



Love • Transform • Serve

# RAYS of HOPE JOURNAL

August 2024, Volume 42 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!



What a joy it is to be entrusted with the opportunity to love on teachers, students, families, and community as the Director of School Ministry here at Cross of Hope. Thank you for all the grace and love that was poured out last year. I learned so much and am excited to continue growing this year.

Teachers are preparing for our school year with professional development, safety training, and **anchoring in Jesus with a focus on being created to love and serve others**. This will be the heart of each and every classroom. **1st-5th grade students will return August 12, and our Kindergarten and preschool students will begin August 14.** We are so excited!

This year we are looking forward to:

- Welcoming 7 new staff members!
- Welcoming 17 new families into our community!
- Continuing our journey of accreditation in preschool with ASCI
- Beginning a journey of accreditation in our elementary school with COGNIA
- Adding a Music class
- Adding a math interventionist
- New curriculum for literacy in 3rd-5th grade
- New curriculum for Christian Studies in our Elementary school
- New curriculum for SEL, strengthening our social thinking skills
- And, continuing our community service projects to carry out the mission of loving our neighbors as well.

We would love to partner with you. Are you looking for a place to serve? Do you have items to donate? We also would love to have volunteers in our classrooms. Please know both are wanted and needed as we build a strong community with our church and our school.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or ideas you may have. My door is always open! 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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## Cross of Hope School

### SCHOOL REGISTRATION

Online Registration for the 2024-2025 year

[Click Here for Registration Details](#)



### 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



# Council Corner

by Sherrie Simek, Council Vice President

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; in all the ways know Him, and He will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6*



Photo courtesy of  
3MorrPhotos

## Created to Be

I am created to be loved - Doesn't this picture speak 1000 words? This picture truly captures what it is to be loved and to love. It is filled to the brim with laughter and delight. Enjoy.

## Created to Be Present

I was finding God's presence in Special Needs Vacation Bible School. Take a look at all of the pictures of on Facebook and in this publication. God was present everywhere!

## Created to be Me

I am a child of God, wonderfully and fearfully made. I am weird, a bit odd, compassionate, loving, and a little bossy!

## Created to be a Disciple

I am both a free and dutifully bound servant to all; sharing God's amazing love and grace. God dwells in me, and I am part of the story of God to create change in the world.

Thank you for your grace and indulgence. Now that I have your attention, let's talk Council news.

## Budget:

The majority of our meeting on July 23, 2024 was review and approval of the 2024-2025 budget. The budget will be presented at the congregational meeting on August 25.

## School Update:

- As I mentioned last month, the School Ministry team has made some hires. Lets put names to those new hires: Linda Aragon— 1st grade; Natasha Van Scyoc— 2nd grade; Jade Gilmore— Preschool Educational Assistant. Their start date is August 5, 2024 along with the returning teachers. Their salaries are within budget. Other positions have been interviewed for and additional hires have been made. Names and positions to follow in the September Rays Of Hope. As June rolls into July, enrollment and registration continues.

- Preschool has received the 5-star accreditation certificate for 2024-2025.
- Council approved funds for construction of a shade structure to Rader Awning for the elementary school. The plan is to have the shade structure in place as soon as it can be made, and then scheduled to be installed by the vendor.

As always, your council members are here to serve you. We are available for questions or comments. Seek us out.

Respectfully submitted, Sherrie Simek. Vice President Church Council

## Family Promise August 4-11, 2024



*For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink: I was a stranger and you took me in. Matthew 25:35*

The mission of Family Promise of Albuquerque (FPA) is to help families who are homeless in the Albuquerque community to achieve sustainable independence. FPA works with family's who are homeless, near homeless or recently exiting homelessness by providing shelter, intensive case management, job search assistance, life skills classes, and supportive services. Our goal is to build a community of support as we empower each family to overcome any barriers they may have to employment or housing.

Cross of Hope is full of such good and faithful servants of the Lord! Supportive prayers are gratefully accepted for the three adults, four teens and three children in the Program. Together, we make a difference to the future of these seven children and stability for the adults doing the hard work toward independent living.

We have hosts, volunteers to provide nightly meals, food for breakfasts. Any subsequent needs will be fulfilled with the monetary donations you offer to the mission of [Family Promise of Albuquerque](#).

If you are delivering food items, they need to be at the Church by 11:30 am on Sunday, August 4. We provide the food for the lunch items that day.

Please call me for any questions or concerns (505 362 3663)

Sincerely,  
Jan Anderson

## Lunch Bunch

**Wednesday August 14 at 1:00 pm at  
Luigi's Restaurant and Pizzeria  
6225 4<sup>th</sup> St NW**



Please call Leon Carrico or email him for a head count by August 12, 2024.

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

Email: [leoncarrico@gmail.com](mailto:leoncarrico@gmail.com).



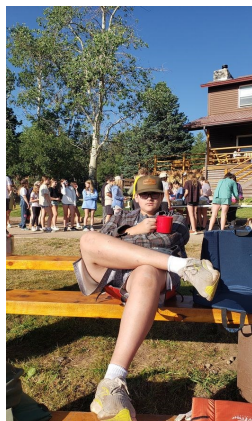


# Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp

*Jesus went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God. Luke 6:12*

This summer eight of our youth spent time 'up the mountain' in prayer, song, fellowship and fun, learning and growing in life and faith with our partners in ministry at Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp. As is our custom, I spent a week with our middle school youth at Confirmation Camp and the pictures here tell of our wonderful week! Stay tuned this fall for preparations for next summer and ways to support this foundational ministry

Peace,  
Pr Adam





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



## Heart Strings

*Members of COH unable to worship on site.*

**Carroll Werling**  
Palmilla Senior Living,  
10301 Golf Course Rd NW  
Apt. 144  
Albuquerque, NM 87114

**Linda Ehlers**  
5580 Mansfield Pl NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87114

## Notice of Address Change

**Rich and Pat Mohr-Kelly**  
1254 8th Street  
Jesup, IA 50648

**Forrest Uppendahl**  
10001 S. Oswego Street #353  
Parker, CO 80134

**Phones and emails** remain the same.

**Phone:** 505-228-7603



	<u>Day</u>	<u>Years Married</u>
Leof and Susan Strand	3-Aug	56
Don and Beth Cretsinger	4-Aug	61
Janet and Wayne Conlon	7-Aug	48
Jason and Laurie Adams	8-Aug	26
Steve and Staci Spinks	17-Aug	33
Ross and Keri Sutter	17-Aug	49
Todd and Kathy Bramley	19-Aug	35
Gary and Fran Hveem	20-Aug	63



Edee Bauer, wife of former Pastor Dale Bauer, passed away on July 16, 2024. A memorial will be held for her on September 7 at Cross of Hope Church at 10 am. Please keep her family members and Cross of Hope in prayer.

Cards for the family may be brought to the memorial or mailed to the church so the family can share them together.

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







# The Happy Hope-r

## Susan Rivera

By Mary Bresnahan



**Birthdate:** Dec. 11, 1963

**Married:** Tomas Rivera (divorced)

**Children:** Jake (35), Aaron (33)

**Occupation:** Educator

**Birthplace:** San Bernadino, CA

**When:** Sept. 1986

**Grandchildren:** 4 – Josiah (6), Mercy (4), Asher (2), Eden (6 months)

**Hobbies:** Grandkids, hiking, pigs, reading books, musical theater, games

Susan was born to Oscar and Shirley Gonzalez. Her dad immigrated to the U.S. from Mexico at the age of 12. He became a probation officer in San Bernardino, CA and held that job for 42 years. Susan's mother worked at the VA hospital in a variety of positions. Her parents were staunch Catholics and provided Susan with a firm faith foundation. Susan has one sister, Virg, who is older and lives in Sacramento, CA.

Susan was always close to her grandparents. One set lived next door to the family. The joy that this provided gave Susan the desire to have a similar relationship with her grandchildren.

When Susan was a junior in high school, she was awarded an Interact scholarship through Rotary. This was back in 1981 and the "Rotary Life Scholar" program had just started. (Interesting how things of the past come back into your life in some way. I told Susan it was Rotary who gave the first individual computers to the school.) She went to Japan for five weeks. Susan went on to college at California State University (Cal State) to study Business Administration. She floundered for two years and decided to quit.

She met her husband, Tomas Rivera, and married in September 1986. Tomas was in the Air Force and they relocated to Denver, CO in 1987. He was a "Ports of Call" Flight Engineer, (a person who consults with the ship's captain during the docking or undocking when entering or departing a confined waterway). He was working on his commercial pilot's license.

Susan's son Jacob was born in Nov. 1988 and Aaron arrived in Apr. 1991. During this time Susan was a stay-at-home mom. She home schooled her boys. Susan and Tomas divorced in June of 1995.



Susan continued from page 7

Susan decided to go back to school attending the University of Northern Colorado. She graduated Suma cum Laude in December 1999 (on her birthday – what a gift!) with a BA in Human Communication, and a license in Elementary Education. She said walking for graduation “was such a joy.”



In August 2000, Susan started teaching for the Aurora Public Schools in K – 5 grades. Second grade was her favorite. She found she really loved teaching. COVID hit in 2020! Online school was not for her. Out of 29 children, 12 showed up.

Her son Jake announced he and his family were moving to Albuquerque. He was a campus minister for “Navigators” (a ministry that shares the gospel of Jesus and helps people grow their relationship with Him through “Life to Life® discipleship.”) in Greeley CO and was reassigned to UNM. She “tagged along” because of the grandma role she wanted to create. Jake has been very supportive and told her, “You can do anything. God will equip you to do it.”

She attended New City Church which had an in-service worship. A lady introduced herself and said her daughter was trying to do online learning with her children and was struggling. They asked Susan to be a nanny to the children and help with the learning. What a blessing that turned out to be. They included her in their family. Additionally, she became a member of Albuquerque Newcomers Club. She met some like-minded women she could go hiking with.

At the end of the year, the children were going back to in-person school and Susan returned to the question of what to do. At the time, Susan lived in the apartments around the corner from Cross of Hope. She would take walks at Mariposa Park and noticed a sign looking for teachers. (I heard a similar story from Linda Willoughby. I think we should always put signs up in those apartments.) The timing couldn’t have been better. Susan became our kindergarten teacher and realized she was meant to teach. She never knew teaching could be so wonderful. Nothing is as amazing as being here at Cross of Hope.

When Debra Alba (our former Director of School Ministry) resigned Nancy Lacher asked if Susan had given any thought to taking Debra’s place. Of course, Susan’s first reaction was “no!” She then talked to her son, Jake, who gives her wise counsel. He told her, “Mom, you have had many assignments in your life, but this is your calling.” Three years had passed since her move to Albuquerque, and she had multiple jobs to make ends meet. She tutored with Tutor Doctor and had been involved in “Apartment Life Ministry” whose purpose was to “radically transform apartment living by making Christ known.” (Their website states they help apartment owners care for the residents by connecting them in meaningful relationships.) She was the Community Coordinator, which meant she would organize events for the apartment community twice a month and love on residents. There she met some wonderful people but knew if she became the school Director, she could no longer do both jobs.

Susan accepted the Director’s position and resigned her other job. She finally found a cute little farmhouse and moved to Corrales in March 2024. She enjoys being close to the Bosque where



Susan continued from page 8

she can walk and enjoy the quiet of nature. Susan describes this transition as going from “super busy” to truly be the MeMa” (grandma) she wants to be. She “finds peace which will overflow into service for others.” She feels she has the “opportunity to make an impact – I can truly represent Christ and love from a place of peace and not work. This is where God wants me to be.” She has “learned a lot in the last year and is excited to continue learning and see how God will use me in this role. I now have the opportunity to live a generous life.”

Susan’s son Jake is now the Youth Pastor at New City Church, where both she and her family attend. He graciously allows Susan to spend as much time with his four children as she wants, which is as often as she can! Not to have forgotten Aaron, he lives and works in Colorado as a lead floor manager with California Closets. Aaron studied Linguistics, translates in Japanese, and hopes to return to school to get his master’s degree - maybe even a doctorate in Linguistics. He is a fabulous dad to his three “fur babies,” sings with the Colorado Choir and loves musicals (Manga), and playing video games. Since Aaron is not married and has no children the decision to move to Albuquerque with Jake and his family was easy.



You can tell that Susan is having a good time and is enjoying life. She spreads her joy throughout our school. If you happen to be around when school is in session, take a moment to meet Susan and experience how she is working to make Cross of Hope School a happy place for children to be and grow. Cross of Hope is thankful for your energy, thoughtfulness and joy.

## SAVE THE DATE! MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



The Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, **August 25, 2024**. Service at 10:00 am, followed by the meeting at 11:00 am. Potluck afterwards.

### PLEASE NOTE:

There will not be a 8:45 am service that day.

## Farewell and Godspeed for Pat and John Mohr-Kelly



Photo courtesy of 3MorrPhotos



## Special Needs Bible School



Photos above and left  
courtesy of 3MorrPhotos

Again this year, we welcomed and celebrated all of our attendees. Thank you to all who helped in any way.

Stay tuned as Cross of Hope's Special Needs Bible school has been submitted for a grant with the ELCA!



Photo above and right  
courtesy of L. Bagby.





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



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**cohccouncil@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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**Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School**



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 Albuquerque, NM 87120-2639

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**Courtney Knutla, Preschool Director**  
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Preschool (505) 899-0928

www.crossofhope.org



**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**  
 Church & School

Love • Transform • Serve



**Wednesday, September 4, 2024**

Back to School Night Community Event  
 at 6:00 pm

**Wednesday, September 11, 2024**

Camp@COH Kick Off  
 at 5:30 pm



## 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 Josiah Manifesto** - Jonathan Cahn

The Josiah Manifesto opens up the stunning mysteries that lie behind the dramatic events of recent times that have changed our world – and the message hidden within them with regard to what lies ahead.

### **Mostly What God Does: Reflections on seeking and finding His love everywhere** - Savannah Guthrie

Mostly what God does is love you. If we could believe this, really believe this, how different would we be? How different would our lives be? How different would our world be?

### **Pray What You See: a five week prayer walk challenge** - Chris Paavola

"Pray What You See" is a practical guide to help you take a five-week prayer walk challenge in your community. Inside you'll find stories, ideas and steps to help you discover what God will do in and through you when you go for a walk and pray what you see.