

The Common Thread

A monthly publication of Church of the Open Arms, UCC

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MINISTER'S ROUNDTABLE

The world seems to be spinning out of control these days. It sounds like the financial systems of our nation and the world are teetering on the brink of disaster. If you listen to the rhetoric about the election, it sounds as if the outcome will be a matter of life or death for all of us. But, remember that this is not the first time in the history of the planet that times have been difficult and frightening. In fact, if we had been born in certain places in recent decades, we would know the hellish existence of things like war and starvation already.

The scriptures have lots to say about "those who trust in their wealth and boast of their great riches" (Psalm 49) or those who put their trust in great leaders, kings, or rulers. The message is clear. Those are things that come and go and are not worthy of our trust. The most powerful ruler in the world cannot assure your safety. The greatest riches in the world cannot assure your safety. Death, disease, and heartache come to each family and each of us.

I am not saying that the election or the economy is unimportant. We have responsibilities and important choices to face. What I am saying is that this is a good time to listen to the Psalms and other words of scripture reminding us that our trust must be in God, not in wealth, power, or worldly success. Fear not.

Wishing you that peace that passes understanding,
Kathy McCallie

Faith and Politics
Thursday nights in October
Starting Oct. 9th at 7:00pm



FAITH AND POLITICS

The elections are coming up very soon. For three Thursday nights in October we will examine the role of faith in our politics. How should our faith inform our political views? How does politics affect our faith and our world? Join us at 7:00 on Thursday October 9, 16 and 23 for a lively and interesting discussion that will include guest speakers and useful information about the upcoming elections.

As people of faith we are called to be engaged in the public arena as we live out God's love for the world. When we wonder whether we should be part of the electoral process, we need to remember Jesus' witness of challenging the powers and principalities in search of justice for "the least of these." Being informed and engaging in the political process is a way of living out the commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Everyone is invited to participate in this important event starting Thursday October 9th at 7:00 p.m. at the church.



PFLAG-OKC will be at the Oklahoma Aids Walk October 5th, 2008 starting at 12:00 at the Myriad Botanical Gardens. Feel free to join us out there!!



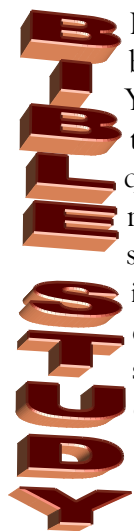
New Youth Project

The New Youth Project is well into its third quarter. It's so hard to think back nine months ago when the group was just beginning. At the beginning of August the group spent the day at Frontier City. Though the trip was cut short, I know that we all had a good time. We are just about to start our "Life Project". We will be cutting out things from magazines to make a huge collage. It will display how we are feeling on any given day and the things that we go through as members of the youth in today's world. When we are through, the finished project will be displayed in the foyer of the church so that others may share in a better understanding of our youth. Just recently the NYP became proud owners of a fozz-ball table and air hockey table! (Thank you Melinda and thank you Red Rock) They also donated several other items that we will be able to put to use next spring and summer. Whoo-hoo! Things are going unbelievably great, but we need YOUR help once again. You see, the kids have been using various Christian artists for their Bible studies. Recently, they experienced the music and stage performance of Toby Mac and his Portabl Sounds concert. They had a lot of fun as they traveled from place to place through the night. Thank you to Sandra Hoyt and Nancy Nesser for their hosting job at Freddie's Frozen Custard. Now, Toby Mac and friends are in concert in November and their tour will be here on November 23. (More information in the church foyer) The kids are excited about the possibility of attending, but they need your help. Since the group is self-supporting they barely have enough money to purchase curriculum. They are asking for sponsors from the church to step up. They need 5 people who are willing to sponsor a single group member. The cost is only \$25. If you are able to help, please contact Kenny @ 208-8969 or 464-9510 or NYPofCOA@gmail.com. (There are also clipboards in the foyer on the front desk)

Peace, love, and laughter,
The New Youth Project of the Church of the Open Arms

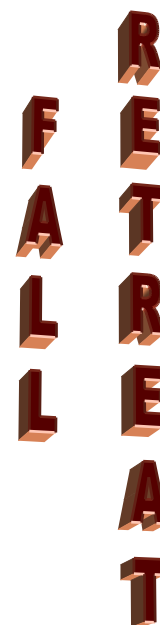
Financial Summary for August

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Begin Balance</u>	<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>End Balance</u>
General Fund	24,560.72	18,749.60	14,179.24	29,131.08
Building Fund	2,910.58	1,895.00	2,925.25	1,880.33
Food Pantry	862.08	856.54	106.45	1,612.17
Pennies from Heaven	130.97	211.62	141.08	201.51
Other Designated	8,914.77	95.00	-	9,009.77
TOTAL	\$ 37,379.12	\$ 21,807.76	\$ 17,352.02	\$ 41,834.86



Have you checked out biblegateway.com? This is a great way to increase your familiarity with the bible, or find a scripture passage you are looking for. Go to their website and go to “keyword search.” You can type in any word, and it will list all the passages of the bible that have that word. If you are thinking of a story or saying, but you can’t remember where that is in the bible, you can find it quickly. For example, if you remember some saying about healing a blind person, and you can’t remember where it is, you can type in “blind” and instantly get a list of places to look. This is a free service that is a great benefit. If you are curious to learn something: like what the bible says about stealing, this is a great resource. It also has an option to look up a passage when you already know the chapter and verse numbers. Of course, there are some limitations. It relies on the English translation, so sometimes you may have to look further to get deep insight. Nonetheless, this is worth checking out. Keep it in mind.

The Fall Retreat is coming up soon. This is an excellent opportunity to make deep friendships and experience spiritual growth and renewal. The camp is only about 30-45 minutes away. It has comfortable beds and bathrooms, heat and air conditioning, and beautiful wooded places to walk. There will be workshops and bible studies to join if you choose. Or you may want time to be alone and quiet in this safe, natural setting. There will be a hayride, campfire, and opportunities for crafts and games. Before you worry about the expense, you need to know that the church has ample scholarship money for this event. We want everyone to come. All kids and youth 18 or younger come free. Adults should pay what they can, and not worry about the rest. We do need to know how many are coming, so please register as soon as possible. A complete registration form is in this letter.



New Growth Team
Weekly meetings
Wednesday evenings
5:45 till 6:45 pm
Open Arms Lobby

Do you remember snail mail? How long has it been since you got a card in your physical mail box? If you have a love of real mail, then this group is for you.

Come join us as we send cards and letters to recent visitors, new members and members we have not seen in a while. We will meet during choir practice so if your partner is singing, you are especially invited to be a part of this group. All greeters are encouraged to participate. If you can only come one time, that’s enough to be of service to our community.

Come join the **SNAIL MAIL MAKERS!**

Rev. Dr. Suzanne Nichols
Minister of Church Vitality
Church of the Open Arms

Wednesday Night Services

7:00pm, Every Week

**Come for a refreshing mid-week spirit lift. Request your favorite hymn.
Stick around and get to know others in a sharing circle.**

www.openarms.org

Check it out!

New changes include sermons and music online.

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

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www.openarms.org