

The Common Thread

A monthly publication of Church of the Open Arms, UCC

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MINISTER'S ROUNDTABLE

Why should we read and study the work of Mary Daly who died just a few weeks ago? I believe she was a prophet, a saint, a divinely inspired teacher. Bryan Marquard of the Boston Globe wrote: "Dr. Daly emerged as a major voice in the burgeoning women's movement with her first book, *The Church and the Second Sex*, published in 1968, and *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation*, which appeared five years later. That accomplishment was viewed, then and now, as all the more significant because she wrote and taught at a Jesuit college." Sister Joan Chittister, a feminist author and a member of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Pa., said: "Her legacy is a cloud of women witnesses and male theologians, too, who have now been released into whole new understandings of what the tradition really holds and really means for all of us, male and female. She was a great thinker, she was a great icon. She will be maligned by some, but history will see her very differently."

Her writing, teaching, and lecturing had a profound influence on my faith and my ministry. Robin Morgan, who edited *Sisterhood is Powerful: An Anthology of Writings From the Women's Liberation Movement*, said: "I think she was a central figure for the feminist movement in the 20th century, and hopefully beyond. She had a fierce intellect and an uncompromising soul that sometimes gave even her most loving friends indigestion, but it was worth it. She redefined the parameters of philosophy. She called herself a feminist philosopher, and she really was -- she was the first."

A discussion group for women is meeting now **each Wednesday night from 7:30-9:00 p.m.** in our community hall to study Daly's work. A similar group for men will be starting soon. I encourage you to explore her brilliant ideas and insights.

Sincerely,
Kathy McCallie

FEBRUARY 17TH AT 7:00PM

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE (SEE PG. 5)

All Church Dinner, Sunday, Feb. 28th 5:00 p.m.

"Food, Faith, and Our Future"

Reconnecting with your partner

If you've been in a relationship for at least a year, it may be time to look at new ways to deepen your relationship. Starting **February 21st** and going for eight weeks, Maria and Robert will be leading a group through "The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work". We'll meet after church, have some lunch and then go through a series of exercises outlined in the book. The meetings will last between 1 and 1 1/2 hours after we've eaten. Please contact Maria or Robert if you would like to participate. You can generally find us downstairs in the Godly Play room just before or just after services. We will order several used copies for those that are interested. that cost plus some nominal fee for food will be requested. The final price to cover books and lunch is expected to be no more than \$50 per couple. We look forward to hearing from you.

Notes from New Growth

Hello 2010!

Another new year... many people see it as another chance to start anew, a time for resolutions, self examination, setting goals, and trying to turn wishes into realities! If that is you, I wish you good luck, prayers and best wishes!

The New Growth team has been doing some self-evaluation as well. We are setting new goals and trying to stretch our ministry in new and exciting places. We have such a great product to market, Jesus' Love, that we are set for success!

We want you to be a part of that success.

The "new" New Growth team stands for a lot of things. We work hard to extend the extravagant welcome that Church of the Open Arms is so well known for. That welcome starts at the front door and we believe continues in the sanctuary and the service and on into our community room and church family. Not only do we need help with the Sunday greeting but we also need people willing to sit in service with visitors or take guests to the community room for coffee after service for a get acquainted visit. We are putting together teams to help new college student move in to their dorm rooms. We also are working hard to help create a network among us as a church family to support and encourage each other during the rest of the week. This is taking shape in many forms; our new church directory which will help connect you with people who have talents, interests, or even jobs, careers, and services that you might need or use. New Growth is on the move. We have worked very hard to get to where we are. But the status quo is not acceptable! New Growth wants to grow our church, our message, our hope, our safety, our love. Won't you please come and help. We need people in many capacities and places. Please talk to me if you are interested.

God's speed,

Mark

New Moon Gathering
February 12

Full Moon Drumming
February 26

held at the
Peace Education Institute,
11404 N. Midwest Blvd.

A vegetarian potluck
begins at 6:30,
and the drumming/intention-setting starts
at 7:30.

These activities are free.

**Ordination for Kayla Bonewell
2:00 p.m. - February 14th**

Kayla Bonewell is now on the staff as associate pastor in Rochester Minnesota at a UCC church working with youth and young adults. She will be with us in Oklahoma City for her ordination service on **Sunday, Feb. 14th at 2:00 p.m.** in the afternoon. Mark that important date on your calendar and plan now to attend. The service will be followed by a reception in the community hall.



Born in southern California and raised in central Oklahoma, Rachel Rettinger finds herself at home wherever she is when working for social justice and youth. For the past year, she has worked at the Peace Education Institute (PEI) where she co-taught a high school peace camp.

Rachel is pursuing a Master's of Education degree in Humane Education which combines social justice issues (global human rights, environmental ethics, animal protection, and western culture concerns) with character education. While working as a substitute teacher in the Putnam City School district for two years, Rachel discovered how much she enjoys working with teens. She has a passion for supporting young people in being their authentic selves and in pursuing their unique path in life.

Rachel serves as co-president on the board of VegOK – the Vegetarians of Oklahoma. She regularly writes on vegetarian topics for the Oklahoma Peace Strategy newspaper. Recently, she joined the Respect Diversity Foundation's speakers bureau and serves on their Celebrating Diversity committee.

To cultivate her personal peace, Rachel enjoys mindful meditation, silence retreats, and learning how to support peace in the world. Through Compassionate Communication Oklahoma, she has completed beginning and intermediate classes in Non-Violent Communication (NVC) including "Speak Peace and Change Your World". Through PEI, she clocked twenty hours of training in "Cultivating a Culture of Peace".

Rachel looks forward to building a vibrant teen and young adult program at our church! She envisions a collaborative effort where each participant's input is highly valued.

A Letter From Your Church's President for 2010

Although I have tried my best over the past year, there are still so many of you that I have not had the pleasure of getting to know. I hope that we will have time over the next year to get to know each other better.

My name is Kenny Wright and I have a vision for The Church of the Open Arms. It is a vision of community ministry and of exploring different ways in which we may grow in Christ's love.

We've been growing so quickly over the past year, that it has become common to walk by a brand new face and not realize that you have never met. I think that I may have a relatively easy solution for this. Most of you are aware that we have just finished with an awesomely orchestrated capital campaign back in October/November. Many pledges were made, but your pledge with the church can be carried out even further this year by getting involved with our Building Team Ministry which is led by Ron Bashant. Ron is a great worker, but no one can do it all alone. There are many smaller things that will need to be done through out the year and it would make things much easier on Ron if he had a few handy people to rely on.

If you happen to bake or are the compassionate type, you may fit into a couple of places. Bo Bass is the leader of our Community Life Team and is always needing extra help in the kitchen. Terri Lowe, leading our Care Team, would be thrilled to have people join her as well. Her team ministry reaches out to those in our congregation who require a hospital visit, a shoulder to lean on, or maybe just a little thank you. It takes a special person to commit to this kind of ministry.

And did you ever wonder who makes that first step into the church feel so welcoming? That would be the leader of our New Growth Team, Mark Van Dorn, who makes it all happen. It seems like it just happens, but making each and every person feel welcome requires so much attention; and a job that requires so much attention also requires so many people to make it happen.

My point is there are many opportunities to get involved this year and make all of our visions become reality.

Other teams to become involved in include:

- ✦ Education – Donna Compton
- ✦ Staff Leadership – Nathaniel Batchelder
- ✦ Finance Team – Sandra Hoyt
- ✦ Worship Team – Gloria Weiss
- ✦ Social Justice – Risa Wilkinson



Feel free to contact me if you are interested in joining any of these groups. (208-8969) Challenge yourself to find a team to join this year. If joining a team is not for you, we also offer many small groups and will be offering more. This should prove to be a very exciting year for all of us. Step outside of your comfort zone and get to know the Church of the Open Arms; more importantly, let us get to know you!

Christian Education for Adults

In addition to the on-going adult group that meets to study a variety of themes on Sunday mornings, we would like to propose a new, alternative class which would study the lives of the people of the Bible. Their trials, faith, successes, and failures would be examined to see how they coped with life's many struggles and joys. **Who is the Creator God? What about Adam and Eve and Lilith?**

This class would be led by the Reverend Joe Arganbright, a member of our congregation who holds a B.A. in Biblical Literature and Interpretation and an Ed. M. in Christian Education, and has done much post-graduate study in pastoral care.

There is a possibility of presenting the class as well on a week night along with Sunday morning. If you would be interested in participating, please contact the church office at (405) 525-9555. Classes would begin in late February.



Food Pantry

Blanket & Sock Drive

Our patrons cannot afford blankets to keep warm.

Any size blanket will help!

Our patrons also need socks!

One man came in with plastic Wal-Mart bags for socks;

Please help us provide our patrons with these basic necessities for surviving
the harsh winter weather.

Bring old or new socks— anything is better than nothing!!

"Give It Up" for Lent!

Lent is the 40 days (not including Sundays) before Easter. Many Christians celebrate lent as a time of preparation. Sometimes people "give something up" for lent. For example, a person might give up going out to eat, or watching T.V., or drinking soda pop. On the other hand, you might give up some time or money in order to take something new on during that season. For instance, you might attend bible study once a week, take a walk every day for some quiet time, or commit to spending 30 minutes a day reading something inspiring. However you decide to spend time preparing for Easter, may you be blessed with new life as spring returns.



Ash Wed. Service

February 17th - 7:00 p.m.

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the season of Lent. This is a special time of preparation for Easter. Our evening service for Ash Wednesday includes a quiet, peaceful, contemplative mood, candles, music, and prayer. Some people will want to participate in the tradition of receiving the mark of the ashes on their foreheads as Christians have done for centuries reminding us of our connection with dust and ashes. We will have child care for this service if it is requested no later than Monday, Feb. 15th. Please plan to attend.

Lenten Bible Study

Pastor Kathy McCallie will lead a bible study group during the Tuesday nights in Lent beginning on Tuesday, February 23rd. The group will meet from 7:00-8:15 p.m. in the community hall. We will study the gospel of John with a focus on "Mystical Christianity." All are welcome.

Something to Think About...

I don't know how all of you feel about it, but I look forward to the time after the holidays are over. By the end of the holiday season, I'm ready for a normal routine again. This year as that time approached, I started thinking about the direction I wanted to move towards in my journey. I've never really been much for new year's resolutions, but I do admit that January is a wonderful time to take assessment and evaluate things.

As I've mentioned before, it is very easy for me to get bogged down in the mundane, day to day facets of life. There's always laundry to be done, a floor to be mopped, or dishes waiting in the sink. I had already worked at making those chores easier to handle, but now I feel that I need to take another step to open up new opportunities for myself. That's when the scary thought hit me -- Step out of your comfort zone. (Insert screams of terror here) How many times do we avoid doing things simply because we haven't done them before? Are there tasks or chores that you do the same way all the time even though doing them another way might make them easier or more efficient? Is there something that you secretly want to try but are too afraid to take the step? Are there things that you formerly did and enjoyed, but haven't been able to make the time for recently?

For me, the adventure involves taking some classes and maybe stepping out of my usual circle of friends. It also involves taking the time to nurture my spirit, no matter what chores need to be done. For you, it might be trying a new hobby, joining a book club, volunteer work at a favorite charity, or any number of other activities.

I encourage you to sit down and take a serious look at where you are spiritually right now. It might be time for a little tweaking here and there just to keep things moving forward.

*Peace & Blessing,
Terry Ellis.*

February 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:30 choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Monthly Potluck	1	2	6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:30-9pm Women's discussion group	1-1:45 food pantry drop off	10:00-12:00 Food Pantry set up 3:00-6:00 Food Pantry servers	6
9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 2:00 Kgyla Bonnell Ordination	8	9	6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:30-9pm Women's discussion group	1-1:45 food pantry drop off	10:00-12:00 Food Pantry set up 3:00-6:00 Food Pantry servers	13
9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Reconnecting Class	14	15	6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00 Ah Wednesday service 7:30-9pm Women's discussion group	1-1:45 food pantry drop off	10:00-12:00 Food Pantry set up 3:00-6:00 Food Pantry servers	20
9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Reconnecting Class	21	22	7:00pm Lenten Bible study (see pg. 5)	1-1:45 food pantry drop off	10:00-12:00 Food Pantry set up 3:00-6:00 Food Pantry servers 6:30 pm Full Moon at PEI (see pg. 3)	27
9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Reconnecting Class 5-7pm Food, Faith, and Our Future Dinner	28	29	Feb. 28th "Food, Faith, and Our Future" 5:00-7:00p.m. program and dinner. All church dinner to enhance faith and friendships. Come share the fun and community as we reflect on growing spiritually in the new year.			

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ARE YOU GIVING
OF YOUR TIME AND TALENTS
TO YOUR CHURCH FAMILY?

NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO START
WITH THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YEAR.

(SEE PG. 4)

"Never place a period where God has placed a comma." -Gracie Allen