



So here we are in the dead of winter, getting ready for a huge community celebration and I have been stuck on what to write to you. I have been struggling with this notion of covenant. I now know at this point in my career I should know what a covenant is, right?! But it is a word used so often in our congregational identity that I think it sometimes gets watered down or glossed over in terms of its importance.

Biblically speaking, we are obviously aware of the covenants God and the Hebrew people had: "I will be your God and you will be my people". Over time this took on many facets from the perspective of the Hebrew scripture writers in terms of explaining how and why God responded to them in certain ways at certain times in their history. But I do not think that covenant is just a simple agreement between two parties. I think that when we really delve into The Hebrew scriptures then we see there is so much more to this covenant thingy. I like what the UCC has to offer: "Whenever a solemn agreement between people is one that is also made with God, the depths of relationships are qualitatively different. It's very different to be God's people as sisters and brothers in Christ than to be members of a club"

Covenants today, in our particular denomination, continue to accept this idea of a promise with the Divine and creation. But they also suggest that this promise pertains to the covenantal relationship with each other and with the Divine. Thus, we come to the most crucial word and aspect of the covenant: Relationship. (Continued on page 2.)

Sunday, January 24 - Congregational Annual Meeting

Agenda:

1. Approve minutes from Dec 6 meeting;
2. Review and Approve the Annual Report;
3. Moment about Stewardship;
4. Vote on Nominations: Jeannie Harrington, Financial Secretary and nominations for Assistant Moderator, Clerk, Member-at-Large;
5. Direct Deposit;
6. Update on Shrine of Remembrance Relationship;



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Special points of interest:

- Adult education 8:30 a.m.
- Sunday morning worship at 10:00 a.m.
- Children's Faith Formation 10:00 a.m.

Covenants (continued from page 1.)

Yet another word that gets used frequently, relationship implies a lot of stuff! It suggests, even demand that we hold each other with kindness and respect. It requires that we are honest with each other, holding one another accountable for living into the gospel in each aspect of our congregational life. Relationship says that I will look to you for support and challenge to grow and I will offer you the same. It means that I will do everything in my power to put aside my ego in order to hear your longings and needs while at the same time being aware of my boundaries and own needs. And it suggests I will do my best to hold in tension and in love, all the ways we do not see eye to eye.

This is relationship. And it is also the undergirding of this thing we call covenant. And we, dear friends, will be once again, professing these covenantal promises to one another in just a short time.

It is with great humility that I accept your trust and your confidence and in addition to offering all the promises above, I also offer my intention to be for you a prophetic voice in our global wilderness. I am so excited about what we can accomplish together through the grace of our Beloved.

Peace to you all.

Vista Grande Community UCC is an Open and Affirming Church.

“We, the congregation of Vista Grande Community Church United Church of Christ in Colorado Springs, CO declare ourselves to be Open and Affirming. We strive to be a congregation that includes all persons, embracing differences of sexual orientation, gender and its expression, marital status, family make-up, age, mental and physical health and ability, racial and cultural identity or background, and educational and socio-economic status. We welcome all to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys of our congregation's life in Christ.

“No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.”

Pastor's Hours

Pastor Clare is in the office on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

The hours are flexible.

If you'd like to meet with Clare, please call her at **719-351-0168**.

Our Staff

Pastor—Rev Clare Twomey

Music Director—Dixie Shipp-Napier

Office Administrator—Donna Bristow

Nursery Attendant—Dena Morris

2016 Steering Committee consists of

Moderator – Erin Elkaim; Assistant Moderator – Open; Treasurer – Nancy Morlock-Hollins; Financial Secretary – Jeannie Harrington; Clerk – Open; Members-at-Large – Phil Puterbaugh and Open

If you are interested in what gets discussed or planned at these meetings, read the minutes which are posted on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Minutes are posted monthly. Also, you'll find the Income/Expense report, too.

Faith Formation for Kids and Adults

Children's Faith Formation



A Joyful Path – a spiritual curriculum for young hearts and minds.
Kids' Faith Formation Leaders this season include:.

January—Trish King

February—OPEN

March—Nancy Morlock-Hollins and Bob Hollins

April—Donna Bristow

Lesson 8: The Confusing Coat – Learning from Mistakes

Lesson 9: The Dangerous Road – Connecting with Kindness

Lesson 10: A Basket Full of Love – Sharing

Lesson 11: Who Is In Charge? – Self-control

The lessons are designed with flexibility. They are drawn from qualities that are important to develop in our own lives as well as to nurture in our children. Therefore, there is no date assigned to any particular lesson. It may take 1 – 3 sessions for any lesson.

Sunday Morning Adult Faith Formation



This month Percolate will begin its study of The Meaning of Jesus- Two Visions by Marcus J. Borg and N. T. Wright. As the title suggests, this is a book of contrasts. Marcus Borg was raised in a “traditional conventional Midwest Lutheran church”, while N.T. Wright grew up in a “traditional and conventional Anglican church in the north of England.” Rather than being an acrimonious text, this is an open and respectful discussion between friends. Both share a Christian faith and practice and are both respected historians. Join us on Sunday mornings at 8:30 – to participate in the discussions - the coffee is always on.

Mid Week Faith Formation

Wednesdays at 5 p.m.

The study will be on The Book of Mark.

Read through the whole book of Mark; it's only 16 chapters and then come prepared to discuss a couple of chapters a session. It doesn't matter what version of the Bible you use. That will add some diversity to the discussion.

Jan 27—We'll discuss Chapter 11.



Membership



New and Returning Members:

By Transfer:

Ron and Maggie Forth joined on Dec. 6, 2015.

On Jan 17, we acknowledged the membership transfer for Jim and Bev Price and Faye Gallegos who joined Dec 6, 2015.

Diane and Nathan Martin and Clare Twomey joined Jan 17, 2016.

Ron Forth has retired twice! He is a retired Deputy Sheriff from Dade County, Florida and retired US Army Master Sergeant with 22 years active federal service. His main hobby is acting in community theatre.

Maggie Forth served in the US Coast Guard from 1998-2005. She enjoys reading, bowling, RVing, video games, prospecting, acting and volunteering at community theatres. Maggie is working toward an MDiv at Lexington Theological Seminary.

Ron and Maggie have travelled south for the winter. We'll see them when the temps get higher.

Jim Price is a retired UCC pastor. He pastored CO churches in Silverton and Black Forest prior to going into the Air Force as a chaplain. He enjoys woodwork and has served several interim pastorates.

Jim and Bev Price and Faye Gallegos are not strangers to Vista Grande. They have been connected in various ways over the years. They are pleased to be back during this exciting transition in the life of Vista Grande. Jim and Faye are both retired UCC clergy.

Diane Martin is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. She has served several CO and WI churches and is currently between calls. She teaches fitness classes. She and Nathan have a blended family of 5 adult children and several grandchildren.

January Birthdays

5	Elizabeth Vincent
11	Mareta Ielu
11	Dena Morris
12	Jeannie Harrington
12	John Tinsley
14	Isaiah King
18	David Bristow
20	Bev Price
21	Jan Kolm
29	Christina Ielu

February Birthdays

10	Eleashia Martel
10	Dixie Shipp-Napier
16	William James
16	Cailyn Pope
27	Lori Gardner

Anniversaries:

Feb 14—Phil and Carol Puterbaugh

January 2016

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
8:30 am Adult Faith Formation 10 am Worship with CE for Kids 11:15 am Fellowship						1 	2
3 Sunday Schedule Communion	4 5 pm Steering Committee	5	6 9:30 am Prayer Shawl 5 pm Faith Formation 6:30 pm Choir	7	8	9 9 am Undecorate	
10 Sunday Schedule	11	12	13 5 pm Faith Formation 6:30 pm Choir	14	15	16 Noon—Women's Lunch at Cheddars	
17 Sunday Schedule	18 	19	20 9:30 am Prayer Shawl 5 pm Faith Formation 6:30 pm Choir	21	22	23	
24 Sunday Schedule 11:15 am Annual Meeting	25	26	27 5 pm Faith Formation 6:30 pm Choir	28	29	30	
31 Sunday Schedule 3 pm Installation			Mission of the Month Family Promise				

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1 8:30 am Adult Faith Formation 10 am Worship with CE for Kids 11:15 am Fellowship	2 5 pm Steering Mtg Committee	3 9:30 am Prayer Shawl 5 pm Faith Formation 6:30 pm Choir	4 9:30 am Prayer Shawl 5 pm Faith Formation 6:30 pm Choir	5	6	
7 Sunday Schedule Communion	8 9 10 6:15 pm Ash Wednesday 6:45 pm Choir	11 12 13 5:30 pm Friendship Dinner	14 15 16 17 9:30 am Prayer Shawl 5 pm Faith Formation 6:30 pm Choir	18 19 20	21 22 23 24 5 pm Faith Formation 6:30 pm Choir	25 26 27
28 Sunday Schedule	29 30 31 Mission of the Month Pikes Peak Humane Society					

Worship/Activities/Stewardship

Ash Wednesday - Wednesday, Feb 10 at 6:15 p.m.

Ash Wednesday starts the season of Lent, a period of preparation for Holy Week and Easter. This is a solemn service that reflects on human mortality and limitations. The imposition of ashes reminds us to be humble towards God and our fellow human beings.

Come join in this special service at 6:15 pm on Wednesday Feb 10

Southeastern Association Clergy and Lay Members,

The members of Vista Grande Community Church United Church of Christ have called Rev Clare Twomey to be their Settled Pastor.

The installation service will be held on Sunday, January 31, 2016 at 3 p.m. at Vista Grande Community Church UCC at 5460 N Union Blvd in Colorado Springs, CO.

Save the date. We look forward to your presence at this celebration.

Cleaning Schedule

Dec 26 and Jan 2 – Donna and Dave Bristow

Jan 9 and 16—Jackie and Jerry Moore

January 23 and 30— Carolyn and Lyn Gunning

February 6 and 13— Carol and Dick Burbank

February 20 and 27—Carol and Phil Puterbaugh

Friendship Dinner

Saturday February 13 at 5:30 p.m.

Zio's Italian Kitchen at
6650 Corporate Drive

We'll gather for our Annual Friendship Dinner at Zio's. Although we will not have a separate dining room, we will be seated together in the back area of the restaurant. We'll be ordering off the menu and will have separate checks. Please sign up at the church or call so Donna can sign you up.



Lock Up

As a reminder to everyone who has a key to the church building ...as a keyholder, if you are the last person to leave the building, in other words locking up, please check all doors (the garden doors, the back door at the back of the sanctuary, and the main door) to make sure they are securely shut. Please be good stewards of our property.

Also, check to make sure all lights are off.

Another area to tend to ... make sure the doors to Fellowship Hall are closed.

Mission

Mission of the Month for January is Family Promise



Family Promise of Colorado Springs is an Interfaith Hospitality Network that provides homeless families with

children a safe, homelike shelter where the family can stay together and share meals. The parents work with a case manager to acquire employment and affordable housing, and to regain independence and self-sufficiency.

The mission of Family Promise of Colorado Springs is to end family homelessness in our community one family at a time.

The **Family Day Center** opened at Catholic Charities facilities at The Marian House and Hanifen Center in downtown Colorado Springs on September 1, 2015. This new Family Day Center is a significant part of the [City of Colorado Springs' Initiative to End Homelessness](#).

At the Day Center, there are dedicated case managers to assist families in accessing services, finding employment, locating shelter, and setting goals and plans to move out of crisis. They also have computer and internet access, homework assistance and child development programs, adult training/employment assistance, indoor play space for children, and onsite services

with:

- o Aspen Point (mental health)
- o Medical clinic
- o Legal clinic
- o VITA tax assistance
- o Other providers planned

Mission of the Month for February is Pikes Peak Humane Society

"We judge the heart of man by his treatment of animals"
Immanuel Kant

The Mission of the Month for February is the Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region. Their mission is "A compassionate society where animals are cared for and valued."

Founded in 1949, Humane Society of the Pikes Peak

Region is a local, independent nonprofit, providing adoption options, animal cruelty investigations, subsidized spay/neuters, a Trap-Neuter-Return program for feral cats, and other important services. HSPPR is the largest shelter for homeless and abused animals in Southern Colorado and is not affiliate

with national organizations such as ASPCA or Humane Society of the United States.



HOLD THESE DATES—The Wider Church

2016 JWW Lecture Series

April 29, 30, and May 1, 2016

presenting Bishop Yvette A. Flunder

Bishop Flunder is the 2016 James W. White Lecture Series Guest Lecturer. Follow us on Facebook to receive future event and ticket updates.

Bishop Yvette Flunder is a native San Franciscan and third generation preacher with roots in the Church of God in Christ.

Bishop Flunder is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ and holds both masters and doctorate degrees in Ministry from the Pacific School of Religion and the San Francisco Theological Seminary, respectively. In 2003, she was appointed Presiding Bishop of The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries, a multi denominational coalition of over 56 churches and faith-based organizations from all over the world.

Bishop Flunder is a trustee and adjunct professor at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. She is an active voice for the Religion

Council of the Human Rights Campaign, as well as for the National Black Justice Coalition. Bishop Flunder is a highly sought after preacher and religious educator as evidenced by her having spoken at divinity schools nationwide including those at Duke, Yale, Drew, and the New York Theological Seminary. She is the author of *Where the Edge Gathers: A Theology of Homiletic Radical Inclusion*, published by Pilgrim Press. In addition to her memorable sermons,

Bishop Flunder is also known for her beautiful singing voice, made famous through her gospel recordings with Walter Hawkins and the Family, the City of Refuge Choir and Chanticleer.

The lecture series is hosted by First Congregational Church in Colorado Springs.

The 2016 Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City While the theme is still forthcoming, we are excited to formally invite clergy, lay-leaders, delegates, RMC UCC members, and their families to Annual Meeting 2016! The meeting will take place **June 9-12** at the University of Utah in beautiful Salt Lake City, Utah. The meeting will be hosted by our be-loved **Intermountain Association**. We developed the new Vision and Framework in 2014; in 2015, we planted Mission Seed groups to begin our important work for the future. In 2016, we are eager to radically connect with one another and continue our work in the name of the Spirit. Most importantly, we want to emphasize that Annual Meeting isn't just for delegates; it's for anyone and everyone interested in the good work and well-being of the Rocky Mountain Conference. We can't wait to see what the future holds, but we can't be at our best without the input, wisdom, and presence of our people. Our people decide the mission of the Conference, not the other way around!



**VISTA GRANDE COMMUNITY
CHURCH**

United Church of Christ

Location: 5460 N Union Blvd
Po Box 26030
Colorado Springs, CO 80936
719-599-3057
www.vgcc.org

Pastor Clare Twomey

COME, GROW WITH US

We are a caring church for thinking people, an inclusive community of faith, united in our common quest to know God, inspired by the spirit of Jesus, and committed to sharing that love in ways that will make a difference in the world.

We are the Open and Affirming (ONA) Church in Northeast Colorado Springs.

Annual Mission Plan for 2016

January – Family Promise; **Donna Bristow**, coordinator

February – Pikes Peak Humane Society; **Deborah Tinsley**, coordinator

March – One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS); **Jerry Moore**, coordinator

April – Los Pobres; **Faye Gallegos**, coordinator

May – Strengthen the Church; **Deborah Tinsley**, coordinator

June – Inside Out Youth Services; **Trish King**, coordinator

July – Mercy's Gate; **Jackie Moore**, coordinator

(Collect school supplies and hygiene products for the health fair.)

August – Cheyenne Village; **Judy Druelinger** coordinator

September – Neighbors in Need (NIN); **Dave Bristow** coordinator

October – Literacy on the Go, **Nancy Morlock-Hollins** coordinator

Nov – One Nation Walking Together; **Judy and Mel Druelinger** coordinators

Dec –The Christmas Fund; **VGCC Clergy**