



The Vista Views

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Summer, almost. *by Rev Clare Twomey*

I don't know about you but I am exhausted! I find that the world's events and our national discourse has been very overwhelming this past year. And I am ready for a vacation! I can't begin to tell you how many times I have re-written a sermon because of some event which demanded that we confront a particular injustice. Somewhere in the midst of the chaos, though, there is hope. Quite frankly, Sunday mornings, as we join together week after week, I find hope in the gathering. We continue to come together as a community of faith, in all our glory and distractions, in order to remember who we are and to whom we belong. We need reminders of where hope lives and where we can be held up in the face of turmoil. Clarissa Pinkola Estes' essay continues to bring me to that place of hope and possibilities. I suggest that you keep this essay, this meditation, this prayer close by, for those times when the world feels as if it is closing in. May it remind you of your purpose and the hope that lies in the realization that we are all called to do small things--things that will add up to changing our small piece of the world.

"My friends, do not lose heart. We were made for these times. I have heard from so many recently who are deeply and properly bewildered. They are concerned about the state of affairs in our world now. Ours is a time of almost daily astonishment and often righteous rage over the latest degradations of what matters most to civilized, visionary people.

You are right in your assessments. The lustre and hubris some have aspired to while endorsing acts so heinous against children, elders, everyday people, the poor, the unguarded, the helpless, is breathtaking. Yet, I urge you, ask you, gentle you, to please not spend your spirit dry by bewailing these difficult times. Especially do not lose hope. Most particularly because, the fact is that we were made for these times. Yes. For years, we have been learning, practicing, been in training for and just waiting to meet on this exact plain of engagement.

I grew up on the Great Lakes and recognize a seaworthy vessel when I see one. Regarding awakened souls, there have never been more able vessels in the waters than there are right now across the world. And they are fully provisioned and able to signal one another as never before in the history of humankind. (continued on page 3.)

Special points of interest:

- *Adult education 8:30 a.m.*
- *Sunday morning worship at 10:00 a.m.*



Rocky Mountain Conference Annual Celebration 2018 is officially in the books—and what a time we had! Written by Cory Kibler

We managed business of course, but even the discussions around Clergy Compensation, UCC Polity, and Budget were sacred and powerful, a true testament to how we work together as Conference.

And there was so much more. Bruce Reyes-Chow offered two large-group sessions on Saturday, including a difficult conversation about racism. He also offered a small-group workshop on Conversational Preaching, and left the entire delegation with a lot to unpack.

Other incredible workshop topics included Children's Sermons (Steve Monhollon and Rob Carlson); UCC Mental Health Ministries (Amy Petré Hill); and Immigrant-Welcoming Congregations (Linda Mahan).

And, of course, we had a *lot* of fun. Thursday night featured appetizers from La Foret (bacon-wrapped pineapple was a favorite), beverages, and a photo-booth—a major hit with the Conference! On Friday night, we sang karaoke in Ponderosa Lodge, and even Conference Minister Rev. Sue Artt sang a tune for us (with eight of her closest friends backing her up).

The meeting concluded on Saturday morning with a powerful worship in the Chapel. We served one another communion, and were reminded that it's very, very hard to care deeply about the world—and that despite its challenge, caring and taking action is our calling as people of the Church.

We are so grateful to everyone who helped pull this thing off, which includes (but is not limited to) the Metro Denver Association, La Foret, our song leaders Jeremy McCleod and Eric McEuen, our Boundary Trainers Rev. Tracey Dawson, Wendy Kidd, and Angie Law, and our tech wizard (and karaoke star) Nic Redavid. A special shout-out goes to the newest members of our office staff, Janice Travis and Daryl Gerboth, for diving in head-first with enthusiasm and crushing it!

Keep an eye out for AC 2019 dates, to be hosted by Western Association in Grand Junction!

2018 Executive Committee consists of

Moderator – Erin Elkaim; Assistant Moderator – Jacque Bechthold-Blueitt; Treasurer – Dawn Bechthold-Blueitt; Financial Secretary – John Tinsley; Clerk – Deborah Tinsley; Members-at-Large – Jim Price and Jeannie Harrington

Our Staff

Pastor—Rev Clare Twomey Music Director—David Hudson
Office Administrator—Donna Bristow Nursery Attendant—Robin

Pastor's Hours

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

Summer, almost. by Rev Clare Twomey (continued from page 1.)

Look out over the prow; there are millions of boats of righteous souls on the waters with you. Even though your veneers may shiver from every wave in this stormy roil, I assure you that the long timbers composing your prow and rudder come from a greater forest. That long-grained lumber is known to withstand storms, to hold together, to hold its own, and to advance, regardless.

In any dark time, there is a tendency to veer toward fainting over how much is wrong or unended in the world. Do not focus on that. There is a tendency, too, to fall into being weakened by dwelling on what is outside your reach, by what cannot yet be. Do not focus there. That is spending the wind without raising the sails.

We are needed, that is all we can know. And though we meet resistance, we more so will meet great souls who will hail us, love us and guide us, and we will know them when they appear. Didn't you say you were a believer? Didn't you say you pledged to listen to a voice greater? Didn't you ask for grace? Don't you remember that to be in grace means to submit to the voice greater?

Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach. Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of this poor suffering world, will help immensely. It is not given to us to know which acts or by whom, will cause the critical mass to tip toward an enduring good.

What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts, adding, adding to, adding more, continuing. We know that it does not take everyone on Earth to bring justice and peace, but only a small, determined group who will not give up during the first, second, or hundredth gale.

One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. Soul on deck shines like gold in dark times. The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires, causes proper matters to catch fire. To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these - to be fierce and to show mercy toward others; both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity.

Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it. If you would help to calm the tumult, this is one of the strongest things you can do. There will always be times when you feel discouraged. I too have felt despair many times in my life, but I do not keep a chair for it. I will not entertain it. It is not allowed to eat from my plate.

The reason is this: In my uttermost bones I know something, as do you. It is that there can be no despair when you remember why you came to Earth, who you serve, and who sent you here. The good words we say and the good deeds we do are not ours. They are the words and deeds of the One who brought us here. In that spirit, I hope you will write this on your wall: When a great ship is in harbor and moored, it is safe, there can be no doubt. But that is not what great ships are built for."

By Clarissa Pinkola Estes

Youth Documentary Academy



Kathy Stults asked if Vista Grande would be interested in screening some of the documentary films that young people from around the Pikes Peaks region had created. These young men and women are chosen from a number of applicants and are mentored extensively by film maker Tom Sheppard through the Youth Documentary Academy (YDA).

The films reflected those personal issues and experiences these teens had but also touched on the concerns that most of our youth deal with today: mental illness, PTSD, suicide, immigration, race, LGBTQIA, etc. They are exceptionally made and produced films.

Vista Grande has screened six films so far and we have three more ready to screen.

SAVE THE DATE! Sunday August 5th at 1:00 p.m. downstairs at VGUCC. We will have our third "Youth Voices Community Conversation." Our filmmakers will be:

1. Bailey Francisco, whose film, After War, tells of the effects of PTSD on a family
2. AJ Vafiades, whose film, Real Mom, tells of different adoption experiences
3. Shaienne Knox, whose film, Out of Our Heads, tells of black hair.

Come and see the films and engage with these amazing young filmmakers.

Graduates!!

Erin and Jon's son, **Ethan Elkaim** transitioned from Rockridge Elementary to Mesa Middle School in Castle Rock, CO. He received his continuation diploma for successfully meeting his requirements to move on to 7th grade!

Jan and Marcie's son, **Jeffrey Kolm**, graduated from middle school (8th grade) at Colorado Military Academy (CMA) on May 24th. He will be entering high school, tentatively at CMA, in August. He graduated with awards for high academic honors and outstanding character, as well as receiving the President's Award for Outstanding Academic Excellence.

Carol and Richard Burbank's granddaughter, **Jolie White** graduated from Iowa Virtual Academy High School on 6/9/2018. She will be going on to community college in Nebraska.

Lucille Derr's granddaughter, **Illianna Derr-Evans** graduated with honors from New Mexico Tech in Socorro, NM on May 12, 2018 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology.

Jerry and Jackie Moore's granddaughter, **Natalie Moore** graduated from Simmons College in Boston, MA, on May 18, 2018, with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science and Informatics. She graduated Summa cum laude as a member of the Academy and member of the Honors Program. They proudly attended her Commencement ceremony.



Looking Ahead! Women's Retreat – Saturday, September 8 at La Foret.

The location is secured. La Foret is our UCC camp almost in our backyard – in Black Forest. It's a beautiful camp setting that has opportunity for meditation, reflection, and community building.

Mallory Everhart will be our facilitator. . Mark your calendars for this fall event.

Faith Formation

Kids' Faith Formation—Plans are in the works for Kids' Faith Formation Saturdays beginning this fall.



Congregations Alive 4! Coming up – Feb. 7-9, 2019

Theme: A Just World for All

Keynote Speaker: The Rev. Traci Blackmon, Executive Minister for Justice and Witness Ministries UCC in Cleveland

Featured Speaker: The Rev. Amanda Henderson, Executive Director of Interfaith Alliance in Denver

Guest Presenter: The Rev. Dr. Ivy Beckwith, Minister of faith Formation Ministries UCC in Cleveland

Worship Leader: The Rev. Chris Gilmore, senior Pastor of Sixth Ave UCC in Denver

There will be 30+ workshops, worship settings, display tables, keynote presentations, and more.

Cost: \$120 per person with discounts for 2 or more from same church.

Watch for more information by visiting the website at www.rmucc.org

Adult Faith Formation “Percolate”

Percolate has spent the last of winter and this past spring reading Original Blessing by Matthew Fox. This book was indeed relevant in our congregation's pursuit to be-



come a Just Peace church. Matthew Fox moves us from a Fall-Redemption view of Christianity to a Creation Centered one that celebrates beauty, compassion and justice. It was a liberating read.

Our next endeavor over the summer will be Marcus Borg's Days of Awe and Wonder: How to Be a Christian in the Twenty-first Century. This book was written two years after his death and is a selection some of his most enduring and insightful writings, including many never before published works. There is a forward by his wife, Marianne Borg, also an Episcopal priest, and an afterword by Barbara Brown Taylor that is the actual eulogy she presented at his memorial service in 2015.

As usual all are welcome, whether or not you've read the book. We meet around 8:30 before the worship service and the coffee will be percolating.

Mission

Vision for Mission

Mission/Outreach is an integral part of VGCC ministries. We will pursue opportunities that are **reflective of Justice and Peace**, denominational and ecumenical, local and global, participatory and financial. Our mission and outreach will make a difference – empowering recipients and inspiring givers to act in the spirit of Christ; exemplifying the 3 Great Loves: Love of Neighbor; Love of Children; Love of Creation.

JUST PEACE

Just Peace Possibilities; We are called

As we sit, walk, talk, run or ride anywhere in our daily lives it becomes increasingly difficult to not notice the continuous and vast ways that injustices reign down on the marginalized. At the same time we get to appreciate our ability here at VGCC to alleviate as much as possible the hurt experienced as a result of these injustices through our Mission work. We are called.



In our response to the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries commitment to a revitalized Just Peace Church movement (www.ucc.org/justice_just-peace) the Justice and Peace Core team was formed here. The goal of the team was to assist in discerning whether or not we, the covenantal partners of VGCC should expand our call to action to include actively participating in non-violent ways of alleviating systemic injustices. In doing so we would seek a designation as a Just Peace Church. This designation would also include offering the message that peace is possible. We are called.

The team has been working to ascertain the distinction between mission work and Justice and Peace work while considering the probability of our church taking on this designation. After 3 months of talking, growing and breaking bread together weekly we presented to the church our thoughts that we as a congregation can do justice and peace work....which essentially is a continuous effort to remove or dismantle systems that create the need for mission work. This presentation and all church discussion happened on May 13 and May 20. We are grateful to share and for the feedback from everyone who participated. It has been great to experience first-hand the growing and coming together of the people that make this church. We are called.

Currently the team is developing a Just Peace statement that will represent our congregation's ability and desire to do Justice and Peace work. It will then be presented to the Executive Council at their July meeting. Once accepted by the Council, a vote will be held for all partners to choose our designation. We are called.

Our Church's ability to get "in the mud" of advocating for and holding up an expectation of justice in a peaceful manner is completely possible. The question that remains for each of us is....What shall I do to assist in making a Just Peace Church? As we each answer, this work becomes more whole and effective in our life, our church, our community, our world. We are called.

Mission Action Team

(Jeannie Harrington and Nancy Morlock-Hollins, Co-Chairs)

On May 6th we had our second showing of Youth Documentary Academy films. Avon Schultz presented his film, Meet me In the Pale Moonlight. Yolande Morrison presented her film, Finding Home. And Daniel Robinson presented his film, White Chocolate. As usual the films we well received and generated lively discussion. The next round of films will be on August 5th.



We are actively supporting Family Promise by providing and serving meals for those families who are staying at churches that have housing facilities. On Friday, May 25th we provided a the meal at First Baptist Church. Thanks to all who provided the dinner and served.

In July, we will once again participate with another church to create a float for the Colorado Springs Pride Parade. See Kayan for details.

We continue to buy eggs and donate clothes for Los Pobres, and staff Inside-Out meetings. Our mission meetings are on the last Sunday after church, right after our worship service.



Memorial Service for Joe Estrada on Saturday July 7 at 10:30 a.m.
Amy Gunning's lifelong companion, Joe, passed away on June 6, 2018. He'll be sorely missed by Amy and her family, along with many friends and extended family.

NEW COVENANTAL PARTNERS

Lorraine and Doug Capps

Jeannie Harrington is Lorraine's sister and she introduced them to Vista Grande. Pastor Clare conducted their mom's memorial service and made a wonderful impression on them. Lorraine is a fused glass artist and also dabbles in clay and mixed media. They moved from Florida to Cripple Creek in July 2016 and then to Colorado Springs in 2017.

Now that they are living in the Springs, Doug and Lorraine are both anxious to become more involved in serving those in need. Doug loves music, art, dogs, and food. He's guessing we do too.

Jud and Maggie Jusell

Jud and Maggie Jusell have been living in Colorado Springs since 1998. Maggie was born and raised in the Phoenix, AZ area, and Jud is originally from Minnesota. Both Jud and Maggie work with The Word for the World Bible Translators, which is based in South Africa. The Jusells have three grown children, who all live in Colorado. Maggie and Jud both enjoy spending time with their family and friends, watching movies, and eating Maggie's great cooking! The Jusells were drawn to Vista Grande because of its diverse community and social activism.

Membership



NEW! You may have noticed, we are using a new e-mail address.

It is admin@vgcc.org We'll be switching over as soon as it looks like we have the message out to members and ministry contacts. Make the change in your address book now.

June Birthdays

1	Dana Zimmerman
2	Kamryn Hollins
8	Zelda Pope
19	Lyn Gunning
19	Kelli Baptist
23	Julia Hollins
25	Cindy Solomon-Klebba
25	Doug Capps
29	Shari (Curly) Solomon-Klebba



July Birthdays

7	Bob Hollins
7	Marcie Wegner
15	Judy Druelinger
15	Jerry Moore
15	Margaret Natelli
25	Faye Gallegos
27	Eduardo Martin
30	Deborah Tinsley

Anniversaries:

June 11	Bob and Nancy Hollins
June 16	Clare Twomey and Liz Bliss
June 19	Jerry and Jackie Moore
July 3	Maggie and Ron Forth
July 18	Jim and Bev Price
July 20	Tim and Kelli Baptist
July 26	Tammie Davis and Ruth Eastwood
July 28	Chase and Melissa Bongirno

Cleaning Schedule

June 9 and 16	—Carolyn and Lyn Gunning
June 23 and 30	—OPEN
July 7 and 14	—Jackie and Jerry Moore Moore
July 21 and 28	—Carol and Phil Puterbaugh



It's not hard to
make decisions 
once you know what
your VALUES are.
~ Roy E. Disney

VGCC's Guiding Values:

Love, grounded in Faith and Hope;
Acceptance that includes Respect and Welcoming;
Caring Relationships
(Family, Friendship, Children, Community)

**The Wider Church – The Rocky Mountain Conference and
The Southeastern Association**

Oct 21, 2018—The Southeastern Association Annual Gathering will be held
at First Congregational UCC in Colorado Springs.

The annual gatherings will be held “close to home” this year.



June 24 – Crystal Karr preaching

Crystal Karr is a Member in Discernment with the Southeastern Association
and a member of Vista Grande UCC.

July 1 – Clare Twomey preaching

July 8 – Clare Twomey preaching

Pastor Clare is on vacation July 9—25.

July 15 – PRIDE DAY Crystal Karr preaching
Note Change! 9 a.m. Worship at Vista Grande
The parade begins at 11 a.m. at Cimarron and Tejon.

July 22 – Mallory Everhart preaching

Mallory is a Member in Discernment with the Southeastern Association and a member of First
Congregational UCC in Colorado Springs. She will be a 9-month Intern at Vista Grande begin-
ning in August. An internship is required for seminary graduation.

July 29 – Clare Twomey preaching

Plan ahead—Sunday August 19th is our outdoor worship and
picnic at Fox Run Park



A United Church of Christ 5 for 5 Mission

One again, Vista Grande received its certificate for being a 5 for 5 congregation.

That means we support :

OCWM – Our Churches Wider Mission

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) funds the work the UCC does in its Associations and Conferences, and in the national and global church. OCWM funds are invested in programs, resources, and tools needed to keep local UCC churches strong, effective, and growing.

And 4 Special Mission Offerings (SMO)

United Church of Christ Special Mission Offerings (SMOs) exist to allow congregations and individuals to meet people at points of critical need in their lives. Though many options exist for direct, individual support of these needs, the SMOs allow a common witness and make a collective positive impact. Our church has identified four areas where these critical human needs exist:

- in places lacking health and educational resources and/or where disaster has struck;
- within systems of injustice which oppress daily life and opportunity;
- in the lives of church leaders without sufficient resources to live with dignity;
- in the nurture of youth and congregations just beginning their lives of faith.

We believe these SMOs collectively serve to lift people closer to the abundance and wholeness to which Jesus Christ has called us to work together to bring about.

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) Supports partners in countries with ministries that fund health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries and both international and domestic disaster response, administered by Wider Church Ministries, Global Sharing of Resources.

Strengthen the Church (STC) Supports church growth, pastoral and lay leadership development, youth and young adult ministries within conferences and administered by Local Church Ministries.

Neighbors in Need (NIN) One-third of this offering supports the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM) and two-thirds is administered by Justice and Witness Ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants.

The Christmas Fund (TCF) 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. A ministry of the Pension Boards, the offering is received annually on the Sunday before Christmas.

Vista Grande has been a 5 for 5 church since 2004 when the United Church of Christ started recognizing this status. However, we were supporting each of these missions since 1997!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sunday Schedule 8:30 am Adult Faith Formation 10 am MultiGen Worship 11:15 am Fellowship					1	2 9 am Parking Lot Workday
3 Sunday Schedule Communion	4 5 pm Executive Council	5 8am Parking Lot Workday	6 9:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry	7 Rocky Mountain Conference Annual Celebration	8	9
10 Sunday Schedule	11	12	13 8 am Men's Breakfast at Wade's Cafe	14	15	16
17 Sunday Schedule	18	19	20 9:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry	21	22 Noon Rally at City Hall	23
24 Sunday Schedule 2 pm EC for Crystal Karr	25	26	27	28	29	30

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Sunday Schedule Communion	2 5 pm Executive Council	3	4 	5	6	7 10:30 am Memorial Service for Joe Estrada
8 Sunday Schedule	9 Pastor's Vacation	10	11 8 am Men's Breakfast at Wade's Cafe	12	13	14
15 9 am Worship NEW TIME PRIDE DAY	16	17	18 9:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry	19	20	21
22 Sunday Schedule	23	24	25 Rev Clare is back!!	26	27	28
29 Sunday Schedule	30	31			Sunday Schedule 8:30 am Adult Faith Formation 10 am MultiGen Worship 11:15 am Fellowship	



**VISTA GRANDE
COMMUNITY CHURCH**

United Church of Christ

Location: 5460 N Union Blvd
Colorado Springs, CO
Mailing: PO Box 26030 COS 80936
Phone: 719-599-3057
Email: admin@vgcc.org

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.

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.”