

The Common Thread

A monthly publication of Church of the Open Arms, UCC

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May 2016

FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR KAYLA

I can't believe it's already been two ½ months since I began my call as Pastor of COH & COA. This past Sunday, during the Installation Service, we participated in a joint covenant between myself, Church of the Open Arms, Cathedral of Hope, and the Kansas-Oklahoma UCC Conference. Let us linger over these words, hopes, and promises as our futures unfold together over the coming years.

You were encouraged to: “Pay proper respect to those who work among you, who guide you and instruct you in the Christian life. Treat them with the greatest respect and love because of the work they do. Beat peace among yourselves.”

I was urged to: “Warn the idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, and be patient with all.”

Together, we were asked to: “See that no one pays back wrong for wrong but at all times make it our aim to do good to one another and to all people. Be joyful always, pray at all times, be thankful in all circumstances.”

This is the official covenant I made to Church of the Open Arms & Cathedral of Hope:

I am willing and I promise to serve these churches faithfully,

Preaching and teaching the word of God,

Administering the sacraments,

And fulfilling the pastoral office,

According to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ.

This is the official covenant you affirmed with me:

We, the members of Church of the Open Arms & Cathedral of Hope
Receive Kayla Bonewell as our pastor and teacher,
Promising to labor with her in the ministry of the gospel
And to give her due honor and respect.
We gather with her and the United Church of Christ
As a sign of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

May it be so, Amen.

Pastor Kayla Bonewell

Greetings from the Finance Team!

The first quarter of 2016 is behind us. We worked really hard during the budgeting process to prepare a bare bones, realistic budget for 2016. The result was an almost 40% reduction in the monthly operating requirements for the church. In January and February, collections were not enough to meet the reduced monthly requirement; however, in March (which included Easter Sunday) collections were right at the Budgeted expense amount. In order for the Church to continue to operate and meet our financial obligations, offerings and financial gifts must equal or exceed budgeted and actual expenses.

The Finance team is asking everyone, to prayerfully review and consider their financial giving to the church. Our monthly shortfall has been around \$2,000. If each of us can find just a bit more to add our monthly giving we can achieve, financially, what we have planned to do in 2016. Regular, accountable giving is a spiritual practice that will change your life and the way that you regard money. All Gifts are needed and encouraged.

If you are curious about Church finances, anyone is welcome to join the finance team's regular monthly meeting. The team usually meets on the second Sunday of the month right after the Worship Service.

MOVIE NIGHTS CONTINUE!

TUESDAY VIDEO NIGHTS ARE AT 6PM on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month. The church will open at 5:15pm for folks arriving early with snacks or brown-bag dinners.

May 10th: The spectacular COSMOS series starring Neil DeGrasse

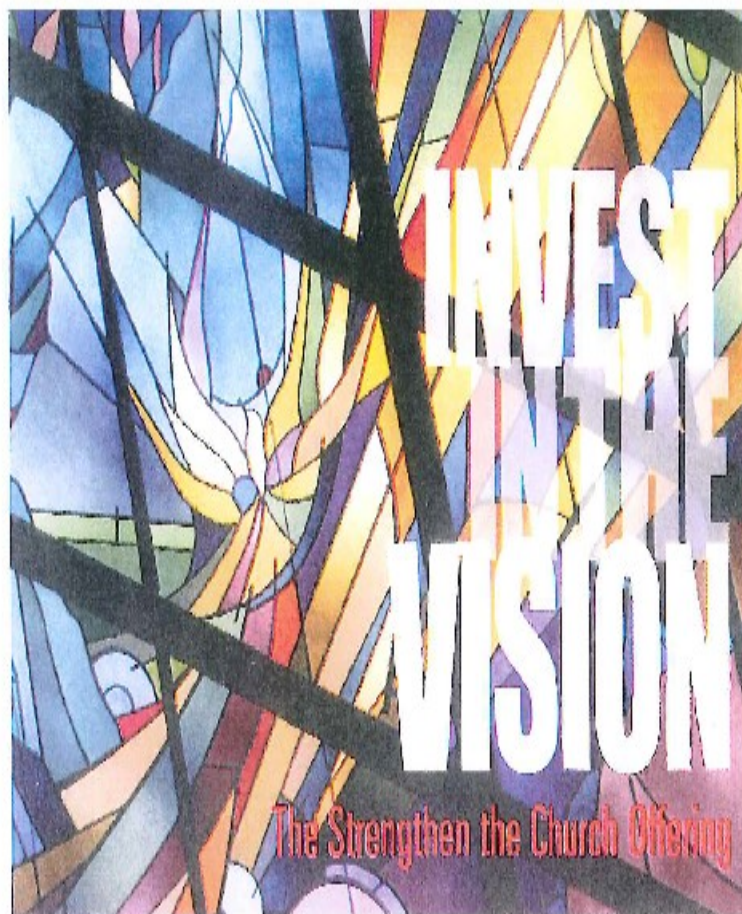
May 24th: "RACE: The Power of an Illusion" Part 2 will be shown.

MEMBERSHIP SUNDAY

Our quarterly membership Sunday will take place the first Sunday in May (May 1st). If you want to become a member of Church of the Open Arms, contact Pastor Kayla and let her know you'd like to join. The best way would be through email at pastorkayla@openarms.org. We welcome you!

Offering for March	\$13,908
Monthly Budget	\$13,320
<i>Overage</i>	\$588

**"STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH" OFFERING
ON MAY 15th. PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY.**



About Strengthen the Church

When you invest in the vision supported by Strengthen the Church, your gift will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and help develop the spiritual lives of our youth and young adults.

About Stillspeaking

Stillspeaking is the shorter form of "God is still speaking," a campaign by the United Church of Christ to remind us that God still has a lot more to say. Since 2004, Stillspeaking has worked with thousands of UCC churches and individuals across the country to extend an extravagant welcome to all—because no matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.

God is Still Speaking.

Your offerings are directed to your church's Conference and to Local Church Ministries, United Church of Christ.

PRIDE GARAGE SALE

Saturday, May 7th, 8am-2pm

Please bring your items to the church for this garage sale on Friday, May 6th, 6-8pm. We need volunteers to help on Saturday. The pride booth and float are totally paid from private funds, so PLEASE do your part in donating items or money, volunteering to help with the garage sale and/or float. Please contact Ron for more information at 604-7434.

THANK YOU!!!!

SAVE THE DATE



It's Almost Time For COA's Annual Pride Ice Cream Social!

On June 26th, we hope you'll invite your friends & family and join us for a fun, family-friendly event, where we'll have air-conditioning and lots of Cold Ice Cream Treats to cool off with, after the Pride Parade. Look for more details in next month's newsletter.



POTLUCK

SUNDAY, May 1st, Noon

**Bring your best Mexican dish (or anything else) and join us!
Everyone welcome, food brought or not!**



HELP MAKE OUR CHURCH'S EXTERIOR LOOK GREAT

Contact Ginger if you'd like to help with the garden. This is an ongoing project. The nine tomato plants are doing well but need a few cages; raised beds will be put in playground area in May; and we need someone to donate a blue spruce tree for frontage along Penn Avenue. Ginger can be contacted via a Facebook message or email the church and we'll get a message to her. info@openarms.org



THANK YOU

FOOD PANTRY

We proudly served 316 households in March (543 adults & 193 children)! Your donations of items and time are MUCH appreciated and needed. We always need volunteers to help, so even if you can only help one day per month, that would be great! For the month of May we still need canned goods of ANY type. Gallon freezer bags are always needed, too. For more information contact Bo Wright-Bass or visit our website (openarms.org) and click on the "volunteer" button.

COA NEEDS YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

If you've not submitted or updated your contact information lately, please do so at your earliest convenience. This information is necessary if you want to make sure you receive announcements and other communication from Pastor Kayla and the church.

Shoot a quick email to: info@openarms.org

Provide your name, email address, primary phone #, mailing address, birthday, and names & birthdates of your children. Also, please include your spouse/partner's name. If you'd like to serve in a capacity within the church, please mention that, too. We want to get to know you!

CHURCH LINKS

Need prayer or would like to pray for others: In Facebook search for & join "Church of Open Arms Prayer Chain".

Are you a member of the other Facebook Group named "Church of the Open Arms UCC"? Search and join.

Also, "like" our Facebook Page "Church of the Open Arms UCC" www.facebook.com/openarmsucc

CONTEMPORARY READINGS FROM WORSHIP

Contemporary Reading **(3/6/16)**

Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here. And you must treat it as a powerful stranger. Must ask permission to know it and be known. The forest breathes. Listen. It answers. I have made this place around you. If you leave it, you may come back again, saying Here. No two trees are the same to Raven. No two branches are the same to Wren. If what a tree or a bush does is lost on you, you are surely lost. Stand still. The forest knows where you are. You must let it find you.
- David Wagoner (85-86)

Contemporary Reading **(3/13/16)**

The Spirit beckons us not to be good, but to be human—humble, of the *humus*—which ultimately means finding your elemental waters, which are connected to God, and living into your fullest energies. You can (and will) do a lot of good by walking the path that brings you most fully alive in this world, but in order to stay on this path, you must learn to say no to doing a great many “good” things.
- Eric Elnes (117)

Contemporary Reading **(3/20/16)**

The world is so empty if one thinks only of mountains, rivers & cities;
but to know someone who thinks and feels with us, and who, though distant, is close to us in spirit, this makes the earth for us an inhabited garden.
-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (142)

Contemporary Reading **(3/27/16)**

“God’s Wounds” by Mark Nepo
Through the great pain of stretching beyond all that pain has taught me, the soft well at the base has opened, and life touching me there has turned me into a flower that prays for rain. Now I understand: to blossom is to pray, to wilt and shed is to pray, to turn to mulch is to pray, to stretch in the dark is to pray, to break surface after great months of ice is to pray, and to squeeze love up the stalky center toward the sky with only dreams of color is to pray, and finally to unfold again as if never before is to be the prayer.

To get real-time, up-to-date calendar events, click on
 "Calendar at a Glance" on our openarms.org website!

Church of the Open Arms

May 2016 (Central Time)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30am - Choir 10am - Adult 11am - Worship 12pm - Pot Luck 4pm - COH	2 Pastor K's Day Off 6:30pm - Amne	3	4 Holocaust Kayla Day of 5:45pm - Choir	5 Ascension Day 12:30pm - Unload 5:30pm - Worship	6 2pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Food Pantry	7 8am - Pride
8 Mother's Day 9:30am - Choir 10am - Adult 11am - Worship 12pm - Finance	9 Pastor K's Day Off	10 6pm - Movie Night	11 5:45pm - Choir	12 12:30pm - Unload	13 2pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Food Pantry	14 6pm - COH
15 Mental Health Pentecost Strengthen the 9:30am - Choir 10am - Adult	16 Pastor K's Day Off	17	18 5:45pm - Choir	19 12:30pm - Unload 5:30pm - Worship 6:30pm - Two	20 2pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Food Pantry	21 6pm - COA Game
22 9:30am - Choir 10am - Adult 11am - Worship 12pm - Christian 4pm - COH	23 Pastor K's Day Off 2pm - Newsletter	24 6pm - Movie Night	25 5:45pm - Choir	26 Kayla Day of 8am - Carman's Vacay (May 26-June 3) @ Sedona AZ 12:30pm - Unload	27 2pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Food Pantry	28 6pm - Coffee
29 Benevolence	30 Memorial Day	31	1	2	3	4
Carman's Vacay (May 26-June 3) @ Sedona AZ						
9:30am - Choir 10am - Adult 11am - Worship 4pm - COH	Pastor K's Day Off					