

History Of The Asbury Cafe:

A UNIQUE TRADITION AT THE NEW MEXICO STATE FAIR

The Asbury Cafe began in the Goat Barn on the Fairgrounds in 1960 as an outreach of Asbury United Methodist Church. The founding church had only a few facilities, and its location at the eastern edge of Albuquerque, 10,000 Candelaria NE, was barren. The cafe began as an idea to benefit Asbury United Methodist Church's building fund. The specialty of homemade pie was the first menu item, and the church facilities took shape as the cafe prospered. In 1971 the decision was made to donate 100% of all profit to local charities.

The Asbury Cafe's reputation for good food and community outreach grew to such an extent that it stretched the resources of the single church. In 1987 St. Stephen's United Methodist Church joined forces with Asbury to expand the volunteer forces and supplement the outreach of the Cafe. In 1993 we were joined by St. John's United Methodist Church. These churches shared in the work involved with the cafe: picking and processing fruit, preparing pies, planning, and operating the cafe. In 2001, three more churches joined and by 2003 there were 11 churches working together that included United Methodists, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches. In the 1970s and 80s there were several charity organizations with booths at the NM State Fair. However, at present the Asbury Café is the only organization at the Fair that gives all profits to charity. Every penny of the profit goes to helping charities that feed the needy, and none of the proceeds of the cafe support the member churches.

The cafe now serves a greater number of fairgoers than ever! The menu includes hamburgers and sodas in addition to the homemade pies that made the Cafe famous. Annual sales now exceed 2000 pies, each homemade and donated to the Café by the member churches.

From a basic beginning of serving pie by the slice from the goat barn in 1960, the Asbury Cafe has become a tremendous community outreach. The Asbury Cafe is run completely by volunteers who desire to share the love of Christ in action throughout our community. In addition to the more than 600 workers from the various churches, the cafe is also assisted by volunteers from the charities that it supports.