



Love • Transform • Serve

RAYS of HOPE JOURNAL

September 2024, Volume 42 Issue 9

Mission Statement

Cross of Hope is a Spirit-centered community that shares in Christ's love through worship, education and outreach to develop and strengthen relationships with God.

We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. Hebrews 6:19-20



Cross of Hope reflected on another year in ministry on August 25 at the annual meeting of the congregation. Find the details of this meeting on page 6. It was a wonderful morning of worship, reflection, gratitude and table fellowship. Cross of Hope continues to abound in hope anchored in Jesus as a *Spirit-centered community that shares Christ's love through worship, education, and outreach to develop and strengthen relationships with God.*

As our School Ministry launched another hope-filled year last month, we look forward to the renewed start of Camp @ Cross of Hope on Wednesday evenings (more info on page 8).

A familiar worship routine begins on Sunday, September 8 with the early worship at 8:45am. We are meeting fifteen minutes earlier to allow for enough time of faith formation opportunities between worship times. Our later worship service will be at 10:45am.

Join us for a social evening of music on Saturday, September 14 (more info on page 14).

We will celebrate Holy Cross Day on September 15 with a dedication of a new processional cross.

Hold in prayer Caitlyn Bye as she gets married this month as well as the McWilliam/Streff family and Bauer family as we gather in worship for the memorial of Sue and Edee this month.

Of course, there's so much more going on and it's a blessing to share it all with you!

Peace,
Pr. Adam



Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School

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This Journal of Cross of Hope Lutheran Church is published each month for the enrichment of the mission ("Loving God • Transforming Relationships • Serving Others"), for the life of the people of God at Cross of Hope and our community.

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Cross of Hope School

SCHOOL REGISTRATION
Online Registration for the 2024-2025 year

[Click Here for Registration Details](#)

Cross of Hope School is a welcoming, Christ-centered community providing high quality education in a nurturing environment that respects each child's development.



WE WANT YOUR NEWS ITEMS

Deadline is 10th of the month for the following month's edition. Send E-mail articles to office@crossofhope.org, lbagby@crossofhope.org, or deliver to church office.

Stewardship

Stewardship involves your time, talent and treasure. Contact the church office for assistance in getting started in any of our ministries. Please remember Cross of Hope in preparing your will.

Care Outreach

Transportation

- Medical Appointments
- Other Appointments
- Necessary Errands



Emergency Meals

- Family Emergency
- Illness
- Death

Assistance is available:

- www.crossofhope.org/forms
- Email: care@crossofhope.org
- In the Great hall
- Call COH office (505)897-0047x102



Cross of Hope School Happenings



What joy it is to begin a new school year! We are celebrating new friends, new teachers, new families, new routines, and a new anchor! This year we will anchor in Loving and Serving Others. The staff and students have been busy generating ideas to find loving ways to serve our church, our volunteers, and the community within Cross of Hope. Do you have any needs or suggestions for ways we can care for one another? Do you have any special talents, skills or interests that you would like to share with our students? We would love to have you as our guest, or to allow us to serve you!

Every month, we will be hosting events and service projects. It would be a huge blessing to have church members join in our events and activities. Our first community event, a Back to School Night, will be held on September 4 from 6:00-7:30pm. "Simply Delicious" food truck will provide dinner for your purchase, and we will have opportunities to get to know one another and our school. I hope to see you there! On September 17 and 18 we will have a field day and fall Walk-a-thon. We would love your presence at this event as well.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or suggestions! My door is always open,

Susan Rivera
esdirector@crossofhope.org
 (505) 897-7232



Rudy and Sherrie pose for school photo



Our eager school staff is ready for a fantastic year.



Ron Cordova poses with the grandkids

Cross of Hope Church and School will be closed September 2, for Labor Day.



The Roving Hope- r

By Mary Bresnahan

School is back in session! The kids are excited to get back in the swing and see their friends. With that in mind, we asked two questions: What is the best thing about being in a new grade? What is the best thing about your new teacher? Some have the same teacher, so the answer was a bit different.

Kindergarten - Liam



“Everything is good about coming back to school. The best thing about Ms. Durham is she reads really well.”

First Grade - Jasmyn



“The best thing about coming back to school is it’s fun. The best thing about having a new teacher, Ms. Aragon, is she is awesome!”

Some of you might recognize Jasmyn from church on Sunday.

Second Grade - Andrea



“The best thing about being in 2nd grade is I get to learn more. My teacher, Mrs. Van Scyoc, is she lets us do fun math on Fridays.”

Andrea was perfectly matched in pink. I am guessing this is a favorite color.

Third Grade - Joshua



“The best thing about being in a new grade is that it’s easier. Ms. Pratt has been teaching me. But the writing is harder.”

Joshua was so excited he came up to me and asked to be interviewed.

Fourth Grade - John



“The best thing about being in a new grade is that I have new friends. It’s challenging, but good. I have a new classroom this year. We get to go on walks around school.”

Fifth Grade - Matthew



“The best thing about being in 5th grade is I get to graduate. This year. Ms. Joy is my teacher. I had her last year so I know the classroom routine.”

Cross of Hope School Staff 2024-2025



Susan Rivera
Director of School
Ministry



Angela Durham
Kindergarten Teacher



Linda Aragon
1st Grade Teacher



Natasha Van Scyoc
2nd Grade Teacher



Elaine Pratt
3rd / 4th Grade Teacher



Joy Thornhill
4th-5th Grade Teacher



Julie Martin
Lunch Manager



Leilani Dixon
Educational Assistant



Paula Willis
Math Interventionist /



Coal
Support



Debra Gonzales
Literacy
Interventionist



Lisa White
Librarian / Art / EA



Lynne Bagby
Spanish Teacher



McMarshal Hartzenberg
P.E. Instructor



Janessa Cruz
Music Teacher



Courtney Knutilla
Preschool Director



Lori Braunhardt
Preschool Lead
4's Teacher



Ann Martin
Preschool 3 and
4 Year Old
Teacher



Rhonda Cantu
Preschool
Educational
Assistant



Florence Begay
Preschool Helper



Jade Gilmore
Preschool Educational
Assistant

Church Council

By Janet Conlon, COH Council Secretary

“Let all that I am praise the LORD; may I never forget the good things he does for me.”

Psalm 103:2 (NLT)

Greetings to all and thank you to everyone who participated in the Annual Congregational Meeting on August 25. As a member of the Council, I am excited and gratified to be part of such an amazing congregation. The fellowship and community atmosphere at COH is inspiring. Thanks also to the Care Team for hosting such a wonderful potluck brunch after the meeting.

Congregational Meeting highlights:

- There were approximately 60 voting members in attendance.
- Margie Reed (Council President) called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. She introduced Council Members to the congregation and stated that the purpose of this meeting was to approve the 2024/2025 Budget.
- Pastor Adam Berndt opened the meeting with a prayer and welcome remarks.
- The Congregational Minutes from May 7, 2023 and September 24, 2023 were approved.
- Susan Rivera (Director of School Ministry) described “Anchoring in Loving and Serving Others” as the year’s mission. She also highlighted the names of new teachers and the addition of two new programs (Music and Math Intervention). There will be a Service Dog on site.
- Nancy and Greg Morrison gave a detailed account of their participation at the 2024 Rocky Mountain Assembly. The theme was “On Our Way, Together”. The Rev. Dr. Meghan Johnston Aelabouni is the new Bishop Elect of the Rocky Mountain Synod.
- Pastor Adam opened the floor to any voting members that might be interested in attending the 2025 Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly, May 22-24, 2025 in Albuquerque, NM. The decision was made to table this discussion until closer to that date.
- Pastor Adam offered his reflections: It is a “Blessing to be Anchored in Jesus” We are anchored together with our school in Jesus.
- Pastor Adam offered thanks and praise to the Leadership and School Ministry Teams and also introduced the Meditation Bowl for future use during worship.
- Pastor presented a new Processional Cross that will be placed into service on September 15, 2024. A gift and honor for our congregation.
- 2024/2025 Worship Schedule handouts were distributed which highlight important events around Worship Services as well as the Camp at COH Schedule. Beginning September 8, 2024: 8:45am (traditional service) **and** 10:45am (contemporary service) There will also be a **Faith Formation Hour** at 9:45am between services.
- Greg Morrison (Treasurer) presented a comprehensive review of the 2024/2025 budget and it was approved by a unanimous show of hands.
- The Council terms for Kristi Valdez and Tim Fuller have expired at this time.
- Ron Cordova was selected by acclamation as the newest member of Church Council.
- Todd Bramley was thanked for his many years of service as Treasurer and presented with a cross as a symbol of our gratitude for his dedication to COH.
- Susan Rivera offered a closing prayer.
- Margie Reed adjourned the meeting.

Please feel free to contact any of the Church Council Members if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions. We are here to represent all of you and welcome your thoughts.

Blessings and Peace.



**The Mission of Cross of Hope
Faith Connections Group**

To provide an opportunity for all people to share Christ's love and authentic community in a small group setting where lives are transformed through growth in faith and service to others.

Getting Our Bearings

Making Faith Connections small group ministry will begin its next series on September 15 and explore the questions raised in the gospel texts for each week. Who is Jesus? Who am I? Who is all this gospel stuff about? Come, drop in and make faith connections on Sunday at 9:45am before or after worship!

Sept 15	Who is Jesus?	Mark 8:27-33	
Sept 22	Who am I?	Mark 9:30-37	
Sept 29	Who are They?	Mark 9:38-50	
Oct 6	Who is Worthy?	Mark 10:2-16	
Oct 13	Who is Holding Us Back?	Mark 10:17-31	
Oct 20	Who is Leading the Way?	Mark 10:35-45	
Oct 27	Who is Free in Christ?	John 8:31-36	Reformation
Nov 3	Who is Cheering Us On?	John 11:32-44	All Saints

Want a more consistent small group experience? Contact Russ Sorensen at r2csorensen@gmail.com to be connected with, or start, a small group!

Ministry Connection Fair

When:

September 8, 2024

In between the 8:45am and 10:45am services

Where:

Great Hall

Pick up some coffee and light refreshments and peruse all of the wonderful ministry opportunities offered here at Cross of Hope.



There will be a blood drive and food drive for Rio Grande Food Program on this day.

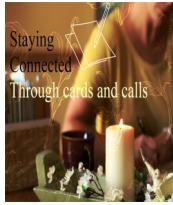


**This exciting worship opportunity resumes:
September 11, 2024!
5:30-7:00 pm**

We are so excited to begin a new year of this fantastic and engaging worship opportunity. The camp starts with dinner, followed by an all camp activity. We then break into age-group Bible study and end the evenings with campfire worship. Modeled after the formative experience so many have had at **Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp**, this Wednesday evening ministry is for children, youth and families.

Bring your family and your friends and come and take a break in the middle of your week with camp! Once the link is established, people can sign up.

To help us make this camp a continued success, we are seeking volunteers for help in providing simple meals. We follow a five week rotation schedule. Each week has a different meal. Some of these meals involve cooking and some are take-out. We gladly accept help to prepare meals, assist in kitchen clean up, and course food donations and/or monetary donations for our take out meals (pizza or chicken) would be greatly accepted! Watch for the link to sign up.



Heart Strings

Members of COH unable to worship on site.

- Shirley McCan 1
- Thomas Hielkema 4
- David Kovarik 5
- Anthony Soto 5
- Mike Walter 5
- John McWilliam 6
- Sherrie Simek 6
- Bennett Berndt 8
- Bill Harris 11
- Bob Arseneau 13
- Gary Hveem 18
- Staci Spinks 19
- Chloe St. Martin 20
- Julia Hawkins 22
- Mary Bresnahan 22
- Roy Pederson 24
- Mike Ropp 26
- Nicole Bencomo 28
- Rich Neely 29

<p>Carroll Werling Palmilla Senior Living, 10301 Golf Course Rd NW Apt. 144 Albuquerque, NM 87114</p>	<p>Linda Ehlers 5580 Mansfield Pl NW Albuquerque, NM 87114</p>
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	Day	Years Married
Rudy and Sherrie Simek	3	47
Geoff and Debbie Bokan	13	49
Robert and Sheri Phillips	14	39

A memorial service for Edee Bauer, will be held 10:00am, September 7 at Cross of Hope Church.

Cards for the family may be brought to the memorial or mailed to the church.

Cross of Hope Member, Susan McWilliam, died peacefully on the morning of August 20, 2024.

A memorial is scheduled for September 28. (Time is forthcoming.)

Cards may be sent to:

John McWilliam
 11 Snow Peak Rd
 Placitas, NM 87043



Janet Wormwood and Family
 4902 Picador Ct. SE
 Rio Rancho, NM 87124



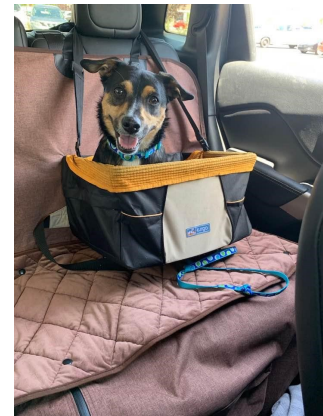
May her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.



The Happy Hope-r

Coal - The Therapy Dog

By Mary Bresnahan



Birthdate	August 23, 2017
Birthplace	Southern Texas
Parents	Ms. Paula and Ms. Peg
Occupation	Therapy Dog
Hobbies	Licking faces, playing fetch with toys, swimming, hiking, riding in the car

I think there is a part-time staff member you haven't met. His name is Coal. Coal is a rescue dog. He is part chihuahua, dachshund and corgi, referred to as a Chiweengi. Coal was abandoned in a box with his brother and sister at a Texas pound. An animal rescue group found them when they were two days old. They were taken in and bottle fed by a foster family and given lots of love. Their information was put on a website called "Pet Finders." All three were adopted at four months old. Coal and his brother, Henry, came to Albuquerque and their sister stayed in Texas. Mama Paula and Mama Peg gave Coal a "Forever Home" while Henry went home with friends of theirs.



Coal with Chaco and his moms.

Coal arrived at Christmas time in a green stocking. Paula and Peg said, "We got Coal in our stocking" and it was good coal.

Coal was surprised his new family consisted of four adopted sisters and a brother. His big brother, Chaco, was a therapy dog. Coal wanted to learn from Chaco and so the adventure began. Coal went to dog school where he learned a lot, but he thinks the owners learn more. Coal still wanted to learn more to become a therapy dog because they make people smile and that was something he wanted to do



On the left, we see Coal in his bed which puts him at the same level as the children or as he would say, "In the middle of things." Coal can greet kids with lots of licks when he is on the table. On the right, Coal is having fun playing with one of his fetch toys. He knows to only play 'toy' when work time is over.

Coal continued from page 10

Paula and Peg taught at Seven Bar Elementary school when Nancy Lacher was the principal. Chaco was a therapy dog there. Coal went along with Chaco. He was thrilled when he earned his therapy dog vest.

I think I need to step back and explain the difference between different types of certified, trained animals. A **service animal** is trained to perform tasks that assist disabled people. A **therapy animal** provides affection and comfort to those in hospitals, schools, nursing and retirement homes. They can also help people with learning disabilities, anxiety, severe stress and offer comfort in disaster situations. An **emotional support animal** provides emotional and therapeutic benefit to those suffering with issues, such as anxiety or psychiatric problems. They are certified and medically recommended.

Coal started working at schools just before COVID hit. As we all know COVID threw a lot of things up in the air. Therapy dogs could no longer come to the schools. That was true for all the schools except Cross of Hope. Coal started his new part-time job, welcoming children into the school and making sure hands were sanitized.

He comes to Cross of Hope on Monday and Wednesday with Ms. Paula who is a math intervention teacher. She works with children who need a little extra support and help in math. Coal can help students who are anxious or shut down to come out of their shell and be successful.

Coal thinks another great thing about this job is receiving treats when they are offered. He will shake hands and demonstrate his knowledge of the “leave it” command when asked.

Mama Paula teaches all the children about animal safety. They learn about “reading” the animals, in this case, a dog’s body language. For example, watching the movement of the tail or ears can let you know if you are approaching too quickly or too loudly. That sure helps Coal out – and any other animals the children may encounter.

Ms. Paula is very active in many things regarding animals. She is on the board at Watermelon Ranch and is the president of Warm Hearts Network. Ms. Peg works at Pet Smart and helps with adoptions through Watermelon Ranch and works for Mission Veterinary Clinic in Rio Rancho. She is also Director of Digital Life at Cross of Hope.



Both Ms. Paula’s and Ms. Peg’s involvement came from having Chaco as a therapy dog. They produced a video (Chaco the Therapy Dog - You Tube) of Chaco interacting with school children and submitted it to an Ellen DeGeneres contest. To their great surprise, they won first place, a \$10,000 prize. They donated all of the money to Watermelon Ranch and the other shelters that their dogs came from. This was the start of many adventures in rescue and therapy dog work.

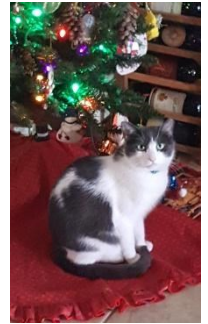
They are often asked, “How do you get a dog to be a therapy dog?” A potential therapy dog should have an outgoing personality, enjoy going places, and have strong obedience skills. Once a therapy dog has been registered with a group, insurance is available to protect the dog as well as the public. To determine if a dog is a good candidate, they are screened. Ms. Paula can help with that. Ms. Peg, who did a lot of Coal’s initial training, says there is a commitment of at least a half an hour every day. Of course consistency is important.

Coal continued from page 11

Coal says he loves his job and is happy to be with his new friends. He has improved his math skills (along with the children) and loves to be read to. Like anybody else, Coal likes his free time when he gets to hang out with his family and go on hikes. He enjoys goofing around, chasing toys and helping his siblings guard the house from the Amazon delivery people. If you saw a picture of all 6 pups, you would notice they are all black. That is because black animals are euthanized twice as much as other animals.

So, I had to ask Coal what he wants everyone to know. "I want people to know that rescuing one dog won't change the world but it will change that one dog's world forever." That is true of cats too –I have one that also came at Christmas time from Watermelon Ranch. We have truly been a gift for each other.

Coal is so excited to be at Cross of Hope. If you see him hanging out with Ms. Paula, please feel free to say hi and give him some special pats.



Lunch Bunch

Wednesday, September 11 at 1:00pm

La Reforma

8900 San Mateo Blvd.



Please call Leon Carrico or email him for a head count by September 9.

Phone: 505-506-7707 or 505-554-1128

Email: leoncarrico@gmail.com.



Women on Wednesday

You are invited!!

On September 4. we will gather for a new year of Women on Wednesday. Women on Wednesday has a long history. It is designed for you. Women is in the name because that was the way it was 'in the beginning'. All are welcome. We are excited about our upcoming year.

Our twice-monthly meetings will look a little different. As Sherrie Simek described, our group will take on the vision of a three-legged stool (Prayer, Bible Study, and Service).

As we begin this year, we want to look at our faith through the eyes of children, and through our walk in faith as adults. Because of this, we are going to start WOW at 2:30pm in the Sanctuary to join our school children in their weekly Chapel service. Rest assured that children sit as grade levels and with teachers. We then move into prayer and Bible study (more information to come when we meet as a group). Finally, we will look at ourselves as instruments of service for each other and our church and school community. The meetings will last until approximately 4pm, so that who do not drive at night will be able to come and join us. Florence Begay has graciously offered to do daycare for our meetings.

All are invited to continue our fellowship into the evening Camp at Cross of Hope.

Bible Study– The Important Letters of Paul

Pastor Rick Alpers is offering a sequel to the class he taught two years ago on the four gospels. Mathew, Mark, Luke and John talked about Jesus' life and teachings. In this Bible study we find the deeper, theological significance of these in the teachings of the Apostle Paul. We not only will learn about the salvation plan for humanity through Jesus, but we will also get some important revelations about the early Christians, their beliefs, and the congregations they formed. We will cover Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Galatians.

This six part class will begin on September 15 and start approximately five minutes after the close of the 8:45am service.. Each class will last about forty minutes. You are encouraged to bring your own Bibles.





Summer Concert

Save the date: Saturday, September 14, 2024 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Please join us for our first End of Summer Social! Weather permitting, we will set up outside and musicians from the Cross of Hope Choir, Praise+Team, and congregation will entertain you with a variety of songs and ensembles that you will not want to miss!

We will provide a dinner of giant subs, chips, and watermelon, and please feel free to bring a side-dish, salad or dessert if you like. Also, bring your folding chairs or picnic blankets, family and friends, and prepare for a fun summer evening!

Any Questions? Contact chaggren@aol.com

Property Volunteers!

HOW DOES COH GARDEN GROW?

With help from the Hope Gardeners! The summer temperatures were hot, hot, hot!

But we were fortunate that our COH flower gardens bloomed, and the grass survived.

Now, it is the time to cut down the dry, old flowers, clean up the median strips in the parking lot and sand and weeds around the school fence to get everything ready for the fall and winter.

Leaves will start falling and blowing everywhere so if you would like to help us clean up, please contact Margie Reed



When you need these services, please think of Rays of Hope sponsors.
 We thank them for their continued support in offsetting the costs (by \$10 per month) associated with producing Rays of Hope each month.

thrivent



Matthew J Klandrud, ChFC®, RICP®, CKA®

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 Congregational Council Team**
cohouncil@crossofhope.org

Pastor Adam Berndt, Margie Reed- President,
 Sherrie Simek- Vice President, Janet Conlon-
 Secretary, Bob Arseneau, Linda Ehlers, Tim
 Fuller, Greg Morrison, Kristi Valdez, and Ron
 Wirths

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www.crossofhope.org



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Emergency Meals
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 Death

Assistance is available:

- www.crossofhope.org/forms
- Email: care@crossofhope.org
- In the Great Hall
- Call COH office (505)897-0047x102



CROSS OF HOPE
 Church & School
 Love • Transform • Serve

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Mission Statement

Cross of Hope is a Spirit-centered community that shares Christ's love through worship, education and outreach to develop and strengthen relationships with God.

 Rev. R. Adam Berndt, Pastor

505-897-0047 • office@crossofhope.org
www.crossofhope.org

Facebook Page: Cross of Hope Church

Worship Times:

On-Site Sunday - 9:00 a.m.
Sunday - 10:45 a.m.

Digital: Sunday: 9:00 a.m.

Devotions: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.

September Book Suggestions

Recommended by Dee Gutierrez

God's Messenger-the astounding achievements of Mother Cabrini - Nicole Gregory

Children were her life, and God's messenger Mother Frances X. Cabrini dedicated her entire life to caring for poor Italian immigrants who sought refuge in the slums of New York City in the early 1890s.

Reaching for the Invisible God - Philip Yancey

Philip offers deep, satisfying insights to the questions you're sometimes afraid to ask. Honest and deeply personal, here is straight talk on Christian living for the reader who wants more than pat answers to life's imponderables.

If I Had Lunch with C.S. Lewis - exploring the ideas of C.S. Lewis on the meaning of life - Alister McGarth

What makes Lewis a good dialogue partner is that his mind traveled through a wide and varied terrain: from atheism of his early life to his conversion later in life; from his rational skepticism to his appreciation of value of human desires and imagination; from his role as a Christian apologist during World War II to his growth as a celebrated author of classic children's literature.