

The Common Thread

A monthly publication of Church of the Open Arms, UCC

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September 1, 2009

MINISTER'S ROUNDTABLE

Community Power meetings are part of a plan to improve our neighborhoods and communities. Picture joining with about a dozen people to reflect together on issues that are troubling for you or your family. Imagine concerned friends listening with focused attention and willingness to work for change when you talk about your own interests and needs. Do your kids have a safe place to play? Is public transportation a problem for you? Are you concerned about the public schools? What about health care? What are the issues that you are willing to work on that concern you and your family? Picture this listening group of about a dozen people taking time to share ideas, hopes, and dreams. Then, picture lots of groups like that meeting to learn from people in our church what shared concerns we have. One of the benefits of these listening groups would be a deeper sense of belonging and connection in the relationships between our members.

Our congregation is one of over twenty congregations in our city who are conducting these "Community Power" listening meetings. We are united in our commitment to organize to improve our community. After our church clarifies needs and interests of our members then we will connect with other churches to take action for change. I believe wholeheartedly in the possibilities for change in our city. Please prayerfully consider being a leader in this important work of community organizing.

Sincerely,
Kathy McCallie



Mixed Company invited to Germany!

Approximately 60,000 people will gather in September 2010 in Germany to listen to a festival of gospel music. Hundreds of musicians will be present to share their gift of song. Church of the Open Arms can be proud of our singing ensemble, Mixed Company, who have been invited to perform at that festival. Some representatives from our partner churches in Germany heard Mixed Company sing two years ago at our annual UCC meeting in Wichita. Those visitors went back to Germany telling people about this wonderful group from Oklahoma. Then, last month, delegates from Germany came to visit Open Arms and brought the official invitation. Although they will not be able to cover the total expenses of the trip for the nine-member group, our German hosts will provide a significant portion of the finances for the trip. Our leadership council will decide how to conduct fund-raising for the rest of the costs. The group will be in Germany approximately one week sometime around September 8th-15th, 2010. Any of our members and friends who would like to make the trip are welcome to go if they can pay their own way. What an honor for our church! This partnership between our UCC conference of churches in Kansas and Oklahoma with our partner churches in Germany provides wonderful insight and strength for our faith.

A decorative border of stick figures surrounds the central text. There are 20 figures in a top row, 20 in a bottom row, 7 in a left column, and 7 in a right column.

New Growth Team

Sunday, September 27th at 4:00 p.m. at the church. Come meet new friends and help improve our welcome to newer members and friends of the church. We need your warm smile and willingness to reach out in new ways. The meeting will not last more than one hour.!

Draw the Circle Wider

Living God's Welcome

This is the theme of our 2009 Capital Campaign. In January of this year the congregation of Church of the Open Arms approved a capital campaign to raise funds so that we can truly welcome everyone. The funds raised will be used to fund projects that include an elevator, parking lot resurface, and sanctuary seating.

These improvements will allow us to fully utilize the basement area of our facility, provide safe access to the building, and provide flexible and safe seating options for the congregation.

A committee of hardworking individuals has been meeting on a regular basis to plan and implement the campaign which will officially "kick-off" on Sunday October 4, 2009. Please make plans now to be present for this exciting and informative service.

Now is the time to prayerfully consider your part in this exciting growth opportunity. It will take all of us to achieve the goals that have been set for the campaign. The words of 2 Corinthians 2:6-8 are a wonderful place to start as you determine your participation in this exciting opportunity for not only the growth of the church, but for your own individual spiritual growth.

Remember this: ⁶ Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹

And it is a very good work, indeed, that we as a church are committed to doing.

Peace,

Mike

AIDS Walk October 11th

Open Arms needs to form a team to walk in the AIDS Walk. The walk begins at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 11th. Walkers will each sign up sponsors to raise funds through this event. Please consider being a walker, and sign up in the church entryway to join the team from Open Arms that will walk together. The walk is approximately one mile, so it is not too hard for kids.

Women's Fall Assembly

The UCC women of the Kansas-Oklahoma conference host an annual retreat at Camp White in Kansas called "Women's Fall Assembly." This year Kathy McCallie will be the keynote speaker and workshop leader for the event September 11-13th. More information about registration and details is available by calling (405) 525-9555 or pick up a brochure at the church.

September is back-to-school time! Are you ready to get involved in a new class or study group at church? Maybe you want to be part of a bible study that focuses verse by verse on the scripture. Or perhaps you are interested in a book study on contemporary issues. A film discussion group might be the thing you are looking for. Donna Compton is the leader of our Education Team at the church you can talk to Donna about ideas for any classes you would like to teach or attend. Or call the church office to share your ideas. Growing in faith requires growing in wisdom. Learning is fun and a great way to make new friends.



Open Arms Fall Retreat

in Guthrie at Central Christian Camp

Friday night, Oct. 16th through

Sunday morning, Oct. 18th.

Even if you can't come the whole weekend,
mark your calendar and come out for Saturday, Oct. 17th!

September 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6 9:30 choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Monthly Potluck	7 6:00pm Meditation	8	9 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00 Worship Service 7:30 Bible Study	10	11 10:00-12:00 Food Pantry set up 3:00-6:00 Food Pantry servers	12 KO Women's Fall Retreat
13 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship	14 6:00pm Meditation	15	16 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00 Worship Service 7:30 Bible Study	17	18 10:00-12:00 Food Pantry set up 3:00-6:00 Food Pantry servers	19
20 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship	21 6:00pm Meditation	22	23 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00 Worship Service 7:30 Bible Study	24	25 10:00-12:00 Food Pantry set up 3:00-6:00 Food Pantry servers	26
27 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 4:00 New Growth	28 6:00pm Meditation	29	30 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00 Worship Service 7:30 Bible Study	<div style="border: 3px double black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Mark your calendars: Open Arms Fall Retreat October 16th -18th</p> </div>		

Vietnamese American Association, Inc.
Community Service Center
A Non-Profit Organization

912 NW 23rd St, Oklahoma City, OK 73106-Phone:(405)524-3088 Email:vaacsc@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern,

We would like to thank everyone at the Church of Open Arms for all the help you continue to provide us to assist our refugees. We have attempted to use the services of many churches and organizations but they have so much "red tape" that it is quite time consuming. Your church is totally different. You have always been happy to help us with "no strings attached". We at the VAA/CSC only wish to return the favor. Please let us know how we can. There is a special place in heaven for people like you. God bless each of you for your time, effort, gifts, and unwavering kindness.

David M. Schulman,
Case Manager

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

Church of the Open Arms, UCC
3131 N. Pennsylvania Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
405-525-9555
openarmsok@aol.com

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