



Love • Transform • Serve

# RAYS of HOPE JOURNAL

February 2024, Volume 42, Issue 2

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.

## An Invitation to Lent

*Now when the centurion, who stood facing Jesus, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!' Mark 15:39*

Much like the Christmas cycle of our year starts with Advent and ends with the celebration of Epiphany, so too does the Easter cycle of our year start with a time of contemplation and reflection during the season of Lent and ends with the great celebration of Pentecost after the great fifty days of the Easter season. Starting on Ash Wednesday, the season of Lent is a time of going 'deeper in' to a relationship with God through reflection and devotional practice. The church offers resources for this journey deeper.

### Worship:

#### Ash Wednesday

12:30pm – A simple spoken Service of the Word with the Imposition of Ashes

6:30pm – Worship with Voices of Hope and Praise + Team and Imposition of Ashes

#### Sundays in Lent

9am and 10:45am – Be fed with the good news of Jesus and Holy Communion.

### Devotion: \_

#### A Voice Calling

Lent Devotions for 2024 by Laura Burton – more information on page 4.

#### Christ in our Home

Shared together Monday thru Friday at 9am on the Cross of Hope Facebook page.

#### Wednesday Morning Prayer

A simple time of prayer, scripture and silence at 8:30am every Wednesday during Lent.

### Study:

#### Making Faith Connections

Small Group ministry to go deeper on our worship texts around the theme Why Church?

More information on page 6.



**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**

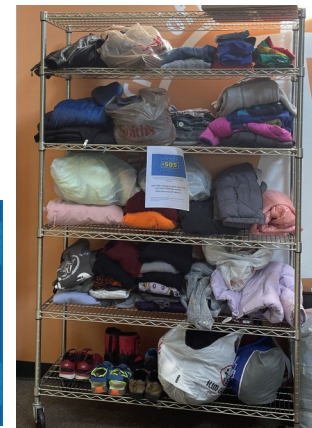
Deadline is 10th of the month for the following month's edition. Send E-mail articles to [office@crossofhope.org](mailto:office@crossofhope.org), [lbagby@crossofhope.org](mailto:lbagby@crossofhope.org), or deliver to church office.

**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**

Thank you for your donations of coats to Locker 505.



It was crazy hair day. Guess who!

School continued on page 3

**New Church Staff**

We are excited to welcome two new staff members at Cross of Hope,. RC Jordan is our Director of Worship and Community Life and Peggy Bierdermann is Director of Digital Life

**On Sunday, February 11**, COH will be holding a light brunch in honor of Nancy Morrison, R.C. Jordan and Peggy Biedermann. Please see Faith Filled Happenings for additional information to come.

We are thanking Nancy for stepping into the communication and media gap at a very important time in our church calendar. We will be welcoming R.C. and Peggy to new positions at COH.

School continued from page 2



# The Roving Hope- r

By Mary Bresnahan

The Christmas holidays are now behind us and we are well into a new year. With that comes thoughts of love - Valentine's Day. What could be more perfect than to ask our Cross of Hope students "What is Love?" Get ready, they had a lot to say.

## Kindergarten - Diego



"Love is hugging people you know and like. They are a good person, like Ms. Abeyta. She is my teacher. I'm friends with people I love like Coach Alex. Oh! I love my parents and my brother."

## First Grade - Amaris



"It's when you love someone you show them by giving them a smile. You are in a relationship with them and you hug the person. I love my cousin. She always asks, "Let's have a playdate" when we Facetime. I love my mom and dad. I give them a kiss on the cheek and hug them."

## 2nd Grade—Isla



"Love is God. Love is friends. Love is family. If you love someone you show them by touching them, talking to someone who is sad. God shows he loves us by creating us and dying on the Cross for us. I show love to God by praying to Him and doing good things to others."

## 3rd Grade—Colton



"Love is helping someone and being a great friend. Jayce is my best friend. I play with him at recess and call him a few days a week. I help him with his math. I will be out of town on Valentine's Day. My birthday is a few days before."

## 4th Grade - Christian



"Love is a feeling for someone that you know. You feel good about them. Every time you see them you smile. You can talk to someone in a nice way. I hug the people I love. I give them compliments. I'm trying to teach other people I know how to treat others. I tell everyone the funniest secret - I was about four or five, I put my backpack in the toilet!"



A Voice Calling continued from page 1

# A Voice Calling - A Lent Devotion



Listen. There is a voice calling from the desert inviting us to enter a sacred space. A space where through fasting, prayer, reading Scripture, and meditation we quiet the worldly voices that shout and intentionally focus on seeking to hear God’s still small voice. By trying something new, even challenging, this Lent, our relationship with God can be enriched and deepened. I desire to know God more deeply, to grow in His grace, and to reflect Him more richly. Join me as we step into the uncomfortable and maybe even the unknown because I am confident we will find God along this path.

Each week will include a reading focused on the Stations of the Cross. The first day of the week will have the text of the reading for reference throughout the week. In addition, each week will include a piece of classical art centered on the Station of the Cross to provide visual encouragement for our meditations and reflections. Each day we are encouraged to focus on and practice one of the ancient spiritual disciplines. Each day will also include reflections, quotations, or stories of witnesses, including martyrs to draw our hearts toward God.

Roving Hope-r continued from page 3

## 5th Grade - Cooper



“Love is a relationship and you have good feelings. You are glued together. You’re friends with each other. There is a romantic love and you can still be friends. I love my dog. I’ve had him since I was one. I hang out with him (Stephen, a Chihuahua). I love my parents. I’m kind to them and am always with them.”



## Director of School Ministry - Susan Rivera



“It’s a hard question. God is love. I think about what love does:

- ♥ Serving others
- ♥ Humbling ourselves
- ♥ Giving grace
- ♥ Giving compassion

In a nutshell, God is love—I go out and give of myself.”

## Speaking of Love . . .

*“Let us love one another” 1John 4:7*

Our February Chapel theme is “Anchor in Love”. God wants us to love and care for others



Anchor in Love

## Council Corner

by Greg Morrison, Council Member

At the close of last year and the start of this year technology was at the forefront of activity. Like any other business, the use of computers has become paramount to the success of our organization. As such, staying current with computer upgrades is a requirement. During the budget process last year, the council approved the purchase of new computers on a rolling basis replacing several every year. In December the first of the computers budgeted for this year were purchased and installed.

December also saw the installation of a new remote controlled camera system to enhance the organization's streaming capabilities. Two new pan/tilt/ zoom cameras, a camera controller, switcher/encoder and a new computer were installed replacing the use of a single cell phone to stream worship, memorial and other service activities held in the sanctuary. The system is able to stream feeds from the two cameras and the PowerPoint presentation computer, and has the capacity to add additional cameras should that be desired in the future. The new system is also connected to the large TV monitors in the great hall allowing for view of the activities there.

Early January saw the purchase and installation of new wireless microphones to replace aging equipment, enhance the sound system capacity and increase the range of the microphones. Two new wireless body pack microphones replaced the one used by Pastor Adam and added a new matching one that can be used for a second pastor or assisting minister. The three aging handheld baton microphones were replaced with four new ones with enhanced sound quality. Initial use of the six new wireless microphones has demonstrated significant enhancement in the ability to not only control sound quality but allow for easier use by those using the microphones.

These new technology enhancements, while still requiring some tweaking to fully incorporate the capacities into our community's life, will bring new and exciting capabilities to Cross of Hope as we strive to meet our mission of sharing Christ's love through worship, education and outreach.

## Family Promise Hosting Week of March 10-17

The Family Promise Program truly needs our prayers and support. I know you are prayer warriors, so Glenna Meneely and I thank you in advance!

There are currently two families. Two single mothers, each with one child. There is a 6 month old baby girl who is excited to begin some more solid foods! There is a 9 year old girl. We will receive updated information about our families as our hosting date gets closer.

We need to provide hosts from 5-8pm and HOT MEALS: 6 evenings. (excluding Wednesday). Weekend meals consist of hot breakfasts either in groceries or by delivery. SIGN-UP tables will be in the Great Hall February 25 and March 3 between services for hosts, meals, supplies, and groceries. The monthly donation request list is posted on FP Bulletin Board. Monetary donations are always needed and welcomed. Thank you!!

There are some changes coming regarding the building for static site shelter and FP offices. Jan will have the most current information at the February 18 Ministry Moment.





**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

**Epiphany: A Season of Light, let the Light . . .**

2/4/24 Lead Mark 1:29-39

2/11/24 Reveal Mark 9:2-9 Transfiguration

These are the final two themes in our Epiphany series connected to the Gospel and Jesus - the light of the world - whom we long for and whose light lives through our lives of faith. Read below for our Lenten focus

Lent continued from page 1

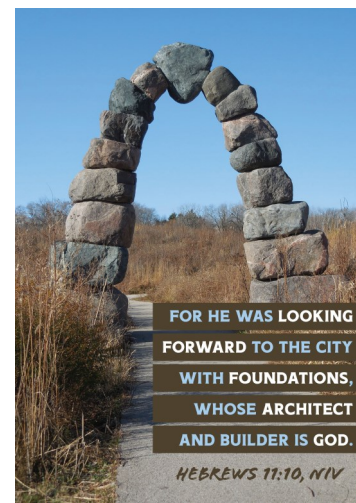
**Lenten Series: Why Church?**

The Lenten season invites us to slow down and reflect both as individuals and a congregation. It is a time to return to our "foundations" Each week we will focus in small groups on our foundation of grace and the Cross.

2/18/24 Lent 1 Foundations Hebrews 10:19-25

2/25/24 Lent 2 Story 2Timothy 1:3-7

**Open group meetings:** Sunday's 9:45am and Wednesday's 6:30pm. Talk with Pastor Russ Sorensen about other available time options at [r2csorensen@gmail.com](mailto:r2csorensen@gmail.com) or (505) 400-8206.



If you are interested in being part of a small group, contact the church office at (505) 897-0047, ext. 102 or Pastor Russ.

**Lunch Bunch**

Join the lunch bunch for a special lunch on Wednesday February 21 at 1 pm. Bring your favorite Valentine. Lunch will be at Milly's, 73708 Jefferson Street NE.

Please call or email Leon Carrico. 505 554-1128 [leeoncarrico@gmail.com](mailto:leeoncarrico@gmail.com) by noon on Monday, February 12 to let him know how many from your family will be attending.





## Heart Strings

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

Jane Fuller	5
John Valdez	6
Nancy Leon	7
Mike Sakelaris	8
Greta Williams	11
Karen Wilson	15
Carroll Werling	16
Glenna Meneely	18
Lucy Benhem	18
Shannon Reynolds	19
Robert Phillips	21
Leof Strand	24
Corbin Bencomo	24
Leeon Carrico	24
David Albin	25
Morgan Case	27
JanaLee Sponburg	28

<p><b>Dale and Edee Bauer</b> 4905 Wagon Mound Trail NW Albuquerque, NM 87120</p> <p><b>John Fries</b> Gardens - Retreat Villas Assisted Living 4100 Jackie Road SE, #15 Rio Rancho, NM 87124</p>	<p><b>Karen Reiten</b> 899-1504 4841 Shin Avenue NE Rio Rancho, NM 87144</p> <p><b>Carroll Werling</b> Palmilla Senior Living 10301 Golf Course Rd NW Apt 144 Albuquerque, NM 87120</p>
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## Address Updates

<p><b>Starleen Cooley</b> 5000 Central Ave SE, Apt 1104 Albuquerque, NM 87108</p> <p><b>Tim and Linda George</b> 6704 Rimrock NW Albuquerque, NM 87120</p>
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	<u>Day</u>	<u>Years Married</u>
Bob and Bonnie Arseneau	2	39
David and Lynne Bagby	14	15
Bob and Margie Reed	19	58
Kevin and Deney Perkins	21	15
Bruce and Linda Molde	26	58

# Community Outreach News

### Blood Drive

Thanks to all who participated in our blood drive. Cross of Hope contributed 23 units of blood. Our next blood drive will be June 9. Please note the date and be ready to help out.

### Food Drive

We will have a food drive for the Rio Grande Food Project on Super Bowl Sunday, February 11. Please start collecting non-perishable food items to donate.





# The Happy Hope-r

## Linda Willoughby

### The Woman Behind the Scenes

By Mary Bresnahan

Birthdate: December 11, 1956

Birthplace: Coalinga, CA

Marriage: July 21, 1978

Where: Brawley, CA

Occupation: Administration and Music Teacher

Hobbies: Music (quartets, symphony, teach), walking, gardening, reading, socializing with a small group of friends

Linda was the third of four children born to Garland Watson Brittain and Frances Jane Brittain. While Linda was born in Coalinga, Ca, at the age of three the family moved to Imperial Valley, CA. Her dad, Garland, had a heat stroke before Linda was born which affected his memory. Nevertheless, he was always employed, working 1 ½ jobs to provide for the family. He was a jack of all trades. He took care of various facilities and the gardens for the school district. Linda’s mother, Frances, was an elementary school teacher teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). Most of her students were pre-kindergarten age. Frances was physically limited due to bone disease which resulted in numerous hip surgeries. She couldn’t do recess duty which was a requirement. Consequently, she could not continue teaching within the school system. So, she tutored children of all ages, ethnicities, and abilities. When Linda was in high school, she recalls her mother working with physically disabled adults including blind, deaf and brain injured, etc. Wow what resourceful and great role models both her parents were.

When Linda was about seven years old, she discovered an old violin in a bottom drawer. Linda asked her parents if she could learn to play this instrument. Her grandmother paid for her violin lessons which were given at Lou Lang’s Music Store taught by Lou’s wife, Ethel. Ethel noticed immediately that Linda had a good ear and would be a good teacher. So, she taught her to teach. Can you imagine this gift Linda received creating the foundation for her lifelong career.

Linda’s older sister, Marguerite, and older brother, Tom, were both musically inclined. Marguerite played the clarinet and Tom the trumpet. Linda would play ensemble hymns with them frequently in church. Her younger brother, Douglas, was not so inclined.

Linda played with Ethel in the symphony when she was in seventh grade. Ethel would take Linda, and several other musicians, to rehearsal in Yuma, AZ which was 86 miles away. Rehearsals went from 7 to 10pm. Linda didn’t get home until about 1 am.

The local school system did not offer anything for string instruments. In middle school, Linda played the bass clarinet. Later in college she played the contra bass clarinet. She would play the violin for special events such as musical productions at the school, weddings and funerals.



Linda continued from page 8

In 1975 Linda went to Point Loma College (affiliated with the Nazarene Church) in San Diego for two years. The generosity of a local doctor and his wife helped pay for her tuition. After two years, the doctor's family adopted a baby and could no longer afford to help with tuition. College is where Linda met Jeff Willoughby. They fell "madly in love." Jeff could only afford Point Loma College for a year. While Linda continued in school Jeff went home to Santa Clara (in northern California). Now they had a long-distance relationship until they married in 1978. They settled in Santa Clara since Jeff already had a good job with Epitaxy. Epitaxy made silicon wafers for computers. Jeff had been promoted to a supervisor position. That was quite a feat for someone so young! Linda got a job at Ramtek which made mainframe computers. She worked in the maintenance contract area.

Jeff was interested in becoming a California Highway Patrol Officer. After passing all the physical and mental entrance exams he was accepted in the training program. After two weeks of boot camp and an actual evening shift ride along he recognized this wasn't the job for him. He then interviewed and got hired to be a shift supervisor by Sumitomo Stix, a water processing company, which was a division of Mitsubishi and was later called Sumco.

Linda and Jeff bought a house in San Jose in 1981. Linda was still working for Ramtek Corporation in Publications which involved publishing software and hardware handbooks for machine operations and involved 4-6 color printing for the marketing of various types of equipment. She attended Mission Junior College and completed an Associates of Arts (A.A.) in Administration. She continued to play her violin and taught private music lessons and played with the Ohlone Chamber Orchestra from Fremont CA.

When PCs came on the market Ramtek closed. Linda went to full-time teaching affiliating with "The Music Place for Children." She taught group violin, group guitar and individual piano plus having private students.

In 1994 Jeff's company transferred him to New Mexico to establish a start-up facility. In January 1995, Linda moved here to join Jeff. For the first two months they were waiting for their house to be finished being built in Rio Rancho. In the meantime, they lived in the Del Rio apartments just southeast of Cross of Hope on Coors and Montano. Linda would go out for a walk every day and always admired the gardens at Cross of Hope. She was looking for a job that would allow her time to have private music students. There was an ad in the paper for a position at Cross of Hope. She called Cross of Hope and spoke with Pastor Dale (Bauer) and applied for the position. Pr. Dale was quite excited with this applicant. Linda was interviewed by 12 Council members. (That was scary.) Linda told the Council, "Your church could really use me." She has no idea where that came from. Obviously, it worked. That was April 1995. The rest is history.

At that time the pre-school met in the great hall. A campaign was started to raise money for the portable which the pre-school now occupies. In 1985 the sanctuary was originally the area between the poles in the great hall. Phase 2 (1988) added the sanctuary and office strip. In 2004, Phase 3 built the school wings, and the portable was moved to the current location.

Over the last 29 years you can only imagine how many people Linda has met. When asked what her favorite memories are, Linda said going out to lunch with the staff and volunteers annually. She likes to interface with everyone. Regarding the actual job, it is best when everything runs smoothly. We can all identify with that. This job has always allowed her to grow. "It always morphs."

Linda continued on page 10

# The Church Mouse

*“For to this you have been called because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in His steps.” 1Peter 2:21*



Is there someone you admire in your life? Someone you remember with great fondness. Of course, we remember our parents, grandparents, favorite aunts and uncles, and maybe even a teacher or two.

I asked numerous members of Cross of Hope who their favorite teacher was. Here are a few of their answers...one of our members said she remembered her 1st grade teacher. When I asked her why, she said because the teacher had been so caring. Another said that she remembered her fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Webb. She said that she had moved to a new school that year and she was separated from her twin sister and Mrs. Webb went out of her way to make her feel at home. I asked one of our male members and he named several teachers. He remembered a female teacher because she was so pretty. He remembered a male teacher he had later at mechanics school who was just a cool guy.

I'm sure all of you could add to that list. The teacher I admired was my high school Spanish teacher. She was the main reason I became a Spanish teacher.

Who else do you admire? What about the Pastors we have had here at Cross of Hope? We joined COH in 2008 and have been so impressed with all of our Pastors, Pastor Adam, Pastor Dale, Pastor Russ, Pastor Matt, Pastor Rick, and Pastor Pat. We have been truly blessed here at Cross of Hope. Take a few minutes to tell one or all of them how much you admire them and thank them for all they do.

Linda continued from page 9

Linda plays in a community orchestra called Albuquerque Symphony Orchestra of New Mexico. She gives private lessons on the violin and guitar. If you want to hear some great music, come to a performance of the Symphony. They usually perform twice a quarter. Linda attends and is a member of the Rio Vista Nazarene Church on Golf Course Road.

Linda had a dog (Border Collie named Annie May) who died a while ago. Now she has Pastor Adam's dog, Chai, to interface with a bit when Chai is at the office. Can't forget Linda's wild rabbits who come up on her patio for apples and carrots every morning. The neighbor's dog got jealous once and jumped the fence to chase the rabbits. However, the dog couldn't manage to get back over the fence and was scared when Linda "busted" him. He has never returned!

Jeff, Linda's husband, passed away rather suddenly one year ago, December of 2022. Jeff was a huge support to Linda with her music endeavors. He always told people that Linda was in the ministry by working at Cross of Hope. Jeff supported Linda by going to her concerts. He made sure that their current home, when it was being built, had a music room to teach lessons with a separate entrance. They enjoyed their home, having pets, taking walks, and watching movies some evenings.

Linda continues to be the "hub" for Cross of Hope. If you don't know Linda, know she is working hard on our behalf and keeps everything running smoothly. You can only meet her if you volunteer or drop in during the week. She definitely will make your day!

Thanks Linda for all you do.

**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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cohouncil@crossofhope.org**

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

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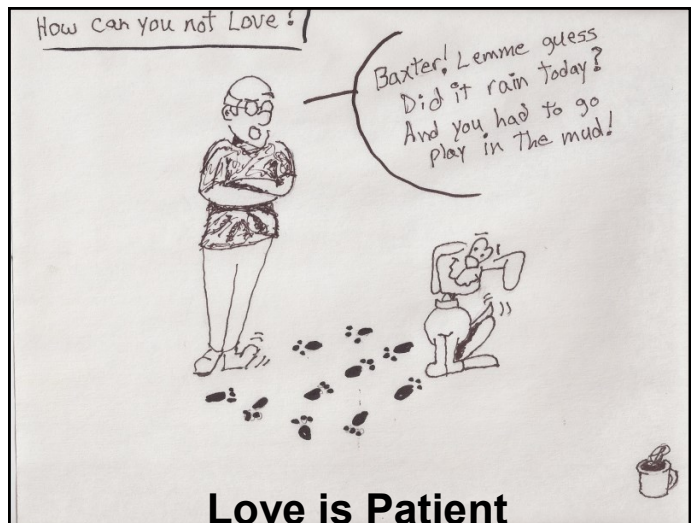
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**Love is Patient**

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



6104 Taylor Ranch Road NW  
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esdirector@crossofhope.org

School (505) 897-1832



Thanks to a wonderful team of volunteers, a broken pipe was fixed before a terrible flood!

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



6104 Taylor Ranch Road NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87120-2639

pssupport@crossofhope.org

Preschool (505) 899-0928

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**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



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**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

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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.

## February Book Suggestions

Recommended by Dee Gutierrez

### **Life Together-Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

*In Life Together, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, renowned Christian minister, professor, and author of The Cost of Discipleship recounts his unique fellowship in an underground seminary during the Nazi years in Germany. Giving practical advice on how life together in Christ can be sustained in families and groups, Life Together is bread for all who are hungry for the real life of Christian fellowship.*

### **Every Good Endeavor: Connecting your work to God's work - Timothy Keller**

Keller shows readers that biblical wisdom is immensely relevant to our questions about work today. In fact, the Christian view of work—that we work to serve others, not ourselves—can provide the foundation of a thriving professional and balanced personal life. Keller shows how excellence, integrity, discipline, creativity, and passion in the workplace can help others and even be considered acts of worship—not just of self-interest.

### **A Woman of Words - Angela Hunt ( Book 3)**

Disciple Matthew, a former tax collector, is invited to work with Peter, James, and John in Jerusalem. He dreams of preaching and performing miracles like his fellow apostles, but he finds his dreams postponed because of a request from Yeshua's mother. Well aware of the passing years, Mary asks Matthew to help her record the stories of Yeshua while the eyewitnesses are still alive.