



Love • Transform • Serve

# RAYS of HOPE JOURNAL

August 2023, Volume 41, Issue 8

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.

## Welcome Back to School!

The hallways are bustling with the sounds of furniture being arranged, copies being run off, and the delighted squeals of friends greeting friends, sharing stories of their summer adventures. Teachers will be preparing for our school year with professional development, safety training, and **anchoring in Jesus**, the heart of each and every classroom. **Elementary students will return August 14 and our preschool students will begin August 16.** We are so excited!

This year we are looking forward to:

- Beginning a journey of accreditation in our elementary school
- Adding a Spanish class for our 3rd-5th graders (still in the works as we print!)
- Adding an Art class for our K-2nd graders
- And, continuing our community service projects to carry out the mission of loving our neighbors well.



We would love to partner with you. Are you looking for a place to serve? Do you have items to donate? If you find yourself unable to resist those sales on **school supplies**, we would love to accept your generous donations.

What a joy it is to be entrusted with the opportunity to love on teachers, students, families, and community as the new Director here at Cross of Hope.

Please stop by to introduce yourself, or feel free to contact me with any questions or ideas you may have. I look forward to serving alongside each and every one of you!

Blessings,  
Susan F. Rivera  
Director of School Ministry  
[esdirector@crossofhope.org](mailto:esdirector@crossofhope.org)



**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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**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.

**Cross of Hope School**

**Now enrolling new students at Cross of Hope School**

Please click on this link to begin our Online Registration process:

<https://ch-nm.client.renweb.com/oa/?memberid=2059>

Campus tours are available for those families interested in becoming more familiar with Cross of Hope School. To schedule a tour prior to registering your child/children, please contact Susan Rivera, Director of School Ministry at 505-897-1832 or email [esdirector@crossofhope.org](mailto:esdirector@crossofhope.org). We look forward to seeing you soon!

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



# Cross of Hope Preschool News

Welcome to a new school year at Cross of Hope Preschool!

We are all so excited about this upcoming school year and are working hard to make it the best year yet! Our passion is teaching preschool children the foundational skills that will follow them throughout the rest of their lives. We want children to learn and grow in their love of Christ and guide them through their first experiences in school!

All of us feel so blessed to work here and truly care about each and every child and family that comes through our doors.

Here's to a great school year!!

Courtney Knutilla, M. Ed.,  
Preschool Director



**We have space available! Enroll now!**

The state of New Mexico's Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) has a Child Care Assistance Program, where if you qualify, will cover the full preschool tuition! They recently changed the criteria to where more families than ever qualify! Check to see if you qualify today! <https://www.nmececd.org/child-care-assistance/>

## Now Hiring for Teacher Positions

Share your passion for teaching with children who love to learn! Join our creative team of educators at our small, Christian school. Our teacher student ratio is 1:14. Positions begin August 7, 2023.

- **PT Educational Assistant in Elementary School**
- **PT Lead Preschool Teacher**
- **PT Educational Assistant in Preschool**

Background check and New Mexico State teaching license are required. Please send your resume and letter of interest to Nancy Lacher, School Support Team Leader, [nlacher@crossofhope.org](mailto:nlacher@crossofhope.org).

# Council Corner

by Tim Fuller, Council Member



Many of you know that I retired last year after a 43-year career with Honeywell, with Jane following shortly thereafter. We were blessed during this transition despite my own encounter with COVID, and recent immune system issues. The advice and help from our many friends, along with prayer and reflection, gave me great comfort and maybe a little wisdom in our retirement preparations.

We have been very busy, mostly spending time with our family and volunteering with Church matters and our Homeowners Association. Jane and I have connected to each other in ways that our full-time careers inhibited. One thing that has become the biggest consumer of our attention has been the Albuquerque Coin Club. It has become a second family, whose wonderful members are working to grow the club and hobby, while making it fun and exciting. I would love to experience more with the Church and School community at Cross of Hope.



As I reflect upon my first full year of retirement, I am struck by many things that have occurred, both good and not so good. COVID not only caused a massive round of illnesses and deaths, it also triggered vast unemployment and excessive inflation. Yet, during this, due to creative minds on our Council, we were able to secure grants that have helped our church and school thrive, despite reduced attendance and the loss of several members. We have been blessed beyond measure.

In the early post-pandemic, we face a shortfall of charitable giving to the church, along with major increases in expenses such as utilities. Your Council will do our best to tighten the proverbial belt, and we are looking for creative ways to increase our funding without raising school tuition or cutting out important items that would interfere with our mission. Watch for important messages from our finance team and remember to pray for God's guidance as we continue to navigate through this time.

Blessings to all.

# Welcome Back and Thank You Brunch



Welcome Back  
*Pastor Adam*

We will be having a brunch on Sunday, August 13 between the 9a and 10:45a service. We are not only welcoming Pastor Adam Back, but thanking our interim pastors: Pastor Rick and Pastor Russ .

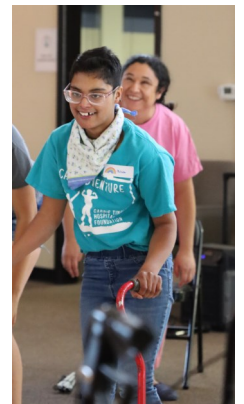
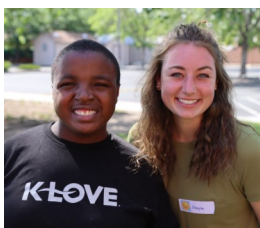
Please go to the SignUp Genius



# Special Needs Vacation Bible School



Photos above are courtesy of 3MorrPhotos





# The Roving Hoper

By Mary Bresnahan

The last week in July, Cross of Hope hosted our annual Special Needs Bible School. When I arrived, I was amazed at the number of participants (and volunteers). Patty Westerfield started this fabulous project 27 years ago.

While doing a personal bible study, she asked herself: “What is one thing, that if you did it, everyone would know it was God and not you?” Patty had been taking care of two special needs children in the church office so their parents could volunteer for Vacation Bible School. After helping with the regular VBS and the director moving, Patty had her answer- - a VBS for children with special needs. We had children from 2 to 72 years old.

Pastor Dale announced this idea and people came forward volunteering to get things started – publicity, music, crafts and guidance from a special education teacher. This has become a truly special ministry God created at Cross of Hope. We have been blessed and needless to say, the kids (both young and old) love it. So many smiling faces!



Roving continued on page 7

Roving continued from page 6

### Emily



“I am 46 years old. The most fun thing has been coloring.” Emily likes being inside since it is so hot. “I also like getting wet using water balloons.” Emily takes Bible study very seriously. Her birthday is at the beginning of August and her family will gather to celebrate. Emily shared that she works at the Special Olympics office.

### Jenna

Jenna is 36 years old. Jenna has been coming to VBS since she was 10. “I like everything, but the music is the best.”



### Daria



Daria is 50 years old. “I like the music and arts and crafts. My favorite song is ‘Glory, Glory Alleluia’.” Daria has been coming for a long time. She wanted to be sure she got several copies of Rays of Hope to share with her family.

### Matthew

Matthew – Matthew is 7 years old. He was very busy making dental molds with clay. Of course, he had an assistant, a dentist. He said his favorite thing was his rocket ship scooter and you guessed it, playing with clay.





- Kristyn St-Martin 2
- Rhonda Cantu 3
- Russ Edwards 4
- Saylor Torres 4
- Richard Hielkema 6
- John Lacher 7
- Gem Harris 8
- Debra Gonzales 8
- Forrest Uppendahl 17
- Geoff Bokan 18
- Kathy Smith 18
- Bonny Arseneau 18
- Ignacia Wickert 19
- Fran Hveem 20
- Tony Kovarik 23
- Rugh Hinkel 23
- Dolores Hughes 25
- Isaac Williams 25
- Arleen Sakelaris 27
- Jeanette McNealy 28
- Rudy Simek 31

## Heart Strings



*Members of COH unable to worship with us on a regular basis. Please*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Dale and Edee Bauer</b> 4905 Wagon Mound Trail NW Albuquerque, NM 87120</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>John Fries</b> Gardens - Retreat Villas Assisted Living 4100 Jackie Road SE, #15 Rio Rancho, NM 87124</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Karen Reiten</b> 899-1504 4841 Shin Avenue NE Rio Rancho, NM 87144</p>
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	Day	Years Married
Leof and Susan Strand	3	55
Don and Beth Cretsinger	4	60
Janet and Wayne Conlon	7	47
Jason and Laurie Adams	8	25
Steve and Staci Spinks	17	32
Ross and Keri Sutter	17	48
Todd and Kathy Bramley	19	34
Gary and Fran Hveem	20	62



**Ruth Hinkel**  
Fairwinds @ Rio Rancho, Apt. 146  
920 Riverview Dr SE  
Rio Rancho, NM 87124

**Julia Hawkins**  
3301 Coors Rd NW - R260  
Albuquerque, NM 87120

**Caroll Werling**  
Palmilla Senior Living,  
10301 Golf Course Rd NW - Room 144  
Albuquerque, NM 87114



# Youth News

By Nancy Lacher

During July, some of our youth continued gathering together in fellowship. We had three boys attend Rainbow Trail Confirmation Camp during the week of July 16 - 21. The boys attended with the adult chaperone, Nancy Lacher. All of us had an excellent time and learned so much. We explored God's amazing grace during the week with different aspects as a part of our daily Bible study and worship, such as the "Sweet Spot of Grace", God's grace doesn't give up on you", and "Responding to God's Grace".

In addition, we hiked, played games, did crafts like wood carving and pottery, and experienced the low and high ropes course. It was quite a week. Enjoy some of these pictures. We hope to have a Rainbow Trail Sunday this fall so you can get a taste of what we did.



Last Sunday, our Senior High Youth wanted to have a tea party where they dress up, eat church cake, drink tea, listen to music and dance. They called it their Tea Party Prom. A good time was had by all those who attended.

We are looking forward to our fall events this year. We will be planning with our youth coordinator and pastor in the next month.

# Women on Wednesday (WOW)

By Kathy Gorman

Welcome to Women on Wednesday. We meet the first and third Wednesday of the month September until May from 4 to 5:30p at Cross of Hope. This is an opportunity for us all to learn more about the Bible and each other. In the session this year we will be talking about our favorite Bible verses in depth. Mark your calendars for September 6. There will be a welcome party at Bart's House, and it will be hosted by Bart and Tessa. (Drinks and snacks provided). It will be from 3 to 4:30p at 5205 Sweetwater Dr. NW.

All you need to bring is yourself. There will be opportunity at the welcome party to sign up for the date you would like to talk about your favorite Bible verse, as well as letting me know what it is so I can add it to the final schedule. This will give everyone an opportunity to read it and think about it before we meet. I also imagine people talking about how their favorite verse has been interpreted over time or even spread into popular culture in the form of music or television or movies. Mainly this is a chance for us to all meet and greet each other to get ready to start up again. I also have cornhole supplies if anyone wants to play and Bart might choose to show off on his agility course. If you have questions, please talk to me at church or email at [klgorman@aol.com](mailto:klgorman@aol.com).



Pastor Rick Alpers sharing God's word during Pastor Adam's sabbatical



# Nurse's Corner

By Mary Hughes, RN

## “An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure”

This is an old saying that is still relevant today. With the beginning of a new school year, this is a great time to check your health records for immunization updates. It is important for children and teens to have the required school vaccines before they return to the classroom. Immunizations can save a child's life; they are safe and effective. Immunizations protect you and others, now and in the future.

Vaccines are not just for children! Adults need to get boosters to bring immunity levels back up. Tetanus (lock jaw) should be renewed every 10 years. In addition to our current guidelines, grandparents are now expected to have a Pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine before they are allowed to hold their new grandchild. We all know how important that is!

Last but not least - Don't forget your annual flu vaccine and additional COVID vaccines (if applicable). They are easy, available, and definitely better than a “pound of cure”.

You can check your immunization history at your health clinic or online at: [VaxViewNM.org](http://VaxViewNM.org), or talk with one of our many friendly, knowledgeable nurses here at Cross of Hope.

## Family Promise Hosting August 6-13

Thank you all for your support! Your Prayers matter so much! We have volunteers to commune and spend valuable, unquestioning acceptance with our four adults and four children from 5-7p each evening. We also have additional volunteers to provide hot food in the evenings.

Many of you have already donated supplies and food. If you have not delivered your food items already, please be reminded that everything needs to be labeled Family Promise and need to be at Church by 11a Sunday, August 6. On Friday, August 4 from 1-3p, Jan Anderson will be at COH to accept donations and gifts.

Generously, you have donated financially as well, Your financial donations during this critical time of transition and renovation. Family Promise is needing to raise \$100,000 to begin this project. When you donate, emails of thanks and details informing you of all progress will be sent. You are good and faithful servants of our Lord!

Blessings always,

Glenna Meneely and Jan Anderson





# The Happy Hoper

## April Abeyta

By Mary Bresnahan

**Birthdate:** April 14, 2008

**Parent:** Tara Toledo

**Current School:** eCademy High School

**Hobbies:** COH youth and nursery, babysitting, writing poems and a fictional book with the youth group

**Work:** St. James Tea Room

**Birthplace:** Las Cruces, NM

**Siblings:** Alex 14, Silas 8

**Grade:** Senior in high school

**Extra Curricular:** President of the Student Council, Secretary of the Key Club, All Faith Children's Advocacy

When COVID caused in person schools to “lock-down,” April and her mother sought an alternative. April started attending eCademy which is an on-line school. She likes it and does well. She watches a video, does her assignments and then has the rest of the time for other activities. If she needs tutoring, she can get it through virtual meetings. The only time she is at school with others is for Student Council and Key Club meetings.

April is a member of the Key Club which is the high school version of Kiwanis Club. Her Key Club has worked to support other students who don't have sufficient resources, like food. The Student Council arranges dances and other social events. The students are currently working with four other high schools to organize a prom. Activities are mostly student led. The club advisor is available to help make phone contacts.

Through All Faith Children's Advocacy, April connects with children who have experienced traumatic events. All Faith's focus is on the prevention, intervention, investigation and treatment of childhood trauma. They provide a child-friendly facility where law enforcement, child protection, family advocacy therapy and training is offered to children and their caregivers safety and a road to healing and recovery. Through Student Council and Key Club April and other students have collected food for those involved with All Faith's.

April and her family attend Wednesday evening activities at Cross of Hope. This works best with their schedules and is a good break in the middle of the week. They knew about Cross of Hope because her youngest brother attended pre-school here. Her grandmother knew a teacher here and helped pay the tuition so he could attend. April likes the sense of community, which is very important to her. This is where she and her brother Alex have friends. The people at Cross of Hope have similar values.

April envisions her future first as graduating on time. After that she would like to work in the film industry. She was introduced to this by family members in Georgia and her uncle's girlfriend. She

April continued from page 12

would like to be the person who scouts out film locations, working up to a location manager. In this job she would work with law enforcement to ensure the location is secure. April said this connects with what she has done in Student Council. Plus, she gets to travel to look for “cool places”. If this doesn’t work out then “Plan B” would be doing something similar.

April intends to attend college for a bachelor’s degree relevant to her aspirations in film. She has heard of a school in Georgia, or she may go to CNM and then on to UNM.

When asked what she would like to see more of in the world, April replied, “kindness”. She would like to see people helping others; see women’s rights go further; equal pay and more opportunities. There should be more encouragement for people who don’t have opportunities. This could happen with employers opening up more. April realizes that employees would also have to do their part.

April mentioned kids need to finish school. Her example was Freedom High, a school that provides credit recovery opportunities. New Futures High School is for pregnant and parenting students. She has found that at her school it is hard to get people to give. All of this is why she likes Cross of Hope projects intended to help others less fortunate.

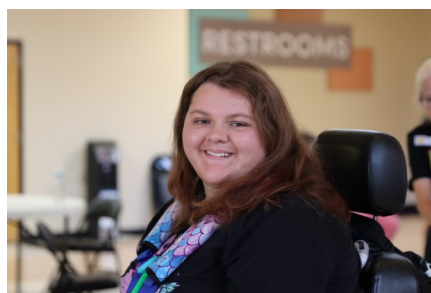
April said she would like to see less of “me first” attitude in people. “It is better to be kind.” Guess that says it all.

April shared that she has been on the other end of things. Her mother struggled when April was younger. Now she works at All Faith and the family is doing well. April’s mother has been supportive of her education and goals. April helps her brothers with their homework and other after-school activities.

If you are around on a Wednesday evening, strike up a conversation with April. You won’t regret it!



# More Special Needs Vacation Bible School Pictures



## Lunch Bunch

**Wednesday, August 8, 1:00pm**  
O'Hare's Grill and Pub  
4100 Southern Blvd.  
SE Rio Rancho

**Questions?** Contact Beth Cretsinger  
Call/text (505) 249-1162, or email [ddbcrets@gmail.com](mailto:ddbcrets@gmail.com).



**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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It's been a year! With my first year under my belt as production editor, I appreciate all of my editors, reporters, columnists, photographers and Linda Willoughby for all of the great and much needed guidance.

Blessings and gratitude, Lynne



**Cross of Hope Church and School  
Congregational Council Team  
cohcouncil@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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Other Appointments  
Necessary Errands



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Assistance is available:

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



## 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.

## August Book Suggestions

Recommended by Dee Gutierrez

### **The Circle Maker: Praying circles around your biggest dreams and greatest fears - Mark Batterson (suggest additional participant guide)**

Sharing inspiring stories from his own experiences as a prayer circle maker, Batterson will help readers uncover their heart's deepest desires and God-given dreams and unleash them through the kind of audacious prayer that God delights to answer.

### **The Problem of Pain - C.S. Lewis**

The Problem of Pain is a 1940 book on the problem of evil by C. S. Lewis, in which Lewis argues that human pain, animal pain, and hell are not sufficient reasons to reject belief in a good and powerful God.

### **The Strength of His Hand (a novel book 3 of 5) - Lynn Austin**

Chronicles of the Kings Book 3- God has rewarded Hezekiah's faithfulness with great wealth and power, but the godly king has no heir. In desperation, his beloved wife takes forbidden measures to ensure fertility. With all that is going on in his kingdom-- and with the Assyrians approaching-- Hezekiah does not discover his wife's idolatry until it's almost too late. Her betrayal cuts to the very core of his being and belief in God. Will his faith sustain him in the face of this deceit, and against an overwhelming enemy?