

The Common Thread

A monthly publication of Church of the Open Arms, UCC

Volume 15, Issue 9

September 1, 2011

MINISTER'S ROUNDTABLE

Where were you on September 11, 2001? As we approach the ten year anniversary of that historic day that shook our nation and our world to the core, we have an opportunity to reflect prayerfully together. One of my initial thoughts is that the bombing of the twin towers that day was the most significant world-changing event in modern history. Yet, when I stop to think more deeply, I realize how that thought reveals what a limited, privileged perspective I have enjoyed. I might have been born a few decades earlier in Japan, and survived the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I could have lived through the genocide and atrocities in Serbia or Somalia. I might have been trying to raise my children in Iraq or Soweto. Now don't misunderstand me. I am grateful that I have enjoyed such a sheltered, peaceful life. War and famine are things I have observed on television screens and read about in books. I wish the September 11th bombings had never happened at all. But, looking back after ten years, I can see that some of the learning and raised consciousness that resulted from the courageous, faithful response to the bombings can help us grow in compassion and more global consciousness.

I do not believe that God causes bad things to happen. I do not believe that those bombings were God's will. However, I do believe that no matter what happens, God can help us respond in loving, faithful ways. Even when the sky is falling, and everything seems to be falling apart, no one but God has dominion over us. May you continue the process of healing and hope as we mark the anniversary of September 11th.

Prayerfully,
Kathy McCallie

Leadership Council

Sunday, September 18th

2:00 p.m.

AIDS WALK OF OKLAHOMA CITY

The Church of the Open Arms will be participating in this year's Aids Walk of Oklahoma City on Sunday, September 25, at Sonic Plaza in Bricktown, located on the south side of Reno, across the street from the ballpark. This group walk is a one-mile walk through historic Bricktown in downtown Oklahoma City.

The mission of the Aids Walk is to build awareness of HIV/AIDS and to raise funds for the support of nonprofit organizations that provide direct care, support services, and education. We participate in the Aids Walk because:

- ⇒ Over 4,500 Oklahomans are currently living with HIV/AIDS.
- ⇒ An estimated 900,000 persons in the United States are currently living with HIV, including 180-200,000 who do not know they are infected.
- ⇒ Approximately 9,500 cases are estimated in children under the age of 13.

Since 1998, AIDS Walk has distributed more than \$500,000 to nonprofit organizations serving the Oklahoma City AIDS/HIV community through education, prevention and community awareness. Thousands of people living in our community have benefitted from the funds raised through the AIDS Walk of Oklahoma City.

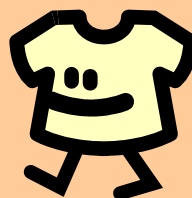
Registration begins at 12:30 p.m. and the Walk steps off at 2:00 p.m. Before the Walk, browse the vendor and service organization tables. The AIDS Walk of Oklahoma City is FREE and open to the public.

Sign-up sheets will be available starting Sunday, September 4. If you have any questions, contact Suzanne Flemming, Sheri Dickerson Chan or call the church office at 405-525-9555.

We Still Have Pride T-Shirts

The sizes left are:

11- 2XL BLUE
13- 2XL YELLOW
1- M YELLOW
3- 3XL YELLOW
1- 3XL BLUE
1 S BLUE



They are \$12.00 each. Ask **Scott Blanton** or **Gene Wiedemann** any Sunday if you want one.

CARE TEAM NOTES

LOTS of Birthdays in September!!

Caleb Barker-Cully	September 4	Lexi Snapp	September 18
Semira Barker-Cully	September 4	Denise Chadwick	September 20
Pam Norton	September 4	Shawna McCord	September 24
Lynda Mead	September 8	Ray Davis	September 15
Jim Stovall	September 14	Maria Rubino-Watkins	September 27
Mark Van Dorn	September 15	Molly Fagan	September 29
Scott Hamilton	September 16	Kylee Crawford	September 30
Kathy McCallie	September 18		

Anniversaries!

Tyler Baize & Zane Wiggins	September 10
Doris & Orra Compton	September 29
John & Betty Harsanyi	September 30

Birthdays and Anniversary Blessings to you all!

(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).

The "blue card" in your bulletin every Sunday has a space for prayer requests. You can fill it out and put the card in the offering plate. Prayer requests during the week can be made by calling or emailing the church office, or via the Open Arms prayer request e-mail list. To make a request or to add your name to the list, contact **Mindy Hellwege** at hellwege69@aol.com.

Speaking of cards, if you've ever wanted to send someone a purple "I was thinking of you today in worship" card message, but forgot to do so during Sunday service, you may contact **Sharon Tomaney** by phone (514-4952) or e-mail (sgtomaney@yahoo.com) with your message and she will send a card in your name.

FOOD PANTRY UPDATES

Please note volunteer Food Pantry hours have changed. From 2 to 4 pm., we will be setting up the pantry, and from 4-6 p.m., we will be serving patrons. The call for volunteers has been tremendous, so much so that persons should call Laura at 277-8406 before coming to see if we have enough volunteers. Willing volunteers are difficult to turn away. Thank you for the response!

Food Pantry Report for the Month of July

We successfully served 471 families, including 914 adults and 359 children. Our total cost for the month was \$754.98. From the Regional Food Bank, we purchased 5,741 lbs of food. Additionally, we received 3,294 lbs of free produce and bread. We were able to feed all these people this month at 59 cents per person!

Food Pantry Item of the Month: Tuna

If you are able to give food for the Pantry, this month we need Tuna. Please put any donation in the red cart by the front door. Each month, we will feature a different item needed for the Pantry. Thank you for your continued support of the Food Pantry!

COME SING WITH US!!

The choir has just begun work on the Christmas music. This is a great time to consider singing with us. We practice on Sunday mornings from 9:30-10:00 and Wednesday from 6:00 to 6:45 pm. We have a great time together; we work hard, we have fun, and most importantly we support and share our love for our church, our God and each other. It never ceases to amaze me how little the focus of our church choir is on performance and making great music. Instead we focus on being a family to each other and sharing our love of God and music together.

It doesn't matter if you think you have a good voice or not. It doesn't matter if you can read music or not. If singing with a caring supportive group of people is something you would be interested in trying, then come check us out. Don't get me wrong, we work hard, but we have a great time doing it. Egos and prima donna attitudes are conspicuously absent from our group and we foster a supportive loving environment where the person who has been musically involved all their lives can work and enjoy spending time singing with the person who has never sung a note or looked at printed music before in their life.

On Saturday, September 17 Conna is hosting the group at her house from 9:00-12:00 with a potluck lunch afterward. This time will be spent introducing ourselves to the music for the Christmas cantata and getting a bit of a head start on it. We did this last year and we had a great time and it proved to be incredibly valuable in getting our Christmas music ready on time.

So, please consider joining us for the retreat and/or our regular rehearsals on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings.

Daniel Willsey

The September Movie Night will be an event. **THE PEACE & JUSTICE TEAM** will be cooking you a delicious, nutritious vegetarian dinner, and featuring a short film called "Change Your Diet—Save The World". The evening will focus on our choice to eat meat or not, and why a person who cares might choose to be a vegetarian. We recognize we all have different standing points on this question, so all points of view will be civilly received.

For the sake of the meal planners, please RSVP to Katie in the church office by Sunday, September 18. Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m.

**Full-Moon
Drumming
Sept. 9, 8:00 p.m.
at MettaWing
(Wilshire & Post)**

Hey, Fellas!

A new men's fellowship is forming and all men of the church are encouraged to participate. Our first gathering will be on **Thursday, September 15, at 6:30**. We'll begin by exploring what it means to be both a man and a Christ-follower, and decide as a group how often we'll meet and the scope of our social activities. This is an exciting time in the life of our church and together we can provide insight and encouragement to be great leaders and great followers.

YOUTH NEWS

New Young Adult Bible Study Coming the End of September

Living the Questions is an open-minded alternative to studies that attempt to give participants all the answer. Living the questions creates an environment where participants not only interact with one another in exploring the best of today's theological thought, but together, we strive to explore what's next for Christianity. Day and Time TBD

Youth Group Anew!

Youth is meeting on Sundays, 12p-1p. So come join our growing community as we explore life's challenges, questions, and joys with one another.

Godly Play Needs You

Do you have a passion for story telling, enjoy spending time with kids, or just like to work quietly in the background? Then the children of our church could benefit from your skills. Godly Play needs more Door Persons and Story Tellers to enrich the experience of our children. Training begins with the Door Person position and takes commitment and care to complete.

For more information, contact Clayton Miller @ clayton.miller@nmss.org
or by phone at 405-514-9492

RISE AND SHINE!



There is another worship opportunity heading to Church of the Open Arms. Starting on Thursday, September 8, join us for a brief time of fellowship on your way to work. We'll gather in the sanctuary at 7:15 a.m. for prayer, a Scripture reading, and sharing communion. You'll be on your way to work by 7:30 a.m., but with a renewed sense of strength and purpose. "Rise and Shine" complements our Wednesday evening Chapel Service as one more way to celebrate God's love for our church family.

ORAL ROBERTS'S GRANDSON TO SPEAK

Friday, **September 23**, will be a very special evening at Church of the Open Arms as we welcome Oral Roberts's grandson, Randy Potts, to speak about the challenges of growing up in the shadows of his homophobic grandfather. He will be the guest on Pastor Scott's weekly internet broadcast, "Oklahoma: Inside Out," recorded before a live audience at our church. We certainly hope the audience will include you! The program will begin at **7:00 p.m.** and include not only Scott's interview, but plenty of time for your questions. Randy is a gifted presenter and this is a unique opportunity to hear someone who is rapidly gaining an international reputation as a superb speaker. Please invite friends to come to this special evening of entertaining enlightenment.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

There will be a brief Education Committee meeting following church on Sept. 11, right after church. We'll try to keep it to 30 minutes--it can't run very long because there is another meeting at 1:00! All staff and volunteers currently involved in the Education Program are encouraged to attend and the meeting is open to everyone. Bring your needs and your ideas. Contact Donna Compton @ 740-8612 for further info.

Beginning in September, the Education Team will sponsor "Lightning Rounds"--a short Sunday morning alternative to Sunday School for those who are involved in the choir but would like something between choir and church service. We'll start at 10 and end at 10:30. After a short presentation, there will be a discussion of the topic presented. So get some coffee or a nice cup of tea and join us for learning and conversation. For more info or to volunteer to lead a Round, call Donna Compton at 740-8612.

- Sept 4 - Labor Day thoughts about Labor Unions led by Donna Compton
- Sept 11 - Memories of 9-11: Our Experiences and Feelings—Group sharing after brief intro.
- Sept 18 - Reflections on the Mormon Faith led by Melinda Norton
- Sept 25 - Bullet Proof Faith Conversation led by Mike DeArmond
- Oct 2 - UCC Position on the Wars led by Nathaniel Batchelder

Save the Dates:

Fall Retreat ~ November 4th-6th
Central Christian Camp near Guthrie

OKLAHOMA SPONSORING COMMITTEE

RETREAT—Saturday, September 24th - 9:00 am to 3:00 pm





at
Capitol Hill Church of the Nazarene
3412 S. Shartel (South of Grand Blvd.)

Among other things, we will be addressing Economic Justice and Seniors' Well-Being issues. **We would like to have as many folks from our congregation as possible** attend the Retreat. Please sign up to attend. Sign-up sheets will be in the foyer in September.

THANK YOU, OPEN ARMS MEMBERS

We had Game Night on August 26th, and the folks that showed up volunteered to carry all the water for the homeless (10 cases!) up from the basement! The Homeless Alliance's new Shelter just opened. An employee there, Jennifer, and her husband came to pick up the water. In all, COA donated 14 cases. Thanks to COA for donating the 10 cases left over from PRIDE week and to our members who donated. The heat continues and the water is much appreciated by the homeless.

September 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Lighting Rounds 10:45 Worship 12—1 pm Youth Group 12:00 Monthly Potluck	5	6 7PM Meditation	7 11AM Bible Study  6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7-7:30 Chapel Service 7:30PM Mary Daly Group	8 7:15 am RISE & SHINE  1:45 Food Pantry drop-off	9 2:00 - 4:00 Food Pantry Set-up 4:00 - 6:00 Food Pantry Servers	10 CHOIR RETREAT 9:00-12:00 at Conna's 
11 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Lighting Rounds 10:45 Worship 12:00 Education Team Meeting 12-1:00 Youth Group	12 10:30 AM Senior Coffee At The Rink	13 7PM Meditation	14 11AM Bible Study 6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7-7:30 Chapel Service 7:30PM Mary Daly Group	15 7:15 am RISE & SHINE 1:45 Food Pantry drop-off 6:00-8:00 HIV/AIDS Support Group 6:30 Men's Fellowship	16 2:00 - 4:00 Food Pantry Set-up 4:00 - 6:00 Food Pantry Servers	17 OKLAHOMA SPONSORING COMMITTEE RETREAT —Capitol Hill
18 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Lighting Rounds 10:45 Worship 12—1:00 Youth Group 2:00 — Leadership Council Retreat	19	20 7PM Meditation	21 11AM Bible Study 6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7-7:30 Chapel Service 7:30PM Mary Daly Group	22 7:15 am RISE & SHINE 1:45 Food Pantry drop-off Movie Night  Potluck—6pm Film—6:30 pm	23 2:00 - 4:00 Food Pantry Set-up 4:00 - 6:00 Food Pantry Servers 7:00—RANDY POTTS SPEAKING	
25 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Lighting Rounds 10:45 Worship 12-1:00 Youth Group AIDS WALK	26 10:30 AM Senior Coffee At The Rink	28 7PM Meditation	28 11AM Bible Study 6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7-7:30 Chapel Service 7:30PM Mary Daly Group	29 7:15 am RISE & SHINE 1:45 Food Pantry drop-off	30 2:00 - 4:00 Food Pantry Set-up 4:00 - 6:00 Food Pantry Servers	

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

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Oklahoma City, OK
#.1229

Address Service Requested

Sermons now on the web!
www.openarms.org

CHOIR RETREAT
Saturday,
September 17th
9:00 - 12:00 p.m.

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