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The Last Guest

Some years ago, a popular parlor game asked the question, “If you had your choice, what five people would you invite to dinner at your house?” The players of the game must choose five persons they would ask to a special dinner party and explain their choices. The chosen guests could be contemporary, literary, historical, imaginative, etc. The selection process made participants examine themselves and their value system and made for great discussions among players.

I saw a reference to this old game on television and was motivated to do the soul searching it required. Who would be my dinner guests?

Without hesitation, I placed Jesus Christ at my table. Long before “truces” and “pacts” and “alliances,” Jesus gave humanity the answer to a perfect and unified world: “Love thy neighbor as thyself.”

For the next guest, who could ever be worthy of sitting by Jesus? That choice was a real challenge. Who? Well, maybe someone who could learn from this holy man—a politician? I put a prominent World Leader by Jesus. A U.S. president (Repub or Dem)—could sit close to Jesus and listen, listen, to everything he says! Maybe something of Jesus could diminish the conflicts that beset us day by day

My next two guests: women whom I have always admired -- Mother Teresa, who lived her faith through action, and Eleanor Roosevelt, first lady of the world, known for her humanitarian acts and her struggle for women’s rights.

Then the knock on the door, my last guest. That guest is not new to my life. That guest has been there so many times before, always chosen by me, but never wholly admitted to **my** table. That guest is the outcast, the filthy, the repulsive, the lost, the shunned. Do I dare open the door and place a chair for the last guest?

Jesus, Teresa, and Eleanor nod their heads. If I want to have “Open Arms,” I’d better open that door wide and offer to wash feet, because that’s what my honored ones would have me do, and what I must do to be part of their Community.

What about you? Can you let the fifth guest into your dinner party?

We Remember in Prayer

Payer: 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.
- **Rev. Bill Royster**, who welcomes prayers.
- **Ray Durham**, who is recuperating from surgery.
- **Lisa Dove**, who had Covid and a bad respiratory and sinus infection.
- **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 entered an experimental program at M. D. Anderson.
- Our friends, **Rev. John and Han Will**, who welcome prayers.
- **Brenda Mayfield**, who is dealing with pain.
- **Jim Lemm**, who welcomes prayers.
- **Kathi**, who welcomes prayers.
- **Storm victims, flood victims, wildfire victims, those suffering from the extreme heat, natural disasters, violence.**

Welcome Guests

We welcome our guests who joined us in worship this past month. Kole Krueger, Cambridge Krueger, Rev. George Oliver, Micah Tanner, Noelle, Raphael, and Emmanuel N., Kathleen Kendall, Alan Carroll, Dalton Pratt, Sophia Braun, Dr. Carolyn Moore.



A PLAY:

It really Happened in Old Spring

Join us for a presentation of a series of monologues by the part-time players of Old Town Spring.



SPRING HAS ITS OWN SET OF UNIQUE HAPPENINGS THAT CAN OUTSTRIP ANY MADE-UP STUFF—AND THAT'S TRUE ABOUT THE OLD TOWN AND ABOUT THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY NOW KNOWN AS OLD TOWN SPRING HEIGHTS.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22 at 1 PM

Tickets are \$7 to cover cost of food and entertainment.

Light refreshments will be served.

Registration is required by Sept. 20

BIG STONE LODGE • 709 RILEY FUZZEL, SPRING 77373 281-350-1029

The Part-Time Players of Open Arms
Present
It Really Happened in Old Spring

Do You Have Your Tickets?

September 22 at 1:00 pm in Big Stone Lodge, 709 Riley Fuzzell Rd. at Dennis Johnson Park, tickets are \$7.00 for the dramatic production and a light lunch. Deadline for purchasing tickets is September 20.

Our Part-Time Players (Open Arms actors) will be applying their theatrical talents at this event as they tell stories of the communities of Old Town Spring and Old Town Spring Heights. If you remember the powerful performances they gave on Good Friday, you know what to expect!

Led by **Ian Says** as Narrator, our musicians, **Peter and Ron**, will provide bridges into entertaining stories that occurred in the area. Can you imagine **Gaye Fairbanks** reliving the closing of Wunsche Bros. Café and Saloon on the night prior to Prohibition? Do you know the story of the Sheriff mortally wounded on the streets of Spring in 1915? Or the famous shoot-out in front of the Spring Bank in 1933? And when was the Spring Fire Department established and how? Plus, many more stories and more story tellers including an account of integration in the Spring schools.

Get your tickets now!

*But they that wait upon the Lord shall
renew their strength, they shall mount up with
Wings As Eagles;
they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall
walk, and not faint.*

Isaiah 40:31

Exciting News to Share!

ANNOUNCING THE ORDINATION OF DR. KENDALL MOORE on **Saturday, September 16, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.** in St. Peter United Church in Houston, Texas. We all rejoice with Kendall as he dedicates himself to the Church after a demanding time of teaching at the University of Houston Downtown, studying and fulfilling Eden Seminary requirements, and assisting at Open Arms UCC. Even though his “plate has been full” during this time, Kendall has remained a cheerful and loving member of our church, always ready to contribute.

Complete details about the ordination have not been posted. The Moore’s friend, Kamica King, is coming to town to provide the music; and Rev. Dr. Jules Williams will have a part in the service. After the service, attendees are invited to a reception in a fellowship hall at St. Peter where refreshments will be served.

Kendall awaits his call agreement, and he and his wife Carolyn will be moving from this area. We send our love and well wishes with them.

“Fall” Into Health

ON OCTOBER 3RD, you are invited to Fall into Health with a free health screening and/or flu shots performed by the Christus Mobil Health Unit at Tamina Community Center. This is a service mainly for adults, offered in various locations in the Houston area by the Christus folks. It will be available to the Open Arms congregation and to Tamina citizens.

The Christus staff members are trained professionals with a mission to improve the health of as many people as they can. Please attend, get the benefit of their program, and show your support of their work. Thanks.

They’ll begin around 9:30 a.m. and work until 12 noon. Lunch will be served to participants and their families.

September Mission Project

FOR ITS SEPTEMBER MISSION PROJECT, the Mission Team has chosen to support **Music Therapy Access Fund**. Founded in 2019, this Texas-based nonprofit provides **Music Therapy Grants** to individuals seeking music therapy services and **Internship Scholarships** to music therapy students completing an internship as part of their course requirements for an accredited music therapy program.

Music Therapy Access Fund believes that marginalized communities must be centered in the work they do. They offer programs to anyone in the state of Texas regardless of race or ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religious belief, political belief, or disability, and stand for fairness, equity, and inclusion. The mission of **Music Therapy Access Fund** is to increase access to music therapy in our state. Recognizing that there are numerous systemic barriers to obtaining and maintaining therapy services, this nonprofit was founded to mitigate these inequities.

Our giving will support this amazing organization in closing the financial gap associated with the provision and receiving of quality care.

WATCH FOR IT! MORE NEWS COMING

Two Events

The Great Duck Race and the Open Arms Garage Sale

THE DUCK RACE WILL BE SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, at Margaritaville on Lake Conroe, sponsored by the Community Assistance Center. We'll have Open Arms ducks a-racing. Cheer them on.

THE GARAGE SALE IS SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14. Might be a good time to start housecleaning and gather up those things that are "your trash but somebody else's treasure." Put them in the Garage Sale.

“Stitched With Love”

RUTH NOONAN is pleased to announce a new mission project for Open Arms Church. The project, titled “Stitched with Love,” and coordinated by Ruth, will mostly involve Open Arms stitchers who love to knit and crochet. This group will make available a supply of hats, scarves, mittens, and gloves, and items for preemies to teens in size. These much-needed creations will be shared throughout the homeless community via Hope Men’s shelter.

For the last several years, the Montgomery County Women’s Shelter has distributed these knitted children’s items. Presently, the Stitchers’ goal is to reach out, not only to the greater Houston area, but also to sister missions in the Northern USA where warm clothing is needed for several months each winter.

Currently, some of these items may be purchased on site at nominal prices. The funds received from these sales will go to support the Forever Home Building Fund at Open Arms UCC.

If you would like to join in the stitching of these items, or if you would like to purchase any item, **please email Ruth Noonan at wiseowl45@sbcglobal.net.**

Yes, Bill, The Spirit Was With Us!

AS 14 MEMBERS OF OPEN ARMS UCC exited the Camp Hope dining facility after lunch, Rev. Bill Royster proclaimed, “The Spirit was with us today.” Indeed, it was for Ken, David, Ian, Gail, Leru, Elise, Liz, Carol, Pam, Ron, Peter, Vicky, and Margaret. We had been privileged to bring lunch and share with 120 members of the Camp Hope establishment, veterans who are receiving help and treatment for various casualties related to military service.

Gail Royster and the Mission Team planned the day, along with help from many others. And that loving Spirit Bill spoke of filled us all as we visited with our new Camp Hope friends. We were suffused with joy that comes from that hands-on love Jesus taught us about. It brought us a blessing too deep for words. Please join with us in our next endeavor of this sort.

P.S. The icing on the cake: Rev. Ron and his saxophone—a delightful contribution to lunch. All appreciated the music.

¢ Change for Change ¢ – Collection Number 1!

SUNDAY, **SEPTEMBER 17**, is first collection day for our “Change for Change” money-raising project. If you have one full jar of coins, start on another, and bring it all to church in September. You may bring your coins, loose, or wrapped, to be packaged, counted, and deposited in the bank. Then start another collection for the next accounting period.

We have had early bird families whose contributions totaled \$371.00! Keep collecting the pennies+.



Donna Gonzaski – September 5

Justin Gonzaski – September 6

Jonathan Sanders – September 6

Kate Flagge – September 8

Adam Mayo - September 9

Robert Cobb - September 16

Ruth Noonan – September 16

Barlow Bradbury – September 18

Adam Rinehart - September 24

Claudia Sanders – September 29

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

from Matthew 5:13 – salt of the earth

from Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 – to every thing there is a season

from Matthew 7:14 – straight and narrow

Lit Wits: What We Learn

Some books are important because of literary style and technique; others recount a compelling story; others are strictly for entertainment. *Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah does none of these. It brings to the forefront knowledge of life in South Africa, the inhumanity of apartheid, of growing up in poverty, of a powerful love between mother and son in a bleak, unfair society. Yet it is probably a book for every American to read and learn about these things in Trevor Noah's life. *Born a Crime* was the Lit Wit selection for August, discussion led by Brenda Ruegge.

The September 12th selection will be *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus, hosted by Tammy Spangler. The best-selling and most popular novel of 2022-2023, this delightful book, set in the late '50's, early 60's, is the account of Elizabeth Zott, brilliant chemist who becomes a TV chef. Elizabeth's life, career, and struggles mirror the condition of women during this time period in the United States. For a great read, grab this book and join Lit Wits in their monthly meeting. You will be rewarded!

Report From Church

Property Search Committee

THE OPEN ARMS PROPERTY SEARCH COMMITTEE HAS MET TWICE—August 7 and August 24. Important discussions, decisions and, conclusions have come from these meetings. Please note the following areas covered by the Search Committee:

1. Considering the widespread homes of the congregants, the best location for us may be found in the area between Robinson Road and 336 Loop South. A plot of two to three acres would be the appropriate size. If a structure is on the plot we purchase, it might be remodeled into a church, or a bare piece of land could be the place to build.
2. It was agreed that we need the help of a real estate agent who knows the area and our needs as a young church. Peter Royster will take the lead in this aspect.
3. The Committee has identified property on F/M 1488, Robinson Road, Hannah Road, and Tamina Road. We ask your help in finding property which would be suitable for us. Everyone is asked to participate!
4. An ongoing problem is the amount of money our budget could handle. We will likely need at least a 20% down payment on property.

5. Fund-raising is critical. Options include a “Go Fund Me” outreach. Also, we need to support church fund-raising projects: “Stitched with Love” sales, “Change for Change,” the theatrical program that members are working on for September 22, a garage sale scheduled for October 14 at Kenneth and David’s, and a fall bake sale (TBA). (And a “walk” by our pastor and his wife.)
6. Members of the Committee are contacting persons that might help with fund raising activities. They are also looking for grant opportunities and contacting UCC sources. We will be asking for assistance for research in completing grants.
7. Rev. Carol will be leading a prayer group to regularly pray to support the church’s efforts to secure a permanent home. See Rev. Carol to participate.
8. Peter and Vicky are working on publicity activities to make the church more visible to the public.

“AMAZING” - SPACES, THAT IS!

WHAT DOES A CHURCH DO if that church has lots of technical equipment, boxes of hymnals, children’s table and chairs, one over-sized manger, three big crosses, full clothes rack of banners, 100 Spooner coffee mugs, assorted boxes in preparation for a permanent place to become “a forever home”? If that church is fortunate, there is a local company that understands the problem!!

Open Arms is not only fortunate, but incredibly lucky to have found “Amazing Spaces.” Not only is this local storage company “*Amazing, but it is Awesome, Incredible, Stunning, Unbelievable, Marvelous, Wonderful!!*”

We are not the only organization that has benefitted from Amazing Spaces’s generosity. The company is well-known in The Woodlands for “Amazing” contributions to community events, as well as non-profit helping agencies. We have been given a storage unit FOR FREE since the first of this year. We just recently were given another three months. After that, we’ll need to begin payment – but at a discounted rate.

So now you understand why Amazing Spaces is Amazing! We plan to host a luncheon for the staff in the future as a thank you. If you have a need for rental space, please remember the kindness of this company.

Some Monthly Observances in September

National Courtesy Month, Better Breakfast Month, National Literacy Month, Classical Music Month, International Square-Dancing Month

North American names for September's full moon which, will be on Friday, September 29, 2023: Harvest Moon and Fruit Moon.

September, 2023

September 4 – Labor Day

September 10 – National Grandparents Day

September 12 – Lit Wits

September 16 - Ordination of Dr. Kendall Moore

September 16 – Rosh Hashanah – Jewish New Year 5,784

September 17 – Change for Change Collection No. 1

September 22 - Part-Time Players of Open Arms Present “It Really Happened in Old Spring”

September 23 – First Day of Fall

September 25 – Yom Kippur

October, 2023

October 3 - Christus Mobil Health Unit at Tamina Community Center

October 7 - The Great Duck Race

October 14 - Open Arms Garage Sale

Open Arms Photo Gallery Photos Courtesy of Gail Royster and Dee Markert

Bill Royster with the Camp Hope Kitchen Team



Pictures of some of the Open Arms Members that volunteered to serve lunch at Camp Hope



Open Arms Photo Gallery Photos Courtesy Pam Mayo

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