



The Vista Views

Inside this issue

Autumn Blessings by Pastor Mallory

Autumn blessings, my friends and Happy (almost) New Year! A little over a month before we change out our calendars, the Christian liturgical calendar starts anew with the season of Advent, which begins the Sunday after Thanksgiving. There's a wisdom to celebrating the beginning of the new cycle a little off-kilter from the rest of the hustle and bustle of the holidays. It gives us the chance to stop, reflect, and renew ourselves before we barrel headlong into the busyness of the next few months.

Take a moment to think about where you were around Thanksgiving of last year. Where were we as a church? When we sit back and take stock, it's amazing how much can happen in the space of a year! As I write this, we are in the midst of our stewardship season, which is themed around the song We've Come This Far by Faith by Albert A. Goodson. The refrain is simple but profound:

We've come this far by faith
 Leaning on our God
 Trusting in the holy word
 God's never failed us yet
 Woah, we can't turn around
 We've come this far by faith

Truly, we have come this far by faith – navigating a pandemic, dreaming big about what is possible for our future, a change in pastoral leadership, grief over the deaths of beloved people in our midst, welcoming new covenantal partners, and more. Through it all, it has been incredible to witness how we have learned and grown together and deepened our relationship with one another and with God. Your willingness to jump in, do what needs to be done, and breathe new life into our building, grounds, and the various ways the church functions has been noticed and I am so grateful for the ways each and every one of you have stewarded this faith community this year. And we won't be turning around, but heading into the next liturgical year trusting that the Spirit will guide and companion the next stages in our journey.

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Special points of interest:

ZOOM

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



Colorado • Utah • Wyoming

Congregations Alive 5!

The Congregations Alive series began in 2013. We took a hiatus during COVID and now we're back!

The previous themes were: 2013 – Energizing the Streams of Faith; 2015 – Weaving Us Together in Faith; 2017 – IGNITE; 2019 – a just world for all. Each offered keynote speakers, workshops, worship, fellowship and more. Put Congregations Alive 5 in your calendars now.

Theme: Climate Justice for All

Date: FEBRUARY 23-25, 2023

Where: First Plymouth Congregational Church, 3501 S Colorado Blvd, Cherry Hills Village, CO 80113

Featuring Rev. Dr. Jim Antal, recently retired conference minister of the Massachusetts Conference UCC. He remains a denominational leader, climate activist, public theologian and author of the book, *Climate Church, Climate World*. AND Rev Peter Sawtell, retired from his long-time role as Executive Director of Eco-Justice Ministries in Denver, he is an advocate and activist for the Climate and Creation in the Rocky Mountain Conference. Come for outstanding workshops, meaningful worship and renewing friendships with colleagues.

WATCH FOR REGISTRATION MATERIALS IN THE FALL WITH EARLY REGISTRATION STARTING IN DECEMBER. SAVE THE DATE!

Our Staff

Pastor — Rev. Mallory Everhart

Office Administrator—Donna Bristow

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.

<https://zoom.us/j/7130001284>

Meeting ID: 713 000 1284

2022 Executive Committee:

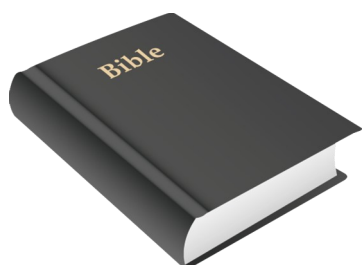
Moderator – Kayan Cross; Assistant Moderator – David Nath; Treasurer – Dana Zimmerman; Financial Secretary – Jerima King; Council Clerk – Erika Forshee.
Members-at-Large – Carol Burbank and Linda Allen

Watch for the monthly news flash each month.

What do you need to leave behind in this turning of the liturgical calendar? What are you entering the next year with? Advent spends the four weeks before Christmas steeping us in some of the most important gifts of our faith: Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace. I can't think of a better way to kick off a year – here, there are no resolutions necessary, but only an openness to listen deeply to the Spirit and to receive the blessings that come with the turning of a new page. May these things nourish us as we journey onward, deepening as we go.

Together,
Pastor Mallory

Bible Workshop – Sara Weatherman



What Even Is This Thing?! Ever wonder what the Bible is or how it came to be? Want to get more familiar with the history or brush up on your reading and interpretation skills? Sara Weatherman will be facilitating a Bible workshop on Saturday, November 12th from 9-12! There will be treats, coffee, and lots of fun as we dive into our holy text!

NOVEMBER 20 – Thanksgiving Sunday

1. There will be a Thanksgiving Meal after the worship service. A signup will be posted soon so we'll have everything we need to make this a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner.
2. Mallory will be installed as our pastor and teacher during the worship service. We'll affirm our covenant with her on Thanksgiving Sunday.



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."

Stewardship

The Stewardship Ministry Team adopted the theme of “This Far by Faith” for our campaign this year. Through the weekly sermons and special guest speakers we are exploring our stewardship over various things like animals, resources, traditions, our soul, Mother Earth, talents, and finances. Pledge cards have been mailed to all Covenantal Partners and are available to anyone who wishes. These pledge cards are a great help to the various ministry teams and financial folks in showing us where you would like to serve and what you anticipate your financial contributions to be. Pledges aren’t binding, if you should have a change of circumstances, but they do help us plan for the future. We are hoping to have all pledges in by November 15th so we can celebrate our commitment to the future at our Thanksgiving meal on November 20th.



Excerpt from our Stewardship Letter 2022

“The last three years at Vista Grande have been marked with unprecedented upheaval. The COVID-19 pandemic, major visioning conversations about our building and land, the releasing of a beloved pastor to the next chapter of her ministry, and both communal and personal losses have changed our circumstances. What these changes have not done, though, is altered what it means to **be** church. Through everything, we are still committed to following The Way of Jesus and seeking love and justice in all things. “

Activities (at a glance)

1. **Bible study** - The epistle of James at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays on Zoom! See you there!
2. **Beverages and Bible - Thursdays at 9 a.m. (This replaces Tuesday Conversations.)**
The goal will be to discuss the lectionary readings for each week.
3. Our next “Potluck” **Agape Meal** is Sunday November 6 following worship.
4. **Men's Breakfast**; November 9, 2022-Wednesday; 8am at Urban Egg (the Dublin/Powers location)
5. **Bible Workshop** – Saturday Nov 12; 9 – 12 Noon Facilitator – Sara Weatherman
6. **Town Meeting** via Zoom at 1 p.m. on November 20. What’s on your mind?
7. **Covenanting Service and Thanksgiving Family Dinner** – Sunday November 20
Look for the signup – posted at church.

Town Hall Meetings (every 3rd Sunday) via Zoom at 1 p.m. on November 20. What’s on your mind?

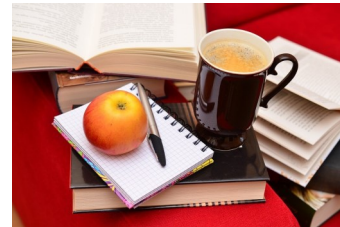
Agape Meal – First Sunday of the Month
Bring a dish to share potluck style.

Percolate – our Sunday morning adult faith formation has chosen to read the following book; An Indigenous Peoples History of the United States. The group is currently meeting at 8:30 a.m. – **Sunday Mornings on Zoom.**

Faith Formation

Bible Study with Mallory

Study the epistle of James at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays on Zoom! See you there!



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.

Family Promise

Family Promise has suffered from low donations and the lack of a day house. The program has had to do a major shift and is now in recovery mode. The church rotation is back up and running after two years of changes due to Covid!

FAMILY PROMISE HAS A SHORT TERM DAY HOUSE!!!

First United Methodist Church downtown has an awesome space that they can use until they get things sorted out for the Wesley House (another possibility). They will need some volunteer drivers to help families without transportation from the Day House to the host congregation.

Los Pobres - We'll collect \$25 gift cards to Walmart. You'll be able to add them to the tree Nov 27. This just in ... Jud and Maggie Jusell has offered to make the run to Los Pobres with items that have been dropped off at Vista Grande.

Inside Out Youth Services (IOYS)

“Every day we see the impact of your generosity in the LGBTQIA2+ youth space. Young people from all walks of life come to our center and find solace and resources your giving provides. Young people transform in t their most confident and true self when they are among people who understand and affirm them. Thanks for your donations that help us keep our food pantry stocked. Your donations also bring peer support programming to our center and outreach to the community.”

Nico is coming to Vista Grande on Nov 20. IOYS is putting together a “gift registry” which we'll add ornaments to the tree. Nico will be “Nico”las at their holiday party.

Mission (continued)

One Nation Walking Together

Throughout the year, One Nation Walking Together facilitates a variety of programs and services which collectively aim to advance our mission of making a positive difference in the lives of Native Americans. During Advent, we'll be Assembling Elder Boxes. A list of suggested items will be sent out in the e-blast. Come on Nov 26 at 10 a.m. to help put the boxes together.

Spreading Sandwiches and Smiles (SS&S)

The second Sunday of each month finds several volunteers bringing sandwiches (and other snacks) to Dorchester Park to help feed the homeless population. This mission isn't without a challenge from the city. More and more, areas get chained off to try and discourage folks from hanging out. That doesn't help feed the hungry. So our group still goes there every 2nd Sunday. For the mission tree, they would like hand warmers, hats and gloves for adult men and women.

The Chinook Center

Samantha Christianson visited Vista Grande on October 23 to share a thank you and how we can best serve The People's Pantry.

Free bags of groceries are assembled each week for folks who are in need. They serve all zip codes. Every week, the volunteers assemble 50-60 bags of groceries. They strive to have 3 full meals in each bag. The number of folks who benefit from this mission averages 500-600 people per month. The Chinook Center partners with Care and Share.

Several folks from Vista Grande help deliver groceries to the folks who don't have transportation.

Stewardship of our Building and Finances

Report for January – September 2022
Thank you for your continued support.

Funds	Pledged	Received	Difference
General Operating	56,197.50	60,411.07	+4,213.57
Mission Outreach	17,913.75	16,202.97	-1,710.78



**Vista Grande
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

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.”