

The Common Thread

A monthly publication of Church of the Open Arms, UCC

Volume 16, Issue 1

January 1, 2012

MINISTER'S ROUNDTABLE

Sunday, February 12th at 3:00 p.m. – mark it on your calendar now! Every member and friend of our church is needed at this event as a show of solidarity and support for improving lives of families and individuals in our community. Our church has pledged to have a minimum of 75 people present for this city-wide gathering. When leaders go through the role call of institutions present that day, we need you to stand up and be present. Can you envision standing with our church in connection with other faith communities that transcend divisions of race and economic level? There will be Spanish-speaking congregations, African-American congregations, Catholic congregations, and other diverse congregations like ours present that day. Together we will make a beautiful, inspiring show of unity and support for a better future in our state and our city.

This event will be the founding convention of the faith-based community organizing group that has been going by the name: “Oklahoma Sponsoring Committee.” Our congregation is among several dozen who have been working to lay the groundwork for this organization for several years now. We have already begun to see the fruits of the growing network leading positive change in our community.

The future is bright for this coalition of congregations. The founding convention will be a proud moment in history. Please support our congregation so that we can stand up proud that afternoon representing our own particular calling as a family of faith.

Details about carpooling and the location of the event will be coming soon. Mark the date on your calendar and protect your commitment to be there. This is one simple action that each of us can take to strengthen and bless our own church and our world. Remember that scripture: “Be doers of the word, not hearers only.”

With enthusiastic excitement!
Kathy McCallie



February 12th
Founding Convention
3:00 p.m.
Oklahoma Sponsoring Committee

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Well we made it through the holidays. What a wondrous time in our lives. Thank you to Kathy, Daniel, Conna and everyone involved in making the season special. You WERE successful.

As we begin the new calendar year in our church cycle, I hope each of you know what an important part you play in the life of our church. I hope you are drawn to become even more involved in it in 2012. The 9 ministry teams are forming at this time of year. It is a great time to plug into one of them; to find a place where you might become more involved. I assure you, **you are welcome**.

There are numerous wonderful, exciting things on the horizon for us. Our church has many opportunities to grow and become more enriched in 2012. I hope you can each find a way to be engaged by some of these opportunities.

Each day of cold winter weather makes a tulip bulb stronger so that it can bloom in amazing glory in the spring. As we, as a church family, start to emerge from the wonder of winter to the glories of the spring and the Risen Son I pray for each of you and your loved ones a new and vital place here in our church family. If I can ever be of help in that effort, please let me know.

In Peace,

Mark Van Dorn

CARE TEAM NOTES

January is a BIG birthday month! Birthday and Anniversary Blessings to You All!

Elva Parsons	January 1	Charlie DeVanny	January 22
Pat Proctor	January 2	Bruce Ross	January 23
Bob Lemon	January 3	Deb Goff-Roberts	January 26
Andrew Van Dorn	January 4	Nancy Nesser	January 26
Daniel Willsey	January 4	Stephen D. Brown	January 28
Mark Herndon	January 6	Anna Holloway	January 28
Regina Scott	January 8	Laurie Benz	January 29
Mindy Hellwege	January 14	Rhonda Harding	January 31
Helen Geissler	January 16	Jim Tomaney	January 31
Bruce Saunkeah	January 21	Dale Wright	January 31

Anniversary

Gene Weidemann and Scott Blanton January 4

(Note: we are always trying to update our records of birthdays and anniversaries. If we missed yours, please contact the church office at 405-525-9555 or at openarmsok@aol.com).

With the new year come new opportunities for service to the community through the Open Arm Care Team. Beginning this month, the Care Team will be hosting the monthly Extravagant Birthday Celebration, so if baking or party planning is your thing, please let us know!
Hospital, home or phone visits
Assisting with funeral/memorial services
Greeting card, email and prayer chain ministries

On Sunday, January 29th, the "Lightning Round" discussion will focus on Care Team issues. In the Community Cafe at 10 a.m. the Rev. Donna Compton will talk about her work as a hospital chaplain and about the Stephen Ministries, a program for lay caregivers to support their clergy and congregations. Don't miss this!

The Care Team will continue to meet after the Shared Meal on the first Sunday of each month. Come for the food and fellowship; stay for the chance to be an essential part of congregational care.

For more information becoming a Care Team volunteer, contact Pastor Kathy, Pastor Scott, the church office, or Bruce Saunkeah (bruce@rinkgallery.com). **Thank You for Caring!**

LEADERSHIP DEDICATION SUNDAY

Sunday, January 8th our congregation will celebrate new leadership of our church council and ministry teams. During our regular Sunday morning worship celebration service new leaders will be installed and our congregation will pledge to support their dedication. Serving as a church leader is a commitment that is sometimes rewarding and sometimes a headache! We are blessed to have willing workers who shoulder the burdens of leadership and decision-making to keep the programs and ministry of our church growing.

Please make your presence that morning a priority, and pray for those in our church who are willing and able to serve.

Leadership Training and Planning Saturday, January 14th

Team building, planning, organizing, and visioning for the new year are all on the agenda for our Leadership retreat on Saturday, January 14th from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. We are counting on the all team leaders and church officers that day. Now that our construction project on our building is drawing to a close, we have new opportunities for mission and ministry as a congregation. It is an exciting time in the life of our church. If you have wondered how you could get involved with leadership, please consider committing to be present that day and get on board a ministry team.

Your service and participation are welcome, wanted, and needed!

The HIV/AIDS Support Group

will meet in the community hall on Thursday, January 19th, 2012 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. We encourage all of those interested to attend.

Lightening Rounds

begin again on Jan. 8th. This is a 'really fast,' informal Sunday class for those who have other obligations until 10. We meet from 10 to 10:30 a.m. in the Community Hall for sharing and discussion. We've been learning a lot and having fun. Come Join Us!

Jan. 8 Suzanne Nichols Intentional Self-Care

Jan. 15 To Be Announced (don't hesitate to volunteer!)

Jan. 22 Donna Compton-Practical ideas about hospital visitation from a chaplain.

Jan. 29 Bruce Saunkeah-Caring for One Another-Care Team hopes and plans

Have an interesting idea or topic you'd like to share and discuss? Volunteer leaders welcome! Someone once said everyone has at least one good sermon (topic) in them--we'd like to hear and discuss your ideas. Call Donna Compton at 740-8612.

Neighborhood Association Meeting

The first meeting of **The Neighborhood Association** at the Church of the Open Arms will be on Tuesday, February 7th, at 6:30 p.m. All those interested in what is happening in the church neighborhood are encouraged to come.

FOOD PANTRY REPORT

The food pantry was open for only three weeks in November due to Thanksgiving. 4,549 pounds of food were purchased at a total cost of \$499.54 and 5,814 pounds of free food was received. 666 adults were served along with 289 children.

167 volunteer hours were donated during the month. From the 1111 campaign, we not only received over that number of items from Church of the Open Arms, but Mayflower Church graciously gave us the food they collected.

Thank you to everyone who helps to make our pantry run!

Men's Fellowship

In January, we will meet on the Tuesdays of the 10th & 24th at 6:30 p.m.

Join us if you are able! All men are welcome!

THE CHURCH NURSERY!!

The church nursery is one of the most important ministries we can offer our families. Over the last three months, the nursery has gone through staffing changes. We have hired two energetic and knowledgeable young women to care for our children. Thank you for your support as we have worked on creating stability in the nursery. From time to time, it will be necessary to supplement the nursery staff with volunteers - especially during Christmas and Easter. If you are willing to volunteer from time to time to assist in the nursery, please contact the church office or Linda Manaugh at Imanaugh@gmail.com.

Meet Your Nursery Workers:



My name is **Desiree Martin**. I have a one year old daughter. I plan to begin college in the spring at UCO studying Child Psychology. I am very "into" the art world. My hobbies include drawing, writing poetry and singing. We have a lot of things planned for our classes. We look forward to working with the kids and their families. Feel free to stop by our class anytime to meet us.



My name is **Jasmine Martin**. I have two boys ages six and four. I currently attend Rose State College and am seeking a degree in Radiological Technology. I have worked at St. Luke's Children's Center for four years. I participate in 30 hours of childcare training each year. I have worked with all ages of children. I love spending time with kids. I look forward to bringing new changes to the nursery here at Open Arms.

*If you or a group you are with uses the church's nursery during the week for any reason, please make sure you sweep the floor and clean up after yourselves so that it is clean on Sunday for our children. Thank you!

Engage

Exploring Nonviolent Living

Engage is a 12-week discussion group facilitated by Conna Wilkinson beginning Sunday January 8th, from 4:30-6:30 p.m., and ending on March 25. It covers a lot of topics including the stages of social movements, sharing & processing personal experiences of violence, and much more. The group is free and we will creatively find a way to handle the expenses of materials and snacks. Fliers are out in the lobby. Let Conna know if you would like to participate.
405-204-6479.

BEGINNING MEDITATION CLASS



Start the new year off with a resolution to learn meditation. Our group meets on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

We begin the session with a 20 minute sit, starting at 6:30. This is for those who are comfortable with a longer sitting period. You can arrive anytime during that period and join for whatever length of time you are comfortable. Then at 6:50, we will welcome each other and do some sharing. At 7:00 we will participate in a guided meditation followed by discussion, and then, we will end with a short walking meditation.

Our guided meditations for beginners are taken from a 12 session course offered by the Edgar Cayce Institute, so for the full benefit, plan to attend all 12 of these beginning January 3rd.

I hope you'll plan to join us. You, and everyone in your life, will benefit.

Full-Moon Drumming

January 6 at
MettaWing
(Wilshire & Post)
Vegetarian Potluck—6:30
Drumming—7:30

SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAM PLANNING MEETING

Sunday, January 8, right after church in the Youth Room. (We will have a light potluck during the meeting.)



DIVERSITY SUNDAY January 15th



The Martin Luther King Holiday weekend is a time for celebrating diversity and justice-seeking at Church of the Open Arms.

We will welcome Lizette Merchán Pinilla of the Justice and Witness Commission of the Kansas/Oklahoma Conference of the United Church of Christ that Sunday as our guest preacher. Lizette brings an inspiring and challenging story of faith and vision as a UCC pastor and leader serving now in the Tulsa area. It will be a great morning to bring a friend and get energized for the new year.

Racial harmony and consciousness-raising about diversity issues are both priorities at Church of the Open Arms.

Plan to be present and share the light of Christ
on Diversity Sunday this year.

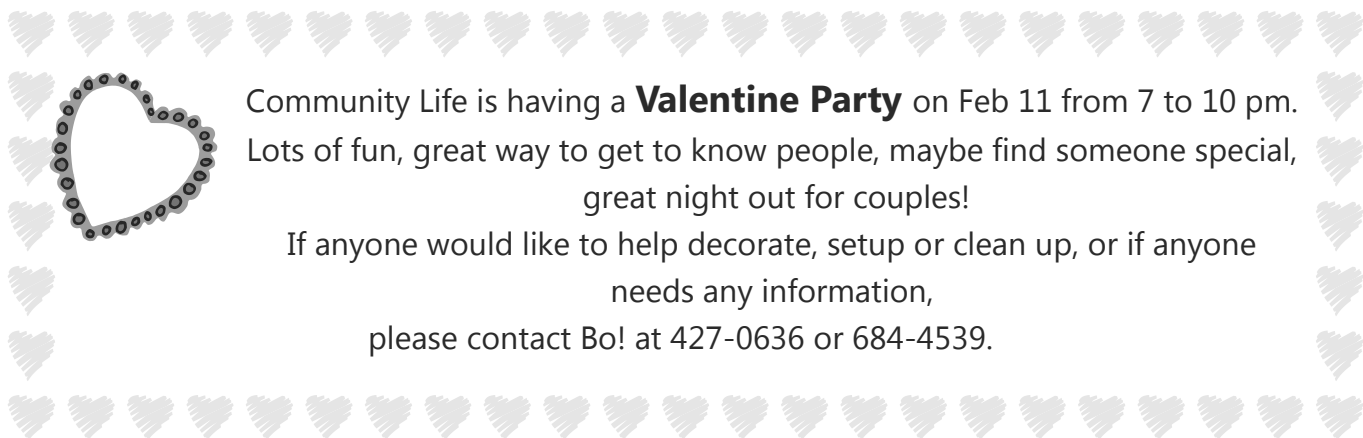
2012 Parade for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday



Church of the Open Arms's banner will be carried by church members in the MLK-Day Parade on Monday, January 16th. Kenny Wright has again volunteered to be the coordinator.

Sign-up sheets will be on display in the lobby. This is a great way for us to visibly demonstrate our church's commitment to universal civil and human rights and our reverence for the memory of Dr. King.





Parade line-up will be between noon and 2pm, on the streets west of St. Paul's Cathedral, at NW 7th and Robinson. An optional MLK-Day Program begins at noon inside the Cathedral ... plenty of time to attend the program, then join Kenny and others for the Parade.



Community Life is having a **Valentine Party** on Feb 11 from 7 to 10 pm. Lots of fun, great way to get to know people, maybe find someone special, great night out for couples!

If anyone would like to help decorate, setup or clean up, or if anyone needs any information,
please contact Bo! at 427-0636 or 684-4539.

January, 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Lightning Round 10:45 Worship 12:00 p.m. Monthly Potluck</p>	<p>2</p> <p>10:30 AM Senior Coffee at the Rink —3200 N. Rockwell</p>	<p>3</p> <p>6:30 PM Beginning Meditation</p> 	<p>4</p> <p>11AM Bible Study 6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7-7:30 Chapel Service 7:30PM Marry Daly Group</p>	<p>5</p> <p>7:15 am RISE & SHINE 12:30-1:30 Food Pantry drop-off</p>	<p>6</p> <p>2-4 pm Food Pantry Set-up ~ 4-6 pm Food Pantry Servers 6:30-9:30 p.m. "Taking Down of the Greens" Party & Game Night</p> 	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Lightning Round 10:45 Worship—Leadership Dedication Sunday Noon—Peace/Justice Mtg.</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>6:30 PM Men's Fellowship 6:30 PM Beginning Meditation</p>	<p>11</p> <p>11AM Bible Study 6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7-7:30 Chapel Service 7:30PM Marry Daly Group</p>	<p>12</p> <p>7:15 am RISE & SHINE 12:30-1:30 Food Pantry drop-off</p>	<p>13</p> <p>2:00 - 4:00 Food Pantry Set-up 4:00 - 6:00 Food Pantry Servers</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Leadership Training & Planning 9am - 3pm</p> 
<p>15</p> <p>9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Lightning Round</p>  <p>10:45 Diversity Sunday Svc. Noon—Leadership Council Mtg</p>	<p>16</p> <p>10:30 AM Senior Coffee at the Rink 2PM—MLK Day Parade: NW 7th & Robinson</p>	<p>17</p> <p>6:30 PM Beginning Meditation</p>	<p>18</p> <p>11AM Bible Study 6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7-7:30 Chapel Service 7:30PM Marry Daly Group</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7:15 am RISE & SHINE 12:30-1:30 Food Pantry drop-off 6-8 pm—HIV/AIDS Support Group</p>	<p>20</p> <p>2-4 pm Food Pantry Set-up 4-6pm Food Pantry Servers</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Lightning Round 10:45 Worship</p> <p><i>COA-OP</i></p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>6:30 PM Men's Fellowship 6:30 PM Beginning Meditation</p>	<p>25</p> <p>11AM Bible Study 6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7-7:30 Chapel Service 7:30PM Marry Daly Group</p>	<p>26</p> <p>7:15 am RISE & SHINE 12:30-1:30 Food Pantry drop-off</p>	<p>27</p> <p>2-4 pm Food Pantry Set-up 4-6pm Food Pantry Servers</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Lightning Round 10:45 Worship</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>6:30 PM Beginning Meditation</p>				

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Sermons now on the web!
www.openarms.org

Diversity Sunday

January 15th, 10:45 a.m.

Pack the Church

Bring a Friend

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