



ALAMOSA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWS

September 30, 2011

Dear Friends in Christ, **September was a busy month, and October is full of special happenings also.**

COMING UP

October always begins with World Communion Sunday and the Peacemaking Offering. I hope you'll be in church as Gary Gardner leads worship and you can share Communion in spirit with Christians all over the world. I hope you'll also give generously to the Peacemaking Offering. Curt Furukawa's presence here for a visit is a reminder (if we needed one) of how much war and violence there is in the world. As we give thanks for Curt's safe return from Afghanistan we remember also the new deaths every day around the world – not only from armed conflict but in homes and on the streets. What a privilege to be able to follow Jesus in making peace, through our own lives and through our gifts to this annual offering.

Did you know that one-fourth of the Peacemaking Offering stays here in Alamosa for the Session to use? It does, and this year it's going some place very special – right to our front lawn! Jan Oen started the conversation with me probably two years ago; others have continued it, and plans are now underway to plant a Peace Pole on the narrow strip of lawn in front of the Sunday School wing of our building. The lawn itself will be transformed into a Peace Garden. Take a look at the “before” photo of the space and the imagined “after” photo. Imagine a quiet oasis with a path through it and perhaps a bench to entice passers by to stop and reflect on the call to peace in our world. (The Peace Pole in the photo is from the Peace Garden at the Seattle Center in Seattle, Washington.)



BEFORE: The north end of our building



AFTER: Visualize a garden on this site and a pillar with the words “May peace prevail on earth” in languages belonging to our Valley (probably English, Spanish, Japanese and Ute, although Dutch is also a possibility). Do you have a preference or another suggestion?

The actual Garden will be designed and planted by folks involved with the

Community Gardens and will incorporate peace-making into its design. The UU's, Anabaptists, Presbyterians, Habitat, and others are all involved so far in the planning. The hope is to plant and dedicate the Pole in November and to install the Garden next spring. We're also paying serious attention to maintenance plans so that the Garden can be beautiful for years to come.

(Never heard of a Peace Pole until now? According to the site www.peacepoles.com, “The Peace Pole Project is the official Project of The World Peace Prayer Society. It started in Japan in 1955 by Masahisa Goi, who decided to dedicate his life to spreading the message, “May Peace Prevail on Earth” in response to the bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Peace Poles are handcrafted monuments erected the world over as international symbols of Peace. Their purpose is to spread the message “May Peace Prevail on Earth” in the languages of the world.”)

Also coming up during October: Presbytery meeting mid-month to consider some important business and to honor Gary Weaver on his impending retirement. The Abuse Prevention Training given to our Sunday School teachers in September will be followed in October by a four-hour version for our Session, Trustees and Deacons, to make sure that all of our church leaders are familiar with what needs to be done to keep our children safe. The Handbell Choir, which began its fall season at September's breakfast, will be back in worship on October 9 (which is also the monthly breakfast day).

Among the ongoing activities, remember Adult Bible Study, which meets each Sunday at 9:30. We still have work groups coming, with four scheduled for October. Sacred Harp is the fourth Monday of the month and Taizé is the first Friday, at Sacred Heart.

Also continuing: participants at Kathy Schultz's Scroll Saw workshop were so enthusiastic that a group now meets each Tuesday evening at 5:30. Kathy says that new people are always welcome; no experience is necessary. The "Fingerprints" book study is also continuing on Thursday evenings at 7:00, Room 316 at Nielsen Library on the Adams State campus. October topics include God as chemist – psychedelic drugs and spiritual experiences (October 6); God as electrician – epilepsy and spiritual experience (October 13); brain patterns in long-time meditators and contemplatives (October 20); and out-of-body experiences (October 27). Both the scroll saw group and the book study are designed for outreach as well as for our own members, as are Sacred Harp and Taizé. Why not come to one or more of them and invite a non-churched friend to join you?

During October, the Religious Roundtable will feature two interviews with Neil Rudolph and other guests Don Thompson, Lois Booth and Janet Basinger, on the topic of "VSED" – "Voluntary Stopping of Eating and Drinking" – as a way to choose the time and manner of one's death when death is already close at hand. If you read the articles about Neil's parents in the Valley Courier or attended the community forum Jan Oen hosted, you already know something about this; tune in to hear more. This month's shows are October 7 and 14 (the first two Fridays), 8:30 am on KRZA, 88.7 FM.

Looking ahead, October 30 (a fifth Sunday) is Reformation Sunday, with a preacher to be announced. Then I'll be leading worship on November 6 (a first Sunday) for our annual celebration of All Saints.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING – EVENTS

The Anabaptist Fellowship has been meeting in our building on Sunday afternoons for a month now. Their table was next to ours at United Campus Ministry's barbeque for ASC students on August 30. The UU's resumed worship on September 11 and treated us to a great breakfast that morning. I think all three congregations in our building had special services for the tenth anniversary of 911 that day.

The weekend of September 16 we partied! Thank you, Sharon, for your hard work and thank you to everyone who contributed food for our Covenant Players dinner theater. It was a memorable evening. The next day, Keith Schultz and Tanya White became husband and wife in a joyful service. As a side note, their hefty groomsmen got to work and moved the cabinet grand upright piano downstairs and into the pastor's office. Wow! That same day Dorothy Ziegler (and Mabel Cotton?) were at PW-P's Fall Gathering in Pueblo, and they say it was great. Then on Sunday Rusty and Sara were with us for stories about children in Peru and a sermon on missions across cultures.

The Nuts'n'Needles crew have been quilting away. Thanks to Laura Murphy of Wild Thyme in Monte Vista (and to Louisa Cheslock, who made the contact for me), we now have a donated quilting frame. Alma, we need you to tell us if I put it together wrong or if something is missing. Eventually, though, it should be a big help.

I know that all of you have had a big month in your personal lives as well. For me, the orchestra and Valley Community Chorus have started up again, so my Tuesday nights are full.

PEOPLE NEWS

For those of you who can't be in worship each week, here is the current prayer list: Joe Martinez, Dorothy Romero's brother-in-law; Marian Sechrist; the family of Susan Valdez, on her death; Susie Paulson's stepdaughter Wendy; Audrey Liu's mother; Lynnette Cotton; Eric Griffis; Candi Atencio (Shirley's daughter-in-law); June Lorimer; Kathi Smith's great-grandchild and other family members; CLP Derek Hutchison, pastor in Las Animas; Elder Larry Farmer, Trinidad; and all of our shut-ins.

Thanks to Sarah's efforts, I can now also bring you a list of upcoming birthdays (although I forgot to put them on the calendar for you). Here are our October "babies": Eloise (10/02), Paul (10/06), Susie (10/18), Dave (10/25), "Doc" (10/25), Sarah (10/25), Benito Jr. (10/25), and "Bud" (10/28).

I'm on my way to visit my parents for a few days; I'll be back soon.

In Christ, Katherine

**PS What do you think of the former storeroom now?
One of you told me you used to teach Sunday School in this room.
Isn't it great to have it back in service?
(And get Kathy to show you her "Cadillac" scroll saw.)**

