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“Being Nice and Being Kind”

AS ALWAYS, Dr. McAninch’s ‘thought for the day’ in our OA email each morning is interesting and provocative. Thursday, July 20th’s ‘thought’ dealt with the difference in being nice and in being kind. Dr. Carol believes that *being nice* is motivated by a need for social conformity (“be nice at the party,” “she dresses nicely,” “he gave such a nice speech”). *Being kind* is action motivated by love, God’s request of us.

A popular comedienne always asked of us as she concluded her TV show: “Be **kind** to one another.” -so much more heartfelt than “be nice to one another.”

Is it easier to be nice than to be kind? Think about that.

In Jesus’ life, he illustrated many examples of kindness, lessons that teach us how to practice that quality. At an elegant meal, he defended a low woman who washed his feet with her hair, even though the guests scorned her. He consorted with a foreigner, a Samaritan woman at the well, when such an association was frowned upon. Without fear, he touched the outcast leper. Seeing Zacchaeus, the despised tax collector, Jesus kindly invited himself to dine at his house. And of all things, when one of his disciples cut off the ear of an official servant about to arrest Jesus at that fateful time, Jesus touched the man, his enemy, and healed him.

It’s easy to smile and be nice, to embrace the old societal norms and not rock the boat. No, it’s **not** easy to be kind to the exiled, foreigners, unclean, those who hate you. But that’s our Open Arms’ mission.

Through his kindness, Jesus healed his enemy, the bleeding, injured servant. If Christians had the courage to practice such kindness, perhaps we could help mend our bleeding and injured world.

Wouldn’t that be “nice”?

We Remember in Prayer

Prayers: we reach out to God. Let us lift in prayer these loved ones and all others who are in need physically, mentally, or spiritually.

- **Gladys Barton**, who welcomes prayers.
- The **Mayo family** on loss of father and grandfather, **Larry Mayo**.
- **Jean Brooks**, who welcomes prayers as she struggles with various issues.
- **Romie Hollins**, who welcomes prayers.
- **Phil Compton and his family**, who welcome prayers.
- **Tammy Spangler**, who plans to enter an experimental program at M. D. Anderson
- Our friends, **Rev. John and Han Will**, who welcome prayers.
- **Brenda Mayfield**, who is dealing with pain.
- **Wanda and Richard Weaver** and others in their family who have various illnesses.
- **Jim Lemm**, who experienced an infection after a second knee surgery.
- **Storm victims, flood victims, those suffering from the extreme heat, natural disasters, violence.**

WELCOME GUESTS



We welcome our guests who joined us in worship this past month. Micah Tanner; Anthony Alex; Chastity Williams and her daughter Emonnie Dixon and son Elijah Powell.

*Clothe yourselves
with compassion,
kindness, humility,
gentleness, & patience.*

Colossians 3:12



High Five's To The Contributors

- TO Pam and Greg Mayo** for their donation of gently used men's clothes to the Camp Hope Store.
- TO** Those who helped on vaccination day—**Pam Mayo, Carol Foss, Elise Daulley.**
- TO Christus Mobil Health Unit** and their wonderful staff and generous service.
- TO David Durham and Kenneth Reaves** for a trip to North Texas to get lovely, donated chairs for Open Arms to use when we get our Forever Home. (Thanks also to the church that donated them and to **Rev. Jo Hudson.**)
- TO Rev. Jules** for bringing us an inspiring message each Sunday—straight from the heart!
- TO Anthony Alex**, percussionist *extraordinaire*, for contributing your talents to our wonderful Praise Team.
- TO Vicky Royster** for our new trifold publicizing Open Arms UCC.
- TO Open Arms actors** who have agreed to help with the Spring community play at Big Stone Lodge.

Happy Birthday Wishes



Heather Meinhart – August 4
Norman Swaney – August 9
Kenneth Reaves – August 18
Laura Rinehart – August 20
Jules Williams, III – August 25

About the Membership

- We welcome our new confirmand, **Julia Reinhart**. On July 2, Julia's gave her Statement of Faith and affirmed her desire to be a member of the Christian church. What a blessing for us! This beautiful young woman is talented in music, art, and scholarship. Julia, accept our love and good wishes.
- Another extravagant welcome goes to **Bob and Ruth Noonan**, who entered OA membership on July 9. The Noonan's come to us from Plymouth UCC in Spring. The Noonan family embraces the word "family," for they have fourteen children. Of this number, six have come into their home by adoption. They have also reared five grandchildren. As for careers, Ruth has had a licensed Home Day Care, among many activities, and Bob is an Environmental Chemist, a retiree from Amtrak where he worked thirty years.

On July 26, the Noonan's celebrated their 9th wedding anniversary. When they married, Ruth wanted to be assured that she and Bob could anticipate a 25th wedding anniversary, so every six months, to speed things up, they observe their marital union again. With a twice-a-year celebration, they will reach their goal of 25 twice as fast! Ask Ruth to explain!

The Noonan's were drawn to OA from watching our on-line services, noting Rev. Jules' sermons and the church's outreach programs as most appealing aspects of our community. They are on board and working. God bless them—and us!

- We must soon say good-bye to one of our beloved, **Dr. Kendall Moore**. Kendall has assisted Rev. Dr. Williams and Open Arms for two years as he completed his degree at Eden Seminary. Although all plans have not been finalized, Moore foresees moving to New York to pastor a church there. More details are coming. Oh, how we will miss Kendall!

Kendall is also donating the sale of his music album *Focus* to help two organizations. Until these are sold out, every physical copy of Kendall's jazz album *Focus* will split proceeds 50/50 with helping Open Arms build its Forever Home and the organization Music Therapy Access Fund, which is a Texas-based Non-Profit that helps close the financial gap between music therapy care seekers and caregivers. You can buy a copy of the album at the church service in person at Open Arms in Tamina, or you can buy a physical copy of the album on Kendall's website at <https://kmooremusic.bandcamp>.

Mission Team Report from Gail and Pam

A CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW of mission activities gives a complete and concise view of Open Arms' outreach program for June through October, 2023.

JUNE: Offering for Camp Hope totaled \$755.00. The Mission Team still plans to arrange a time to serve a meal to the residents of Camp Hope. Gail will find a contact, gather some information, and schedule a meal sometime in August.

JULY: The Christus Mobil Health Unit, sponsored by the Mission Team, gave free back-to-school vaccinations on Tuesday, July 18, at the Tamina Community Center. Backpacks filled with supplies were provided for each child that came to the health clinic. Leftover back packs and supplies will be donated to a local elementary school, Houser Elementary, for use as the staff sees a need. Back to school supplies are covered by grant funds.

Interfaith of the Woodlands and Montgomery County Food Bank are Open Arms missions this month; since both have requested support for purchasing food, our monthly mission offering will be divided between the two agencies.

AUGUST: As another back-to-school project, Pam Mayo will fill "teacher cheer" bags for about sixty teachers at Houser Elementary School. The bags will contain special teaching tools to help in the classroom and personal items for the teachers' use. Again, grant funds will help finance these bags for which \$150.00 was appropriated.

Houston Association Vacation Bible School, hosted by St. Peter UCC, has requested funds. for supplies. The Team allocated \$200.00 from OAUCC August mission money for the VBS.

SEPTEMBER: The mission focus will be on disabilities, perhaps in the use of music therapy or other areas of therapy that might need assistance. Suggestions would be welcome.

OCTOBER: *Neighbors in Need*, one of the UCC "five for five" categories cited as an area for denominational offering, is the October mission for OA. Notes of reminder: *One Great Hour of Sharing* and *Strengthen the Church* as part of the "five for five" need funding by the end of the year. The Houston Association dues are also important. Keeping up with mission responsibilities is a critical job for our group.

Recent Press Releases!!!

Remember our fundraising project for Forever Home, “**Change for Change**”? **Accounting Sunday**, the day we first bring in our collected change, is scheduled for **September 17**. If you have one full jar of coins, start on another, and

bring it all to church in September. Then start another collection jar for the next accounting period.

Many have complimented our **OA actors**. (If you remember the powerful performance they gave on Good Friday.) This group will be performing again on **September 22** at Dennis Johnson Big Stone Lodge on Riley-Fuzzell Road in a show called **It Really Happened in Old Spring**. Details of that performance will be published soon.

On **October 3rd**, you are invited to **Fall into Health** with a free health screening and flu shots performed by the Christus Mobile Health Unit at Tamina Community Center. Lunch will also be served. This service will be provided for OAUCC and the Tamina Community.

Programs to Help the Christian Grow

WE SPEAK of “planting the church.” It might be good to “plant the Christian”—to help the individual become more and more deeply rooted in his Christian knowledge and faith. Here are some programs at Open Arms that aid in planting and growing the Christian.

1. Dr. Carol McAninch and Vicky Royster provide us with a daily meditation, prayer, and Bible reading to help in turning us toward Christian behavior and thought each day.
2. On Sunday mornings Dr. Carol is leading a course on spiritual development. As a guide, the class is using *15 Ways of Doing Prayer* by Kristen Ingram. Members are encouraged to become still so that they can hear God speaking with them and welcoming their prayers.

3. Using Biblical passages as his guide in Sunday worship, Rev. Dr. Jules, offers a spirit-filled session that instructs us, strengthens us, and prepares us to be Christ-like in a secular and often confusing society.
4. Rev. Bill Royster, with help from his friends, plans a series of weekday Zoom sessions on issues related to gun violence in American society. The class will not be a stage for arguing, or abolishing, or deleting; it will be a time for discussing and understanding—a time for people of Christian faith to look at the whole picture of a complex situation.
5. The Houston Association of the UCC is planning a multi-church Vacation Bible School for the children of the HA on Thursday, August 3 to Saturday, August 5, 2023. Sunday School and Vacation Bible School are where “planting the Christian” begins. Two Open Arms families will be participating in this VBS, maybe more.

Lit Wits: Running Witless in July

Our Lit Wits meeting in July was projected to be 80 percent empty as illness, vacations, and summer obligations eroded our membership and caused cancellation. A couple of us met and had a phone talk about John Grisham’s popular novel, *Boys from Biloxi*, the book for the evening. The consensus: Gresham had a poor editor, with much extraneous material and some inconsistency in events. Nevertheless, the theme in the novel, the struggle between good and evil, is always worthy of exploration, and some of the story’s characters involved in that struggle are truly memorable.

The August 8 meeting will focus on *Born a Crime*, Trevor Noah’s autobiographical account of growing up and living in South Africa during and after apar-tied. Brenda Ruegge will lead the discussion of this selection. The little stories that make up the narrative are, as the critics say, “moving and searingly funny [portraits] of a boy making his way through a damaged world in a dangerous time, armed only with a keen sense of humor and a mother’s unconventional, unconditional love.”

Join us for what will be a great discussion. More details about the meeting will come later.

This year August has 2 full moons. The first on Tuesday, August 1, 2023, the Sturgeon Moon and then the Blue Moon on Wednesday, August 30, 2023.

**HELLO,
AUGUST**

A few sayings, phrases, and expressions we use every day that come from the centuries old Bible .

from Isaiah 40:15 - Drop in the bucket

from Galatians 5:4 – Fall from grace

from Ecclesiastes 10:1 – Fly in the ointment

Monthly and Weekly Observances in August include: American Indian Heritage Month, Black Business Month, Boomers Making a Difference Month, Family Fun Month, Home Business Month, National Peach Month, National Read-a-Romance Month, National Sandwich Month, Be Kind to Humankind Week-August 25-31, National Aviation Week-August 15-21, World Water Week-August 20-24, Air Conditioning Appreciation Days-July 3-August 15, National Smile Week-August 13-19



Open Arms Photo Gallery Photos Courtesy of Pam Mayo



Anthony Alex, percussionist *extraordinaire*, contributing his talents with our wonderful Praise Team.

Open Arms Photo Gallery Photos Courtesy of Pam Mayo

Vaccination Day at Tamina Community Center.



Open Arms Photo Gallery Photos Courtesy of Pam Mayo

Give the gift of music to help two organizations!

Until these are sold out: Every physical copy of Open Arms UCC church member Kendall Moore's Jazz album *Focus* will split proceeds 50/50 with helping Open Arms build its forever home and the organization Music Therapy Access Fund, which is a Texas based Non-Profit that helps close the financial Gap between music therapy care seekers and caregivers. If you want to pick up a copy, come on down to church service in person at Open Arms in Tamina, or you can buy a physical copy of the album on Kendall's website at <https://kmooremusic.bandcamp>.

