



The Vista Views

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Are you part of the solution? By Clare Twomey

“A noticeable trend, around the issues of homelessness and weeds and more expressed in "Your Viewpoint" has been "They should do something about this." When a writer says "The churches should get involved", this concerning homelessness in Colorado Springs, may I ask are you a member of a church, temple, etc.? Are you part of the solution? Family Promise is one example of a non-profit alleviating the causes of homelessness with a church based component to it. You can get involved there, raise awareness, raise funds, and learn the complex and human side of what it means to deal with homelessness. I am not employed by Family Promise, but through my church I do support their proactive approach to the issue. I am simply suggesting, using only one example of where help and support is needed in our city, that the "They" you reference is "Us". And, contrary to the writer who remarked "It would be good if churches were involved (in the solutions)", they are; Churches, Temples, Synagogues, other voluntary organizations that are not faith based. In my own church, we have affiliates who are not Christian who align with us to make changes to the manifold human distress found in our city, state, and world. I humbly suggest that rather than being an observer of what is wrong with our city, you become an actor in the solutions for change. Each of us has something to offer; together we can be the city we want to live in.” (September 18th letter to the Gazette, by Deborah Tinsley)

This letter to the editor appears in the September 18th edition of the Gazette. I wanted to share it for a number of reasons. I'm not sure if the author intended for all the interpretations I have gleaned from this response and so I realize I may be taking some liberties with the text. But, heck this is what we preachers tend to do with a lot of texts, so here we go!

First of all, this is a perfect example of ways in which we can all strive to live into what it means to be a Just Peace church. It protests the idea of passing the buck for others to do the work while at the same time offering an invitation to take part in the work. It also gives clear ideas on how to improve a situation rather than just complaining. It reminds us that we all have a stake in the responsibility of what needs to be done. It holds neighbors and friends accountable in the solutions and focuses on the power of community as THE mechanism for getting to the heart of an issue and to be instrumental in its solution. Kind of makes you wish the writer of this letter was someone from our church, doesn't it?? Well guess what? This response was authored by our own Deborah Tinsley. (Cont'd on page 3.)

Special points of interest:

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



Sacred Conversation on Ending Racism Facilitator Workshop:
Oct. 12 & 13 at Berkeley Community Church (Denver)

This October, the Rocky Mountain Conference is holding a workshop that will help RMC clergy and lay-leaders to facilitate the UCC's **Sacred Conversations to End Racism** curriculum. The Facilitator Workshop will be led by Rev. Velda Love, the UCC's Minister of Racial Justice.

It will be held on October 12 (9 am–4 pm) and October 13 (9 am–1 pm) at **Berkeley Community Church** in Denver.

On October 14, Rev. Velda Love will be the guest preacher at Vista Grande.

The Wider Church – The Southeastern Association

October 21 - the Southeastern Association Annual Gathering at First Congregational UCC in Colorado Springs, 3 p.m. Please come prepared to share with those gathered how your church has participated in the national campaign of Three Great Loves. Feel free to bring stories, pictures, songs etc. to share with the group. There will be an opportunity to brainstorm ways to collaborate with other UCC communities. Each church is encouraged to send three voting delegates. More may come, however only three lay people are able to vote. All clergy have vote.

Our Staff

Pastor—Rev Clare Twomey Music Director—David Hudson

Seminary Student Intern—Mallory Everhart

Office Administrator—Donna Bristow

Nursery Attendant—Vacant

Pastor's Hours

The hours are flexible.

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

2018 Executive Committee consists of

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

Continued from page 1.

We all know someone who looks at the various problems facing our city, neighborhoods and or world and wonders why more isn't being done to make things better. To be honest, I do this myself when I see a homeless person on the street or hear about immigrants being mistreated or watch as a person of color is being unjustly accosted. I want things to be better. And I know you do too. And I admit, I expect that someone else will take care of it. But, as Deborah reminded US in this article, we are the ones who have to do the work.

It's not only the anonymous person who doesn't attend church who expects "the church" to do something. Those of us who do attend expect that we, as a community, will be actively involved in the work of the gospel. At Vista Grande we expect that we will actively pursue justice for those who are oppressed. We expect that we will continue to support our missions so that we can remain actively involved doing the work of our Beloved. We expect that we will remain a radically hospitable congregation, reflecting that hospitality in our worship and our fellowship. We expect that we will continue to provide a safe place for those who have been injured by religion or toxic theology and that our door will remain open to all who enter this place. But we also often expect that someone else will do the work: welcome those at the door, be the first point of contact on a Sunday morning. We expect that the sanctuary will be warm or cool and comfortable depending on the weather. We expect there will be good music and a well-planned worship service designed "to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable". We expect that there will be delicious food at fellowship and that the bathrooms will be clean and well stocked. We expect the grass will be cut, the parking lot safe for our vehicles and easy to negotiate. We expect that someone will make sure the doors are locked and the lights are off when we are leaving and open and lit when we return home.

We are so very lucky in that we have been the recipients of one grant which helped to pay my annuity for 3 years, and another grant that has helped to purchase a new sound system, advertise for our church and activities, purchase learning materials and leadership workshops for folks, and update office equipment. We have two other donations which allows us to have a student intern, whose spirit and innovative ideas have the potential to propel us into being the kind of church those, who have otherwise avoided church, may find to be a safe spiritual home.

The point is, what are you doing to make the things happen at Vista Grande that you expect to happen? Are you able to volunteer to make the grounds safe and neat, especially our over grown garden? Are you willing to usher, to greet, to feed those who walk through our doors? Are you the one who will increase your pledge so that we can increase our support for our missions, or provide new ministries for those who would otherwise remain unchurched? Are you prepared to pick up where our grants leave off, when the money we have been receiving to support our vision is gone? Are you the one who will join a ministry team, or plan a fundraiser, or become a member of our Executive Council, whose job it is to assure the sustainability of this small but mighty church? What do you expect from this Church and what are you doing to have those expectations realized??

I promise you, there is no way we can be relevant in this world without also being willing to be involved in the life of this congregation. We have covenanted with each other and our Beloved to be as God would be in this world: compassionate, loving and proactive in our quest for justice. How do you expect you will do this?

Our Iliff School of Theology Student Intern

Beloved community –

It's hard to believe we've been journeying together for two months already! The time flies in a congregation as vibrant and life-giving as this one. It has been a pleasure to get to know you and I am excited about what the rest of the year has in store.

We have started two recurring events which are highlights of my week. Coffee and Conversation is a weekly casual get-together at 9am on Tuesday. Every week has been different, with topics ranging from sports to stewardship to social justice and beyond. You're more than welcome to come and add your two cents! We are even better together. Second, we have started an in-depth look at the Gospel of John. It is such a privilege to wrestle and discover and share together with a book of the Bible with such a fraught reputation.

In September, we hosted a queer and plus size community clothing swap. Thank you so much to everyone who donated clothes or stopped by! It was a great experience and folks who had never heard of or stepped foot in Vista Grande now know that we are committed to opening our doors and sharing our resources. There was talk of wanting another swap in the spring when the weather begins to get warm again.

These are just a few of the exciting things we are doing together and there is more on the horizon. Though it's hard to believe, Advent is just around the corner and we are planning to use this time of waiting to explore contemplative practice and worship. Rumor has it that some soup might even be involved!

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out if you have ideas or feedback for me as an intern. I grow and learn as a minister in relationship with you.

Peace and joy, Mallory Everhart

On September 8, Mallory facilitated a magnificent women's day retreat at La Foret, *Sacred Creativity: Spiritual Artistic Expression*. Those of us who were able to participate experienced how the Spirit flowed in and out of our time together. Some of us had known each other for 30+ years, others were fairly new. We all came away with a refreshed soul.



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)

Fellowship

Our Annual Thanksgiving Dinner is coming up.

Sunday, November 18 immediately following the worship service.

There will be a signup soon so we are assured of getting all of our favorite Thanksgiving dishes.



Faith Formation



Adult Faith Formation “Percolate”

Percolate is still reading and discussing Marcus Borg’s Days of Awe and Wonder: How to Be a Christian in the Twenty-first Century. This book was published 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. We have found much of the material wonderfully familiar. However, we are gaining new insights into previously read material, and are struggling with using new eyes to understand ideas such as “spirit-filled”, mystics and mysticism.

We need to be thinking of our next book. All ideas are welcome. 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.

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.rmccucc.org



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.

Mission in Action

One Nation Walking Together – Coming up ... Worship on Nov 4 will be Honoring Native Neighbors. We will also be collecting supplies to put together Elder Boxes. A supply list will be supplied late October.

Los Pobres – Los Pobres is always in need of cooking oil and flour. You can leave donations in Fellowship Hall.



Family Promise – The **3rd Annual Family Promise Walk** went well with folks from 19 churches walking. Vista Grande raised \$555 to help support the work to end homelessness. Vista Grande will be serving the evening meal on Saturday Oct 13 at First Cong UCC and Friday Nov 16 at Central United Methodist Church as a support to the host church.

Inside/Out Youth Services – The AllyUp Breakfast was held October 3 with Vista Grande reserving two tables for our folks. This fundraiser helps support the mission of Inside Out Youth Services.

Mission Action Team

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

Our Mission Action Team is in the community. In September we walked in the Family Promise Walk to raise funds that directly benefit families with children experiencing homelessness in our community.

In October, many attended the Ally Up Annual Breakfast Fundraiser for Inside Out Youth Services.

We are gearing up to serve a few meals for the families in the Family Promise program.

Our Mission Action Team continues to use the 2nd and 4th Sundays for a Mission Reflection. We have been able to raise awareness of missions through these short talks along with our information tables.

Please join us! We meet after church on the last Sunday of the month.

Worship

October 7

Theme: Bringing the world together/No place with boundaries

October 14

Theme: Racial Justice

Rev. Dr. Velda Love, The Minister of Racial Justice and Local Church Ministries at the National UCC, will be our guest preacher

October 21

Theme: Blessing of Animals

Mallory Everhart will be preaching.

Bring your pets to church.

Please have your animals leashed or caged

October 28

Theme: TBD



The purpose statement of the United Church of Christ from the Gospel of Matthew:

To love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.

The vision:

United in Christ's love, a just world for all.

November 4

Theme: Honoring Native Neighbors

November 11

Theme: Veterans Day

November 18

Theme: Thanksgiving

Following the worship service, we'll have our Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner.

November 25

Theme: Waiting for Advent/preparing/anticipating

December 1

Decorating for Advent

December 2

The First Sunday of Advent

Covenantal Partners

October Birthdays

5 Evelyn Cherney
7 Carol Lawson
9 Xachary Martin
10 Jud Jusell
11 Richard King
14 Ethan Elkaim Happy 13th!
15 Nora Victoria Barnes
19 Carrie Barnes
20 Jeffrey Kolm
22 Kayan Cross

November Birthdays

1 Patience (PJ)
1 Elly Siebert
15 Meghan Harrison
15 Melissa Bongirno
22 Lucille Derr
22 Erika Borboa
29 Maggie Forth



Anniversaries:

Oct 1 Doug and Lorraine Capps
Nov 14 – Eleashia Martel and Kord Ball
Nov 22 – Dawn and Jacque Bechthold-Blueitt

Cleaning Schedule

Sep 29 and Oct 6 – Donna and Dave Bristow
Oct 13 and Oct 20 —Jackie and Jerry Moore
Oct 27 and Nov 3 —Carolyn and Lyn Gunning
Nov 10 and Nov 17 —Carol and Phil Puterbaugh
Nov 24 and Dec 1 – Donna and Dave Bristow



Facilities

From facilities group,

We have spent most of our budget on resealing the parking lot and still have some monies left for sprinkler repairs. We are hoping to get those done soon!

Please contact anyone of us if you see a building or property need!

Anyone wishing to help with applying weed killer on our sidewalk areas please feel free to come out and spray away...

Remember we are green and need to use bunny friendly product!!

Let me know where you were able to spray so we can get it all treated.

Thanks, Jan Morgan



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.

Excerpt from The UCC Stewardship Material—Gifts of Word and Deed

Actions speak louder than words. You no doubt have heard that before, perhaps for most of your growing up. It is true that our actions are very important.

But words are important as well! The power of our speech to encourage or discourage should not be discounted. In the gospel of Luke, in particular, it is the words spoken by the main actors that often gives evidence of the influence of the Holy Spirit. The great poetry (songs) that flow from Elizabeth, Mary, Zachariah, and Simeon early in this gospel is prophetic speech that issues both a word of hope and a caution about judgement.

When Jesus speaks about good fruit coming from good trees and bad fruit from bad trees we know he is really talking about integrity – the integration of the thought and practice into the whole of a person's life. As the Book of James would remind us, it does little good to tell a hungry person to be well fed and full of encouragement if we don't also provide food to back up our good intentions. The letter of 1 John counsels that we can't say we love God and at the same time hate our sister/brother. They are non-sequitur. It is equivalent to looking for peaches on a sycamore tree. To love God is love the "other." To care for the poor is give them a hot meal, not just a platitude.

October 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>Sunday Schedule 8:30 am Adult Faith Formation 10 am MultiGen Worship 11:15 am Fellowship</p>	<p>2</p> <p>5 pm Executive Council</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9 am—Coffee and Conversation with Clare and Mallory</p>	<p>4</p> <p>7 am Ally Up Breakfast 5:30 pm Bible Study—The Gospel of John</p>	<p>5</p> <p>4:00 pm Choir</p>	<p>6</p>	
<p>7</p> <p>Sunday Schedule World Communion</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9 am—Coffee and Conversation with Clare and Mallory</p>	<p>10</p> <p>5:30 pm Bible Study—The Gospel of John</p>	<p>11</p> <p>4:00 pm Choir</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Clare away—Sacred Conversations Training At FCC</p>	<p>13</p> <p>5:30 pm Family Prom-</p>
<p>14</p> <p>Sunday Schedule Rev Velda Love preaching</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Clare—Vacation 10/15-10/19</p>	<p>16</p> <p>9 am—Coffee and Conversation with Mallory</p>	<p>17</p> <p>5:30 pm Bible Study—The Gospel of John</p>	<p>18</p> <p>4:00 pm Choir</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>21</p> <p>Sunday Schedule Blessing of the Animals CAC Mtg 3 pm Southeastern Association Annual Gathering at FCC</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9 am—Coffee and Conversation with Clare and Mallory</p>	<p>24</p> <p>5:30 pm Bible Study—The Gospel of John</p>	<p>25</p> <p>4:00 pm Choir</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>28</p> <p>Sunday Schedule Mission Team 1 pm—YDA Films</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Donna—Vacation 10/29-11/05</p>	<p>30</p> <p>9 am—Coffee and Conversation with Clare and Mallory</p>	<p>31</p> 			

November 2018

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	Sunday Schedule 8:30 am Adult Faith Formation 10 am MultiGen Worship 11:15 am Fellowship				1 4:00 pm Choir All Saints Day	2	3
4	Sunday Schedule Communion Native Heritage	5 5 pm Executive Council	6 VOTE! 9 am—Coffee and Conversation with Clare and Mallory	7 5:30 pm Bible Study— The Gospel of John	8 4:00 pm Choir	9 5:30 pm Family Promise Meal at Central UMC	10
11	Sunday Schedule Veterans' Day	12	13 9 am—Coffee and Conversation with Clare and Mallory	14 5:30 pm Bible Study— The Gospel of John	15 4:00 pm Choir	16 5:30 pm Family Promise Meal at Central UMC	17
18	Sunday Schedule Thanksgiving Potluck 	19	20 9 am—Coffee and Conversation with Clare and Mallory	21	22 	23	24
25	Sunday Schedule Mission Team	26	27 9 am—Coffee and Conversation with Clare and Mallory	28 5:30 pm Bible Study— The Gospel of John	29 4:00 pm Choir	30	1 Decorating for Advent



**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.”

Vista Grande UCC is a **Just Peace** Church. “We, the Covenantal Partners of Vista Grande Community Church United Church of Christ, declare ourselves a Just Peace Church. As a congregation and as individuals, we prayerfully strive to live out Jesus’ non-violent words and actions in treating all people and the environment with dignity and respect. With humility, we seek to establish relationships with others through what may be uncomfortable conversations. While calling attention to imbalances of power and privilege, we will promote peacemaking and work to resist and dismantle religious, political, economic and social systems of oppression. We acknowledge that peace and justice work is a dynamic process, and we will need to grow continually in our empathy in order to have a positive impact in our homes, neighborhoods, communities, nation and world.”