

The Common Thread

A monthly publication of Church of the Open Arms, UCC

Volume 14, Issue 12

December 1, 2010

MINISTER'S ROUNDTABLE

Recently, I have been on too many airplanes! Flying doesn't scare me or bother me much, but it is somewhat stressful. Stormy weather caused turbulence and a rough flight on my recent flight to Washington D.C. The pilot came on over the speaker saying: "Fasten your seatbelts. We are going to experience some bumps ahead." He was right. It was choppy, but we got through it just fine.

Here at Church of the Open Arms we are coming up on a time of change and challenge. Our building construction is going to disrupt our schedule, our routines, and our habits for a few months ahead. Change is always stressful, but it is exciting, too. By this time next year we will have a new parking lot, a new elevator, new sanctuary seating, and some other wonderful improvements that will be resources for serving God and our community. In the meantime, we will all have to be patient and make some compromises as we adjust to the construction phase.

So, "fasten your seatbelts; there are a few bumps ahead!" What a blessing to be part of a growing church! Please keep our New Construction Task Force and Building Team, led by Mark Van Dorn and Ron Bashant, in your prayers. We are fortunate to have such faithful stewards and workers expressing their faith through serving in this way.

Grace and Peace,
Kathy McCallie

Leadership Council Retreat - Jan. 22nd

The Servant/Leadership Council will have an all-day retreat to set goals and get organized for the new year on Saturday, January 22nd from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. All church leaders are urged to gather, and those interested in meaningful service opportunities volunteering at our church are encouraged to come, too. Bring your calendar and your dreams and visions for the future of our church.

NEW CONSTRUCTION TASK FORCE UPDATE

By the time this reaches you, we could be
sitting in our
NEW CHAIRS IN THE SANCTUARY!

We have gone through the first round of bids for the work on the parking lot, the elevator and related construction, and we are diligently interviewing and exploring the contractors and their bids. This process has been long but soon we will be in the middle of

CONSTRUCTION DUST !

Please watch the Sunday bulletin and your e-mail for notices of upcoming meetings. All are welcome and encouraged to be there.

Any questions about new construction can be directed to Denise Chadwick, Jeff Fuller, Kathy McCallie, Ron Bashant or Mark Van Dorn. These five people are the standing committee for the Task Force and would be happy to visit with you.

Thanks for your patience! Be excited, be very excited!

It's about to happen!!!!

COMMUNITY POWER TEAM UPDATE

Church of the Open Arms continues as one of 23 churches and organizations participating in the development of the "Oklahoma Sponsoring Committee" that will take action in Oklahoma City to improve the lives of families. Community Power Team co-chairs are updated on OSC's progress at monthly meetings that are open to everyone wanting to stay informed. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month, at 7 pm, at the First Unitarian Church, 600 NW 13th Street (next meeting: Thursday, December 9th).

One focus issue being addressed is the crying need of our public schools, some of the most poorly-funded in the nation. A powerful film - "A Community Concern" - will be shown in late January, showing how citizen organizations like OSC have taken action in three different communities resulting in improvement of their schools and student performance.

Co-chairs and all OSC members will be asked to seek "sponsors" of the public film showing, as part of our commitment to insure OSC's solid financial status. The time, date and place of the showing of the documentary are still under consideration, but that will be announced in the January newsletter. **STAY TUNED!**

Belonging Class - Dec. 12th, 2:30 p.m.

Come learn more about the church and how to deepen your involvement. Whether you are considering joining the church or you have recently joined or you just want to make new friends and get more connected, this is a great opportunity. Kathy McCallie will be leading this discussion.

Church Wide Finance House Party

DECEMBER 12, 2010

IMMEDIATELY AFTER CHURCH

*In the Community Café
Hosted by the Finance Team*

**Come Enjoy a Light Lunch, Learn About How the Finances of the Church Work
And Where Our Financial Health Stands**

YOUTH NEWS

NEW! Young Adults Peace Café

Are you a young adult? They're both such subjective terms – young and adult. Basically, if you are around your twenties or thirties, we think you're a young adult. Seeking community and new friends? Come join us!

The Peace Café idea has three secret (okay, not so secret!) agendas: (1) talk about social justice/peace/current events of interest (2) gather young adults so they can meet one another and revel in each other's awesomeness, and (3) eat some lunch. So what better place to do this than the Red Cup, right? We'll meet up **at the Red Cup – 3122 N. Classen - every Tuesday, 11:30am – 1:30pm.** No worries if you can't come right at 11:30, join us at any time! If interested, just meet me (Rachel) there, or ...

Youth Give Back this Holiday Season

We have the best youth right in our congregation here! They are itching to go out and volunteer in the community. Their top 3 volunteer desires are: the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, the Boys and Girls Club, and pet adoptions. For the month of December we will volunteer at the Regional Food Bank, helping to prepare for the busy holiday season.

Because of the work that volunteers do, the Regional Food Bank is able to provide enough food to feed more than 77,000 Oklahomans each week throughout 53 central and western Oklahoma counties. Last year, thousands of volunteers donated more than 64,000 hours of service, saving the Regional Food Bank \$1 million in labor!

We will help give families in need a reason to celebrate this Christmas. Our youth are excited to donate their time and to learn more about the Regional Food Bank. We'll be there on Saturday, December 18th, from 1-4pm. We'll leave from the church at 12:30. You are welcome to join us!

If interested, contact Rachel at 360-7696 or rachelrettinger@yahoo.com or Facebook me!



New Servant/Leaders for 2011

President: Carol Fasol

Vice President: Mark Van Dorn

Secretary: Marie Kizzia

Treasurer: Jeff Fuller

Financial Secretary: Carol Fasol; understudy: Shannon Haggard

Inclusivity Advocate: Nathaniel Batchelder

Care Ministry Team: Kenny Wright

Worship and Music Ministry Team: Gloria Weiss

New Growth Ministry Team: Gene Wiedemann and Marie Kizzia

Community Life Ministry Team: Debbie Hall and Sandra Hoyt

Education Ministry Team: Donna Compton

Social Justice Ministry Team: Rachel Rettinger, Conna Wilkinson, and Angele Fahey

Building and Grounds Ministry Team: Ron Bashant

Stewardship and Finance Ministry Team: Suzanne Flemming

Leadership and Staff Ministry Team: Nathaniel Batchelder

Team members: Cyndy Schillinger, Suzanne Flemming, Bruce Saunkeah, Nancy Nesser, Kathy McCallie

New Construction Task Force: Ron Bashant and Mark Van Dorn



Help Louie Wells

in his mission to

Help Haiti

Louie Wells is a long time member of Church of the Open Arms. Since the recent disasters in Haiti, Louie has been planning a mission trip to Haiti where he worked for five years as a missionary from 1993-1998. Since that time he has kept in touch with close friends and family in Haiti, so he is well-connected to ministry projects there. Seeds of Hope Orphanage Outreach Center is described more fully on the back of this sheet.

Louie is the Donation and Outreach Coordinator for Seeds of Hope.

Donations can be made payable to: "Seeds of Hope"

Attention: Louis Wells, 712 Kimberly Road, Tecumseh, OK 74873

sohooc@windstream.net

Phone: (405) 570-5482 Fax: (405) 598-3254

Raffle Fund Raiser:

Ends December 14, 2010

Items being raffled include: Gift cards for Red Lobster, Chilis, Olive Garden, Wal-mart, movies and other fun stuff. Also: Men's bike with helmet, lock, water bottle and light, Lady's spa package, Hot wheels and Matchbox sets, Baby alive dolls, dvd/blue ray player and more. All prizes will be delivered in time for Christmas. Tax deductible receipts will be available and sent out at the end of the year at your request.

December 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
5 *COA-OP 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 9:30 Book Study* 10:45 Worship 12:00 Monthly Portluck 12-1:30 Youth Group	6	7	8 6:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm Saving Jesus Group 7:30-9pm Mary Daily Group	9 1:45 Food Pantry drop-off 7:00 pm Community Power Team— First Unitarian Church	10 10am—noon Food Pantry set-up 3:00 - 6:00 Food Pantry Servers Decorating Party	11
12 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 9:30 Book Study* 10:45 Worship 12:00 Finance House Party 12-1:30 Youth Group 2:30 - Belonging Class	13 10:30am Sr. Rink Coffee	14	15 6:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm Saving Jesus Group 7:30-9pm Mary Daily Group	16 1:45 Food Pantry drop-off	17 10am-noon Food Pantry 3:00 - 6:00 Food Pantry Servers	18 Youth Volunteer Day At Regional Food Bank
19 9:30 Sunday School 9:30 Book Study* 10:45 Worship SANTA PARTY! 12-1:30 Youth Group	20	21 7:00pm Winter Solstice Celebration	22 NO CHOIR REHEARSAL 7:00 pm Saving Jesus Group 7:30-9pm Mary Daily Group	23	24 CLOSED 8:00pm—CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION SERVICE	25 2:00pm HOLIDAY DINNER 
26 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 9:30 Book Study* 10:45 Worship 12-1:30 Youth Group	27 10:30am Sr. Rink Coffee	28	29 NO CHOIR REHEARSAL 7:30-9pm Mary Daily Group	30	31	

* **Advent/Christmas
Decorating Party**



Friday, Dec. 3 6:30-9:30pm.

Come trim the tree and spruce up the church for the holiday season. Bring a holiday snack to share. We will play cards and make new friends between climbing ladders and hanging the greens. All are encouraged to participate.



SANTA PARTY, Sunday, Dec. 19th, immediately after church. Children of all ages are encouraged to join in the fun. Bring cookies and/or holiday snacks to share.

No Choir Rehearsal - On Wednesday, December 22 or 29th due to the holidays.

Food Pantry Vacation - Pantry closed on Christmas Eve, December 24th.

**2ND ANNUAL COA HOME FOR
THE HOLIDAYS DINNER**

Dinner begins at 2:00 on Christmas Day.
The church will be supplying the turkey and ham.
We ask that you sign up to bring a side dish, salad, or dessert.
Even if you are not able to bring a dish please join us anyway!!

Call Bo or Kenny at 443-8141 to RSVP
or you may sign up in the foyer

EVERYONE IS INVITED!

There will be no full-moon drumming
at the Peace Education Institute
in December.
Please join us for the
Winter Solstice Celebration on Tuesday,
December 21 in the church sanctuary!
7:00 pm



Celebrate the Winter Solstice

December 21 is the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year. On the night of the Winter Solstice, we acknowledge the darkness, the low points, the despair and hopelessness we sometimes feel in life. It's an appropriate ceremony to remember that light will always return. The seasons change, and what can feel like endless darkness will give way to light.

On this special night, you will have the opportunity to identify the light you want to call into your own life and into the world, as we light a "candle sculpture" in the center of the circle.

Join us on December 21 in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. and bring a snack to share afterward.

***"The darkness fades, the light's reborn.
What will you leave with the night?"***

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www.openarms.org

Christmas Eve Communion Service - 8:00 p.m.



The worship team invites you to share the wonder of the season with this candlelight communion service beginning at 8:00 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 24th. The service will include the singing of traditional Christmas carols.

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