



Love • Transform • Serve

RAYS of HOPE JOURNAL

September 2025, Volume 43, Issue 9

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.

Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

We give thanks for the gifts shared by those concluding service on Church Council, the new gifts being brought by those now called to serve, and the same Spirit that gives gifts for the common good. Please join me in thanking and welcoming your leaders at Cross of Hope! Peace, Pr. Adam

How Do I See and Sense God Calling Me to Leadership through Church Council?



Laura Burton

We are called to use our gifts and abilities to reflect God's goodness and good stewardship in the world and for the Church. Since returning to Cross of Hope, I have been praying and seeking how God wants me to serve Him and the community of the Church. In my professional life, God has provided opportunities, positions, and mentorship for me to advance in leadership skills and mentoring.



Art Kavanaugh

Cross of Hope Church is my spiritual home, and the members are my church family/friends. From my work experience I believe having faith in God, being honest, ethical, demonstrating integrity, treating others like you want to be treated, are all assets I will apply serving on the Church Council. I feel I can provide assistance and guidance to the Church Council as we look forward to building a stronger and larger congregation and also serving the school's needs for future growth and success. Working together as a supportive Council, we can assist Pastor Adam to make the necessary decisions to make Cross of Hope Church and School a vital place for spiritual growth in the Lutheran Community, neighborhood and academic communities.



Todd Olson

It's not one definable thing, but a collection of many thoughts and reflections. A desire to contribute, participate. Perpetuate the good works of previous church members.

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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Monthly Book
Suggestions

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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, 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.

School News

The days are getting shorter and cooler. With these hot days, it sure adds a layer of struggle in trying to focus on school work! We are all working hard to establish routines and expectations, as well as sprinkle in some learning! We are encouraging children to have a good attitudes and make good choices as they are learning how to thrive at school once again!



Recess!

School continued on page 3

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



Love • Transform • Serve

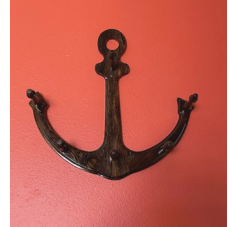
School News

School continued from page 2



Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly.

Micah 6:8

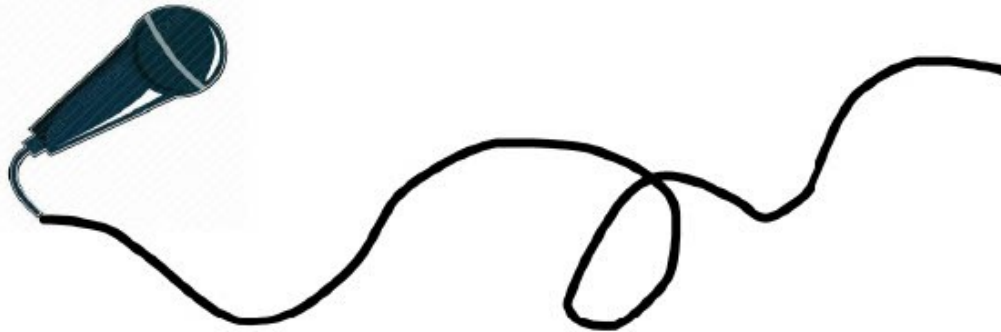


School Staff 2025-2026



Our adults are as happy as the children to be back in school!





The Roving Hope-r

By Mary Bresnahan ROH Editing Staff

Hard to believe we have started a new school year! I had to find out what fun thing/s students did. They had a great summer! Here is what I learned.



Noelle is starting kindergarten. She went to Denver, CO to visit her cousins, Natallie and Caroline. A trip to Ninja Nation was also part of her summer adventures. There she climbed the 'Rope pull' and went on the 'Up and Down Ladder'. She obviously had a great time because she could have talked a lot longer!



Alex is starting 1st grade. He has been homeschooled, so all of this is new to him. He didn't have a 'summer vacation.' He worked on crafts, drawing and learning his letters. He still has to learn to write a few letters. He seemed pretty excited for his new school adventure.



Ocean is in 2nd grade. She spent a week in Jemez visiting her uncle. There she saw her kitten, Sylvia. She is "fluffy, tan and brown." Nothing is much better than a warm fluffy pet that likes you.

Cameron is in 3rd grade. He went to Arizona and stayed at the Great Wolf Lodge. There are eight water slides, including 'tube' and 'tubeless' slides. He explained that there was one slide with a pit that opened and you dropped through the opening. Cameron didn't do that one, but his dad did. Sounds like mom, dad, sister and Cameron had a great time. Sounds like fun to me.



Roving Hope-r continued on page 5

**Our Friday Enrichment
programs begin starting
September 5.**

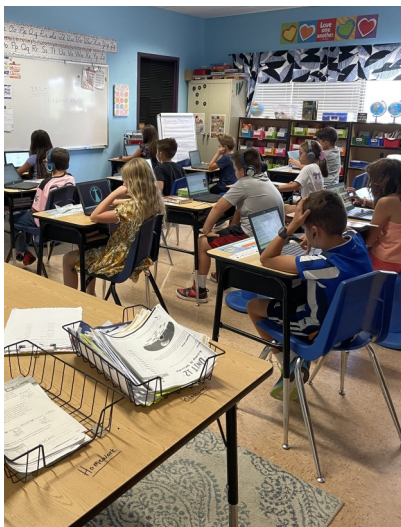


Roving Hope-r continued from page 4



Milo is in 4th grade. He went to New York and went go-carting at the 'World's Biggest Track'. Then the family went to Hershey Lodge in Hershey, PA. We all know what you get there! Yum chocolate. They went to the amusement park and rode the roller coaster. Milo said they go to New York every year since they have family there.

John is in 5th grade. He and his family went to Tennessee. They went off-roading on ATV's. Following a leader, they made a line through the mountains. They were visiting his mom's side of the family. He got to hang out with his two boy cousins. What could be more fun?



Mrs Pratt's Class is busy!



We were thankful to have Menaul School students here to do some community service by helping us to beautify our campus.

(Left two pictures)



New lunch tables!



(Left) Ben and Luke, Reading Buddies, enjoy a great book together.

Picture courtesy of Miss Vola

Council Corner

By Sherrie Simek

"So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is useless." 1 Corinthians 15:58

At the annual Congregational Meeting on August 24, as a Church, we approved:

A. August 2024 annual Congregational meeting minutes

B. June 2025 special Congregational meeting minutes

C. 2025/2026 Budget

D. Elected three new council members, Laura Burton, Art Kavanaugh and Todd Olsen. Bob Arseneau was elected to continue as a council member.

At our congregational meeting and our August council meeting, we honored with gratitude and appreciation the service and dedication of our three outgoing council members: Ron Wirths (member), Janet Conlon (Secretary) and Margie Reed (President). Thank you for your years of service to God and our community of faith.



In addition to the recognition for our outgoing members with reflections from all, we conducted the following business at our August Council meeting:

A. Pastor Adam offered kudos and a big thank you to Linda Willoughby for her diligence and advance preparation in amassing and assembling of our Annual Congregational report document.

B. Ron Cordova, project manager, provided an update on security cameras. Installation has been completed. Training is ongoing.

C. Margie Reed, on behalf of project manager, Bob Arseneau, provided an update on our solar project. PNM has made COH aware that we have moved into the 3rd phase of review.

D. Pastor Adam provided an update regarding the search for a new Preschool director.

Your council members are always available for your questions and discussions. Come meet us. We would love to visit with you.

Property Update

By: Sherrie Simek

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it".
Genesis 2:15

As summer unwinds, the outside property is in a season of predictability and consistency, mowing, weeding, maintaining shrubbery, cleaning up gardens and repairing irrigation systems.

We are blessed to live in a climate where gardens bloom and grass grows long into fall.



Property work inside involved the completion of the installation of our camera security system. We have 14 cameras, and 4 monitors. Training is ongoing.

Our team completed a couple of work orders regarding projector screens during the first week of school.

A follow-up for our annual fire inspection compliance issues will be completed on September 4, 2025. Our pressure gauges are due for a five year inspection, three sprinklers (nozzles) are missing and an emergency light needs replacement.

Thank you to Pat Benchik for the quick response to texts and calls to move along any necessary repairs or negligent trash pickup. Thank you to our team, Kevin Kouri, John Lacher, Margie Reed, Rudy and Sherrie Simek, and Anthony Soto for their care and commitment to property needs inside and out.

A memorial for Russ Edwards, Cross of Hope member, will be held on September 17 at 11am.



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



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

Say What!?

The grace of God can often sound scandalous to our modern ears. I wonder if it's always been that way and perhaps that's the point. This fall we'll encounter some parables from the Gospel of Luke that might have us responding, 'say what!?' Our Making Faith Connections small groups will wonder together while we share the journey through life and faith as followers of Jesus. Need a small group? Contact RC Jordan at media@crossofhope.org

September

- 7 – Costly discipleship
- 14 – Proclaiming Christ crucified
- 21 – Whom do you serve?
- 28 – Merciful reversal

October

- 5 – Mustard seed faith
- 12 – One in ten
- 19 – Persistence as faith
- 26 – Set free

November

- 2 – Love your enemy
- 9 – Silly question
- 16 – The end is near!
- 23 – How many kings?



WOW Women on Wednesday

Women on Wednesdays (WOW)

is dedicated to prayer, Bible study, and service.



Meeting Dates

First and Third Wednesdays:
Starts at 1:00 pm in the Sanctuary

All participants are welcome to stay for our school's Children's Chapel right after each meeting.

Lunch Bunch



The Lunch Bunch will gather together on
Wednesday, September 10 at 1pm at

Cheddar's

Scratch Kitchen

4865 Pan American FWY

RSVP to Florence Begay

At 505-363-5827 or email florencebegay2011@gmail.com
by September 8



September 1

The Church Office and School will be closed.

The Church Mouse

By: A Thoughtful COH Parishioner

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9

School is starting around the country. Here in New Mexico, it has already started. Remember when you were a child and you got so excited about school starting. At least most of us were excited. As I was thinking about children going back to school, I started thinking about other starting days in our lives. How about moving to a new city or even a new state. It's exciting and terrifying at the same time. A thousand things run through your head...should I have done this, can I afford it, will I make friends. The list goes on and on. An even more terrifying new beginning would be getting married or maybe having a baby. Those two are really terrifying. Suddenly you have this new little being in your house and you are responsible for him or her.

You don't have to go to those extremes to start something new and sometimes it's as simple as moving to a new house, starting a new job or maybe living on your own. There are things all throughout our lives that are going to be new, exciting and different. Sometimes, we enjoy them, sometimes they don't work out so well and sometimes we find out that it's something we just can't handle. Maybe that new job isn't nearly as much fun as you thought it would be or maybe going to college just isn't for you.

We all have new and different things in our lives. We all have new beginnings. Just like those first graders, we'll make it. But, how do we know we'll make it? We know because the Lord is with us every step of the way. It's new to us but it's not new to the Lord.

“Lord, thank you for always being with me as I tackle new things in my life”

Banner Babes

By Lynne Bagby

The Banner Babes met on August 4 Many members shared projects. Further plans were made for the upcoming tea on November 1.

On August 16, the Banner Babes had a workshop to continue working on comfort quilts for members of our church community who are in need of comfort. Our people who are unable to attend church and those with health issues.





Heart Strings

Shirley McCan	1
Thomas Hielkema	4
David Kovarik	5
Mike Walter	5
Anthony Soto	5
John McWilliam	6
Sherrie Simek	6
Bennett Berndt	8
Miranda McNealy	10
Bill Harris	11
Lisa Fields	11
Bob Arseneau	13
Jacob Kouri	13
Gary Hveem	18
Barb Oberhelman	18
Staci Spinks	19
Khloe St-Martin	20
Mikayla McNealy	21
Julia Ann Hawkins	22
Mary Bresnahan	22
Roy Pedersen	24
Mike Ropp	26
Nicole Bencomo	28
Rich Neely	29
Kevin Kouri	29

Pastor Adam (right) shares joy with Carroll Werling after bestowing a comfort quilt to her from the Banner Babes. Carroll loves the color red, bears, ladybugs and honey bees. Sheri Phillips said Carroll asked several times why would the Banner Babes make a quilt for her. Sheri let her know it is because she is loved very much.



Rudy and Sherrie Simek
Geoff and Debbie Bokan
Robert and Sheri Phillips
Tim and Linda George

Day	Years
3	48
13	50
14	40
18	44

Camp@Cross of Hope Kick- Off Party



Join us on Wednesday, September 3 - 5:30 - 7:30pm

Parents are invited to attend as well. We will have games, orientation to camp, dinner, and a campfire worship..

Please register using this link. <https://www.crossofhope.org/register-for-campcoh/>

The Wednesday Evening ministry is for children, youth and families - all ages! Camp@COH is modeled after the formative experiences so many have had at Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp.



Pizza

Congregational Meeting and Picnic Potluck



Margie Reed is announcing the new Council Members.



The Church body was attentive during the Annual Report.



Sherrie Simek presented Janet Conlon and Margie Reed gifts of gratitude from the Church.



(Below) Zach Zimmer and Robert Phillips wanted to know "When do we eat?!"



Church Women United Luncheon

Church Women United, an ecumenical Christian women's fellowship, will gather for their World Community Day celebration on Friday, September 5th at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 6901 Wyoming NE.

The morning will begin at 9:30am. with coffee fellowship, followed by the program at 10 am. Rev. Anne Morawski will be our featured speaker. She was the Lutheran Campus Pastor at UNM/CNM for 15 years. Since her retirement in 2017, she has been volunteering with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Budapest, Hungary. She is "home" now, but has plans to return to Hungary in November. She will share what it is like living in Hungary, being well aware of it being an authoritarian country, as well as the story of her journey, knowledge and experience around this and how it might relate to what's happening in America today. In addition, CWU women will collect school supplies for those children needing them.

For more information, contact Shirley Nilsson at 505-463-3657.



New Mexico Ramp Project



It's been a while since our last New Mexico RAMPS project. But the weather will soon be cooling down and we have a new build planned for Saturday September 20, in the Four Hills area near Juan Tabo and Central.

If you have helped with previous RAMP builds, please join us again. If you haven't participated before, please consider it. A typical build takes about 4 hours, start to finish; but not everyone has to get up early, stay late, or carry a heavy load of lumber. Lending a hand for as little as an hour is greatly appreciated and there is always a need for people willing to handle other tasks like keeping track of tools, logging workers in/out, and most important, taking pictures for Rays of Hope!

If you're thinking about participating or have questions, please contact Tim George: phone/text (505)412-9016) or e-mail tgordon430@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.

thrivent

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



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

Pastor Adam Berndt, Sherrie Simek –Vice President, Greg Morrison –Treasurer, Bob Arseneau, Laura Burton, Ron Cordova, Art Kavanaugh, Todd Olsen, Jessica Williams

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**Susan Rivera, Director of School Ministry
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esdirector@crossofhope.org
 School (505) 897-1832



BLOOD DRIVE SAVE THE DATE

DATE: Sunday, September 28, 2025

TIME: 10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

LOCATION: 6104 Taylor Ranch Rd NW
 Albuquerque, NM 87120

Because of you, life doesn't stop



Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School



6104 Taylor Ranch Road NW
 Albuquerque, NM 87120-2639

psupport@crossofhope.org
 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 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
www.crossofhope.org

Facebook Page: Cross of Hope Church

Onsite Worship Times:

Sunday - 8:45 a.m.

Sunday 10:45 a.m.

Devotions: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.

September Book Suggestions

by Dee Gutierrez

The Atonement Child - Francine Rivers

A moving Christian women's fiction novel. Poignant themes of wrestling with God, forgiveness, and redemption. Explores sensitive topics in a thoughtful, nuanced manner.

Through the Eyes of Jesus: Coming to Appreciate Jesus More Fully - William Stephens

Bill Stephens set out to present the sacred story of Jesus's last days in an innovative, contemporary manner that would equally engage both old and new Bible readers.

Jesus On Trial: A lawyer Affirms the Truth of the Gospel - David Limbaugh

In Jesus on Trial, David Limbaugh applies his lifetime of legal experience to a unique new undertaking: making a case for the gospels as hard evidence of the life and work of Jesus Christ..