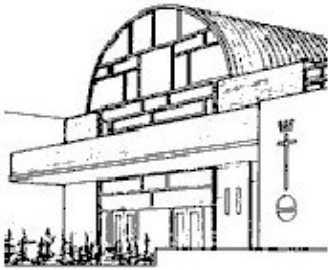


Volume 40

November/December 2016



VISTA GRANDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

The Vista Views

We Are Grateful! *By Pastor Clare*

"If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough." Meister Eckhart

Greetings Wonderful People,

I cannot believe I am writing for the Nov. /Dec. newsletter already! Didn't we just welcome autumn? So much is happening in our community that the time seems to just fly by. In the midst of all the activity, I want to take the time to catch you up on all that has happened or is happening so that everyone has the scoop!

We continue to be in dialogue with High Plains UU in order to strategize how to best be in relationship with one another. The obvious logistical concerns pertain to where we will all hang our hats. We continue to be bound to the leasing contract with SOR which allows them to purchase our property in 2019. Likewise, we have this property on the market to explore whether a third party would want to purchase it before the 2019 deadline. There have been a few bites, but so far no offers. While we continue to explore options, the vision of collaborating with High Plains and people of other faiths continues to be paramount.

--As such, we continue our mutual relationship with Center for Progressive Renewal, exploring the best way to be involved in interfaith communities.

--We have been awarded 2 grants (up to \$19,000) to be used towards developing our vision through: our missions by becoming more actively involved; our desire to create an interfaith collaboration; and supplementing the pastor's benefits, saving the church money as we venture forward in this vision.
(continued on page 3.)

Our Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner

Sunday November 20; immediately following our worship service.

Please bring your favorite Thanksgiving dish to share. A signup sheet is posted so we are assured of having all our favorite dishes.

Join in for the wonderful food and fellowship.

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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.



Core Purpose:

The Rocky Mountain Conference is a faith community of over 77 UCC congregations in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming who support and nurture one another in local and wider ministry and mission, in the name of Jesus Christ. We are an open and welcoming denomination that proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ, celebrates diversity, honors the gifts of all people and seeks justice and peace for all.

Our Core Values:

- Covenant – While honoring autonomy, we engage in covenantal relationship with the Holy, our neighbors, creation, and ourselves
- Enduring Faith – We express enduring faith in the transformational work of the Spirit
- Continuing Testament
- Extravagant Welcome
- Changing Lives

Check the website often for news and events!

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.

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**.

2016 Steering Committee consists of

Moderator – Erin Elkaim; Assistant Moderator – Jacque Bechthold-Blueitt; Treasurer – Nancy Morlock-Hollins; Financial Secretary – Jeannie Harrington; Clerk – Dawn Bechthold-Blueitt; Members-at-Large – Phil Puterbaugh and Deborah Tinsley

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.

Our Staff

Pastor—Rev Clare Twomey

Music Director—David Hudson

Office Administrator—Donna Bristow

Nursery Attendant—Dani Diaz

We Are Grateful (continued from page 1.)

- We have been invited to re-apply for a \$60,000 matching funds grant next September for re-visioning church.
- We have been identified by the Rocky Mountain Conference as a church to watch, a community that leads the conference in terms of how to be a leader in the 21st century.
- We have been invited by the Rocky Mountain Conference to apply for "In the Mud" grants designed to enhance and/or expand our current mission efforts.
- We have re-structured our missions program so that we may be more intentional about our involvement and our participation.
- We have created Task Forces to oversee our facilities (including the sale of this property), worship, faith formation (adult and children), and missions.

All of these accomplishments are something we should be proud of. But perhaps more importantly, something for which we should be grateful. Think about it, during this time of year when we purposefully focus on our blessings, how lucky we are to have been entrusted by our Beloved to be involved in co-creating a world in which all lives flourish. And how wonderful it is that you all have risen to this call.

Please know, that as I count my blessings this year, that this church, this community, you, will be among those for which I am most grateful. It is my pleasure and privilege to serve this community.

Pastor Clare

Theology on Tap

Come join us at the Whistle Pig Brewery for drinks and theological discussion. You bring the topic that you would like to unravel or one will be provided for you!

Date and Time:

Thursdays at 6 p.m.

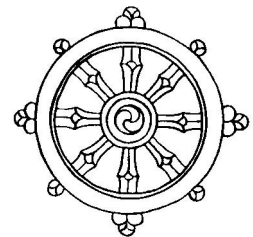
Location: 1840 Dominion Way (across the street for High Plains Church)

Leaders: Rev Clare from Vista Grande and Rev Dana from High Plains



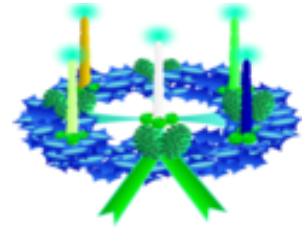
Engaged Buddhism

This course is underway at Vista Grande United Church of Christ!! Engaged Buddhism- How do the teachings of the Buddha relate to contemporary issues such as climate change, poverty, population growth and social justice? How do we work with the emotions that arise when we feel helpless against the powers in control? How do we harness our energies and cultivate attitudes that lead to constructive change? Explore these and other related issues with people who care about the world and its inhabitants! Location: Vista Grande United Church of Christ!! Dates: Six Mondays, from October 31st - December 5th. Time: 7-8:30 pm! Facilitator: Ayya Dhammadhira, an ordained Buddhist nun



Worship and Faith Formation

Advent is a time for introspection, expectation, and preparations! This year it is also a time for introducing multigenerational worship. Multigenerational worship means that all members of our congregation will be invited to remain in worship each week. Children's faith formation will occur at a time other than during the service. This will give the message to our young people that their presence is very much wanted and needed in our worship services. As such, our time together will be inclusive of all generations.



This advent we will introduce this concept by having a multigenerational activity in each service. There will be a table in the sanctuary where everyone is invited to color part of a mural which reflects the season. Each week a different poster will be available for all to prepare for Christmas. It is possible that this may be a bit distracting especially since the activity and the logistics are new to all of us. But what a great time to introduce this kind of worship service: when we are all excited preparing for the birth of Jesus!

In the future, multigene worship will continue to reflect the liturgical season but may not be as elaborate. To be clear, our order of worship will maintain in its format with minor changes. It will just also include ways for our kids to participate. All feedback is welcome and necessary in order to assure that our worship is meaningful for all. And as always, if you have any questions you can let me know or anyone on the worship committee; Lori Gardner, Carol Burbank, Carolyn Gunning, Sandy Gates, or Carol Wisely-Puterbaugh

Multi-Generational Faith Formation - Advent

On Saturday, Nov 5, our children and family members participated in our first of many multi-generational faith formation activities. (We had 8 children and 8 adults.) Crystal Karr planned the lesson on Advent; Clare, Donna, and Crystal planned the hands on activities; and we all participated in games too. What fun we had listening, learning, and playing together.

Sunday Morning Adult Faith Formation

At the end of October we started Traveling Mercies by Anne Lamott. While our earlier study, The New Jim Crow pushed us out of our comfort zone, causing us to seek our neighbor with new eyes and in new places, Anne Lamott, may give us food for the journey. She writes, "It's funny: I always imagined when I was a kid that adults had some kind of inner toolbox, full of shiny tools: the saw of discernment, the hammer of wisdom, the sandpaper of patience. But then when I grew up I found that life handed you these rusty bent old tools – friendships prayer, conscience, and honesty – and said, do the best you can with these. They will have to do. And mostly, against all odds, they're enough."



Please join us! As always, the coffee's brewing by about 8:30 on Sunday morning. All are welcome!

Worship Services

December 11 – Special Service “Las Posadas” – Celebrate the Journey to Bethlehem

We have a guest speaker, Luke Cammack, the Congregational Care Manager for Family Promise. You won't want to miss this Sunday!

December 24 – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 6 p.m.

December 25 – Christmas Day falls on a Sunday this year. We conducted a small survey on worship dates and the majority expressed that they would rather focus on the Christmas Eve service at Vista Grande and use Christmas Day to be with their families. By mid-December, we'll give you a list of UCC churches in our city who will be having a Christmas Day service. This will come via the weekly e-blast or printed in the worship bulletin.

Activities to Include on your Calendars

Sat. Nov. 26 at 9 a.m.

Decorating for Advent –

Come and offer your helping hands to decorate the tree and prepare the sanctuary for this Holy time.

December 3 – Holiday Party at High Plains Church UU.

High Plains is hosting this joint Holiday Party. Watch the announcements or weekly e-blast for time and other details.



Mission Day – Sunday Nov 6

Our Missions Task Force has re-structured our mission programs in order to be more effective, sustainable, and gospel driven! Instead of a monthly focus, we'll concentrate on a yearly focus. The missions chosen are:

Inside Out Youth Services; liaisons Nancy and Kayan

One Nation Walking Together; liaisons Judy D. and Jon

Cheyenne Village; liaisons Jon and Judy D.

Los Pobres; liaisons Faye and Erika

UCC 5 for 5; liaisons Clare and Dave

Family Promise; liaison Donna

Check out the displays in Fellowship Hall, ask your questions, and offer support.

Thanks to Jamie for putting together a Power-Point presentation with information on ALL our mission.



December Birthdays

5	Maurine Hale
6	Ruth Eastwood
7	Mel Druelinger
10	Jan Morgan
10	Charlie Morgan
12	Michelle Wright
19	Brenda Collins
23	Erin Elkaim
26	Evelline “Evee” Martin

Mission of the Month for November and December

What is One Nation Walking Together?

One Nation Walking Together is a non-profit charitable organization located in Colorado Springs, Colorado committed to making a positive difference in the lives of Native Americans. We are not funded by any government agency nor are we affiliated with any religious entity.



We are a proactive and creative organization that is efficient, effective and innovative using our limited resources in realizing a vision of service to those living in Indian Country. We are good stewards to our donors and partners. We have a demonstrated history of serving those in "need."

Who receives the goods that One Nation sends to the communities?

One Nation Walking Together works with Native American community leaders to ensure the goods are distributed where the need is the greatest. This includes individual families, senior housing, social service agencies, food banks, schools, missions and clinics. **We serve those Urban Indians within the state of Colorado and those residing on reservations in Montana, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, New Mexico and Arizona.**

This offering will be received on Nov. 27.

The Christmas Fund – 5 for 5

Provides direct financial assistance to retired and active United Church of Christ authorized ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including pension and health premium supplementation, emergency assistance, and Christmas thank-you checks. The generous gifts of United Church of Christ congregations and individuals to the Christmas Fund enable the Pension Boards' Ministerial Assistance team to provide the following gifts: Christmas thank you checks will be provided to approx. 507 persons totaling \$253,500; small monthly annuity supplementation for low income retired clergy is given to approx. 447 persons, totaling \$1,370,160; quarterly health premiums is given to approximately 240 persons, totaling \$329,272.50; and emergency grants have been given to 28 individuals and families, totaling \$48,587.50.



Our offering for this Pension Board's Ministerial Assistance program is received annually on Christmas Eve.

The Wider Church

Congregations Alive! 3 – February 2-4, 2017 at 1st Plymouth Congregational UCC in Englewood, CO. Theme: IGNITE!

A three day event with Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, our General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ as our keynote speaker.

Worship leader is Rev. Lee Ann Bryce, the senior pastor, musician and worship leader at 1st Congregational UCC in Fort Worth, TX.

Presenter is Rev. Dr. Leanne Hadley, Children's minister, educator, and author from Lexington, KY.

30 + workshops on subjects including authenticity in community; safe church; practical youth leadership; non-violent communication; interfaith dialogue; and many others.

Early bird registration is December 15, 2016 \$110 per person

There will be a discount for 2 or more from the same church.

Stewardship Note—GO and Do the Same

This year we are changing up the way we financially support missions. We have in the past, had 'mission moments' during worship. These weekly appeals would provide information about those missions Vista Grande supports and at the end of the month money would be collected for that mission. Often, we would not hear about that particular mission until the following year when their 'month' came up again. Rather than mission moments each week there are now tables in the hall which will keep us all updated on those mission we support *all the time*. This will remind us of our commitment to these missions and will give anyone at any time the opportunity to be involved in numerous ways. This year, we are asking that you include your financial support for missions in your pledge. You will note on your pledge cards where you can identify what you are giving to the general fund and what you are designating for missions. And as always, thank you for your support of this community and the work

Stewardship – Over the past several weeks, Pastor Clare has addressed our Stewardship Theme. And by now, you should have received a stewardship letter in the mail. If you didn't, please let us know. In case you are wondering, "how do I pledge?"; the pledge cards will be available at the Thanksgiving Dinner on November 20. If you won't be at church on Nov. 20, the cards will be available every Sunday during Advent.

Cleaning Schedule

Nov 12 and 19 – Carol and Richard Burbank

Nov 26 and Dec 3 – Carol and Phil Puterbaugh

Dec 10 and Dec 17 – Donna and Dave Bristow

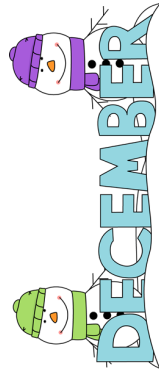
Dec 24 and Dec 31 – Jackie and Jerry Moore





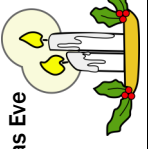
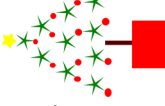



2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sunday Schedule 8:30 am Adult Faith Formation 10 am Worship with FF for Kids 11:15 am Fellowship 11:45 am Korean Worship Service		1 	2	3 6 pm Theology on Tap	4	5 Faith Formation Multi Generational activity Planning for Advent
6 Sunday Schedule Communion	7 5 pm Steering Committee Mtg	8	9 9:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry 6:30 pm Choir	10 6 pm Theology on Tap	11 	12
13 Sunday Schedule Guest Mission Speaker	14	15	16 6:30 pm Choir	17 6 pm Theology on Tap	18	19
20 Sunday Schedule Thanksgiving Potluck 	21	22	23 6:30 pm Choir	24 	25	26 Decorating for Advent Season
27 Sunday Schedule First Sunday of Advent	28	29	30 6:30 pm Choir	Theology on Tap is held at The Whistle Pig at 1840 Dominion Way.		Mission of the Month One Nation Walking Together



2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sunday Schedule 8:30 am Adult Faith Formation 10 am Worship with FF for Kids 11:15 am Fellowship 11:45 am Korean Worship Service			Mission of the Month The Christmas Fund—one of our 5 for 5 missions	<i>1</i> 4:30 pm Facilities Team Mtg	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i> Holiday Party at High Plains UCC 
<i>4</i> Sunday Schedule Communion Second Sunday of Advent	<i>5</i> 5 pm Steering Committee Mtg	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i> 9:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry 6:30 pm Choir	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>11</i> Sunday Schedule "Las Posadas" Guest Mission Speaker	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>14</i> 6:30 pm Choir	<i>15</i> IGNITE! Early bird registration for congregations Alive 3. (save \$20)	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i> 
<i>18</i> Sunday Schedule Third Sunday of Advent	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>21</i> 9:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry 6:30 pm Choir	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i> 6 p.m. Christmas Eve Service 
<i>25</i> NO Worship service Today MERRY CHRISTMAS 	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>28</i> 6:30 pm Choir	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>31</i> Bring on the NEW YEAR! 



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

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

July – Mercy's Gate; Back to School Fair—Cancelled

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

