



RAYS OF HOPE JOURNAL

October 2026, Volume 44, Issue 10

Love • Transform • Serve

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.

Jesus said, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (John 8:31)

Confirmed: Continuing in God's Word

On Reformation Sunday, October 25, Boden Bencomo and Issac Williams will affirm their baptism at our one worship at 10am. Our combined Sunday's have been feeling noticeably full this last year or so and I hope this Reformation Sunday will feel so as well! Baptism is a sacrament that takes place in the assembly.

The gathered community is an important part of God's living word that flows through the sacrament into our lives. Confirmation is a time of intentional faith formation at home and in the church that prepares one to affirm the gift of their baptism, and so it is a gift and blessing to have these High School Youth proclaim an affirmation of their baptism in worship.

Reformation Sunday is a powerful and appropriate time for this rite of passage in the lives of our young community members. It is a festival Sunday focused on the gift and blessing of God's word of grace that calls us to faith and sends us to grow into the future, continuing in God's word while rooted in the wisdom and blessing of the past. Reformation Sunday celebrates the good news of God's grace.

How through Jesus Christ we are set free every day to do this life-transforming work of being ever shaped and formed by God's grace. It will be good to be all together on that day in worship and fellowship. To pray for the unity of the church. To honor and celebrate the gift of baptism through Boden and Issac. To give glory and praise to God for God's word of life in which we abound!

Soli Deo Gloria,

Pr. Adam



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, 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

**Open Enrollment for
Cross of Hope School continues.**

**Check out the school site for exciting events:
Crossofhopeschool.org**

Care Outreach

Transportation
Medical Appointments
Other Appointments



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)897-0047



School News

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5



All photos courtesy of 3MorrPhotos



A HUGE thank you to students from Menaul School for holding a volunteer work day September 18 at Cross Of Hope School. They helped spread newly delivered pea gravel and shredded bark on the school playground.



School continued from page 3

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." Galatians 5:22–23

Fall Fun at Cross of Hope Preschool

Fall is such a fun and exciting time of year! From the colorful balloons of Balloon Fiesta to cooler weather, changing leaves, and Halloween festivities, there is so much to enjoy. Our preschool teachers had a chance to interview a few of their students and hear their adorable thoughts, ideas, and favorite things about the season. Get ready for some sweet, silly, and heartfelt answers from our little Courageous Coyotes!



Haven Shell

What do you think it feels like to fly in a hot air balloon?

It feels like touching the sky.

What is your favorite thing about Fall?

The leaves!

If your teachers dressed up for Halloween, what would they be?

A pumpkin and a princess.

Isabel Garcia

What do you think it feels like to fly in a hot air balloon?

Probably like I'm with God and my grandpa again.

What would your hot air balloon look like?

Probably a pink triangle. But with a pink basket too.



Zander Walz

If you had a hot air balloon, what shape would it be?

Green

No, what shape would it be?

Green

Who would you take for a ride in your green hot air balloon?

Nobody! I'm scared of the fire!



Preschool News (continued on page 9)



October has arrived and the Cross of Hope Elementary School is in full swing. It's time to find out what the kiddos are planning for their Halloween costumes. This was a bigger challenge than I expected. Maybe you'll get a few giggles over my struggles.



Scarlet Rae is representing the kindergarten. This is all new to her. She doesn't know me or what it means to be interviewed. We took a little time to warm up to each other and jumped in to learn about her costume.

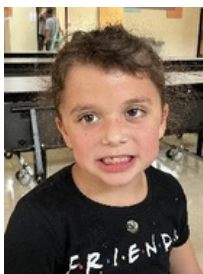
She plans to dress up as Mira from the film 'K-Pop Deman Hunters.' Mira fights "bad guys" with her sword. She wears a black dress with sparkles and boots. Mira goes after aliens (the bad guys). She has two people who help in her fights.

Scarlet Rae will go trick or treating with a boy and girl cousin. She is ready to get dressed up and have some fun.

Our first grader, Mia is going to be dressed as a 'cop.' (This one is easy for me to figure out.) Mia thinks her uniform will be black. She will wear her hair pulled back with a hat that looks like a baseball cap, and she will carry a basket to collect her goodies.



Mia explained that a cop arrests people who are bad. I asked her for an example and she mentioned that stealing is bad. She further explained that at school she "can tell someone not to touch her stuff."



Harper is our second grader. Immediately she said she would be 'Red' from "Descendants: Wicked Wonderland." "Red begins as an evil character but in the second episode she is nice. Her friend is Chloe." Red saves Chloe who "went evil and is brought back" to the good side.

Harper's "costume will be all red. She wears tights with a dress over them."

For those, like me, who are unfamiliar with this movie, it's a Disney production.

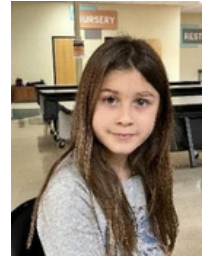
The story is about Red and Chloe who face the consequences of time travel. When they are altering the past a new villain is created, Maddox Hatter, who captures the Queen of Hearts. Sounds exciting.

Continued on page 6



Continued from page 5

From the third grade we have, Ocean. Ocean is going to be 'Tauriel' from *The Hobbit*. (Once again Roving Hoper is a little behind the times and had to do some research.) Tauriel is an elf warrior and captain who lives in the Mirkwood Forest and fights off giant spiders and Orcs. Ocean also talked about Bilbo Baggins, a hobbit. These two characters fight together to protect the Dwarves.



With a little browsing I learned that Tauriel has long red hair and wears a green dress with high dark brown boots. She carries a bow and arrow, ready for battle.



Ahren, from the fourth grade, said he wanted to be Oliver Tree. Oliver was a singer who passed away on "June 14, 2026, in a helicopter accident." Oliver wore a short 'bowl' haircut and a pink and blue jacket and oversized "really long jeans." Ahren learned about Oliver from his mom and grew to like his songs. Oliver sang about life and had a "passion to make people happy. He sang a blend of pop, rock, electronic and hip hop" music.

Milo represents the fifth grade. Milo was quite honest in saying he "hadn't decided yet" what he was going to be for Halloween. "Actually, I haven't thought about it." He mentioned "a mask with lights that light up his face." I got the impression they may be changeable in some way. When I looked it up, I saw an LED mask. That sounds like it fits the description.



Thank you, readers, for being patient with my Halloween descriptions. I hope I got it right. We will have a show of costumes at the 'Fall Festival' on October 28 from 5:30 to 7pm. Come and check them out.



Council Corner

"For the LORD gives wisdom; From his mouth come knowledge and understanding"
Proverbs 2:6

The Church Council met September 12 where we discussed the operational, financial and outlook for the month involving Cross of Hope Church and School.

The start of the new budget is underway and the Treasurer's report, indicated we are meeting the expected budget Income and Expenses for this time period. The investments are holding strong at this time.

Council President, Sherrie, gave her report regarding the following office/building updates and ground repairs:

- four trees will be trimmed by September 15 by Baca Trees
- the sprinkler stations have been repaired by Just Sprinklers
- a color printer was exchanged for the black printer (printing costs can be expensive)
- Our Constitution and Bylaws are being modeled after the ELCA Rocky Mountain Synod and were sent to the ELCA secretary to be recorded
- New bark and pea gravel was spread out on the children's playground. Kudos to all the volunteers who helped and worked hard on that day

Pastor Adam discussed with the Council a future retreat. A decision was made that the retreat would be held in January 2027. Pastor Adam asked for the agenda topics; what information were we lacking and what we needed to improve our effectiveness on the Council.

Council members are available each Sunday between services at the front desk for questions or comments you might have. Come by say Hi!!! We look forward to seeing you!!!



Respectfully,

Arthur Kavanaugh, Council Member



Called By Name To Be A Child Of God

Oliver Lee Jennings was baptized September 13
by Pastor Adam Berndt.

Toni Kovarik, proudly poses for a family picture
with her good friends, David and Elizabeth
Jennings, (Oliver's parents).



Photo courtesy of OliverPhotos



Lunch Bunch

Mariscos Altamar Mexican Sea Food Cuisine

1517 Coors Blvd NW, Albuquerque, NM 87121

Wednesday, October 14, 12:30pm

Please RSVP: Florence Begay 505-363-5827
 email florencebegay2011@gmail.com

Marisol Wickert	5-Oct
RC Jordan	9-Oct
Milo Kouri	10-Oct
Janet Conlon	12-Oct
Dee Gutierrez	13-Oct
Deney Perkins	14-Oct
Jan Anderson	19-Oct
Amy Ellis	20-Oct
Gabriela Cortinas	25-Oct
Adam Berndt	26-Oct
Kathy Gorman	28-Oct
Anthony Girard	29-Oct
Keri Sutter	31-Oct

Heart Strings

Members of COH unable to worship
 with us on a regular basis.
 Please contact these Church members
 and let them know we care and are
 praying for them.

Gary and Fran Hveem
 884 Evening Primrose Lane
 Bernalillo, NM 87004

Joanny Wilson
 10008 Ashland St NW
 Albuquerque, NM 87114

Charlie and Gini Murphy
 548 Eastlake Dr. SE
 Rio Rancho, NM 87124

Diane Pressel
 543 Whisper Pointe St SW
 Albuquerque, NM 87121



ANNIVERSARIES

David and Toni Kovarik	1-Oct	49
Michael and Patrice Leddy	16-Oct	44
Chris and Julie Morgan	22-Oct	43

Preschool News continued from page 4

The rooms of Cross of Hope Preschool are filled with smiles, laughter, learning, and lots of little voices! Our preschoolers are off to a wonderful start as they learn, grow, make new friends, and discover God's amazing world together.

We are excited to welcome our new **Educational Assistant, Rosa Marquez**, who works with Ms. Lori in our 3-year-olds' Busy Bees classroom. Rosa comes to us from another professional field and is enthusiastic and eager to grow and learn as an early childhood educator. She brings a caring heart and a desire to make a difference in the lives of our students. Rosa is the proud mother of three grown sons and grandmother to two granddaughters, who mean everything to her, second only to her love for God. We are blessed to have her as part of our preschool team!



Our 4-year-old class, the Courageous Coyotes, taught by Ms. Amber and Ms. Krissy, recently enjoyed special visits during their Community Helpers unit. They welcomed Police Officer Brown and Fire Captain Keadrick, who talked with the children about police and fire safety. The students loved learning about the important ways community helpers keep us safe and serve our community!

Our September Bible theme is "God Loves Me and Always Helps Me." We are learning the Bible verse, *"I will sing of the Lord's great love forever."* — Psalm 89:1. Our Bible story focus is Joseph and His Coat of Many Colors, teaching children about God's love, faithfulness, and care for us. We are also focusing on the Fruit of the Spirit of kindness, encouraging our students to show God's love through kind words, helpful hands, and caring hearts.

We are grateful for the continued support and prayers of our Cross of Hope congregation. Please continue to pray for our teachers, students, and families as we grow together in faith, learning, and love!



Trisha McClain, Director of Preschool Ministry

Cross of Hope Elementary School

Happy Fall! Our school has had an amazing start to the year thanks to our dedicated staff, supportive parents, and devoted community members. Last month, we worked with our safety team and property team representatives, along with our partner school, Menaul School, to ensure our playground is safe by adding pea gravel and woodchips. With donations of gardening equipment from our staff, and a few hours of back breaking work in the oppressive heat, we accomplished the task. What a blessing!

COH Elementary School continued from page 9



This year we have two verses to memorize and support us while we learn how to live alongside one another in unity; *John 15:5* and *Galatians 5:22-23*. Our staff is anchoring in unity by reading God's Word together through the devotional, "Remain in the Vine". Our elementary students gather every morning for the pledge and prayer. In chapel, our students are leading us in their reflections of God's Word as well as in song. Thank you to Ms. Ellis for providing live music for chapel each week. What a wonderful time of community unity!



COH Elementary School continued from page 10



This month we are looking forward to some wonderful community events. Balloon Aloft will be held Friday, October 2 at 6:30am. Come join us and see "Buckeye" inflate and take flight. Fall Festival will be held Wednesday, October 28 from 5:30-7:00pm. Please join us and invite some friends, neighbors, and family members to celebrate with us. We are blessed because of your support!

Susan Rivera
Director of School Ministry



Flu and COVID Immunization Clinic

Oct 14, 3 – 6pm at Cross of Hope Church
Everyone is welcome

Please have I.D. and Insurance information available Immunizations provided by Albertson's Pharmacy.

If you have any questions, call Mary Hughes, 505-321-7264

Serving Cross of Hope Together with Joy

Welcome to our corner of the community! As leaders across our church ministries, we want to take a moment to say a huge *thank you* to the leader volunteers who came out and made our recent ministry event on September 13, such a wonderful success. The time, energy, and heart makes everything we do possible.

We are still growing and *have volunteer spots* available! Whether you want to help out once a month or get involved weekly, there is a place for you here. If you have any questions or want to jump in, please come chat with any of our ministry leaders - we would love to welcome you to the team.

Property and Garden Ministry – Sherrie Simek

Altar Team and Bread Bakers Ministry – RC Jordan

Front Desk Volunteer Ministry – RC Jordan

Blood and Food Drives: Outreach Ministry – Kathy Gorman

Family Promise of ABQ: Outreach Ministry – Jan Anderson and Glenna Meneely

NM Ramp Project: Outreach Ministry – Tim George

Camp@COH and Youth Ministry – Nancy Lacher

Women on Wednesday (WOW) Ministry – Lynn Bagby

Music Ministry – Tom Ropp

School Ministry – Susan Rivera and Trisha McClain

Hospitality and Care Ministry – Claudia Russo

MFC (Making Faith Connection) & Faith Formation Ministry – Sheri Phillips

Banner Babes Ministry - Diane Carrico

Scouts of America (Boys, Girls and Boy Scouts) Ministry – Gary Warner

Safety, Temple Guard and Usher Ministry – Ron Cordova

HeBrews Ministry – Todd and Kathy Bramley

Blessings Counter Ministry – Sylvia Oelsner

Columbarium Exploration Ministry – Duane Meneely



Blessings,
RC Jordan, Director of Worship and Community Life



Photos courtesy of 3MorrPhotos

Property Update

September was a busy month in accomplishing much-needed projects around our property. We are incredibly grateful for the wonderful community of hands that united to complete these projects. Thank you! Please read to the end of the article to see how you can be a caretaker of God's house.

Wesley Gray, from Scout Troop 126, chose to paint the sheds in the back of the parking lot for his Eagle Scout project. On September 12, Wesley and a crew worked together to give the sheds a fresh new look. They scraped old paint and cut tree branches away from the roofs and painted. The sheds look great. Take a few minutes to drive by.

You might notice the three cottonwoods and ash tree in the front garden, look a little lighter and have a few less branches. On September 15, Baca Trees trimmed, pruned and shaped our four trees. They are stable and in good health.

On September 11, eight Menaul High School students and a few members of the assembly raked and spread a delivery of playground bark and pea gravel to improve the safety of both our playground and fire pit area.

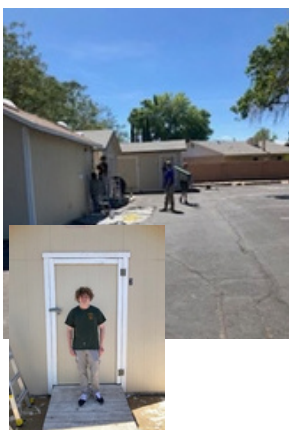
"What makes them worth doing is the God we are serving. You happen to be God's field in which we are working. Or, to put it another way, you are God's house." — 1 Corinthians 3:9 (The Message)

We are looking for volunteers to help care for our gardens and grounds. Opportunity for group work on Thursday and/or Friday morning 8am, or you can serve on your own schedule and time that works for you!

Please connect with Rudy and Sherrie Simek (505-362-8571) to join the group of caretakers.



By Sherrie Simek, Council President



Scouts painting sheds.



Menaul work day, students volunteering, spreading pea rock.



Baca's Tree service trimming

Balloons Aloft

Friday, October 2

6:15 - 8:00am

Join us to watch a hot air balloon inflate and do a tethered flight. Everyone is welcome.

Meet in COH front Parking Lot



Cross of Hope School

Community Event

FALL FESTIVAL

Wednesday, October 28

5:30 - 7pm at

Cross of Hope Church



*"The word is near you,
in your mouth and in your heart."*

Romans 10:8

Grab a friend. Come and worship. Explore together in small group on Sundays at 9:30am Fellowship Hour as we learn and grow together in life and faith.

The worship materials will be in your Sunday Bulletins.

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.

If you are looking for better times or options for participating in a small group, email RC Jordan at media@crossofhope.org.



Camp@CrossofHope

Camp@CrossofHope meets Wednesday evenings from 5:30 - 7:30pm. Join us for games, food, Bible study and s'mores around the campfire.

- No Camp on October 7, Balloon Fiesta
- No Camp on October 28, Fall Festival with the School Ministry

thrivent



Valley Consulting Group

7620 Jefferson St NE, Ste 3
Albuquerque, NM 87120-6065
valleyconsultinggroup@thrivent.com

27931C RS-2

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

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

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



Trisha McClain, Director of Preschool Ministry

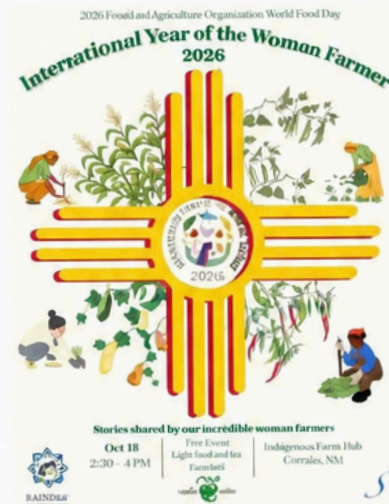
Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School



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Albuquerque, NM 87120-6039

psdirector@crossofhope.org

Preschool (505) 899-0928



World Food Day

is being celebrated this year on Sunday, October 18 at Indigenous Farm Hub in Corrales. We're celebrating the International Year of the Woman Farmer, with speakers and prayers from different faith groups. Cody Broyles and Keri Sutter will sing the "official" New Mexico World Food Day song (Composed by David Poole, local composer).

Sunday, October 18, 2:30 - 4:30pm

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 in Christ's love through worship, education and outreach to develop and strengthen relationships with God.

Rev. Adam Berndt, Pastor
505-897-0047 • office@crossofhope.org
www.crossofhope.org

FaceBook Page: Cross of Hope Church

Onsite Worship Times:

Sunday - 8:30 am
Fellowship Hour - 9:30 am
Sunday - 10:30 am

October Book Suggestion

By Dee Gutierrez

Falling Upward, Revised and Updated: A for the Two Halves of Life- Richard Rohr

In the revised and updated edition of Falling Upward, Richard Rohr seeks to help readers come to terms with the two halves of life. In this book, Rohr teaches us that we can't understand the meaning of "up" until we have fallen "down." More importantly, Rohr describes what "up" can look like in the second half of life.

Please Note

The Church office and School will be closed Monday, October 12, Indigenous Peoples' Day