

NEWSLETTER

OF THE

Estancia United Methodist Church

600 Williams, Estancia, New Mexico

<http://www.estanciamethodist.org>



DECEMBER, 2012

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Your Church Staff

Chairperson of Church Council	Marcia Fitzner
Recording Secretary	Vickie Coburn
Organist	Morrow Hall
Lay Member of the Annual Conference	Marcia Fitzner
Chairperson: Board of Trustees	Bill Simms
Worship Team Leader	Sylvia Levy
Education Team Leader	Butch McGee
Chairperson: Missions	Marcia Fitzner
Care and Outreach Team Leader	Barbara Simms
Chairperson: Pastor Parish Relations	Mel Stephenson
Chairperson: Finance Committee	Marcia Fitzner
Financial Secretary	Vickie Coburn
Church Treasurer	Vickie Coburn
President UMM	Jon Shively
McMurry Rep	Charles Spooner
Sacramento Camp Rep	Charles Spooner

Bishops: Bishop William W. Hutchinson and Bishop Dan E. Solomon

District Superintendent: Rev. Jeff Lusk

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<http://www.estanciamethodist.org>



Sunday Worship 9:00 AM

From Pastor Bonnie

John 10:10 says that Jesus came that we might “have life and have it abundantly.” But really, how many of us see the ‘all-is-well’ Norman Rockwell Christmas portrait when we survey our own lives? Thirty minutes of TV news on any given day reminds us that this world is full of war, murder, joblessness, homelessness, broken families, broken hearts, poverty, and hunger.

Such troubles have long plagued humankind. They are not unique to the 21st century. Consider the plight of Catholics in England after the Protestant Reformation. Parliament, during the period 1558 to 1829, prohibited Catholics in England from ANY practice of their faith - private OR public. It was a time when it was a crime to BE a Catholic. So how did English Catholics lift their sights above the darkness of this world? They created and sang, "The Twelve Days of Christmas." It may seem like a silly children’s ditty today; but its origins were quite serious. The tune was written as one of the "catechism songs" to help young Catholics learn the tenets of their faith. It was a memory aid, used at a time when to be caught with anything in *writing* could not only get you imprisoned, it could get you hanged, headed, or even drawn and quartered.

Each verse of the song contains hidden meaning. The "true love", for example, doesn't refer to an earthly suitor, it refers to God Himself. The "me" who receives the gifts refers to every baptized

person. The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Christ is symbolically presented as a mother partridge which feigns injury to decoy predators from her helpless nestlings. Remember Matthew 23:37? Jesus says, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings..."? Each symbol is founded in Scripture. Others include:

- 2 Turtle Doves = the Old and New Testaments
- 3 French Hens = Faith, Hope and Charity, the Theological Virtues
- 4 Calling Birds = the Four Gospels and/or the Four Evangelists
- 5 Golden Rings = the first Five Books of the Old Testament, the "Pentateuch"
- 6 Geese A-Laying = the Six days of creation
- 7 Swans A-Swimming = the Seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments
- 8 Maids A-Milking = the Eight beatitudes
- 9 Ladies Dancing = the Nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- 10 Lords A-Leaping = the Ten Commandments
- 11 Pipers Piping = the Eleven faithful Apostles
- 12 Drummers Drumming = the Twelve points of doctrine in the Apostle's Creed



So – here we are – in the season of Advent. The season of ‘God with Us.’ It’s a season built around the petition of the Lord’s Prayer, ‘Thy Kingdom Come...’ a season of lifting our sights beyond the daily grind, beyond the immediate and ordinary, beyond our anxieties and troubling headlines to the fullness of God’s kingdom. It’s a season for anticipating the coming ‘Day of the Lord.’

I pray that you can let your focus shift from the darkness of this world to the light of God’s Kingdom. Cling not to your own strength; but rather place your confidence fully in the One who comes to save.

Jesus didn’t come to save us only for heaven – or some distant and far-off-in-the-future existence. His Kingdom is HERE. His Kingdom is NOW. God’s Kingdom is wherever (and whenever!) God reigns! The Message, a modern English Bible paraphrase, says, in John 1:14: “The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood.” Who needs the Norman Rockwell family next door when you’ve got Jesus in your heart? As we light each candle on the Advent Wreath, may we each truly experience the Incarnation – God manifest in His Son – and living among His people. May God reign in your heart and home in every circumstance throughout this Advent season.

Blessings,

-Pastor Bonnie

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE:

Sundays: 8:00am at Estancia, Choir Rehearsal.

Mondays, 6:30pm at Mountainair: Community Choir weekly rehearsals for the Dec. 16 Christmas Cantata.

Sunday, December 2: Hanging of the Greens.

Estancia, 9am - the Children will begin decorating during King's Kids time & we hope you'll stay after the service to add the finishing touches!

Mountainair, 11am – Got a few extra decorations? Bring them to church & we'll let God direct our efforts.

Sunday, December 9: 9am at Estancia. Calling all kids (and those who feel like kids!) to “The Unrehearsed Christmas Pageant.” Got any shepherds' robes, angel's wings, or wise men's crowns? Bring them to worship & see how God uses them!

Sunday, December 16: 2pm Christmas Cantata at Mountainair Baptist Church, "A Celebration of Carols". Patty Mahoney of Mountainair UMC directs this ecumenical celebration. Sponsors include Mountainair UMC, Mountainair Baptist Church, Manzano Mountain Arts Council, and Mountainair Christian Alliance.

Advent Sundays Dec. 2, 9, 16 & 23 at Estancia and Mountainair: Families participate in lighting the advent candles. Please say, “Yes” when Pastor Bonnie calls!

Saturday, December 22 at 6pm: Caroling, Caroling Now We Go, Christmas Bells Are Ringing! We'll leave from Estancia UMC and return by 7:30pm for hot cocoa & cookies in the Education Building.

Monday, December 24, 6:30pm at Estancia: Combined Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Carols and Lessons.



Joyous Singers

The joyous singers are planning to sing at the regular church services on the 9th, 16th and 23rd. In addition a special music is planned for the Christmas Eve Service. The group will meet to rehearse at 8 am prior to church.



Methodist Men

The Methodist Men met for breakfast at 7am on November 13 at the Old Mill. The group discussed plans for installing the cross on the church steeple. Jon Shively is looking in to renting a boom. The group is also working on renovating the restroom at the Mountainair Methodist Church for handicapped access. The workers have broken through the first wall for a new passage. The Men authorized giving the Methodist Women \$100 for the purchase of new carpeting in the education building.

- Jon Shively



Mel Stephenson, Sonny Massey and Don Fitzner

FROM YOUR CONFERENCE TREASURER!

Please mark these dates on your calendar (preferably in red!) and share them with others who may need them.

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration has extended the date for **2012 Shared Ministry receipts** to allow churches one additional Sunday to raise funds.

Regardless of when they may have been mailed, checks must be received by January 15, 2013 (this date is usually the Friday following the first Sunday of the month or January 11th). Please note that monies must be received in the Conference office by 3:00 on that date, not just postmarked on that date. If you would like to make an electronic payment, please contact Cathy Anderson at canderson@nmconfum.com or 505-255-8786 for details.

Your **end-of-year church statistics** must be completed and submitted by January 23, 2013.
Your

The deadline to submit **vouchers for expenses** charged to the Annual Conference's 2012 budget is December 28, 2012.

Mountainair UMC News

On Sunday, December 16, at 2:00pm, the Mountainair Community Chorus will present a Christmas Cantata entitled "A Celebration of Carols" by Joseph Martin. The Chorus will be accompanied by Kathleen Ryan Clute on keyboard as well as several other instruments. The singers hail from Mountainair, Deer Canyon, Tajiue, Willard and Estancia.

Structured as Lessons-and-Carols, Mr. Martin expresses this about the cantata. "With the hearing of winter's first treasured song, we are gradually gathered from the noise of our daily enterprise and drawn into the hopeful sounds of Christmas. With great expectation we begin to prepare our hearts for the warming candle of Christ's birth. . . . Our places of worship reverberate with the time-honored carols of our faith and we remember that we are loved. As you hear the timeless story, may you grasp hope with all of your heart and experience the rich abundance that is the true gift of the season. Let Christmas begin!"

The presentation will be held at the Mountainair Baptist Church and admission is free. Sponsors include the Mountainair Methodist Church, Mountainair Baptist Church, Manzano Mountain Arts Council, and Mountainair Christian Alliance.

From Your Ad Council Chairman

Can you believe that another year has gone by and we are getting ready to start a fresh journey into the New Year. But first, we will begin a spiritual journey toward the manger with great anticipation of the birth of our Savior. I am going to try very hard to make this a spiritual journey and not just one of presents, decorations, etc. That is a quite a task, because Christmas decorations have been in stores since before Halloween, and we have been hit with ads and music now for quite some time now.

I will be finishing up my time as chairperson of the Administrative Board, and I have to say that it has been a blessed journey. Everyone has cooperated and been willing to do whatever is asked of them. The stained glass windows are the most visible accomplishment, but there has been a lot of other things going on that happen because people are willing to go beyond what is asked of them. People continue to keep our supplies up, refreshments seem to magically appear every Sunday morning and the church is always clean and wonderful place to worship.

The dedication of the windows was a WOW experience for everyone. Visitors were so impressed and continue to be impressed and blessed by the work that was done on the windows. I'm sure that someone was missed when thanks were being handed out, simply because so many came forth to help when help was needed. We are truly blessed and we need to continue to strive to be a blessing to our community.

I will be taking on another job in our church and I know all of you will pray and help me out. If I am correct in my interpretation of the job, I will be asking you to keep me informed on needs that you see within our church and community. For example, when folks go to the hospital and have a need for prayer and support, Pastor Bonnie and I want to be available to help in whatever way that we can. So, please call me and be ready in case we need **your** help. Part of our Christian duty is to care for each other and our neighbors.

What a journey I have been on and I look forward to following God's will as we go forward together.

-Marcia Fitzner

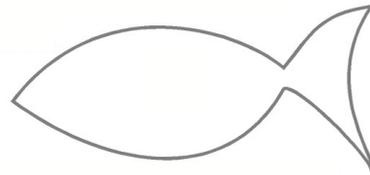
What are “Chrismons?”

In modern colloquial usage, Chrismons are used to adorn liturgical devices and Christmas Trees during Advent and Christmas, where they are made from various materials ranging from needlepoint to woodwork and metalwork. (As well as handmade glass ornaments by members of EUMC!) This usage is quite recent and goes back to 1957 when H. W. Spencer started the first Lutheran Christmas service in Danville Virginia based on their use.

These ornaments often include many symbols that have been interpreted by those producing them as signs of Christ, e.g. a Five-pointed star to symbolize the birth of Jesus in the context of the Star of Bethlehem. The choice of what constitutes a Chrismon ornament in this usage is left to the people who produce the ornaments, and a wide variety of symbols have been proposed by various groups who produce them, e.g. the harp to represent the joy of worship.



Dove in Flight - A representation of the dove in flight is a symbol for the ascension of Christ. It may also be considered as the hope of the resurrection. It has several other related associations in the Bible.

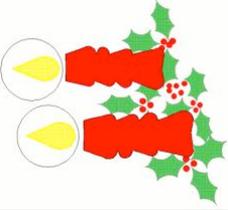
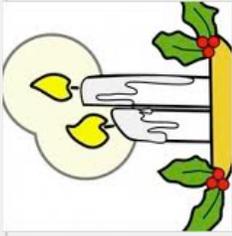


Fish - The sign of the fish was used by early Christians as a secret symbol that they were followers of Jesus. Some believe one person drew part of the fish on the ground, and another believer would finish the drawing, signifying they knew the “Password.”



On Sunday afternoon, Nov. 24, the congregation came together for a “*Thanksgiving Practice Potluck.*” Everyone had their fill of turkey, dressing, homemade rolls, mashed potatoes and cranberry sauce, not to mention pumpkin and apple pie!

DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9 AM Worship 11 AM -Mtair Hanging of the Greens	3	4	5 10:30:am Quilters	6 6:30:pm TRUSTEES	7	8
9 9 AM Worship 11 AM -Mtair	10	11	12 10:30:am Quilters	13	14	15 7:00AM Men's Breakfast
16 9 AM Worship 11 AM -Mtair Christmas Cantata 2:PM	17	18	19 10:30:am Quilters	20	21	22 CAROLING 6:PM
23 9 AM Worship 11 AM -Mtair	24 Christmas Eve Service 6:PM	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26 10:30:am Quilters	27	28	29
30 9 AM Worship 11 AM -Mtair	31					

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Sent with a prayer to:

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" (230) is a popular Christmas carol. The text was written by Phillips Brooks (1835–1893), an Episcopal priest, Rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia. He was inspired by visiting the Palestinian city of Bethlehem in 1865. Three years later, he wrote the poem for his church and his organist, Lewis Redner, added the music. Redner's tune, simply titled "St. Louis", is the tune used most often for this carol in the United States.



Phillips Brooks.