	9	10 All Day-Prison Ministry, Grants
11 **Baptism of the Lord Sunday** Altar Color - White or Gold	12 6pm Pastor's Bible Study, ABQ	13 1pm Wesley Study, ABQ	14 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ **No** Family night in Estancia	15 **Year-end Statistical Reports Due !**	16 6pm Emmaus Community Gathering, ABQ	17
18 **Special Giving – Human Relations Sunday** ☐ Noon-Potluck and Ad Council, MtAir Altar Color - Green	19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day 6pm Pastor's Bible Study, ABQ	20 ☐ 1pm Wesley Study, ABQ ☐ 3pm Promised Land / Road-runner Food Bank, MtAir	21 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ **No** Family night in Estancia	22	23	24
25 **Ecumenical Sunday - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** Altar Color - Green	26 6pm Pastor's Bible Study, ABQ	27 1pm Wesley Study, ABQ	28 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ **No** Family night in Estancia	29	30	31

Sent with a prayer to:

Estancia United Methodist Church
P. O. Box 126
Estancia, NM 87016

For the under age 40 crowd ONLY…
Can you tell me what's in this photo?
First caller (271-0486) with the correct answer gets recognition in next month's newsletter

December– No One called in the Answer to what was happening in THIS picture…

<u>It's the Bunny Hop</u> !

Better luck in January.

Overheard: Lord, keep your arm around my shoulder and your hand over my mouth.