



Love • Transform • Serve

# RAYS of HOPE JOURNAL

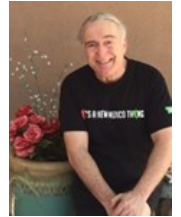
July 2023, Volume 41, Issue 7

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.

## CHRISTIANS - RELAX!

By Pastor Rick Alpers



*"And a great windstorm arose, and the wave beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion..."*

Mark 4: 37-38

If I were to ask you about an image of Jesus, I'm sure you could come up with some ideas. Maybe you'd suggest Jesus feeding the five-thousand, or perhaps Jesus healing the blind man. Another possibility might be Jesus teaching in the Temple, or raising Lazarus from the dead. But I would imagine the image of Jesus presented in the two verses above would not come to mind. Jesus nurtured, healed, taught, and performed miracles, yes, but he also rested!

There's Jesus, in the back of the boat, asleep, probably sawing logs, with his head comfortably occupying the prime position of a cozy cushion. The Greek word means exactly that, cushion or pillow. He was unaware of what was going on, since he was out of it. A storm was happening, but he had taken a trip to dreamland. Why? Because he **had** to. The Son of God realized that there is a time for everything, and this means there is a time to rest, even in the midst of intensive ministry to others, even in trying circumstances. He trusted God completely, if a storm came up, he would not perish.

There's always a percentage of Christians who have a hard time doing this, even when it's Summer. They feel guilty if they're not doing **something** for God every minute. Even if the angel Gabriel came to them and commanded them to rest they'd not be able to relax at all. How could they? There's a heavenly harvest that needs tending to. But a wiser heart might realize that we are all human beings, and that maximizing effectiveness often means knowing when to walk and when to abstain from labor.

It's July! Take your trips, spend time with family, spend some time exploring the wonders of our state, our country, our world. Let your batteries recharge. Then, when the church programs, tasks, and responsibilities reemerge this Fall you'll be ready to tackle them with enthusiasm and gusto. Life patterns occur in cycles, and part of a healthy cycle is knowing when and how to recreate. Jesus himself is an example of this.

**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.

**Congratulations to Courtney, our Pre-school Director**

Master's Degree earned in May 2023. We are proud of you Courtney



# Cross of Hope School News

## Meet Susan Rivera, Director of School Ministry

July 1, 2023



I am beyond blessed to be entrusted with the role of Director of Cross of Hope School Ministry. I moved to Albuquerque three years ago in the middle of the pandemic and ‘found’ Cross of Hope while on a walk to the park from my nearby apartment. Originally from San Bernardino, CA, I moved to Aurora, CO in 1987 to raise my family, served in the preschool ministry at Galilee Baptist Church in Denver, and earned my teaching degrees. I am a licensed teacher in the state of New Mexico, with a bachelor’s degree in human communication, and a master’s degree in education, and teaching experience with Aurora Public Schools from 2000-2020. It was through that experience that I fell in love with teaching, both children and adults

After moving to NM in 2020 and spending a year as a nanny for four amazing girls during COVID, God led me back to my heart’s desire, teaching kindergarten here at Cross of Hope. God has faithfully shown me how wonderful teaching can be in a supportive, Christ-centered community! In addition to teaching, it’s also my privilege to serve with Apartment Life Ministries, making Christ known to the residents in my apartment community by coordinating events and ministering to the needs of the staff and residents at Stride West.

Inspiring others through curiosity in a classroom comes second only to raising my two sons; Aaron, 32, who lives in Colorado with his dog and two cats, and Jake, 34, who lives here in Albuquerque with his wife, Jess, and my three grandkids, soon to be four in October! Spending as much time as possible wrapped up in their sweet, loving arms, (or zooming in with Aaron) is my greatest joy. In my spare time, I belong to a hiking group, a women’s bible study, a community group, and a sorority of women educators, DKG. Yes, I am an extroverted extrovert!

I can’t wait to see how God will work through me here at Cross of Hope. I am so thankful for all the love, support, and the encouragement received from our school and the church community. Thank you for your continued prayers as we work together to serve the families, teachers, and students. Please feel free to stop by, introduce yourself, and see what opportunities we can partner together with on this incredible journey.

Blessings,  
Susan Rivera

## 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.

- FT Elementary Teacher**
- PT Lead Preschool Teacher**
- PT Educational Assistant in Preschool**
- PT Extracurricular Teacher (art, library, music, Spanish) Cross of Hope School is hiring**

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 Margie Reed. Council President

Every third Tuesday of the month, the Cross of Hope Council holds their meetings. Sometimes we meet in the alcove, sometimes in the Sanctuary and sometimes in the Great Hall. The Conference Room is no longer the ideal space to hold a meeting because it is now the office of the Director of Communication.

There are a lot of activities going on in the Church during the week at COH. We are the lucky ones who share Tuesday evening with the members of the Bagpipers. They are here, like mail delivery through rain, snow, wind, and any other kind of weather. They are dedicated!

It was floor cleaning time again at COH. Classrooms and hallways were off limits because of the washing and waxing of the floors and the cleaning of carpets. I must admit the smell from the wax is something that makes your eyes water and nose run. I turned on all the air conditioners hoping the smell would disappear, but it didn't.

We decided the best place to meet would be in the old conference room. The AC was turned on, the door was closed and hopefully we wouldn't be bothered by the smell.

Well, the bagpipers and drummers started to arrive. Because we were inside the offices, we weren't aware that they set everything up outside our meeting room and began to practice – loudly. We kept going with our meeting and not only survived the bagpipers but managed to have a productive meeting. It's just hard to sit still when they start playing those bagpipes and drums – makes you want to do a little march.

And so, after a call to order, a devotional was read by Linda Ehlers and the meeting began.

The Consent Agenda, consisting of the May 17, 2023, minutes; the approval of hiring Susan Rivera to the position of Director of School Ministry; and to approve paying Susan Rivera up to 120 hours at her current salary during June while she works with Debra Alba to learn about her new position, were approved.

The School Ministry Team presented a request to the Council to begin the process to interview and make recommendations to fill the following positions listed below.

Full time Elementary Kindergarten teacher; Full time First grade teacher; Part time preschool Educational Assistant;

Part time Lead preschool Teacher and Part time Extracurricular Teacher. We are waiting for information regarding hours, and salary for each position.

Susan Rivera, Nancy Lacher, and the School Ministry team will recommend the finalists and the Council will vote on hiring them.

Todd Bramley presented an overview of the financial reports and spoke about the FY 2023-2024 budget which will be presented at a special September Congregational Meeting.

Other projects in the works are updating the Employee Manual (Kristi Valdez); the Finance Manual (Todd Bramley) and the Human Resources Manual (Sherrie Simek and Margie Reed).



The meeting ended about 8:30pm and we all marched out while the bagpipers played one of their favorites!

# Special Needs Vacation Bible School



**When:** July 24 – July 28, 2023

**Where:** Cross of Hope Church

**Information:** 505-250-5186 Patty West-  
field

[Student Registration link](#)

[Volunteer Registration link](#)



RTLCC campers intently listening to camp counselors about God's word and his message of "It's all about Grace".



- Eva Hubbard 1
- Diane Carrico 1
- Marjorie Pool 1
- Dave Comfort 1
- Beth Locke 3
- Lynnette Anselmi 3
- Linda Ehlers 4
- Mary Hughes 6
- Liz Sanchez 8
- Jackie Taylor 9
- Isabel Wickert 9
- Jane Anderson 10
- Nicole Anderson 10
- Mia Maldonado 10
- Dale McCabe 10
- Pat Mohr-Kelly 10
- Duane Meneely 14
- Caroline Alba 18
- Cooper Horn 18
- Leilani Streff 21
- John Romisher 21
- Walter Hubbard 24
- Steven Weiss 26
- Stacey Taylor 26
- Deborah Rivera 29
- Doris Herrmann 30
- Draco Wormwood 30
- Stephanie Webb 31

## Heart Strings

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

<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> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Carroll Werling</b> Palmilla Senior Living, 10301 Golf Course Rd NW - Room 267 Albuquerque, NM 87114</p>
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	Day	Years Married
David and Diane Pressel	23	40
Brant and Kristyn St Martin	23	7
Michael and Dee Gutierrez	25	34
Louise Hawley and Bob Grogan	25	12
Steven and Laurie Weiss	26	20
Russ and Cheri Sorensen	29	51





# The Roving Hoper

School is out! Children are still at Cross of Hope having fun and learning about God’s kindness and grace. The scene is Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp. The questions to our campers were: “What was the most fun this week? What did you learn?”

I think you will agree, a good time was had by all!

## Kindergarten Ariana



Ariana will be in kindergarten. “Everything was fun but the most fun was playing with other kids.” Thinking really hard (& with a little help) “I liked the hippopotamus song.”

## 1st Grade Amaya



Amaya said she learned about camp from her mother since she used to work at Cross of Hope. “I liked recess the best. I got to see my sister, Anayla. I liked the hippopotamus song the best.”

## 2nd Grade Anayla



“The most fun thing I did was paint a rock. I put a cross on it. It is red, black, blue, and green. When I see it, I will remember here. We sang “Step by Step.”



Above:  
Singing and dancing to the “Hippopotamus Song”.

Roving continued from page 7

### 3rd and 4th Grade Piper and Hallie



Piper thought the most fun was playing with her friends. Halle loved “water day.” “We did the step and slide and filled sponges with water. Then we squeezed them out on people’s heads. Piper learned about Jesus and His grace. Hallie added, “We learned about helping others, being kind and not being selfish.”

### 5th Grade Mary



Mary learned about camp through her aunt. “I really liked meeting the animals and going to the fire station. I liked getting into an ambulance and wearing a coat and boots. The coat was really heavy. You have to put on your suit in one minute. The ambulance can hold six people. The hoses are thick and there are tools that can cut through a car.”



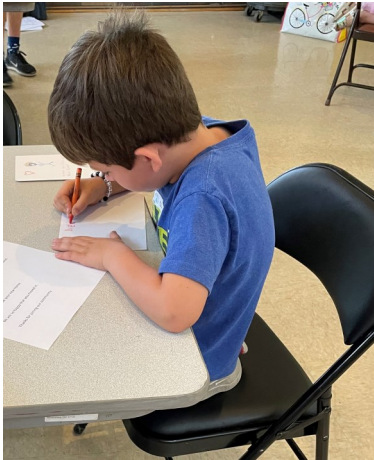
Morning Worship

Rainbow Trail  
Lutheran Camp





# Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp, June 2023



Making cards for Saranam



Keeping the campers hydrated!



Dancing and Singing, animals, and more!



Listening and looking at fossils with the Forest Ranger



Donations for Saranam



**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.

COH Small Group Ministry

Dear Faith-Filled Faith Connections Group Facilitators and participants!

With Pastor Adam on sabbatical through the month of July, we also have an opportunity for sabbatical renewal as well. Pastor Rick will continue the ministry of care and proclamation of the Good News at Cross of Hope in the month of July. We share the excitement of this time of renewal and thank you for your prayers through the summer.

Speaking of summer...Feel free to use whatever resources are available for your Faith Connections groups to have fun together this summer. Meet as often as you choose, have a picnic! Go skydiving! Whitewater rafting!! Read a good book! Be creative! Pray together!  
Blessings and Peace,

Pastor Russ, 505-400-8206, [r2csorensen@gmail.com](mailto:r2csorensen@gmail.com)

# Cross of Hope School Supply Drive

- 3-M (or high quality) sticky notes
- dry erase markers
- watercolor paint sets
- crayons (jumbo too)
- markers (bold tip and fine tip)
- sharpie markers (multi-colored, black, fine tipped)
- clorox wipes
- baby wipes
- kleenex
- paper towels

If you would like to contribute to individual grade supply lists, please visit the School Ministry site at: <https://www.crossofhope.org/schools/>

Please bring items to church throughout the month of July

# Trees

By The Church Mouse

“I think that I’ll shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree”

Joyce Kilmer

“He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season. And its leaf does not wither, and in whatever it does, it prospers.” Psalms 1:3

How many of you like to garden? Maybe you like to plant flowers or vegetables or maybe trees or bushes. I once worked with a teacher who would pick a day every spring and take her advanced English class outside and they would plant a tree or bush. There was no significance of the day. She just thought that planting a tree or bush, was a good way to interest students in horticulture. Whether it worked or not, I don’t know, but many years later, most of those trees and bushes still beautify the campus of that school.

If you check in the Bible, you will find reference after reference to trees and plants. In fact, there is an entire podcast about trees of the Bible. For example, there are many references to the Tree of Knowledge or the Tree of Life. Or how about the sycamore tree that Ezekiel climbed. You can read about that in Matthew 21:19-22. Of course, we can’t forget the tree that became the cross that Christ died on. One final thing I found about trees said, “Trees are like Jesus- they keep giving and giving life, beauty, shade, rest, strength and stability”.

Do a little research in the Bible and read how those wonderful trees give us so much. You’ll be amazed.

# Family Promise

By Jan Anderson



Cross of Hope will be hosting Family Promise the Week of August 6-13. We have a slightly new look as Glenna Meneely has graciously offered to help me with FP coordination and responsibilities. Added to Hot Meals needed, weekend breakfast

delivery Saturday and Sunday. Hot meals are needed in the evening: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday as well.

An important aspect of the families’ process of healing and reorganizing their lives, we prepare evening meals, eat dinner, and make ourselves available to chat or play together with unquestioning acceptance from 5-7pm. This may also mean just being the anchors, (quietly) for the program, until a staff member returns at 7pm.

Currently there are four adults and four children in the program, but that may change when our week actually arrives! More dates and details will come soon. I will provide FP Ministry Moment July 16, and a sign-up table will be available on July 23 and July 30. Please call Jan Anderson for questions, 505 362 3663.



# The Happy Hoper Kaley McClain

By Mary Bresnahan



**Birthdate:** June 3, 2005

**Birthplace:** Albuquerque, NM

**Parents:** Trisha and Jonathan McClain

**Sibling:** Ethan, 15

**Current School:** Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School

**Grade:** Senior, graduate 2023

**Hobbies:** Singing, guitar, ukelele, acting in musicals and film at UNM

**Work:** Not currently

A treasured memory Kaley had of attending Cross of Hope Elementary was when she hung out with the after-school group. On Friday's they would make a snack. She got to melt chocolate to make peppermint bars. (Oh, finger-licking good!) This gave her the opportunity to get closer to other kids at Cross of Hope.

Currently Kaley is not working since there is too much going on at the end of senior year – much to complete and prepare for. However, she is still active with her acting. She acted in the musical “Frozen Jr” and is currently in “Legally Blond” at Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School.

Cross of Hope prepared her to take college level classes in high school. She has all of college level required courses completed. At Cottonwood Classical High School she has been in the International Bachelorette (IB) program. The six to tenth grade students are prepared to take the IB courses. She will take a test at the end of this year (May) that will transfer to her chosen university. Her test score will translate into the number of college credits she gets for the classes she has taken in high school. She currently has a 4.14 grade point average. It would appear that Kaley is well prepared for her next chapter in college.

Kaley has chosen to attend Ft; Lewis College in Durango, CO and has been accepted. She visited her parents’ alma mater (Monmouth College in Monmouth IL) and the University of Illinois. One was way too small for her and the other way too big. She felt very comfortable at Ft. Lewis and it is closer to home. Kaley described her family as “close”. Her aunt and uncle, grandparents (Pat and Laura Benchik) all live in the area. Her mother, Trisha, is currently a nanny for a toddler. This arrangement gave Trisha the opportunity to finish her Master’s degree in Education, Elementary Reading and Literacy on-line at Walden University which she completed in March 2023. Trisha previously was a kindergarten teacher at Cross of Hope. Kaley’s dad, Jonathan, is a computer scientist at Sandia Labs. (Kaley mentioned that her uncle also works there.) Her brother, Ethan, is currently a freshman at Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School.

Kaley continued from page 12

Kaley said there is a reciprocity agreement between Colorado and New Mexico. This gives her in-state tuition at Ft. Lewis. In addition, she has applied for 45 other scholarships. This is a fascinating journey since there are some very unusual scholarships available. Kaley is still waiting to hear on some. For example, she has applied for a “Brown Eyes” scholarship. Another was about where she would want to live in ten years. She selects a house from numerous photos and the location. There is a website filled with different kinds of scholarships available to graduating high school seniors.

Kaley shared that originally she envisioned starting her own tech business providing more affordable and reliable technology. That was when she thought she wanted to be a computer engineer. Now that she has changed her mind about that her thoughts are evolving. She would like to do something in business that would help those in need.

She is thinking of being a business owner/entrepreneur. There are certainly many possibilities. With AI looming on the horizon, I have to wonder how that will play into her final direction. From those of us who are a little older, what a great confusing and joyous time to be figuring out how to write the next chapter in her life.

Kaley would like to see people be more supportive of others. She said it is easy to be independent and pretend you don't need help. However, it is important that when the need arises help is readily available. Cottonwood Classical is very competitive. Kids (people) need to know it is ok to ask for help.

On the other end of the spectrum, Kaley would like to see less competition. “Society can be very competitive.” Some people play dirty and find loopholes. We would have a better community if everyone created a win/win situation versus win/lose. It appears Kaley knows her moral compass. Hopefully she won't lose sight of it in our competitive world.

Kaley and her family usually attend the second service. Can/would you engage Kaley in a conversation about achieving what she envisions in her future. Seems the possibilities are endless.

## Lunch Bunch

**Wednesday, July 12, 1:00pm**

Garcia's Kitchen  
 6390 Coors Blvd NW  
 Southeast corner of Coors and La Orilla

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



# Property Update

by Pat Benchik, Property Manager

## Management in Summer

Summer at COH brings some quiet times for school, but summer doesn't mean quiet times for COH property management team.

Summer is time for managing the lawns, maintaining the grounds, trimming the trees, and battling the skunks, sand wasps and other critters that invade our space.

Summer is a wonderful time for outdoor services, youth summer camps, and the ongoing good of COH ministries.

Meanwhile the Church and its administration keep doing business "as usual" - well almost!

In late June, every carpet in our beautiful church was professionally cleaned. Every floor was stripped and waxed. Every window was washed. Each chair and cushion in the Sanctuary were cleaned.

During July, our facility air conditioners and heating systems will receive their annual preventative maintenance.

Summer rains are always welcome and it's a great time for all of us to pray that our roofs won't leak.

I think I can speak for all of us involved in COH property management by adding the following.....

If it's worth doing it's worth doing right.

When it's broke fix it.

Every day we help many different people with many different things.

Your environment is a reflection of who you are.

Cleanliness is next to Godliness.

Enjoy your summer.



Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp, June 2023 - Dancing and Singing, animals, and more!

**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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**Courtney Knutilla, Preschool Director**  
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**SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF ALBUQUERQUE**

**Invites you to an fundraiser**

**A solo piano concert**  
**featuring Charles McDaniel**

**July 9, Sunday, 2:00 pm**  
**Heights Cumberland Presbyterian Church**  
**8600 Academy, NE**

**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

**Cross of Hope 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 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.

## June Book Suggestions

Recommended by Dee Gutierrez

### **The Cross and the Lynching Tree - James H. Cone**

The cross and the lynching tree are the two most emotionally charged symbols in the history of the African American community. In this powerful new work, theologian James H. Cone explores these symbols and their interconnection in the history and souls of black folk.

### **Brother to a Dragonfly - Will D. Campbell**

Campbell shares two of his stories. One is of his youth in rural Mississippi and his devotion to his brother whose life ended in seeming tragedy. The other tells of his ordination at age 17 and gradual realization that civil rights for blacks, for women, for gays was an essential part of a ministry that has not yet ended.

### **Song of Redemption: a novel book 2 of 5 - Lynn Austin**

When King Hezekiah discovers that God's Law forbids him to take multiple wives, he must choose one woman to love. He must also choose to trust God's promises when he decides to rebel against his powerful Assyrian overlords.