



Love • Transform • Serve

# RAYS of HOPE JOURNAL

January 2025, Volume 43, Issue 1

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.

## Merry Christmas and Blessed New Year

*Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.' John 8.12*



Photos above are courtesy of Duane Meneely and Nancy Morrison

**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.*

# Cross of Hope School



|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
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**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](mailto:office@crossofhope.org), [lbagby@crossofhope.org](mailto: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](http://www.crossofhope.org/forms)
  - Email: [care@crossofhope.org](mailto:care@crossofhope.org)
  - In the Great hall
  - Call COH office (505)897-0047x102





School continued from page 2

# Cross of Hope School News

## Classroom Mission Statements

### Kindergarten with Angela Durham

We come to school to learn, know God, get ready for first grade, and to make friends.

### First Grade with Linda Aragon

We are first grade friends who solve problems, and are kind and respectful, and work hard to learn. We learn about God and share Him with others.

### Second Grade with Nataysha VanSych

Turning frowns upside down. We are joy bringers who show kindness, generosity and respect. We are a class of learners who carefully listen, follow directions, and do our best and forget the rest. Our hearts are filled with God's love and we work to cheer people up. The Happy Emoji Crew.



### Third and Fourth Grade Class with Mrs. Elaine Pratt

We are faithful, energetic, and ambitious. We come to school each day to learn school subjects and about God. We will be kind to each other and have a self-disciplined class to make this year successful.

### Fourth and Fifth Grade Class: Ms. Joy Thornhill

We are the fourth and fifth grade class and we want to feel loved, excited and joyful at school! Everyday we come to school to increase our faith in God, learn a lot, and to be better friends.

## *Kudos to our COH's Hospitality Team!*

This wonderful team goes above and beyond to provide their time and talents behind the scenes!  
Once again, this year's Las Posadas event was a smash hit!

And for all those who stepped up and and volunteered where needed, Thank You!





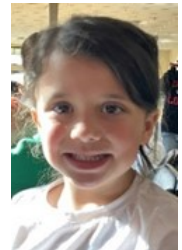
# The Roving Hope-r

By Mary Bresnahan

So much excitement and joy during the Christmas season! There was a lot going on. We need to share some of it. As you know, Las Posada happened with over 200 people in attendance. I was able to interview a few of our students who were filling various roles in the story of Mary and Joseph searching for a place to rest as Mary was about to give birth to baby Jesus.

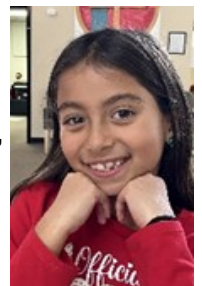
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Harper is in kindergarten and played the part of a sheep. She said she “dressed as a sheep and wore a sheep’s hat. I didn’t say anything – just said ‘baa’ at the manger.”



Jasmine is in 1st grade and played the part of a boy and said, “You may be bad people.” The “people” were those who wouldn’t let Mary and Joseph stay at their place. She wore “a rope on her wrist and a beard.”

Ellie is in 2nd grade and was an angel. “Glory to God in the highest” was her line. She “ran around in a circle and told people that Jesus had arrived.”



Henry is in 3rd grade and played the role of an innkeeper. He said, “This is not an inn. So, keep going!”

Caydence is in 4th grade and was the angel, Gabriel. She talked to Mary and told her not to be afraid. Her cousin Elizabeth was pregnant. She said, “ ‘Anything is possible with God’ . Gabriel repeated what the story was about because Mary didn’t believe it.”



Addy is in 5th grade and played the role of Mary. “I rode on the donkey. I was happy because I was giving birth to Jesus. I was married to a tall guy.”

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Our other excitement, and noteworthy, was each grade constructing their mission statement. We wanted to hear the children tell us about it.

Roving Hoper continued from page 4

**Kindergarten's** mission statement is *We go to school to learn, to know about God, get ready for the 2nd grade and make friends.* Ben said, "We come to school. I like it." After some thought and a little prompting, he agreed he does those things.



The **first-grade** statement is *We are First Grade friends who solve problems, are kind and respectful and work hard to learn. We learn about God and share Him with others.* Luke repeated the statement without any slips or hesitation. He likes the mission statement. Luke shared that math is his best subject.

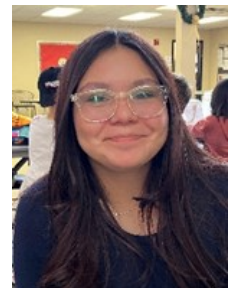
The **second-grade** statement is *Turning frowns upside down. We are joy bringers who show kindness, generosity and respect. We are a class of learners who carefully listen, follow directions and do our best and forget the rest. Our hearts are filled with God's love and we work to cheer people on. "The Happy Emoji Crew!"* Laura likes the statement. "The whole class wrote it. We are the 'Happy Emoji Crew'. I like it."



The **third and fourth grade** mission statement is *We are faithful and ambitious. We come to school each day to learn school subjects and about God. We will be kind to each other and have a self-disciplined class to make this year successful.* Isla liked the word "ambitious" which she interpreted as "lots of energy to achieve (like break dancing, doing jumping jacks), energetic. I like the school subjects and learning about God and being kind to each other." Isla will be leaving our school and moving to North Carolina. All the best Isla.



The **fourth and fifth grade** statement is *We are the fourth and fifth grade class and we want to feel loved, excited and joyful at school. Every day we come to school to increase our faith in God, to learn a lot and to be better friends.* Saylie "contributes with the group" and agrees with the first sentence. "I remember to make the whole class proud and to be a better person. I think about what I want to say before I say it."



Thank you to all the students who contributed to this month's article – and all others who contributed throughout the school year.

I hope you had fun holidays and wish you a heart full of peace and joy in the new year.

The Roving Hope-r

# Property Update

By Margie Reed, Council President and COH Gardener

A special thank you to the Boy Scouts, their Leaders, Rudy and Sherrie Simek, Kevin Kouri, and Laurie and Steve Weiss, who stepped in to do a major clean-up outside of COH. You did a fantastic job making our property look great for Christmas.

Leaves were blown, raked, and bagged all around the property including the ditch next to the Fire Station. The turf in the playground was cleaned, mulched and sand was raked. The crew cleaned under the shrubs located on the islands in the parking lot, flower gardens and front of the Church.

Inside Denise Soto, Jan Anderson, and Margie Reed cleaned and polished the bookcases and furniture in the Great Hall. All the chairs in the Sanctuary, the backs and underneath the seats were dusted and polished. The bibles and hymnals were cleaned as well. In addition, the altar, baptismal font and credence tables were polished. Everything was so clean and fresh and ready for Jesus.

And, let's give a shout out to two people who have come forward to fix things around the Church. Anthony Soto fixed a leaky faucet in the HeBrews sink and secured a desk in the office area. Both of these needed attention for years. Kevin Kouri replaced the water stained ceiling tiles throughout the Great Hall.

John Lacher, thank you for fixing the cord above the Sanctuary door, as well as always being available to replace light bulbs and fix the copy machines.

COH is blessed to have these wonderful people helping to make God's house inviting.

Happy and Blessed New Year from the Property and Gardening Teams!

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day**  
***Monday, January 20, 2025***

**Cross of School and the Church office will be closed.**





# Happy Hope-r Bill Harris

By Mary Bresnahan



|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Birthdate:</b> September 11, 1948     | <b>Birthplace:</b> Detroit, Michigan                 |
| <b>Married:</b> To Gem on June 19 , 1971 | <b>Where:</b> Denver, Colorado                       |
| <b>Occupation:</b> Broadcast Engineer    | <b>Hobbies:</b> Playing Guitar (bass), Praise + Team |

Bill lived in Detroit, Michigan until he was 5 years old and the family moved to the suburbs (Farmington, New Mexico). His father, George, was a Detroit native. His mother, Peggy, was born in Canada., lived in Spokane, Washington but grew up on a farm in North Dakota. George was in the military during WWII. He managed a gas station for many years, then became a mostly self-taught machinist. Peggy was a homemaker and worked at the Farmington Cleaners. Bill’s sister (who is about four years older) moved out when Bill was 12 years old. She still lives in Farmington.

After high school, Bill moved to Chicago, Illinois to attend DeVry Institute of Technology to learn electronics. He received a Communications Technician certificate in December 1968. He stayed in Chicago and worked for an electronics company.

With the Viet Nam War happening Bill knew he would be drafted. He asked his mom to find out when he would be drafted. He learned it would be in April or June of 1969. With that in mind, he went to the draft board in March and signed up for the Air Force which was a four-year requirement. (By signing up he avoided the Army or the Marines which typically meant front-line duty.) Bill went to Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas for basic training. While there he got a note to meet with the Captain (it is now June) to discuss his going to Specialist Electronics Technician school. When basic training was over, he went to Lowry Air Force base in Denver, Colorado for school. It was all very easy for him since he had recently graduated from tech school. School lasted almost a year (August 1969 to June of 1970). Three more years to go in his “hitch.” When his training was completed, he swapped assignments with another fellow which placed him in a generally undesirable place – Shemya Island. It is part of the Aleutian Islands west of Anchorage. Shemya is a 2 X 4-mile strip of land. This was part of a worldwide network to monitor nuclear activity around the world (and still does today). This assignment lasted from June 1970 to January 1971.

When he was in Denver for school Bill met Gem. They developed a long-distance relationship while he was on Shemya. Bill returned to Denver in June 1971 and they got married. They moved to Alexandria Virginia to headquarters which was referred to as AFTAC. In Sept. 1972 they moved to Patrick Air Force Base in Florida. Bill “separated” from the Air Force in May 1973. They stayed in

Bill continued from page 7

Florida and Bill worked part-time as a DJ in small market radio. Meantime, Gem worked in a bank in Melbourne. They stayed in Florida until December of 1973 and then went back to Denver, Gem's hometown.

Bill got a radio job in Colorado Springs, Colorado. While there, He was offered a job in Denver at a country station. This was a move-up for him since it was a bigger market. He eventually worked up from nights to afternoon drive. Gem had found a job in banking. Bill also got a job teaching at a broadcast school; first part-time and then full-time. He liked this a lot but unfortunately the school went defunct. Bill went back to radio as a news man. Someone Bill knew from school told him about a job as an engineer at KIMN and KYGO. This was in 1979. It was his first full-time job as an engineering technician. In this job he "fixed things, installed equipment, and put things together." Now his career was finally on its way; he started to grow within the field while gaining a reputation. Bill moved into management and became a Chief Engineer. They lived in Denver until 2004 when Bill was hired by Citadel Broadcasting in Albuquerque. Citadel sold to Cumulus Media, the present owners. He 'stepped back' from full-time work in 2015 but still does project work for the radio station group.

Mike and Sarah Synder introduced Bill and Gem to Cross of Hope in early 2005. Bill liked the sermons and the music. He got a real sense of community. Not long after their first introduction, Bill got involved with the Praise Team. 2005 was the first time a service was held outside in the summer. We continue to enjoy it today.

The person who was the bass player for the Praise Team was inconsistent in his attendance. Bill asked if they needed someone to fill in. Bill has been a stable ever since. Bill does not read music but can follow the rhythm. Richard Hielkema was playing bass guitar, but the horn (saxophone) is really his instrument of choice. Bill stepped up to play bass guitar, and later six string rhythm guitar. During COVID he filled a leadership role.

In addition to the Praise Team, Don Lister (the former drummer) introduced Bill to playing with a five-person band that did gigs in bars. Bill did this until 2018 when his cancer made it too difficult.

Gem was active as a docent at the Albuquerque Bio Park Zoo. She has a degree in elementary school education with a strong interest in Biology. The docent work was right up her alley since she got to be with groups of children. Docent work requires a lot of education about the different animals so it can be shared with the zoo guests. She was active in this until her osteoarthritis limited her mobility.

Bill is an important anchor on the Praise Team. Give him a "hi" when you can.

## Lunch Bunch



**Wednesday, January 8, 2025 at 1:00pm**  
**Red Lobster**  
**10520 Coors Bypass NW, next to Olive Garden**

Please call Florence Begay or email her for a head count by January 6.  
 Phone: 505-363-5827, email: [florencebegay2011@gmail.com](mailto:florencebegay2011@gmail.com).





## Heart Strings

*Members of COH unable to worship with us on a regular basis. Please contact and let them know we care.*

|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Carly Adams       | 4  |
| Susan Strand      | 7  |
| Rosemary Neely    | 7  |
| Susan Ropp        | 12 |
| Nick Neely        | 13 |
| Barbara J. Owens  | 14 |
| Emily O’Roark     | 16 |
| Tarra Toledo      | 17 |
| Lori Braunhardt   | 18 |
| Curtis Case       | 18 |
| Emily Walter      | 18 |
| Debbie Bokan      | 19 |
| Joan Wilson       | 20 |
| Cheri Sorensen    | 21 |
| Silas Toledo      | 21 |
| Victoria Jahn     | 24 |
| Don Cretsinger    | 26 |
| Joseph Poyner     | 27 |
| Kiersten Hielkema | 29 |

### Carroll Werling

Palmilla Senior Living  
 10301 Golf Course Rd NW  
 Apt 144 A  
 Albuquerque, NM 87120



|                         | <u>Day</u> | <u>Years Married</u> |
|-------------------------|------------|----------------------|
| Dale and Shirley McCan  | 1          | 29                   |
| John and Kristi Valdez  | 20         | 17                   |
| Jahn and Barbara Wright | 27         | 55                   |



A beautiful image of our sanctuary during the Christmas services.

Photo courtesy of Nancy Morrison



# Las Posadas, a time to remember...



Photo courtesy of 3MorrPhotos



**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.**

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 6565 Americas Pkwy NE, Ste 200 Albuquerque, NM 87110

**Cross of Hope Church and School  
 Congregational Council Team**  
**cohouncil@crossofhope.org**

Pastor Adam Berndt, Margie Reed -President, Sherrie Simek –Vice President, Greg Morrison – Treasurer, Janet Conlon - Secretary, Bob Arseneau, Jessica Williams, Ron Wirths, and Ron Cordova.

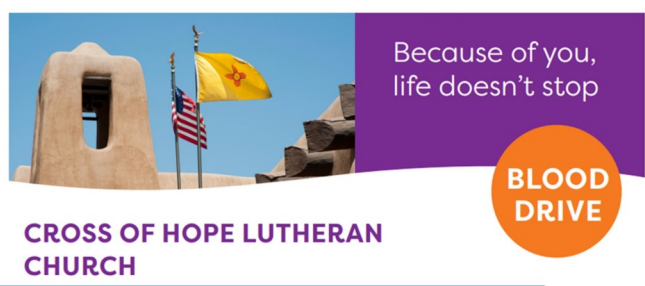
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 6565 Americas Pkwy NE, Ste 200 Albuquerque, NM 87110



**CROSS OF HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**Sunday, January 19, 2025**  
**From 10:00am to 1:30pm**

To make an appointment  
**call or text Julie Jones at 915-433-7588 or use the QR code provided. WALK-INS WELCOME**  
 All donors who come to give blood will enter our giveaway to win 1 of 3 \$10,000 gift cards.



**Susan Rivera, Director of School Ministry**  
**Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School**




6104 Taylor Ranch Road NW  
 Albuquerque, NM 87120-2639

esdirector@crossofhope.org  
 School (505) 897-1832




**Courtney Knutilla, Preschool Director**  
**Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School**




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 Albuquerque, NM 87120-2639

pssupport@crossofhope.org  
 Preschool (505) 899-0928  
 www.crossofhope.org




**Cross of Hope Care Outreach**

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><b>Transportation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical Appointments</li> <li>Other Appointments</li> <li>Necessary Errands</li> </ul> |  | <p><b>Emergency Meals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Emergency</li> <li>Illness</li> <li>Death</li> </ul> |
|--|---|--|

**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



## CROSS OF HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

6104 Taylor Ranch Road NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87120

### 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](mailto:office@crossofhope.org)  
[www.crossofhope.org](http://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.

## January Book Suggestions

### **Small Things Like These - Claire Keegan**, (Recommended by Dee Gutierrez)

Early one morning, while delivering an order to the local convent, Bill makes a discovery which forces him to confront both his past and the complicit silences of a town controlled by the church. A New York Times Bestseller • Shortlisted for the 2022 Booker Prize • Winner of the Orwell Prize for Political Fiction

### **Good Boundaries and Goodbyes - Lysa TerKeurst**, (Recommended by Dee Gutierrez)

Stop the dysfunction of unhealthy relationships and learn biblical ways to set boundaries--and, when necessary, say goodbye.

### **Imagine Heaven- John Burke**, (Recommended by Glenna Meneely)

Burke compares over 100 gripping stories of near-death experiences (NDEs) to what Scripture says about our biggest questions of Heaven: *Will I be myself? Will I see friends and loved ones? What will Heaven look like? What is God like? What will we do forever? What about children and pets?*