



THE CHIMES



The United Church of Los Alamos
United in our Faith Journeys

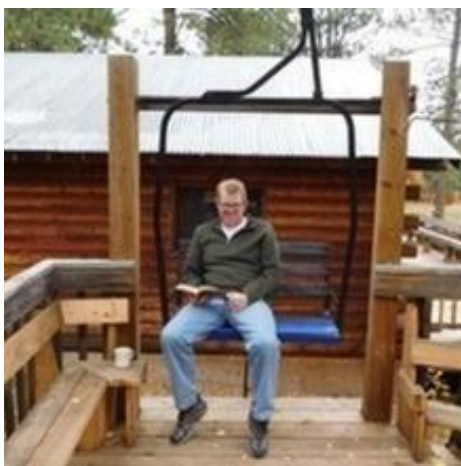
www.unitedchurchla.org

September 2026 - Vol. 63 No. 9

CLASSES FOR ALL AGES!



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH



Weekly Word

Weekly Word email: If you would like to receive the email David sends out each week about the upcoming Sunday, please email or call the Church Office and tell us to add you to the "Weekly Word" list.

Contacting the Church

If you have any questions or concerns, you may call the Church Office at (505) 662-2971, email us at ucoffice@unitedchurchla.org, or send us a message on Facebook.

The Church Office is open Monday through Friday:
8:30am – 4pm.

You may also reach the pastors at the office number, email, or phone numbers below:

David Elton
979-219-8640 cell
david@unitedchurchla.org

Keith Lewis
505-412-9954 cell
gohorns_99@yahoo.com

Kara Windler
DCE@unitedchurchla.org



- 4th **Jim McInroy Memorial Service**
- 5th International Bacon Day
- 7th Labor Day – Office Closed
- 9th **United Singers Return**
- 11th 9/11 Remembrance
- 13th **Fall Classes Begin!**
Grandparents' Day
- 17th **Rose St. Worship**
- 19th International Talk Like a Pirate Day
- 21st **Staff Retreat – Office Closed**
- 22nd **Staff Retreat – Office Closed**
First Day of Autumn
- 26th Breakfast in Bed Day
- 30th Ask a Stupid Question Day



September is that crazy month that catches us napping and we realize summer is over and Fall is here. We may not feel the cool breeze yet or see changes in leaf color but it is coming. We start Sunday School on September 13th at 11am and we have classes for all ages. ALL ages..... 3 to 103. Mid/Sr High will focus on a variety of opportunities each month. We will have our monthly Starbucks Meet-up, which actually can take place at Sugar and Cream, Wolf and Mermaid or Starbucks. Our youth like to switch the location. Our first Meet-up on September 13th will be at Starbucks....the van will leave the church parking lot at 11:05. Service will be a focus one Sunday of the month, a large group fun activity and a group Bible focus to round out the month. Weekly emails are sent on Mondays to remind our kids about Donut Run (Tuesdays) and High School Pizza Lunch (Wednesdays), as well as upcoming activities and any additional information that may be helpful.

September Schedule:

- 13th Starbucks Meet-up @ Starbucks. Church van leaves parking lot at 11:05am
- 18th Los Alamos High School Homecoming Parade @ 2:30pm.... LAHS vs. Cibola HS
- 20th Group Study in Craig Hall
- 27th Service Sunday activity TBA

SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday, October 11th
Balloon Fiesta!
details TBA

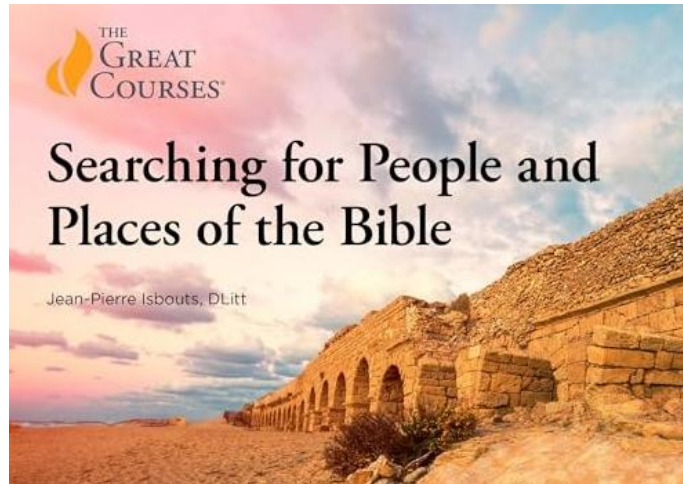


Watch for more information regarding our young people and their activities. We have folks in football, cheerleading, band, cross country, and other activities. Names will appear in the October Chimes so you can keep up with all of the excitement.

We pray that God will bless all who are involved with educating our young people and that this year will be safe and fun!

Blessings,
Keith

Fall Sunday School begins on Sunday, September 13th for all ages.
We have two Adult Education Sunday classes to begin this semester:



Join best-selling author and biblical scholar Jean-Pierre Isbouts to find the actual locations where great stories of the Bible took place. Meet the remarkable human beings who lived them and discover amazing connections between the Bible's texts and the history of the ancient world. There are 16 half-hour lectures, each focusing on a given person or place so each Sunday we will view one lecture and have discussion.

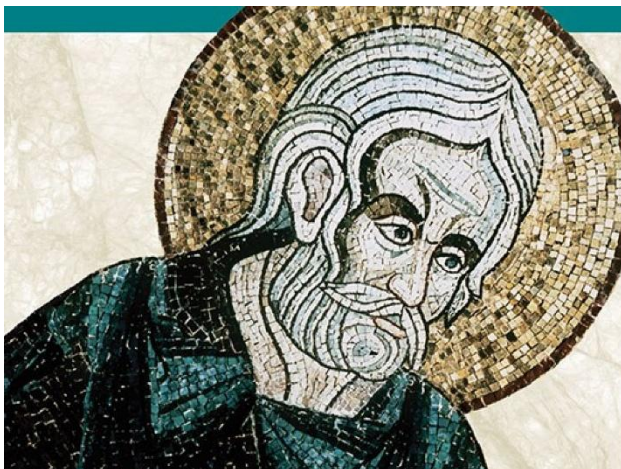
For more details, check out:

<https://shop.thegreatcourses.com/searching-for-people-and-places-of-the-bible>.

Facilitated by Alison Watkins and John Puckett
CE Lounge

Gospel of John: Part 1

Prologue & Book of Signs



Join us each Sunday as we read and discuss Chapters 1-12 of the Gospel According to John. This “Fourth Gospel” begins with a bang—dropping us in the deep end of Jesus’ identity. The gospel then takes us to the beginning of his ministry that presents signs of who he was/is... why he was here... and how people were/are to respond to him!

Facilitated by David Elton
CE 311



PRAYERS



Please continue to hold these people in your prayers during the month of September:

Mark Homuth ~ Wayne Tafoya ~ John Rebstock

Janet Clayton ~ Randy Dickerhoof ~ Jerry Seeger

Mary Venable ~ Jerryl Galassini ~ Lola Netuschil

Arlene Edwards ~ Barbara Martinez ~ Tammi Fields

Jeremy Halberg ~ Deb Fisher ~ Karin Reese ~ Eunice Raar



Lunch Bunch Callers for September:



Pam Meyer, Laura Erickson,
Jen Olsen, & Chris Sierk



Men's Koffee Klatch

All men of The United Church are invited to coffee, refreshments, and fellowship Thursday mornings at 9:30am. There are no lesson plans, no required or suggested topics, no devotions, no leaders,

but there is a lot of fun! Hosting duties are passed around within the group. The wit and wisdom shared cover all sorts

of topics and the discussions have proven extremely interesting, informative, and supportive. We laugh a lot! We

will be meeting in the CE Lounge, or you can join from home with Zoom.



Please contact the Church Office to be included on the Zoom link email.

How can a violated small child, who makes bad choices as an adult, flip and become a woman who is willing to, at great risk often, start Mental Health initiatives all over the world as Lyn Westman has? What turns a king who has a beautiful woman's husband killed so that he can marry her, be called "a man after God's own heart?" How can a murderous African chief become a Christian minister that shows others "the way." And how can someone who approves of stoning a man, become a spokesman for a fledgling church spreading good news of God's Love to both Jews and Gentiles?



God can bring light out of our darkest moments, either our doing or another's doing. God can transform sins, or "missing the mark," as Rabbi Schlacter calls it. Yes, we all sin, and separate from God's will. Yet, God can redirect our energies toward blessings even when sin has darkened life. We and others can be more than we ever expected, the best version of ourselves. Jesus' resurrection and his forgiving those who killed him is the finest example of things gone horribly wrong working for God's Good.

Gregory Boyle encourages gang members to see their inherent goodness as God's beloved. "Jesus did not condemn the woman involved in the sex trade who was washing his feet. He knew her pure heart. He could see the preciousness of her soul." The 'good' folks watching the woman were judgmental, self-serving, flushed with pride, self-absorbed. "We all believe in a God of second chances—though frankly, we give very few of them. We all believe in a God of infinite mercy, though we can be quite stingy in doling it out."

"For even when we find ourselves less than delightful, God does not delight in us less."

It is *hard* to see ourselves as beloved. We are all the lost sheep at one time or another. I agree with Boyle's statement, **God wants to be found in the very midst of all loving**. We need to see as God sees, loving our neighbor and loving ourselves. Our God is the God of redirection, allowing us to live full lives as Christ's body, no matter where we start, our mess-ups or how far off we have "missed the mark." As new creatures, we can become "God-intoxicated and recognize the holy in everything," naturally becoming God's instruments of love to all.

On behalf of becoming our best selves, Betty Smith

Care Packages for College Students and Active Military

Each autumn, the Membership and Evangelism Board organizes for the congregation to send “Care Packages” to our young folks stretching their wings away from home. We like to let them know the church cares about them!

On Sunday, Sept. 27, the empty boxes will be out in the Fellowship area of the Sanctuary to be filled with goodies for the soul and body furnished by the congregation. Besides candy, people have added to the boxes hand-written notes, small coloring projects, devotional material, toys and decorations, fun cards and bookmarks—you name it! What surprise would you have enjoyed finding in a care package from home?



All the boxes will be the same size, and the last day for collecting items will be Oct. 11, so if you’re planning to send fresh edibles, that will be your deadline. The boxes will be shipped that week.

Pastor Keith Lewis keeps a comprehensive list of names and addresses, but please be sure that your favorite young person is on **The List**, AND that we have current **addresses** for mailing labels!

Thank you for helping to remind our kids we’re thinking of them!



PERSONNEL BOARD

United Church Staff Performance Evaluations

Each year the Personnel Board completes an evaluation process for the staff of the United Church. All church members have the opportunity to provide comments on the performance of the church staff. Comments can be verbal or in writing (preferred) and sent to a member of the Personnel Board.

- Heath Watkins, Nancy Bliss, Vicki Cobble, Milan Gadd, & Chris Sierk

Dignity Mission

Final Update

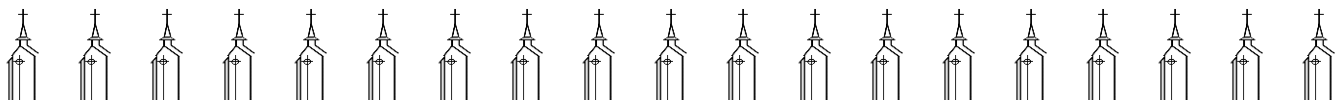
The conditions at the US/Mexican border including the El Paso - Juarez crossing have changed dramatically in the past 20 months and the Dignity Mission has changed too! Jack and Cheryl Ferrell have stepped out of the leadership role and have found a Texas non-profit, Families Triunfadoras, Inc. to continue the work that Dignity Mission did. The “packing parties” now pack ~2000 dignity kits in El Paso, rather than in Placitas and Los Alamos. Dr. Eva Moya continues as an active leader of the dignity mission activities in El Paso.

Smile, and remember the first 100 kits we packed in July 2020 during Covid on Chris Sierk’s covered deck. We accomplished so much together over the six years, 2020-2025, including:

- 6,000 dignity kits
- 700 children’s backpacks with school supplies and
- More than 1200 Christmas bags for children, hand-sewed and filled with toys and stuffed animals from our Thrift Shop, (many hundreds sewn by Nebraska friends).

Our United Church hands-on mission work continues with our participation in the Interfaith Coalition on Homelessness which was started several years ago. ICOH focuses on coordinating support from local churches for three facilities in Espanola, the Pathways Shelter, McCurdy Family Resource Center and Inside Out. Our Thrift Shop has provided dozens of bags of clothing culled from our racks, when they are over-full to McCurdy and we have packed ~200 snack packs for the Pathways Shelter. You may contact Kim Taylor (kstantay@sbcglobal.net), our United Church representative to ICOH, to help with this mission.

Nina Thayer



USHERS NEEDED!

We currently have multiple openings for new volunteer ushers.

Ushering gives a great new perspective on the services, it’s easy, and a great way to get to know people.

If you are interested in serving, please contact Eric Schmierer, eschmierer@msn.com or leave a message at 505-660-9936.



Susanna Naud	02	Emily Engel	15	Kara Windler	27
Loree Lynch	05	Iris Purtzer	16	Carol Brown	28
Quinn McCulloch	05	Chris Worley	17	Jo Ann Howell	28
Lisa Reader	06	Kelly Myers	20	Heath Watkins	28
Gus Ovaska	10	Fred Thomas	23	Carter Watkins	28
Holly Hayes	13	Tom Feiertag	25	Phil Jones	29
Don Tolmie	14	Eden Schmierer	27	Suzanne Johnson	30



CHOIR IS RETURNING SOON!

UNITED SINGERS RETURN

Wednesday, September 9th
at 6:15 pm

If you'd like to join the church
choir, please speak with
Suzanne Johnson
or the Church Office.





Worship

Dinner 5:15 PM Worship 6:00PM

Join us for Rose Street Worship on Thursday evening, September 17th. It will be a time to gather as family, friends and neighbors for a casual dinner and uplifting worship service. The service will be more contemporary in style and last around 45 minutes. But the experience will feed and inspire our spirits until Sunday and beyond!



AGOG, our grandparenting group, is open to any adults who are concerned about their role in sharing their faith, love, stories, and expectations with the next generations. We chat about traditions, pray for our grandchildren, and listen to, resolve or empathize with both thorny and gratifying issues of grandparenting. We'll kick off our Fall sessions on September 13th at 12:15 PM in the CE Lounge for an hour of shared wisdom.

Pack a bag lunch and join us!

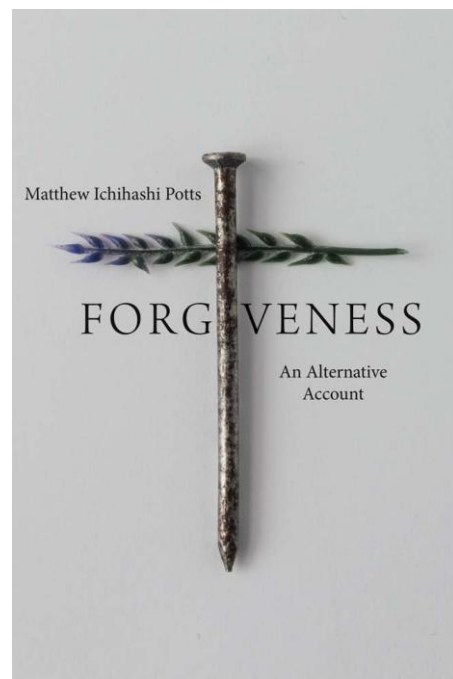
Questions? Please contact Diana Little or Irene Powell

Monday Morning Women's Book Study

All women of the church and their friends are welcome to attend this group.

The books for discussion are selected by the group.

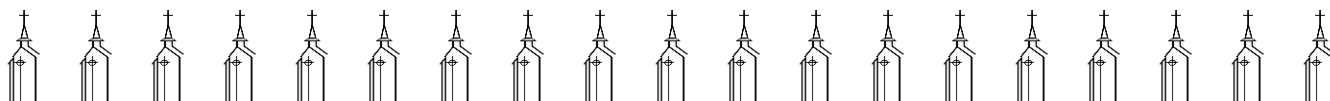
The Monday group will soon begin reading "*Forgiveness: An Alternative Account*" by Matthew Ichihashi Potts



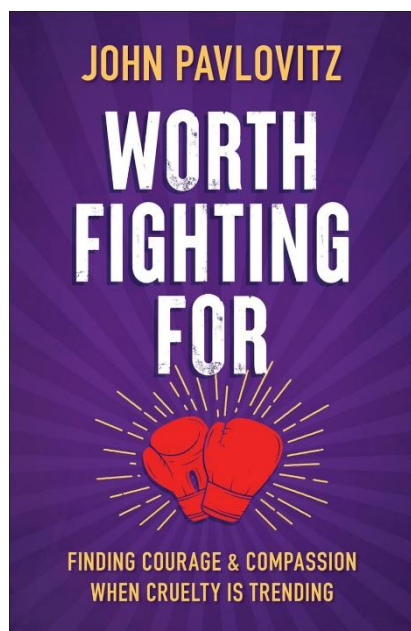
Monday Mornings:

11:00 am – 12:30 pm

via Zoom



Friday Morning Women's Bible Study



All women of the church and their friends are welcome to attend this group.

The books for discussion are selected by the group.

The Friday group will begin studying "*Worth Fighting For: Finding Courage and Compassion When Cruelty is Trending*" by John Pavlovitz on September 4th.

Friday Mornings:

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

via Zoom

Feel free to contact Pastor Kara (dce@unitedchurchla.org)
or the Church Office if you'd like to join.



Fall Retreat at Sonlight Christian Camp, Pagosa Springs, CO October 16 to 18

“Created to Create: A Retreat on Creation, Creativity, and Worship”

Join us for a weekend retreat up at beautiful Sonlight Christian Camp in Pagosa Springs, CO. There will be opportunities for relaxation, outdoor activities, communing with nature, crafts, and helping around the camp.

For those interested, Carolyn Rarr will be leading an exploration of the biblical and theological foundations of creativity as a faithful response to God's grace. Through Scripture, discussion, worship, time in creation, and collaborative artistic practice, we'll consider how beauty, imagination, and craftsmanship can enrich both our spiritual lives and the worship of the church. As a shared expression of our learning, participants will work together to create a set of Advent banners for our sanctuary.

Price is \$225 per person and includes 2 nights lodging (dorm room style) and 6 meals. (Scholarships available.) Rides can be arranged, and carpooling is encouraged.

Tentative Schedule

Friday, October 16th

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 3:00 pm | Begin Arrivals |
| ~6:00 pm | Dinner |
| 7:30 pm | Evening session and activities (Games, etc.) |

Saturday, October 17th

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 8:00 am | Breakfast |
| 9:30 am | Morning session and activities |
| 12:00 pm | Lunch |
| 1:00 pm | Afternoon free, activities available (Arts & Crafts, hike or bike, Sonlight projects, etc.) |
| 6:00 pm | Dinner |
| 7:30 pm | Evening session and activities |

Sunday, October 18th

- | | |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| 8:00 am | Breakfast |
| 9:30 am | Morning session and activities |
| 11:00 am | Worship |
| 12:00 pm | Lunch |
| ~1:00 pm | Head out |

Retreat Leader

Rev. Carolyn Raar is a retired minister in the Reformed Church in America and a graduate of Western Theological Seminary. During her ministry, she served congregations in western Michigan and Utica, New York, and also worked with the Reformed Church in America, equipping pastors in the practice of coaching. Her ministry has included adult education, pastoral care, interim ministry, chaplaincy, and leadership development.

A lifelong student of Scripture, creation, and the arts, Carolyn is currently pursuing an MFA in Digital Design, exploring the intersection of theology, visual storytelling, and creative practice. Drawing on the Reformed understanding of God's good creation and our calling as image bearers, she enjoys creating spaces where people can ask thoughtful questions, discover fresh perspectives, and experience creativity as an expression of worship and faithful discipleship

Please cut here and return completed form to the Church Office

Fall Retreat at Sonlight Christian Camp, Pagosa Springs, CO October 16 to 18, 2026

“Created to Create: A Retreat on Creation, Creativity, and Worship”

Registration

Name(s): _____

Telephone # _____

Email _____

Registration Fees: _____ x \$225 each = \$_____ (Check, myEoffering or Venmo [@UCLAgiving] accepted.)

Allergies, food intolerances, and other requests: _____

☐ I would like to get a ride

☐ I have room in my vehicle for others

☐ I am willing to lead an activity or provide a craft



The SEPTEMBER 2026 CHIMES Newsletter
The United Church of Los Alamos
2525 Canyon Road
Los Alamos, NM 87544