

# The Common Thread

A monthly publication of Church of the Open Arms, UCC

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June 1, 2010

## MINISTER'S ROUNDTABLE

It was August, 1979 when I was hired for my first job. I was the youth director at First United Methodist Church in Perry, Oklahoma. I was nineteen years old. I continued to work as a youth minister while I was in college, and worked at a church in Dallas while I was in seminary. Since that time, I have worked in many, many churches. At the risk of sounding like an old lady, I have to admit that I have now been in full-time ministry every year since June of 1987. I have worked in rural churches and city churches, small churches and one mega-church. I have worked as youth minister, associate pastor, and senior pastor. If you hang around in the same profession long enough, you start to have some insights about how things work – or at least how they might could work.

In most churches I have served, there have been a small, dedicated group of faithful members who kept the church alive. Usually there was a group of old ladies who ran the kitchen, provided food for funerals, weddings, and church events and made the coffee on all occasions. Usually there was a group of old men who kept the building in repair. They fixed things that broke, kept an eye on the roof, plumbing, heat and air conditioning, and made the yard look great. Sometimes these faithful stewards could be stuck in narrow, unimaginative opinions about how things should be done. Nonetheless, they kept things together year after year.

As a young congregation, Church of the Open Arms is still only beginning to develop systems for getting things done. For years whatever got done usually happened because of a few, persistent individuals. However, as we grow we can't get along without strong teams of volunteers and creative workers. Our building will soon be undergoing transformations as we install a new elevator, parking lot, new sanctuary seating, and other improvements. We need a robust Building Team to oversee this work and maintain the building in the years to come. Maybe you would consider serving as a member of the Building Team. When we serve as volunteers we have the profound satisfaction of building a ministry that will live into the future. I hope you will look at opportunities for being a "Doer" included in this newsletter, and get involved with a ministry team.

Sincerely,  
Kathy McCallie

June 27th and 28th  
OKC Pride Celebration  
"Simply Proud"

## **Nicaragua Mission Trip**

**January 3-10 (dates may vary slightly)**

Come to an information session on To learn more about the mission trip to Nicaragua. Kathy McCallie will lead this trip with the goal of increasing cross-cultural understanding. The Manos Juntas scholarship program will be the focus of study and exchange as we visit the cities of Managua and Leon as well as rural communities. Don't let the cost of the trip scare you away. There are multiple ways to raise funds for the group. The cost will be approximately \$1,400 per person. To learn more check out [manosjuntas.org](http://manosjuntas.org) or call Kathy (405) 525-9555.

## **Full Moon Drumming June 25th**

held at the  
Peace Education Institute,  
11404 N. Midwest Blvd.  
A vegetarian potluck  
begins at 6:30,  
and the drumming starts at 7:30.  
These activities are free.

## **The Scholarship Program**

Manos Juntas Scholarship Program works to provide opportunities to Nicaraguan students to achieve their dreams. Since its beginning in 1996, Manos Juntas has been working with local community leaders and faculty members from UNAN-Managua (National Autonomous University of Nicaragua - Managua) and UNI (National University of Engineering) to recruit students. Now, many of our students have graduated and are working. Education has been a great investment to improve the lives of these kids. We generally look for enrolled students who have clear goals about their careers, have the desire to study and have good grades, but can't afford to continue when they are faced with tuition, books, and transportation costs. The program consists of a monthly monetary help between \$25.00 and \$50.00 depending on the level of education. Every year Manos Juntas has approximately 20-30 scholarship students. Most of them live in extreme poverty. Kathy McCallie recently visited scholarship students in Nicaragua and continues to support the partnership between our church and Manos Juntas.

### **Good News! Homosexuality and Scripture Study:**

**What does the Bible say? Sunday, July 18<sup>th</sup> 4-6 p.m.**

**Church of the Open Arms**

Come make new friends and review the passages in the scripture that we call the "Clobber Passages" because they are often used by fundamentalists to clobber GLBT folks. Kathy McCallie will lead this workshop demonstrating ways to defend the belief that homosexuality is neither sickness or sin. We take the bible seriously but not literally; we study scripture prayerfully seeking the direction of the Holy Spirit. By learning about the history of the scriptures and the cultural settings of the texts, we can grow in faith and understanding. There is no charge for the workshop, but please sign up to help us prepare. Childcare can be provided if reserved no later than July 12<sup>th</sup> (call 525-9555).



**Youth Mission Trip Saturday, July 3- Monday, July 12**

Southwest Good Samaritan Mission, South Texas

**Information Session: Wed., June 2<sup>nd</sup> 6:00 p.m.**

At this meeting parents, youth, and anyone interested can get more details

*Come help neighbors in need in South Texas.*

Our goal is to learn more about border issues, and racial justice as we do volunteer service work. We will also visit historic and fun places in the area, including the Alamo, San Antonio river walk, and beach. We will be staying at the Southwest Good Samaritan Mission – sleeping on cots and preparing our own food in their kitchen most days. We will also have some fun meals out and recreational activities along the way.

Leave at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 3. drive to San Antonio

Return late at night (around 11:00 p.m.) on Monday, July 12<sup>th</sup>

**Check out where we are staying: Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries**

28259 Pereira Compassion Rd., PO Box 273, Los Fresnos , TX 78566

Phone: 956.233.5198

Fax: 956.233.8802

E-Mail: info@swgsm.org

## RESOURCE AND NETWORK DIRECTORY

COMING SOON

New Growth is very excited to announce we are nearing the roll-out date for the **Church of the Open Arms Resource and Networking Directory.**

*The manual is designed to do a variety of things. It will obviously serve as a phone and address directory. But it will go one step further and include information that will help us be better connected. Are you looking for a hairdresser, a lawyer, a dentist? Look here and do business with someone that is a member of your church family. Do you want to know more about rose gardening, antique cookie jars, stamps, old coins? Check here to find someone in your church with similar passions. This will be the first of its kind for Open Arms and, we hope, will go along way to making us more connected as a family.*

Over the next few weeks, we will be talking about the directory, gathering information, and making sure we have pictures of everyone that want to be included.

If you want a directory, please sign the pre-order form that is available on the sign up table. Although the cost per directory is yet to be determined we are confident that it will be **LESS** than \$20.

*If you have questions, please direct them to any one on the New Growth Team.*

# OKC Pride Events

June 16, 7:00 P. M. Wednesday,

**LGBT Pride Interfaith Service of Remembrance**

Epworth United Methodist Church, 1901 N. Douglas  
(2 blocks west of Classen on N.W. 19<sup>th</sup> street)

Join friends of many faith perspectives as we prepare for Pride Week celebrations by remembering members of our LGBT movement and community who have passed on from this life. Rev. Kathy McCallie and clergy of other faiths will lead this service of inspiration and hope. Rev. Scott Jones, UCC pastor, will be preaching.

June 26th-27th, Saturday and Sunday

**OKC PRIDE Festival 2010**

Memorial Park

It's that time of year again! The OKC Pride 2010 festival is coming up on Friday June 25, Saturday June 26, and Sunday June 27. This promises to be a major event for Oklahoma City and a major statement for diversity and inclusiveness. Our church believes very strongly in diversity and inclusiveness and to support that statement we will be setting up a station at the Pride Festival. We will have music, brochures, Frisbees, water, dog treats, and information to distribute, along with a computer photo show and a fan to help keep us cool. This is a great opportunity to interact with the community, share information and answer questions about our church, and to maybe make a few new friends. We are asking for anyone who is interested in assisting with this please sign up on the sheet in the church lobby or call James Smith at 922.7446, Bruce Ross at 821.6738, or Mark Van Dorn at 209.4137 or you may contact the Church office at 525.9555. Length of shifts will be determined by the number of people who volunteer. We are looking to staff from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM Saturday and from After Church until 2:00 PM Sunday. Shifts are first come first assigned basis. Don't miss out on an important way to make a statement for equality for all at the 2010 OKC Pride Festival!

June 27th Sunday

**5:00 P.M. Parade step off**

**6-8 PM Ice Cream Social at Church of the Open Arms**

Church of the Open Arms, at 3131 N. Pennsylvania Ave., will host an Ice Cream Social for the community, following the Pride Parade on Sunday, June 27<sup>th</sup>. From 6-8 pm, ice cream, toppings, and refreshments will be available in the Open Arms Community Hall. Background music, optional games, and a drawing for prizes will make this event a memorable social occasion.

Sign-up sheets will be in the church lobby for those who can help, contribute ice cream or toppings, be greeters, servers, or clean up afterwards. Co-chairs of the project are Nathaniel "Batch" Batchelder and Robyn Lemon-Sellers. Invite friends and help spread the word!!

# Simply Proud

## Next Step in Renovations...

Now that our loan has been approved, we would like to go forward with the renovations that were approved at the "All Church Meeting". The building team would like for everyone to attend a meeting on June 8, at 7:00 in the Fellowship Hall. To get involved in the decision making process on moving forward with our renovations, which include the parking lot, a new elevator and renovations of the downstairs located under Fellowship Hall, We will also be looking at the bids that we have received to determine who will be awarded the contract to do the work. If you are able to attend, we would like to see you at this meeting on Tuesday, June 8. 2010.

Sincerely, The Building Team

## New Things at New Growth

New Growth continues to set new goals and reach for new and higher sights. We are still working on making your Sunday mornings full of joy and smiles; trying, as we go to make visitors and new and old members alike feel important, welcome, and special.

Our 2010 Pride Booth continues to be developed in the capable and competent hands of James Smith and Bruce Ross. If you have interest in helping them please speak to one of them or to me.

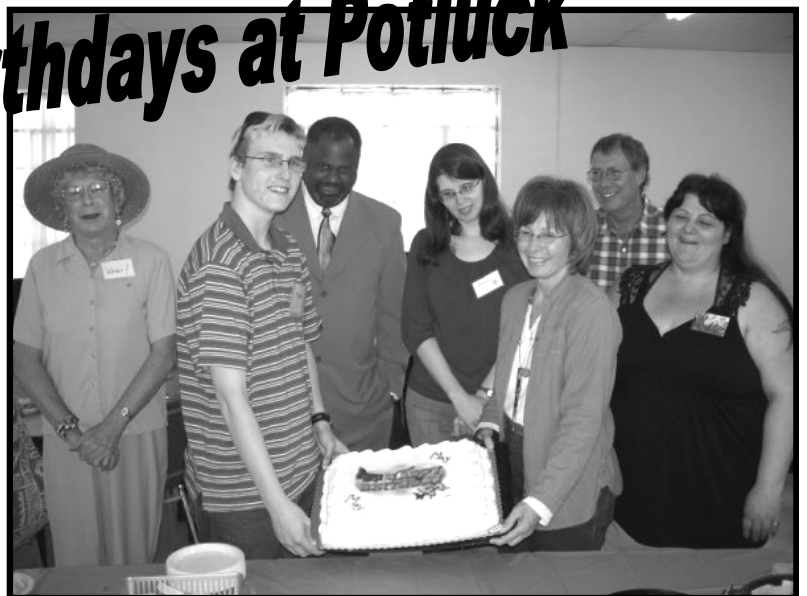
New Growth will be starting a new Business Card campaign the first part of June which is being developed to speak to complete outsiders who may be looking for a safe, loving place to spend some time.

Our efforts to put together a Resource and Networking directory are coming to fruition. There will be much more about that over the next 2 or 3 weeks.

Our ministry team is proud and glad and honored to be able to serve our church family and to pay back and pay forward some of the blessing that each of you and our church gives us. If you would be interested in being part of that, please talk to Mark or anyone of the New Growth Team.

Until next time...Peace and Grace,  
Mark Van Dorn

## ***Celebrating May Birthdays at Potluck***



# June 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
9:30 choir rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship <b>12:00 Monthly Potluck</b> <b>12-1:30 YOUTH GROUP</b> <b>Fair Trade Fair</b>		8 <i>7:00 Renovations Meeting</i> <i>See Pg 6</i>	9 6:00 Choir Rehearsal <b>7:30-9pm Women's discussion group</b>	10 1-1:45 food pantry drop off	11 10:00-12:00 Food Pantry set up 3:00-6:00 Food Pantry servers	12
9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship <b>12-1:30 YOUTH GROUP</b>	7	15	16	17	18	19
			6:00 Choir Rehearsal <b>7:30-9pm Women's discussion group</b>	1-1:45 food pantry drop off	10:00-12:00 Food Pantry set up 3:00-6:00 Food Pantry servers	
9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship <b>12-1:30 YOUTH GROUP</b>	13	14	23	24	25	26
			6:00 Choir Rehearsal <b>7:30-9pm Women's discussion group</b>	1-1:45 food pantry drop off	<b>6:30 pm Full Moon at PEI (see pg. 3)</b>	<b>Pride Festival</b>
9:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship <b>12-1:30 YOUTH GROUP</b> <b>PRIDE FESTIVAL</b> <b>5:00 PARADE STEP OFF</b> <b>6:00 ICE CREAM SOCIAL</b> <b>SEE PG. 5</b>	27	28	29	30		

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[www.openarms.org](http://www.openarms.org)

NEXT STEP  
RENOVATIONS  
MEETING

**7:00 PM Tuesday, June 8th**

See page 6

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