



NEWSLETTER

OF THE

Estancia United Methodist Church

600 Williams, Estancia, New Mexico

<http://www.estanciamethodist.org>

*Happy
New Year*



JANUARY, 2019

Estancia United Methodist Church

www.EstanciaMethodist.org

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FROM THE PASTOR'S KEYBOARD

As we rushed headlong into 2019 we were supposed to pause and resolve to make it a “better” year. We commit to more exercise, healthier food, less food, less weight, more time with family, more time reading the Bible, more time praying, quit smoking again, quit putting off projects that were on this same list last year, invite someone to church, drive like a Christian should, be a better friend, daughter, son etc., write/call/email that person and so on.

But depending upon which “expert” and from which article from which year you choose to believe, from 33 to 80 percent of us will give up before Valentine’s Day. Never mind how wildly these “facts” differ, they’re on the Internet so they must be true. From failed resolutions to failed marriages, failed governments, failed bridges and buildings, and failed attempts to obey God, as a species we don’t have a great track record when it comes to making good on long term ideas and commitments.

Thank God (no, really, THANKS BE TO GOD!) that we don’t have to depend on our dependability to earn our way into Heaven. We are loved by God who is the same yesterday, today and forever, and will *never* leave us or forsake us. Imagine how secure, how *insecure* our salvation would be if we had to earn it by being “good.” That is not God’s standard- *perfect* is the standard, and it is certainly no less true now than when it was written, “ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (emphasis mine) Please also note that Paul didn’t use “fallen” as something that happened in the past, but maybe we’re doing better now. I fall short. You fall short. Hopefully not every day, although that is certainly possible. It’s not that we don’t understand how important it is, in the same way that we understand that fat-coated hearts and arteries stop working (and that’s bad!), and that tobacco-poisoned bodies stop working. What we know and what we do about it frequently just don’t make sense.

The “good” news, which is so fantastic that it exceeds the ability of words to describe, is that our failure doesn’t doom us. It only took one perfect sacrifice to grant all of us entry into eternal life. We honor that sacrifice whenever we partake in remembrance of Him.

Have a blessed new year.

-Pastor Keith



Happy New Year

New Year's Resolutions

What will your New Year's resolution be? As hard as I try, I rarely keep mine longer than a month or two. I wonder if most of us are the same. I recently read an article that may help us keep our resolutions. Below are excerpts from the ***New Year's Resolutions*** by **Dr. Ralph Wilson** (<http://www.joyfulheart.com/new-years/new-year.htm>). I removed portions of the text for the sake of the newsletter. See the link above for the full article.

"First, we all need changes. Some we find very hard to admit to ourselves. I've heard people who say, "I have no regrets about my life. If I had it to do over, I'd do it the same way again." But that attitude is way too blind and self-serving so far as I'm concerned. There is great power in confession--to ourselves, to God, to others. Owning up to our failures is the first, painful step on the road to something better.

Second, when we change calendars is a good time for reassessment. How did last year go? What do I want to do differently this year? This time of year always reminds me of a passage of scripture, better understood by farmers than suburbanites: "Break up your unplowed ground, and do not sow among thorns" (Jer 4:3). It makes sense. The more land you put into production, the more prosperous you'll be.

Third, New Year's is an excellent time for mid-course corrections. Sure, we might fail in what we set out to do, but if we fail to plan, the old saw goes, then we plan to fail. Failure is not the end. For the person who determines to learn from it, failure is a friend.

Fourth, New Year's is a time to learn to rely more heavily on the grace of God. Now I've met a few self-made men and women and so have you, but so often these people seem proud and driven. There is another way: beginning to trust in God's help. One more secret from the Apostle Paul: "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength," he said (Phil 4:13, NIV). And God's strength saw him through a lot--through pain, through joy, and through accomplishment.

If this last year, you didn't practice relying on the Lord as much as you should have, there is no time like the present to make a New Year's resolution. In fact, why don't you say a short prayer right now--use these words if you like: "Dear God, I want the new year to be different for me." Now spell out in prayer some of the changes you'd like to see. And close this way: "Lord Jesus, I know that I'm going to need a lot of help for this. So right now I place myself in your hands. Help me to receive Your strength. Amen." Good. Now you've got a much better chance of a Happy New Year."

-Melanie Chavez





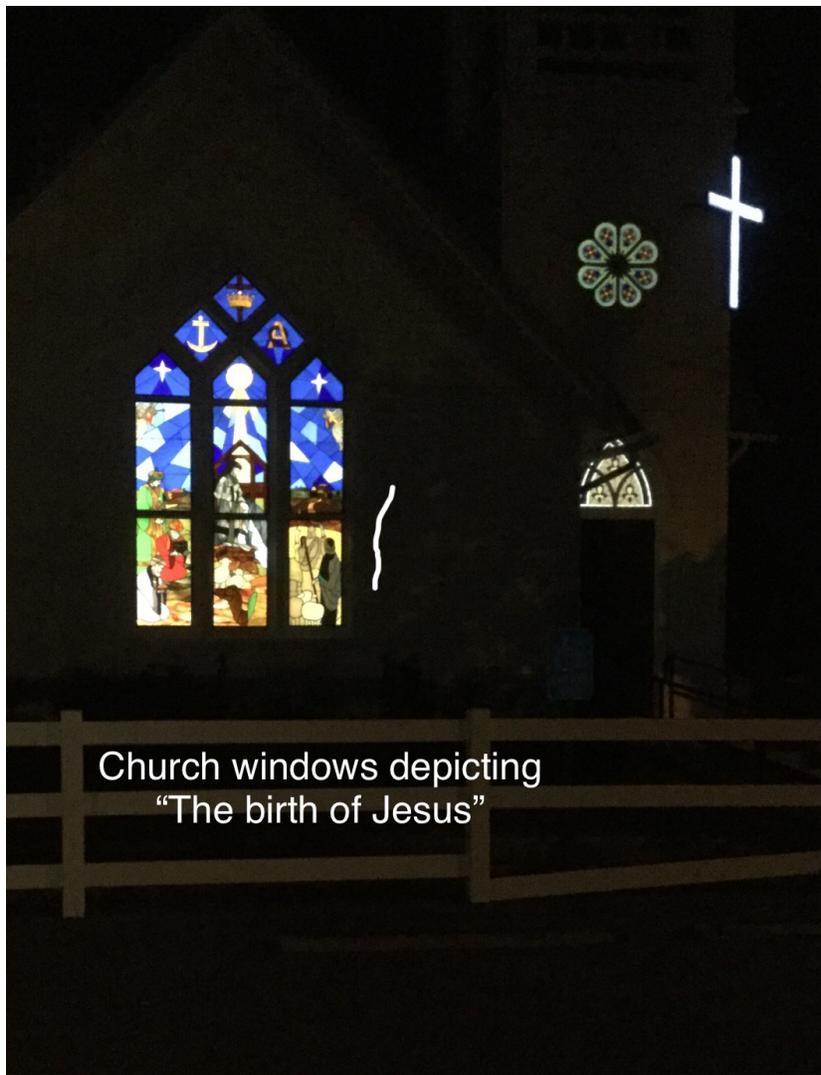
The Chavez family lighting the Advent wreath

2018 State of the Church Report

The 2018 State of the Church Report, *The Mission is Yet Alive*, has been released. It provides a broad overview of global membership trends and programs of and issues facing the worldwide body of the people called Methodists. The 22-page report is a collaborative effort of The Connectional Table and United Methodist Communications, with statistical data provided by the General Council on Finance and Administration. The report is available online at UMC.org/SOTC, with a printed copy available for review at the church.

From 2006 to 2016, declines in membership in the US and Europe were more than offset by increases in Africa and the Philippines. Overall there was an increase of almost 1.4 million members, or 12 percent. The report includes information on the Four Areas of Focus first adopted by the 2008 General Conference, as well as a look at The Way Forward and the issues to be addressed by the General Conference in February, 2019.

- Pastor Keith



Church windows depicting
"The birth of Jesus"



Christmas lights at the church



FROM JULIE & NICK

Greetings from Colorado!

Our hearts are filled with thanksgiving for all that God is doing in our lives. We are mostly unpacked, and the beautiful house God provided us feels like home. Nick started his training with Colorado Dept. of Corrections at the beginning of December. He will be a corrections officer at a facility just outside of town - less than a 5 minute drive from our house. I plan to look for a job after the holidays. No sense rushing into anything!

God also sent us buyers for our Estancia house. We closed on the sale last week! What a relief that is.

The Methodist church here has been very welcoming. We've been attending services and a couple of Bible studies. Plus, we've already become involved in some of their ministries. We sure do miss Keith's preaching and Morrow's music though! And, of course, we miss all of you - our dear family. We think of you often, and you are in our prayers.

May God pour His blessings on each of you through the coming year.

Julie and Nick Griffo



Christmas Cantata

Manzano Arts Council hosted the annual Christmas Cantata held in Mountainair on December 16, 2018. It was well attended and enjoyed by everyone. Many thanks to all those who worked so hard to make it happen!

JANUARY 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 NEW YEARS DAY	2 Women's Bible Study 6:00 - 7:00 PM	3	4	5
6 Worship 9:00 AM Mtair 11:00 AM	7	8	9 Women's Bible Study 6:00 - 7:00 PM	10	11	12
13 Worship 9:00 AM Mtair 11:00 AM	14	15	16 Women's Bible Study 6:00 - 7:00 PM	17	18	19 Men's Breakfast 8:00 AM
20 Worship 9:00 AM Mtair 11:00 AM	21 ECHO Food Distribution 9:00 to 1:00	22	23 Women's Bible Study 6:00 - 7:00 PM	24	25	26
27 Worship 9:00 AM Mtair 11:00 AM	28	29	30 Women's Bible Study 6:00 - 7:00 PM	31		



Sent with a prayer to:

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

GOD BECAME MAN

*He gave up his place with God
and made himself nothing. He was born to be
a man and became like a servant.*

PHILIPPIANS 2:7

It all happened in a most remarkable
moment...a moment like no other.

God became a man. Divinity arrived. Heaven
opened herself and placed her most precious one in
a human womb.

The omnipotent, in one instant, became flesh
and blood. The one who was larger than the universe
became a microscopic embryo. And he who sustains
the world with a word chose to be dependent upon
the nourishment of a young girl.

God Came Near

Max Lucado

+

-Contributed by Alma Wimsatt