



Vista Grande United Church of Christ

# The Vista Views

Greetings, beloved community!

It's hard to believe how quickly the summer is flying by! We have had an eventful summer together, filled with faith, challenge, hope, and invitations to solidarity. Rev. Dr. Kris Watson started us out by talking about the spiritual practice of de-centering, reminding us that though we are an important part of this work, the work isn't about us. Rev. Dr. Anthony Scott encouraged us to be prophetic in our witness – even when we are not heard or understood by the people around us, we are carrying out God's calling and "they will know a prophet has been among them." A gentle word of restoration and hope came from Rev. Dr. Jacque Franklin as she shared her story of being disconnected from her indigenous roots and finding new growth through the sacred act of wandering and reconnecting with the land. Just this last week, Rev. Dr. Stephany Rose Spaulding used the story of Zacchaeus to illustrate the incredibly important practice of truth-hearing, accountability, and repair. As I am writing this, Rev. Dr. Velda Love will speak in a few days and I am sure her workshop and sermon message will be just as transformative and enlightening!

Over this summer, I also preached about what community solidarity looks like and who we assume owns the table. There are two traps American Christianity can easily fall into that we as Vista Grande Community Church actively resist. The first is the idea that both our sin and our salvation is an individual affair best dealt with privately. As a church community primarily made up of people of European descent and whose denomination has roots in violent colonialism, we know that it is not enough for us to address our racist tendencies on an individual level. If we did, we would have plausible deniability, saying things like "I'm not racist! I don't see color!" But since we understand racism, among other oppressive systems, as a social and communal sin we put ourselves in context. It places us in the paradoxical position, as the Talmud puts so eloquently, of not being obligated to complete the work but not being free to desist from it, either. Our job, then, is to "do the next right thing" by doing justice, loving mercy, and walk humbly with God together, wherever it may lead us.

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**Special points of interest:  
ZOOM**

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

## Join the Movement for Racial Justice



A movement often begins with a simple step. The Revs. Traci Blackmon and Velda Love urged Synod goers to take that step — to step out in faith — and [Join the Movement Toward Racial Justice](https://www.ucc.org/join-the-movement-toward-racial-justice).

"Racial justice and anti-racism work is foundational to the mission, vision and purpose of the United Church of Christ," said Love. "The UCC promotes and believes in 'Justice for All.' It is intersectional and intentionally inclusive."

<https://www.ucc.org/join-the-movement-toward-racial-justice-debuts-at-gs-33/>

### *Vista Grande's Vision Statement - adopted April 13, 2020*

*"We covenant together to imagine and live into a world where God's Kin-dom vision of human and planetary flourishing comes to pass through the work of love, justice, peace, equality, and extravagant hospitality. We envision nothing less than a world restored to wholeness, wellness, joy, and gratitude for all of God's Creation."*

#### **Our Staff**

Lead Pastor—Rev. Clare Twomey  
Associate Pastor — Rev. Mallory Everhart  
Music Director— COVID—19 Dismissal  
Office Administrator—Donna Bristow  
Nursery Attendant— COVID—19 Dismissal

#### **Lead Pastor's Hours**

Pastor Clare is on sabbatical until September 5th.

#### 2021 Executive Committee:

Moderator – Kayan Cross; Assistant Moderator – David Nath; Treasurer – Dana Zimmerman; Financial Secretary – John Tinsley; Clerk – Erika Forshee  
Members-at-Large – Carol Burbank and Jeannie Harrington

The next newsletter will be the Nov Dec Jan 2021/2022 edition.  
Deadline for articles is October 15. E-mail your articles to [admin@vgcc.org](mailto:admin@vgcc.org)

## Summer Speakers (Continued from page 1.)

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The second trap, even among churches who want to be inclusive, is acting as if we believe the table belongs to us. This starting point means that inclusion in the life of the church is subject to the whims of people who usually represent the dominant culture and is why so many queer folks are wary of the word “welcome”. A queer reading of Psalm 23 offers us a counter narrative – the table belongs only to God and has been set for the oppressed and it is they who belong there most of all. This, like Rev. Dr. Watson preached, requires us to commit to the sacred practice of de-centering ourselves!

Over the coming months, we will have several opportunities to discern what our faith and justice commitments look like in action. On August 14<sup>th</sup>, we will be hosting a contemplative anti-racism retreat at Broadmoor Community Church from 10am-4pm. Please RSVP to [admin@vgcc.org](mailto:admin@vgcc.org), especially with any dietary needs. We also have two more town hall meetings - August 8<sup>th</sup> and August 29<sup>th</sup>. On August 29<sup>th</sup>, we will be joined by representatives from Archway Communities so we can discuss the proposal to share space with affordable housing on the church property. I understand that the proposal may spark some anxiety, so I encourage you all to attend so you can get your questions answered.

Before we know it, we will be turning the corner into autumn and the beginning of school, with all of its hopes, joys, and anxieties. Initially, we had hoped that we would be able to return to the building in September. Please know that the Safety and Reopening Committee is working diligently toward that end, we are also concerned about the changes in COVID and the dangers of the variants which are coming to light. We ask that you remain patient and flexible with us as we discern the best possible way to care for everyone in the church community. We will keep you apprised of our activities, plans, and decisions.

We look forward to welcoming back our beloved Pastor Clare from her well-deserved sabbatical. Her first Sunday back will be September 12<sup>th</sup>. We are in the midst of planning a welcome back celebration for her sometime in the month of September. If you are interested in being part of that planning, please reach out to Donna at [admin@vgcc.org](mailto:admin@vgcc.org)! September 19<sup>th</sup> is Just Peace Sunday and we will be kicking off a sermon series that dives deeply into the VGCC Just Peace statement. Stay tuned for more information!

Blessings, dear friends!

With love,

Pastor Mallory

### **ZOOM WORSHIP—Our Sunday morning worship meets at 10 a.m.**

#### **Use the Zoom link to join in.**

The best way to get this link is through our website.

Password: VGUCC

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9115878719>

Meeting ID: 911 587 8719

## SUMMER 2021 at VISTA GRANDE UCC



Don't miss any of the challenging and exciting events scheduled for this summer!

In addition to Mallory's brilliant sermons, Guest preachers will be offering their insights and personal voices so that you have the chance to hear from those who have been most affected by racism.

### **Guest Preachers via ZOOM:**

- \*June 20, Rev. Dr. Kris Watson, Co-founder of Nurturing Justice, UCC New York Conference
- \*July 4, Rev. Dr. Anthony Scott, Associate Conference Minister for Racial Justice, Rocky Mountain Conference
- \*July 11, Rev. Dr. Jacque Franklin, Minister for Pastoral Care, First Congregational Church, Colorado Springs
- \*July 25, Rev. Dr. Stephany Rose Spaulding, Founder of Truth and Conciliation
- \*August 1, Rev. Dr. Velda Love, Minister for Racial Justice, UCC National Office
- \*August 22, Pastor Roberto Ochoa, Program Associate for Congregations of Color and Ethnic Identified Congregations, UCC National Office

### **Digging Deeper:**

- \*July 30-31 – Racial Justice Workshop with Rev. Dr. Velda Love, Minister for Racial Justice, UCC National Office via ZOOM July 30 (5 – 7 pm); July 31(10 am – Noon and 1 – pm)
- \*August 14 – Contemplative Antiracism Workshop with Pastor Mallory and Dr. Myntha Anthym of Daring Ideas; to be held at Broadmoor Community Church (315 Lake Ave). **IN PERSON 10 am – 4 pm**

### **Discussion in Community:**

Town Hall Meetings via ZOOM – June 27<sup>th</sup>, July 18<sup>th</sup>, August 8<sup>th</sup>, August 29<sup>th</sup> at 1pm  
Engage, enjoy, immerse yourselves.

## Women's Retreat 2021 Shoes of the Faith

Facilitator: Sara Weatherman

September 18, 2021 LaForet -- Blue Spruce Cabin  
9:00am to 3:00pm

Cost will be \$45.00 and will include lunch.

This figure is based on having at least 12 women attend.

For planning purposes please let Judy or Donna know by **August 21, 2021**  
if you are able to attend.

Please bring 2 or 3 pairs of shoes for activities. Be bold in your choices. Just remember that what you wear needs to be practical for wearing at LaForet.

Checks should be made payable to Vista Grande Community Church and mailed to

**John Tinsley**

**6275 Spurwood Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80918**

**Memo Line: Women's Retreat**

John should **receive checks by August 29th** as we must pay 2 weeks in advance of the retreat. Please remember that the church does have some scholarship funds for those that need assistance. Please don't let money prevent you from attending. Just speak privately with Mallory.

You may also choose to donate a pair of shoes to either **One Nation** or **Los Pobres**.

More on this later.

Judy's email: [jdruelinger@yahoo.com](mailto:jdruelinger@yahoo.com) or text at (719) 322-7124

or

Donna at: [admin@vgcc.org](mailto:admin@vgcc.org)

### A little about the theme: "Shoes of the Faith"

We will explore 3 passages of scripture: Moses is instructed to take off his shoes at the burning bush; the prophet Amos, standing in the marketplace, accuses his listeners of "selling the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes"; the "prodigal son" is given a new pair of shoes when he returns home. These stories point us to 3 essential practices of our faith. We will "play" with the stories, walk the labyrinth, have a shoe tower building contest, and tell some shoe stories of our own.

## Mission

### Vision for Mission

Mission/Outreach is an integral part of VGUCC 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.

### Los Pobres

Los Pobres is definitely in need of BACKPACKS!

We are having better luck with school supplies, but the backpacks are in short supply.

IF you want to furnish the much needed items ( BACKPACKS, TOWELS, POTS AND PANS)..... please call Faye (719-596-3507 or email [alicefaye4@hotmail.com](mailto:alicefaye4@hotmail.com)) .

I will be most happy to arrange for pickup or leave off when you are ready. THANK YOU to all who support Los Pobres with your donations of physical items and always appreciated prayers.



### School Supply Drive for One Nation - Until Aug. 8, 2021



Lined notebooks; Packs of pencils – USA made; Scissors – Fiskars work for both right and left handed children and cut and last well; Glue sticks; Bottles of Glue; Rulers; Pink erasers; Boxes of crayons; Calculators; Pack of blue or black ballpoint pens; Packs of highlighters; Binders; and Backpacks.

Judy will place a bin on the front porch so you can drop off at your convenience, and Judy will see that items are taken to One Nation. The drive will end of August 8<sup>th</sup>. Please have things to Judy's home by the deadline. Address: 5150 Windgate Court, Colorado Springs 80917

If you miss Judy's deadline, you can deliver your school supplies directly to One Nation by Aug 12.

**In kind items for Sandwiches and Smiles** are being collected by Nancy Morlock-Hollins. There is a collection box on her porch at 7649 Safari Cir. Colorado Springs, CO 80920. These items include: individually wrapped snacks, toiletries. Check out the web-site for other items.

<http://vgcc.org/mission-and-social-justice/>

### Family Promise

**Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN): Family Shelter (High Barrier – Families must qualify)**

**The Leadership Team at Family Promise is working on Guideline for re-entering our host churches to bring back the church rotation model for our Interfaith Hospitality Program. Since COVID-19, families have been housed at the Day House. Host and Support Churches have continued to provide the meals for these families with strict preparation and delivery guidelines.**

**We all hope we will be back in the churches by January 2022.**

<https://familypromise.org/>



We're Looking Into ...

### Community Involvement – Food to Power

<https://foodtopowerco.org/dropoff>

#### Mission

To cultivate a healthy, equitable food system in the greater Colorado Springs community.

#### Vision

We envision a world where communities heal and thrive in relationship with food, land, and each other.

Save your compostables from the trash at home. Then, whenever it's convenient for you, swing by the dropoff station of your choosing and kiss your scraps goodbye into the bins.

Food To Power Compost (formerly Soil Cycle) takes it from there: collecting and hauling food scraps, paper and yard waste (see: [what's compostable?](#)) for composting at community gardens, transfer to a regional composting facility and, in 2022, processed at our home site at [the Hillside Hub](#).

Finished compost is a rich, living soil amendment that promotes nutrient cycling and retention of water and carbon in soils — the foundation of a healthy environment and a resilient food supply!

Join the composting community that puts “waste” to work regenerating soil fertility for plants, people and planet.



## Covenantal Partners

### August Birthdays

1	Carol Burbank
3	Elisia Garcia-Salazar
5	Trish King
7	Kathryn Romberg
8	Katherine Fatica
11	Cindy Nath
11	Denise Lee
19	Lorraine Capps
20	Judy Gibson
23	Phil Puterbaugh
24	Grayson Charles Barnes
27	Sebastian Bongirno
27	Clare Twomey
28	Jimmy Collins

### September Birthdays

1	Roberta Povelite
3	Crystal Karr
17	Jackie Moore
18	David Hudson
20	Katherine Matzen
22	Max Hale
23	Claire McGee
26	Tammie Davis

### August Anniversaries:

August 2	Crystal and Joel Karr
Aug 17	Kathryn Romberg and Willie Schubert
Aug. 19	Jimmy and Brenda Collins
Aug. 29	Mel and Judy Druelinger

### September Anniversaries

Sept 1	John and Deborah Tinsley
Sept. 3	Lyn and Carolyn Gunning
Sept. 4	Dave and Cindy Nath
Sept. 20	Charlie and Jan Morgan
Sept 23	Justin and Kelsie Hollins

### October Birthdays

3	Jim Sailor
5	Evelyn
7	Carol Lawson
9	Jud Jusell
14	Ethan Elkaim
15	Nora Barnes
19	Carrie Barnes
22	Kayan Cross
24	Ashton Lawson

### October Anniversaries:

Oct 1	Doug and Lorraine Capps
Oct 1	David and Chia Hudson
Oct 14	Amanda and Phoebe



**Adult Faith Formation “Percolate” 8:30 a.m.**

As usual all are welcome, whether or not you’ve read the book. We meet around 8:30 on zoom before the worship service. (During COVID, you’ll have to “percolate” your own coffee.)



Percolate is reading Caste-The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson. Once again we find ourselves asking “why didn’t I know this already?” She makes a distinction between a caste system that controls so much of our lives and our behaviors, and race, which is a contrived concept. Her words also lead us into lively discussions on other racial justice issues.

# Shout out!



Amanda Udis-Kessler wrote a song that was chosen to be the closing hymn of the closing worship for the United Church of Christ Synod in July. These worship services often have 5,000 participants.

Thank you, Amanda for sharing your talent with the wider church as well as Vista Grande. We are so blessed to have you!

## FACILITY MAINTENANCE



Outdoor Workday -

Keep reading your weekly e-blasts for information on Work Days!

### Financial Report for January—July 2021

Funds	Pledged	Received	Difference
General Operating	46,124.17	47,428.31	1,304.14
Mission Outreach	13,052.08	11,985.24	-1,066.84



**Vista Grande  
United Church of Christ**

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[www.vgcc.org](http://www.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 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.”