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Open Arms

A Mission Church with Many Missions

Open Arms United Church of Christ has as one of its Christian obligations to help those in need. That obligation is being fulfilled this summer.

The *July Mission project* is a cooperative effort with St. Peter UCC, Spring Branch. The goal is to send new and/or gently used shoes or a monetary contribution. Under supervision and regulation, these donations will be distributed to entrepreneurs of developing countries who need inventory to open local shoe stores. This project will supply families with income, provide employment to a community, and place shoes on the feet of children and adults. Open Arms will collect on Sundays, July 24 and 31, and the shoes will be delivered to St. Peter. This is a great opportunity to clear out those gently used shoes to be used for a wonderful cause. Thanks to Open Arms for joining with St. Peter to help make a difference in the world. More information about our July Mission can be found on page 7.

The June Mission donation of has been split between the victims and families in Buffalo, New York, and Uvalde, Texas, both horrific scenes of gun violence. One source says, "Our giving may pale against other contributions (to these two locales), but we are called to be involved in some way. We trust that our giving will bring comfort." Thanks to Gail Royster for managing that distribution of funds. If you wish to donate further, please contact Gail.

In *June and July*, Open Arms UCC was/is involved in an on-going mission project, the collection of items for the Tamina Food Pantry. The last Sunday of the month is designated time for bringing pantry items. The congregation brings food

stuffs as well as paper goods and cleaning supplies to put in the pantry for distribution to Tamina citizens.

We Remember in Prayer

Prayers have the power to heal and change the lives of those who are hurting in body or mind or spirit. We ask that you would send up prayers for:

- **Olive Baer**, who welcomes visitors, cards, and prayers.
- **Kevin**, who welcomes prayers during his illness.
- **Gladys Barton**, who welcomes prayers.
- **Anthony Maldonado**, who welcomes prayers.
- **Tammy Spangler**, who has surgery July 5, reconstructive procedures, and other treatments to combat cancer.
- **Elna Swaney**, who is experiencing improved vision.
- **Antonia Rivera**, who has major medical issues.
- **Ron Krueger**, who awaits results on recent tests.
- **Matt Royster**, who is taking chemotherapy treatments.
- The family of **Eva Hollins**, who lost their youngest member, a five-month-old infant.
- **Gail Royster**, who was hospitalized for health issues and has received a Pacemaker.

Welcome Guests

We welcome our guests who joined us in worship this past month. Irene McCartney, Jennifer McCartney, Taylor Herrick, Vaughn Herrick, Eva Hollins, Will Kearson, Tessa Munson.

Names Up in Lights in June

- Congrats to **Peter Royster** who is playing with a new group—ask Vicky about his schedule.
- Thanks to **Barry and all the choir members**—In spite of Covid19 and 101-degree weather, they continue to bring us beautiful music for worship.
- Recognition for the **Williams family** for setting up on Sunday morning and for faithfully transporting their musical instruments from Huntsville to Tamina. And always thanks to the folks who further set up before church and dismantle and take down chairs and equipment after worship.
- Thanks to **whoever** leaves a parking place in front of the Community Center each Sunday for those with mobility issues.
- A “shout out” for **Card Queen Carol** who sends greeting cards on special occasions and at times of illness. A card can really lift one’s spirits, Carol. Your job is so important
- We have a true hero in our midst in the person of **Donna Gonzaski**. A Special Education Teacher who teaches blind children, Donna travels to every Spring ISD school to serve her students. She is one to admire.
- Ever wonder who travels the longest distance to church each Sunday? The award goes to **Leru Poenisch**, who drives from Clear Lake to Tamina each Sunday morning. Rumor has it that she may be moving closer soon. Sure hope so.

Happy Birthday

Nia Williams – July 1
Colton Sanders – July 7
Jackson Sanders – July 7
Kendall Moore – July 22
Brenda Mayfield – July 26

Back-to-School Bash: July 30 in Tamina

Safety, health, literacy, and back-to-school issues—all will be topics handled in our Back-to-School Bash on July 30 at the Tamina Community Center.

Although the plans are still tentative, with the help of Tianna Hawkins of the South Montgomery Fire Department, the following are services we hope for on that day.

- The Red Cross will participate as will the Montgomery County Hospital District. Hopefully, EMT's will come with an ambulance/emergency vehicle to show the community its operation. Perhaps vaccinations will be offered. Firemen, with their fire truck, plan to bring in smoke detectors and install them when requested. They will also demonstrate the use of a fire extinguisher, and children can see how the extinguisher can be used to put out a real fire. Handouts and backpacks containing activities that teach safety features will be distributed to the children. These activities will occur from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM.
- Literacy activities with free children's books and school supplies will also be provided. These plans are in the early stages; more will come later. Also, we hope to provide a light lunch sometime during this day.
- Help from Open Arms members will be needed. Please volunteer; ask Pam Mayo or Kim Williams what you can do to help. Advertisement is exceedingly important!

AS AN ADDED NOTE: In the Tamina Community on May 12, 2017, three children, trapped on the second floor of their home, perished in a fire. Other family members were injured trying to save them. There were no fire hydrants in Tamina; firemen had to tap into hydrants on I-45 to get water to fight the fire. Soon after, the fire department provided free smoke detectors to the community. Now they want to do much more. Perhaps our cooperation with the fire department, can prevent another such horror from happening.

Bible Study — “With A Little Help from My Friends”

After a May hiatus, we are resuming Bible Study every other week on Wednesday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon. We met June 22 to “look back” at our earlier work this year and to “look forward” to continued study of the book we all revere. This meeting was remarkable in terms of discussion and expression of opinion during our review. In returning to the historical emergence of our Bible, we noted how modern collectors have pirated biblical artifacts from the Middle East countries, using them to try to validate unproven content about the Bible. We remembered our own visit to the Houston Baptist University Bible Museum and the things we learned about the development of the Bible as presented there.

We also reviewed our brief experience with Judaism during a visit to a synagogue. We remembered Dr. Kendall Moore’s presentation on anti-Semitism, its causes, and its history. We recalled Chris Teese’s discussion on the Bible and homosexuality as he informed us of the various Biblical passages on the subject and the way the Bible has sometimes been manipulated or misused to make a condemning statement. Elise Daulley researched and presented interesting facts about the *Psalms* and cited oft used passages and sources for hymns that are derived from these poems.

Together, we revisited *Genesis* and looked at the origin and history stories that come from this one book. In the future, we will return to *Genesis* and *Exodus* to study in detail that history and the roots of Judaism.

As you can tell from this brief synopsis, Bible Study is not a one-person show. Several of our class members have brought their knowledge to the table for us to savor. As we continue sharing the teaching experience, on July 6, Rev. Bill Royster will talk on prophecy in the Bible, identifying the Major and Minor Prophets, and perhaps focusing on one or more books of prophecy. On July 20, Rev. Royster and Margaret Smith will examine part of Jesus’ great sermon, “The Beatitudes” from what is called the Sermon on the Mount. A new look at the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament may be in order with this study.

There has been some discussion about an evening Bible Study in addition to the present morning session, maybe at the Community Center or via Zoom. If you are interested, please speak to Rev. Royster.

Lit Wits – Fun and Fiction Among the Readers!

Lit Wits met June 12 at Wunsche Brothers to enjoy dinner and to discuss *In an Instant* by Suzanne Redfearn, Kathy Howerton’s choice for our reading in June. This fast-moving novel told of two families who are involved in a horrible accident during a snowstorm—the change in the lives of these people occurs “in an instant” as the event brings out various qualities in the characters who experience the wreck and the harrowing aftermath. From this reading, our group realized how quickly things can change from a light-hearted adventure to incredible fear and death. We were warned to value life because things can change “in an instant.”

Not all was sober during this meeting. We spent some time revisiting several of our reading selections from the last few years, pleasantly recalling our favorites and some of our non-favorites. Also, we were happy to welcome nine participants, with one zooming from Michigan. We have a promise of another new member at the July meeting. Lit Wits is open to everyone and is not limited to members of one church or one type of reader. The books vary from month to month, most fiction, but some non-fiction, some with a religious base, some more secular in nature.

On July 12, Sue Krueger will be guiding us through *This Tender Land* by William Krueger. With positive reviews from readers, and a number of weeks on the *New York Times* best seller list, this promises to be a great read. Even though the book tells of the struggles of four orphans, Sue promises a positive ending that is uplifting. We all look forward to this acclaimed novel and encourage you to join us on our reading journey this summer.

Open Arms June Financial Information

Missions (Buffalo & Uvalde) - \$718.00

Offerings - \$5,292.00

Memorial Fund - \$200.00

Forever Home Fund - \$271.00

HELP OTHERS STEP INTO THEIR FUTURE

Clean out your closet of gently worn or new shoes

Ask your friends and family to help collect shoes too!

Drop off your donations @ **Open Arms** July 24th & 31st

Can't give shoes
DONATE INSTEAD!!!
Text "GIVE2SPU SHOES\$15" to 73256 OR

In Partnership with funds2orgs

Email me @ Shoes@stpeterunited.com

Support your local community as well as developing countries around the world

 **JULY MISSION PROJECT**

Open Arms UCC has partnered with St. Peter UCC for our July mission. Check out the info and website. Our collections of new/gently used shoes will be distributed to developing-country entrepreneurs who need inventory to open a local shoe store to provide employment to a community and place shoes on the feet of children and adults.

Open Arms will collect shoes on Sundays, July 24 and 31. We are grateful to St. Peter's folks for including us in their mission efforts..... joining forces to help make a difference in the world.



Also in July..... we plan a Back-to-School celebration, with safety, health, and school-related activities. Watch for information about what you can do to help with school supplies and backpacks.

Open Arms

Vision Meeting

June 26, 2022

Open Arms congregation met in an open meeting on June 26 for purposes of sharing committee reports and budget figures and looking at future issues.

President Kenneth Reaves called the meeting to order. He asked for comments and questions. Rev. Jules commented that he had not yet signed a contract about his wages. Kenneth reported that Rev. Jules, will be preaching four Sundays a month rather than the three he has been handling.

Margaret Smith summarized Gail Royster's report from her committee. Gail mentioned, and had questions about, giving to a fund for housing, acquiring school supplies for Tamina children, communicating with Tamina residents, signage for the church, helping a member with medical equipment, and changing her team's name to more accurately reflect its work. She announced the mission project for July: new and used shoes for those in need in developing countries. Gail questions the present meeting time after church for her team and wonders if a zoom meeting would be more productive.

Kim Williams and Margaret Smith told of present plans for the Back-to-School Bash, July 30, sponsored by Open Arms at the Tamina Community Center. South Montgomery County Fire Department is planning groups and activities that will entail information about health and safety. Literacy activities with some school supplies, children's books, and learning related sessions will be on the schedule.

Vicky Royster reported on the treasury holdings and on spending. On request, she also reported on the amount in the building fund. Margaret Smith suggested that the Council consider appropriating an amount each month for the building fund. President Reaves reported that the Council has looked into the matter.

The meeting adjourned.



Presentation of Stole to Rev. Dr. Jules William – June 5, 2022

July 2022 Open Arms UCC
Calendar of Events

3	<i>In Person Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Tamina Community Center Communion Sunday</i>
4	<i>Independence Day</i>
6	Bible Study Via Zoom at 10 a.m.
10	<i>In Person Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Tamina Community Center Council Meeting</i>
12	Lit Wits Wunsche Bros. Café at 6:00 p.m.
17	<i>In Person Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Tamina Community Center</i>
20	Bible Study Via Zoom at 10 a.m.
24	<i>In Person Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Tamina Community Center</i>
30	<i>Back-to-School Bash at Tamina Community Center</i>
31	<i>In Person Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Tamina Community Center</i> Bring foodstuff, household needs, and paper products for the community center.

It's National Ice Cream Month