

The Common Thread

A monthly publication of Church of the Open Arms, UCC

Volume 15, Issue 10

October 1, 2011

"The Church Has Left the Building!"

We all know that the church is the people, not the physical building. In the next few weeks, our community of faith will take a "field trip" to worship in the chapel at Oklahoma City University. Sunday, October 2nd and Sunday, October 9th our church will gather at 10:45 a.m. on the OCU campus, in their beautiful chapel for our regular Sunday morning worship celebration service. What a great opportunity to explore, experiment, and discover new perspectives on our life together as a church body.

As part of our building improvements, we are installing a new ceiling in our own sanctuary. The construction phase in our sanctuary should be completed within two weeks. We plan to be back enjoying our own sanctuary by October 16th. Like any adventure, this arrangement will require patience and willingness to stretch beyond our usual comfort zones. The OCU chapel building is located just east of Pennsylvania Ave. on the south side of N.W. 23rd Street. It won't be the same without you, so please make the effort to be there!

Many other activities will be moved or cancelled during those weeks, so check the church website or call (405) 525-555 if you have a question about a specific activity. Help us make this a fun, memorable experience by going the extra mile to be present those weeks. Just remember, all this chaos is a sign of progress. In a few more months our construction projects will be complete.

On the move,
Kathy McCallie

Mission 1: 11.1.11 – 11.11.11

For more info: www.ucc.org/mission1 and Mission1 on Facebook

** SENIOR WELL-BEING **

At a meeting this summer of the church's Community Power Team, we heard a report from Kathy McCallie and Kris King, the leading organizer of the Oklahoma Sponsoring Committee (OSC), about a conference they had attended regarding issues concerning the aging population in our country. At that meeting, a number of people were interested in learning and discussing more about topics such as Social Security, retirement planning, housing, health care reform, insurance and Medicare. As a result, a Senior Well-being Task Force was established, with 9 people at the meeting willing to serve on the committee. Mary Sue Sparkman and I agreed to be co-chairs and liaisons with OSC and its Senior Economic Justice Committee, working at the community level. We are making plans for a gathering at the church for anyone wanting to hear and learn more about justice and senior wellbeing, and the complex issues that seniors face. There will also be an opportunity to hear your stories and talk about what might make it easier to live as a senior in OKC.

As I said in church recently, COA is the most informed and action-oriented church I have ever attended, with people willing to advocate for justice and equality for all people and for a variety of causes. And I repeat, NOW is the time for us to speak and act for ourselves, our parents, our grandparents. Given what is currently going on in our country, states and communities, now is NOT the time to sit back and let others talk and make decisions for us. We need to be heard. We need to help speak for those among us who are not being heard. This meeting will provide an opportunity for us to come together and share our diverse experiences, thoughts and ideas – a chance to inspire and inform those who will choose to help lead the way to make OKC an “equal-opportunity” community – supporting and promoting what is good and right and just for all of its residents. I hope to see you at that meeting!
Nancy Sharp—373-2849

FACTS

In OK County:

There are 85,000 seniors (age 65+), more than 9,500 of them live in poverty, 42% are disabled and 13,000 are raising their grandchildren. **The 10th leading cause of death among our county seniors is suicide.**

In our church family:

Some of us are seniors, most of us plan to be seniors, many of us are concerned or dealing with aging relatives or friends. Most of us are currently, or will be at some point, dealing with Social Security, Medicare and retirement issues.

Oh to Listen...



At Church of the Open Arms we use the consensus method to manage the business of the church. Consensus means that we offer everyone who cares to contribute the opportunity to share their feelings about a subject and then use those thoughts and considerations to create the plan. It is NOT “majority rule” or Roberts Rules of Order.

Because everyone has the right to input and discernment one of the most important elements of Consensus is the person assigned to “Listen.” The Listener is a pre-determined individual whose job it is to make sure everyone is heard that wants to be and that no one person or group of people dominate the conversation. The Listener sits and hears the conversation, observes people's body language or asks for input from people who appear to want to speak. The Listener does not facilitate the meeting but rather facilitates the opportunity to contribute. They also do not give up their right to speak.

As you all know, we have 12 Leadership Council meetings a year. Looking forward to 2012 we are hoping to create a pool of people who are interested in being Listeners at the council meetings. You could make one commitment for the year or agree to do it any number of times. It is a great opportunity to play an important role in the life of the church.

If you would like to know more about this, please speak to **Conna Wilkinson or Mark Van Dorn.**

We hope to put together an opportunity for the Listeners to get together over a cup of coffee and explore the opportunities this ministry allows.

Nursery Help Needed

We are in the process of hiring new attendants for our nursery.

In the meantime, we need a list of volunteers who can be called in a pinch to help with the children.

We are required to do back ground checks and insist that all volunteers follow policies being developed for the nursery.

Special thanks to Lisa Wolfe for helping advocate for our nursery!

If you are interested in volunteering call: Linda Manaugh (405) 812-6457

CARE TEAM NOTES

Another BIG birthday month!!

Birthday Blessings to you all!

Veta Bordeaux	October 4	Christopher Ross	October 17
La Vonne Green	October 5	Jeff Fuller	October 19
Tara Henry	October 9	Andy Talbert	October 20
Terry Holmes	October 9	Lisa Wolfe	October 20
Carol Fasol	October 12	Jeanne Flanigan	October 26
Maria Kizzia	October 13	Warner Jones	October 26
Sandra Hoyt	October 27	Bo Bass	October 31

(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).

Other reminders:

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.

The Open Arms Care Team meets during the Pot Luck Meal after worship on the first Sunday of every month. Feel free to stop by, have a bite, and share your ideas for building a more effective Care Team.

New: Men's Fellowship

**All men in the church, ages 18-118, are invited to join the New Men's Fellowship.
This month we will be meeting on Thursday, October 13th, at 6:30 p.m.**

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

Total People Served in August - 1107 (408 Households: 773 Adults, 334 children)

Total Monies Spent in August - \$1,022.41

Money Spent per Person—92 cents

Number of pounds paid for – 6,096.1

Number of courtesy pounds – 7,445

(These amounts do not reflect the bread donated by Panera and Ingrid's)

The total monies spent this month was up due to a sale of bulk items which we took advantage of toward the end of the month, and will carry over.

Item to donate for the Month of October – Canned Fruit

(As the cost of food has gone up everywhere we are emphasizing one item a month for donations from the church family – these are items that have become very expensive for us at the food bank – thank you for your support. They may be placed in the red cart in the foyer.)

*****Due to construction the food pantry will be closed on September 30, Oct. 7 and Oct. 14 *****

Thank you for your continued support for this very needed and appreciated ministry of the church!

August 30, 2011

Dear Friends at Church of the Open Arms,

Thank you so much for your generous gift of \$100.00 to **NEIGHBORS IN NEED** in 2010! Two-thirds of your NIN offering goes to support Justice and Witness Ministries and 1/3 to support the Council of American Indian Ministry.

It has been another remarkable yet challenging year in the United Church of Christ as we strive for justice and peace for all of God's people. No matter where they are, members throughout the church demonstrate that they are people of compassion and commitment. Local churches, conferences, associations and the national setting work daily to address injustice in their communities, regions, the nation, and in the world.

We are encouraged by our relationships with conferences and partners of other faith communities. These efforts have proven that we can make a difference when we work together. For example, a powerful coalition of faith and non-religious communities has formed to address the serious crisis relating to global poverty and climate change.

Remember – October 2, 2011 is Neighbors In Need Sunday. This year we are engaged in an exciting new campaign that honors our commitment to be ONE CHURCH – MISSION 1! Between November 1st and 11th we encourage our churches to go an extra mile and collect an extra 1 million healthy food items, an additional \$111,111 for Neighbors in Need designated for hunger action, and 11,111 letters to Congress to support just food policies all over the world. For more information, go to <http://www.ucc.org/mission1>.

In Christ's Service,

Paul Osgood, Chairperson
JWM Development Committee

M. Linda Jaramillo
Executive Minister



Fall Retreat

Nov. 4-6



Nature Deficit Disorder is when the lack of time out in nature weakens your joy of life, spiritual zest, and mental health. In our busy society it is a challenge to take enough time to rest, play, and renew ourselves and our relationships. That is why our church retreat is an essential part of our programming. Come out on Friday night and spend about 40 hours (that biblical number!) without getting in a car. You will be surprised what it can do for your relationships with friends and family and with God. The woods are beautiful at the camp. The meals are cooked for us. There are walking trails, canoes, a campfire, a hayride, crafts, bible study, meditation time, and inspiring story-telling. The adventure begins at 7:30 p.m. on Friday night, Nov. 4th and ends at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 6th. Some of us will come back for church on Sunday morning at Open Arms, and others will stay out at camp and enjoy an out-door worship experience there. The cost is \$80 per adult. All children and youth are covered by scholarship money. There is additional money to help with scholarships for adults. Please pay what you can, but most importantly, please come! Fill out a registration form or call the church office (405) 525-9555 to get your place reserved for the retreat.

YOUTH NEWS

Youth Group will now be Sunday's from 4:00pm-6:00pm. Everyone from middle school through high school are invited to join our spirit-seeking community.

For more information, contact Clayton Miller

@ clayton.miller@nmss.org or by phone at 405-514-9492

Full-Moon Drumming

October 7, 8:00 p.m. at

MettaWing

(Wilshire & Post)



Come Home for the Holidays

The holidays are fast approaching. For the past two Christmases, Bo and I have hosted Christmas dinner for our church family. We want to let you know what this has meant to us. Our church is our family.

We want to thank those who attended as well as those who helped make it all happen. Every Christmas there are people who don't have anyone to spend Christmas with. They think that no one cares and many feel they don't deserve to experience the joys of Christmas. They usually end up at the bar or alone at home. The suicide rate spikes incredibly during the holidays. We feel that absolutely no one should have to spend Christmas alone.

We invite not only the congregation of the Church of the Open Arms, but we invite the congregation to invite others. You see, Christmas just happens to fall on Sunday this year. This is a superb opportunity to bring a friend to service or someone who has never heard of our church. This is your chance to share the love with others!

This year, on Christmas morning, the Community Café will be open at 8:00 a.m. offering coffee, hot apple cider and other Christmas goodies. Feel free to bring your own Christmas goodies to add to the table. There will be dominoes and cards as well as other games available. So join us early to make some memorable Christmas morning memories.

Christmas morning worship service will begin at 10:45 and child care will be available. Christmas dinner will be served following worship service (approximately 12:15) child care WILL NOT be available. Christmas dinner will work much like a potluck. Carol Fasol and Cindy Lasyone have each donated a turkey and Scott Hamilton has donated a ham. We are asking everyone to bring a favorite holiday dish. In order for us to get a good idea of how many will be there and who is bringing what, a sign-up sheet will be available in the foyer of the church.

RSVP IS APPRECIATED

Contact Bo or Kenny for more information
405-684-4539

HIV/AIDS SUPPORT GROUP

To those interested in attending this month's HIV/AIDS Support Group Meeting on Thursday, October 20th, at 6:00 p.m., it will be held at Dennis Creedon's home. Call him at 205-7460 for more information. The group will be back at the church in November on the third Thursday, as usual, at 6:00 p.m.

Anyone interested is welcome to join the group.

"Count Yourself Blessed" Campaign Coming

Our many blessings at Open Arms will be the focus of a three-week campaign starting October 29. Using materials from our national denomination, the campaign task force will be urging members and friends to fill out and turn in "Estimate of Giving in 2012" cards. "Every person in church should feel they are essential to Open Arms' life and future," said in-coming President Mark Van Dorn. "Whether your giving is \$10 or \$1,000 per month, everyone counts and should be counted."

An all-church dinner, on Thursday, November 10th, will celebrate the third week of the campaign and should bring in the bulk of the "Estimate of Giving" cards. Sunday November 12th will be Campaign Completion Sunday.

The Finance Team and Leadership Council invite everyone to prayerfully reflect on their giving to the church. This will be an opportunity to make a change, either up or down, in your giving. The point is to make all our giving intentional and consistent, so that our church remains healthy and strong.

We do have many blessings to count.

Mission 1:

11.1.11 – 11.11.11 **That they may all be 1**

For 11 days in early November, the entire United Church of Christ will make good on its "that they may all be one" motto with a coordinated mission campaign to gather more than one million food and household items for local food banks and marshal its 5,300 congregations to advocate collectively — and loudly — for hunger-related causes, both domestically and around the world.

"In a nutshell, 'One united church on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food-related injustice' is the centerpiece of this major push that we are launching today," the Rev. Geoffrey A. Black, the UCC's general minister and president, told United Church News. "If you've ever yearned for the whole UCC to walk hand in hand to achieve a common goal, this is the answer to that prayer."

Affirmed unanimously by the UCC's 90-member Executive Council, meeting March 17-19 at the Church House in Cleveland, "Mission: 1" — as the campaign will be called — plays on the prevalence of the number "1" in the Nov. 1-11, 2011, timeframe and calls for three overarching goals:

- In the 11 days, the United Church of Christ will collect more than 1 million items of healthy food and other household items for local food banks and outreach services.
- In the 11 days, the United Church of Christ will make an extra-special push to gather online contribution of more than \$111,111 for Neighbors in Need, offerings that will be shared for hunger-action purposes with agencies of justice and compassion throughout the United States.
- In the 11 days, the United Church of Christ will offer more than 11,111 letters to Congress asking the government to reform U.S. foreign assistance in a way that more effectively benefits hungry and poor people worldwide, helping to provide a major final push to Bread for the World's 2011 "Offering of Letters" campaign.

On Nov. 1, the UCC's homepage at ucc.org will be converted into an online tote board that will tally the denomination's collective count of food stuffs, donations and letters — information that will be updated and celebrated in real time. Churches, as well as individuals, will be encouraged to self-report their participation.

Also during the 11 days, the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries will organize church member delegations to meet with members of Congress to bring attention to our church's concern about hunger issues at home and abroad, said the Rev. M. Linda Jaramillo, JWM's executive minister.

"Our hope is that 'Mission: 1' will prove to be a game-changer in how we think of ourselves as one church in shared mission," said the Rev. Geoffrey A. Black, general minister and president. "This is a recognition that every local church is a center of mission and collectively we have power to make a huge impact."

October 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:45 Worship (OCU Chapel) NO MONTHLY POTLUCK!	7:00 pm Staff Leadership Meeting	6-9 pm: Mental Health Support Group 7PM Meditation at MettaWing	11:00 AM Bible Study 6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7:30PM Mary Daily Group	7:15 am RISE & SHINE 6:30 p.m. : Men's Fellowship Group —All men welcome—	Food Pantry Closed	8
9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00Lightning Rounds Resumel 10:45 am Worship Leadership Council Meeting 4-6PM—Youth Group	10:30 AM Senior Coffee At The Rink	6-9 pm: Mental Health Support Group 7PM Meditation at MettaWing	11:00 AM Bible Study 6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7-7:30 Chapel Service 7:30PM Mary Daily Group	7:15 am RISE & SHINE 12:30 Food Pantry drop-off Movie Night Potluck—6pm Film—6:30 pm	Food Pantry Closed 2:00 - 4:00 Food Pantry Set-up 4:00 - 6:00 Food Pantry Servers	15
9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00Lightning Rounds 10:45 am Worship 4-6 PM—Youth Group	10:30 AM Senior Coffee At The Rink	6-9 pm: Mental Health Support Group 7PM Meditation	11:00 AM Bible Study 6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7-7:30 Chapel Service 7:30PM Mary Daily Group	7:15 am RISE & SHINE 12:30 Food Pantry drop-off Movie Night Potluck—6pm Film—6:30 pm	2:00 - 4:00 Food Pantry Set-up 4:00 - 6:00 Food Pantry Servers	22
9:30—Choir Rehearsal 10:00Lightning Rounds 10:45 Worship 4-6PM—Youth Group	10:30 AM Senior Coffee At The Rink	6-9 pm: Mental Health Support Group 7PM Meditation	11:00 AM Bible Study 6PM Choir Rehearsal 7PM Spanish Class 7-7:30 Chapel Service 7:30PM Mary Daily Group	7:15 am RISE & SHINE 12:30 Food Pantry drop-off Movie Night Potluck—6pm Film—6:30 pm	Building Team WORKDAY 9am-3pm	29

GO4-OP



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

New Construction Team Update

We continue to move forward with the work in the basement. The stem walls are all up, the rough-in of the plumbing is in place, and they continue to work on the rest of the mechanicals. Although the finishes are not in place in the downstairs bathrooms, they are mechanically sound and can be used now.

The next big thing to happen will be the new ceiling in the sanctuary. It will be installed with some other refurbishing done in that room at the same time and the elevator shaft and the hole for the elevator will begin to be put in place.

It is all very exciting. There are many things going on at once so it remains very important to check and double check about room availability and space constraints. Soon all the discomfort and extra aggravation will be a memory. We will be in our new facility dreaming about the next project.

God continues to bless us and seeks us out as an example in our community and in the wider church. Thanks to each of you for the part you are playing in this wonderful time in our church.

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