

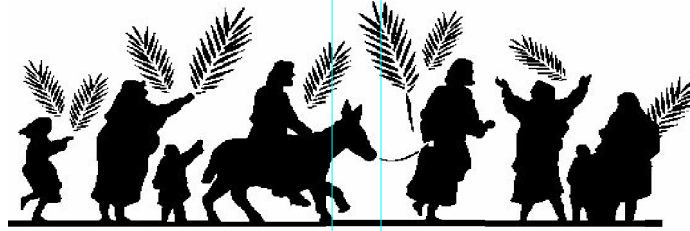


Dave Blackwell, Pastor

P. O. Box 378, Estancia, NM 87016
Church Office 384-5215
Parsonage 384-2710
email: methods@ix.netcom.com



Sunday Worship 9:00 AM
Nursery Provided
Church School 10:30 AM



Newsletter - March, 1999

MARCH WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Lay Assist.: Marilyn Seddon
Ushers: Renee Richards and Shellee Stewart
Greeters: Larry and Waynette Burnett
Acolytes: Ashlea Stewart Jett Sharp

YOUTH SCRIPTURE READERS:

March 14: Leah Jo Hughes
March 21: Erinmarie Blackwell
March 28: Ashley Welch

Special Music

UNIVERSITY JSIC:

March 21, (UMW) Sunday, **The Zabalzas**
March 28, Children's Choir; and duet by **Ethel Floyd** and **Morrow Hall**.
April 4, Sunrise Service, **Mike Calhoon**.
April 4, the Easter Cantata.
April 11, Duet by **Karla Patterson** and **Morrow Hall**.

MARCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Trustees: Sun., Mar. 14, 10:30.
Finance: Sun., Mar. 14, 1:00.
Pastor/Parish: Sun., Mar. 14, 5:30.
Care & Outreach: Mon., Mar. 22, 10:00.
U.M.W. Tues., Mar. 23, Noon.
Administrative Council: Sun., April 11, 1:00.
Nominations: Sun., April 18, 1:00.

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m. March 24 & April 7, 21
Alternate Wednesdays at 3:30 March 31 & April 14, 28

LENTEN CLASSES

On Wednesday mornings, 10:00
On Thursday nights, 7:00

EASTER CANTATA PRACTICE

continues on Tuesday nights and Sunday mornings before church. The Easter Cantata, "No Greater Love" is a beautiful story of the life, death, and resurrection. God will definitely be glorified as the choir continues to practice for our Easter service, under the direction of **Charles Hughes** and accompaniment by **Morrow Hall**.



Cantata Rehearsal

ESTANCIA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH HOLY WEEK ACTIVITIES

Palm Sunday, March 28:

The children's choir will be performing! Don't eat before you come to church (Or maybe just eat a little.) A Palm Sunday breakfast will be served after the worship

service. Quiche, bacon, sweet rolls, fruit, biscuits, drink all for: \$4.00 for adults, \$2.50 for kiddos. The funds go toward the Logos program for training, supplies, etc. Come get some good eats for a good cause.

Maundy Thursday, April 1, 7:00 PM:

A Seder dinner will be provided in the Education Building. Jewish passover history, readings, and other interesting events will be provided that evening. Come and enjoy this unique time.

Good Friday, April 2.

Two services will be provided at the church, 1:00 pm. and 7:00 pm.

Easter Sunrise Service, **April 4, 7:00 a.m.**

(Daylight Savings Time)
This will be held at the Assembly of God church. Several selections of special music will be given, including **Mike Calhoon** from our church. **Pastor Dave** will be preaching. Breakfast will be served afterwards.



Easter Service Cantata here at 9:00 am. The Choir will be performing the Cantata, "No Greater Love.": Come early for a good seat to witness a beautiful service.

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

On Sunday, March 21 at 6:00 pm

The 1st Baptist Church will be hosting members of the Baptist Neighborhood Center of Albuquerque who will be providing a puppet show like you've never seen. The group is called "God's SPORTS", and Brother Frank has assured me the show is like the Muppets with some Gospel music set to the 50s and 60s. This is our opportunity to see this unique show before they go on tour throughout the country. A love offering will be taken. Following the show, there will be an ice cream social. One y Let's go see t



ON SUNDAY, APRIL 11, at 3:00 pm

The 1st Baptist Church will also be hosting The **Hoffmantown Baptist Church Choir**. They are known all over Albuquerque and have performed in this valley, too. There will also be special songs presented by members of the Estancia churches. And, the congregation will get to sing along with the choir on some of the

selections. We will receive a great blessing. Mark it down on your calendars now.

Confirmation Sunday, Pentecost, May 23, 5 p.m.

This will be a special night service for our confirmands and families and friends. But, we hope the church takes special note of this opportunity to witness ~~many children giving their lives~~ to Jesus Christ.

What a Great Time We Had!!

The Country Gospel Sunday and Potluck was a fantastic event. Thanks to **Cyle and Sharla Sharp** for inviting and hosting **R.W. Hampton, Phil Bob Borman, Donnie Cates, and Butch Willoughby** to entertain over 130 people who were at the church from all over the valley. The food was terrific, too. ~~Many thanks also to those who got the kitchen and the "dining room" prepared so quickly and cleaned up afterwards.~~

Our Church Family is growing

• **Ann and Cheryle Coburn** rejoined on 1/10/99, and it's great to have them back.

• **Shellee Stewart** joined on 1/24/99, and **Ashlea Stewart** was baptized on the same day. And

Josh Stewart is in the confirmation class.

• **Mike and Renae Calhoon** joined on 2/14/99 along with their children, **Mikayla** and **Leanne**.

We have already been blessed by the gifts and graces of these "new" families.



ATTENDANCE

Weekly attendance is getting stronger (pun intended).

January's average was almost **70** per Sunday.

February's average was almost **68** per Sunday. Ash

Wednesday had **20** in attendance. The Country

Gospel Concert drew **133!**



Confirmation

Who are the confirmands, and what have they been doing?

This year there are 10 confirmands, 2 more than **Pastor Dave** had during 1997 and 1998. They have been exploring the Bible, doing some

memorization and dramatic reading. By the time the newsletter gets released, they will have been in four sessions with five more to go concerning prayer, peer pressure, and the power of Christ. The confirmation ceremony is on May 23, 5:00 p.m. When you see these great kids, encourage them. Be in constant prayer for:

Aden Corliss
Alice Daniel
Rebekah Friis
Jessica Gorum
Dominic Griffio

Chris Hughes
Audra Long
Katie Rogers
Laura Sanchez
Josh Stewart

What makes it work

A kid, upon receiving a crucifix, turned it upside down, back and forth, and in exasperation asked, "How do you make this thing work?" The crucifixion is what makes life work over death.

-Homiletics

FAMILIES IN GRIEF:

- **The Creamers** for **Angela's** dad, **Tommy Lewis**.
- **The Sanchez'** for **Tony's** grandfather, **Vences**.
- **The Wilson's** for **Susan's** dad, **Randy Mayhew**.

All of these deaths have occurred recently. We can proclaim our faith as Christians, but God knows that the parting of loved ones hurts. Remember to be in prayer for these brothers and sisters who stand hurting in the valley of loss while lifting up their families to our God.

Pastor Dave has been receiving grief counseling materials and would like to start a grief support group some time after Easter. Please know that any who are still grieving, regardless of the time since the death of a loved one, is invited. He is considering days and times that would be most beneficial to a greater number of people.

The Lenten Bible Study. . .

has had some good crowds and a lot of spirited participation. Pastor Dave welcomes this opportunity to teach and share with him and each other the meaning of Christ's sacrifice for us. He would like to do a spring/summer Bible study before he goes to school. If you have ideas, call him.

Finance Committee Update

The first three of six Spring Dinner Bashes were held this past Saturday, March 6th. From all reports, those attending really enjoyed the opportunity to become more acquainted with one another and the meals were delicious! The attendees were generous in their contributions to the church, to date, \$477 has been raised!

A very special *thank you* to the hostesses for opening up their homes and preparing such wonderful meals! Host and hostesses for the dinners on March 6th were: **Roy and Linda McConkey, Tish McMichael and Elaine Darnell, and Lacy, Alice, and Rose Daniel**. The three dinners on March 13th were hosted by **Bill and Barbara Simms, Chris Rogers, Corrine McNatt, and Cindy Littlefield, and Ethel Floyd and Marcella Reynolds**.

Many thanks to **John Hughes** and **Cyle** and **Jett Sharp** for the handicap parking signs on the east parking lot!!

The Difference

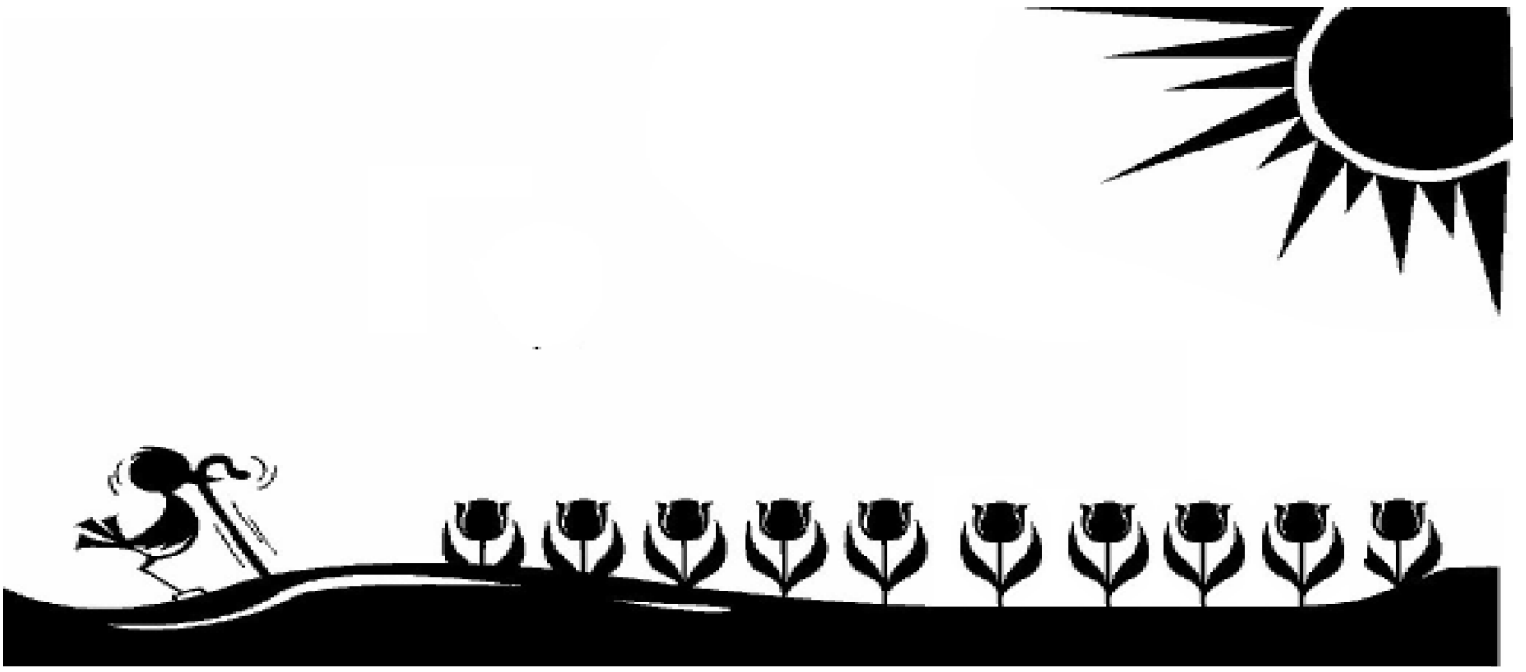
I got up early one morning
And rushed right into the day;
I had so much to accomplish
That I didn't have time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me,
And heavier came each task.
"Why doesn't God help me?" I wondered.
He answered, "You didn't ask."

I wanted to see joy and beauty,
But the day toiled on, gray and bleak;
I wondered why God didn't show me,
He said, "But you didn't seek."

I tried to come into God's presence.
I used all my keys at the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided
"My child, you didn't knock."

I woke up early this morning, and
Paused before entering the day;
I had so much to accomplish
That I had to take time to pray.



From the Pastor's Pasture

In this newsletter, there is an insert, a letter written by our Administrative Council Superintendent, **John Hughes**. He is reporting the findings that the Council was mandated to learn regarding this church becoming its own charge and not tied to Mountainair.

Many people have come to me this past winter wondering what it would take to keep a pastor here full time without sharing him/her. When I told the Administrative Council what I had been hearing, and that this had been a subject of concern for several people, they voted to research the cost effectiveness of such a plan. You have been given the "bottom line" in John's letter.

Do I think you can come up with an extra \$8,000? Yes, I do. If you divide \$8,000 by 20 families who commit to paying the extra money, and divide that by 52 (weeks), you come up with an extra \$7.70 per week, or about \$30 Per month. Of course, if more families commit to paying the extra cost of having a pastor solely stationed here, each would pay less.

Do I think YOU should make the commitment? I think you should count the cost and weigh it against what you think the blessings could be. Is it worth it to you to have a pastor here full time for visitation, Bible study, etc? If you think it is worth the extra cost, then make a commitment toward that end. Money will definitely be needed, but prayer is even more necessary.

What else could happen and would you expect to happen? There would definitely be a study and a decision made about moving the worship time to 10:00 or later, thus giving time for Choir practice, Bible studies, and committee meetings happening earlier in the day. There would be more time for the pastor to make calls on members, visitors, seekers, and shut-ins. There would be more time and opportunity to plan more special worship services. Thus, there would be a definite hope that the church would grow. But, again, is the cost worth the possibilities for you?

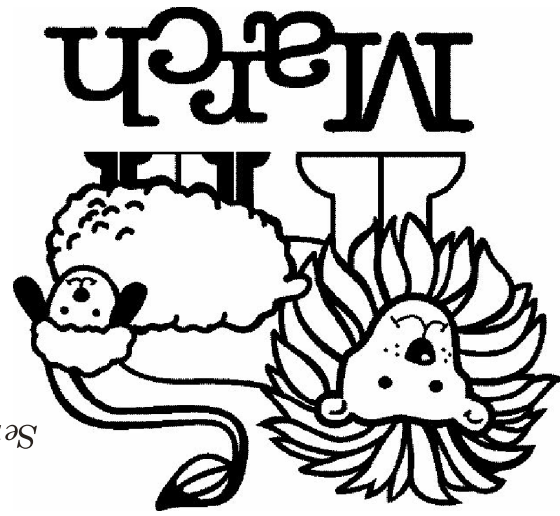
What about Mountainair? I have spent as much time there since this past August than in my previous three years combined. I have made my presence known in the community and the schools like I never had before. The result: one family (with children) quit the church and another woman quit before that leaving her husband to attend sporadically. Prior to that, a family quit a year ago. And, there are a couple of people who could come, say they'll come, but don't. Right now, one couple attends regularly, one couple attends semi-regularly, there are two women who come if they can't get to Albuquerque to their Lutheran church. One woman new to the community has been attending. The average attendance, without any visitors from Estancia, or any from my family, averages 5 people per Sunday. If you don't count **Ethel**, who still goes there with me every Sunday to play the hymns, the average is 4. How long can they stay open? They have enough money for a couple more years if the situation stays the same. The church is alive due to estate money. There are as many contributions from people who don't go to church there, but have pledged to give (and some of those are from Estancia), as there are from "in" the church. There were times that my check was the only one in the offering plate because nobody else came to church. Are they concerned? To a point, in my estimation. There is one couple who has been working with me to organize a "homecoming" month in April when extra publicity will be given to the church, and an effort will be made to have extra music, flowers, and snacks for those who attend. Others in the church are not very positive that this will work. And, the community has told me, in so many words, that people just aren't going to come. Are they aware of the Possibility of Estancia being a single point charge? Yes. If the church closes, is that Your problem? It could be, if there are no plans to make up for the loss, given this is still a two-point charge.

While you are praying and thinking about the cost vs. the possible outcome of the church supporting itself without Mountainair's help, please keep in mind that you should think of the pastor, not just **Dave**, being here full-time. **Terry Anderson**, the District Superintendent, wants me to stay here, but his is not the only opinion. You know pastors don't stay here for great lengths of time. I have been fortunate to be here for almost four years. Do I want to stay during a possible transition period? Yes. But, let us prepare for the future.

Be in prayer about it. Keep your eyes and ears open to possibilities. Try to attend future meetings about this so that you can be heard.



Sent with a prayer to:



*Estancia United Methodist Church
P. O. Box 378
Estancia, NM 87016*

A preacher retired and moved to the country to enjoy life and practice his hobby of yard work. Needing a lawn mower, he headed into town to buy one. On the way he saw a sign advertising a lawn mower for sale. He stopped at the house and a young lad came out to greet him. The preacher asked about the lawn mower and the kid said it was behind the house. The two went to look at the lawn mower. The engine was sputtering along at idle speed. The preacher increased the speed of the engine and mowed a few strips. Satisfied that the mower would do the job they settled on a price of \$25.00.

Later in the day, the young lad was riding his bicycle when he spied the preacher pulling on the engine starter rope. The kid stopped and watched for a couple of minutes. He asked, "What's wrong?"

The reply came, "I can't get this mower started. Do you know how?"

The kid said, "yep."

"Well, how do you do it? Tell me!", the preacher yelled.

The kid replied, "You have to cuss it."

The preacher rose up indignantly. "Now you listen here. I am a preacher and if I ever did cuss, not saying I have, I've forgotten how to do it after all these years."

With a wise look on his face well beyond his years, the kid said, "Preacher, you keep on pulling that rope and it'll all come back to ya."

