

WORSHIP



COMMUNITY OF HOPE, UCC

GOD IS STILL SPEAKING!
WORSHIP SERVICES | EVERY SUNDAY
AT 6:00PM

Rev. Bob Lawrence, Pastor



SUNDAY JULY 4
INDEPENDENCE DAY
REV. LIZETTE MERCHANT PREACHING
ON HER VISIT TO
CENTRO ROMERO IN
CALIFORNIA

SUNDAY, JULY 11
REV. BOB LAWRENCE PREACHING
LUKE 10:25-37

SUNDAY, JULY 18
COMMISSIONING
OUR NICARAGUA
TEAM
DAVID HOOT
PREACHING

SUNDAY, JULY 25
REV. BOB LAWRENCE PREACHING
LUKE 11:1-13

Dear Companions,

Well, things are sure heating up here at Community of Hope this month, and I'm not just referring to the temperature readings! There's a lot of really exciting things taking shape, and I would encourage you to jump on board. From the creation of the Community of Hope Neighborhood Garden to the recent celebration of our 17th birthday to the sale of a portion of our property to our recent visit with a representative from our partner community in Chacraseca, Nicaragua to our own planned visit to Chacraseca in late July, this newsletter is full of information about the various events at Community of Hope, the activities of your fellow Companions, and the continual movement of our ministry "beyond our walls".

At the recent Coordinating Council, our Policy and Procedures Team recommended a process for Community of Hope to use in determining all of our mission and ministry work for 2011 and 2012. To begin that process, we will be meeting as a community to decide a set of "ministry guidelines" that will help us guide our subsequent discussions and decisions about what our ministry and mission will look like for the next two years. After that, we will then begin a series of presentations and discussions of our current ministries, along with any proposed new ministries.

Community of Hope has a history of "drawing the circle wide", so it is only natural that we are using the broadest possible definition of what constitutes "ministry." Basically, as a community of faith based upon the notion of a shared journey, we view ministry as anything we do together as a community, or that individuals do on behalf of our community. For example, "ministry" would include the work of our Administrative Assistant to update and manage our church's web site, it would include our Tables-to-Go program, it would include our worship, it would even include our participation in the Tulsa Pride events. Again, the focus of our discussions will be ANY thing that we do together as a community, or that someone does on behalf of the community. We are envisioning a detailed and involved process that is expected to feed directly into our budget-making process for 2011. We will be sending email announcements with specific details about meeting dates, times, locations and the focus of each of those events, and will also be including information in our newsletters.

As you might imagine, your input and committed involvement in this process will be absolutely crucial to what we will be doing together as a community for the next two years. Please make a personal commitment now to participate as much as you can in this process, even if all you are able to do is pray for our discernment. (Yes, this is a process that will depend heavily on prayer, so even our "long-distance Companions" will have a vital role to play.) See...? It's starting to heat up around here!

AN OPEN LETTER FROM BARRY AND VIOLA LAZZER

Dear Companions,

With our decision to move on to a new stage in our life, we want to share this reflection of our brief history with you, to marvel at the passion and commitment you display, and to wish for thoughtful discernment as COH seeks its path forward.

As you have probably heard, we started attending COH when a friend suggested a UCC congregation would be most similar to our Canadian experience and, given two options in Tulsa, we chose the one whose schedule was a better fit for us (evening service). On the drive home after the first night, I commented that I had never been (knowingly) with so many gay people in one place. But we also recognized a community committed to social justice issues locally, nationally, and internationally. As I said on the day I placed my handprint on the wall, “I don’t know much about God, but I recognize a community that cares and I intend to support it”, or words to that effect.

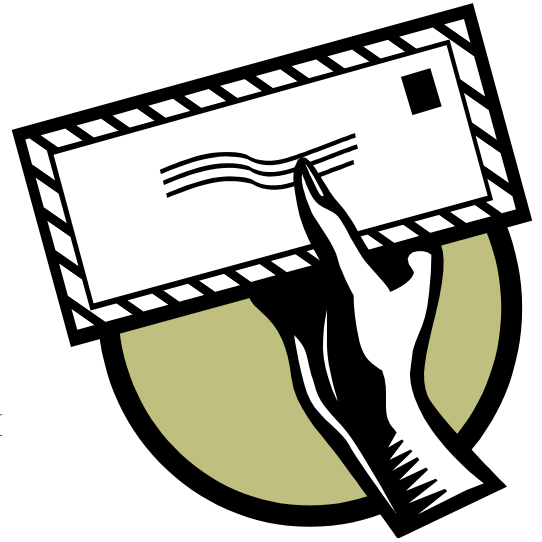
Shortly after that, our Community transition period began. We started experiencing firsthand the amazing way that companions came forward to take on difficult tasks. As with any groups of people, there were tough times, but we persevered and came through with strong support for our first called pastor. Much like the words of the companioning ceremony, but by our deeds, we affirmed our commitment to COH.

Part of the decision making process in calling Bob required us to decide what we were actually looking for in a pastor. To that end, we were asked to “vote” for competencies expected in our new pastor. The majority opinion for the top four characteristics were: Energetic & Passionate Leader, Spiritual Leader, Nourish Well-being of Community, and Support Community Vision of Social Justice.

Personally, Viola & I see Bob doing a good job on all points, although there is always room for dialog and improvement in any relationship. Certainly there shouldn’t be any argument about his energy and passion. And, I really enjoy listening to his reflections – I usually find a personal situation to which I can relate, and I know I can talk to Bob on a personal level about the message and how it was delivered. We also see in Bob an individual who cares deeply about COH. We believe he is motivated to achieving long term viability and sustainability through strong and visible participation in the wider community on any number of social justice issues, but particularly those centered on discrimination and immigration.

As companions of COH, we continue on a remarkable journey. We showed great commitment in the transition and have chosen an energetic and passionate spiritual leader. Several companions have stepped up to take on long-running ministries as others pulled back. Others have taken the opportunity to rest and renew. The emotional drop in energy is understandable – it has been a difficult last three years. And talk of new activities and ministries seems to only exacerbate the feelings of fatigue.

David Elgin states, “We cannot build a future we cannot imagine. A first requirement, then, is to create for ourselves a realistic, compelling, and engaging vision of the future that can simply be told.” A couple of recent events have created a level of excitement that hasn’t been seen in some time. The Neighborhood Garden is an excellent example of where the passion of a few individuals is leveraged to bring COH to the wider community. A significant feature of the Neighborhood Garden is that it is not being spearheaded by Bob. Yes, it was initiated by Bob attending Homeowners’ Association meetings in the neighborhood, but it is a neighborhood-based project picked up by other highly motivated individuals. Similarly, following the HIV Spring Retreat, it was reported that five participants wanted to help organize the next such event.



These are realistic and compelling visions of a future with greater COH involvement in the community it serves. And, the response of companions is as expected – we have embraced these activities. The assumption is that a companion has come to Coordinating Council with a realistic and compelling mission or vision and is asking for COH support and blessing. I mention these two events because of peoples’ response and knowing it is easy to embrace such activities when there is little or no financial commitment necessary. But things start getting uncomfortable when our bottom line is affected.

In our opinion, these types of activities – where our commitment to community are on full display – are the path to the long term viability of COH. They also illustrate subtle changes occurring in our beloved Community. COH is still adjusting to Bob’s leadership. Bob is still adjusting to COH. Our ministerial focus may change. Our approach may change. There will be hurt feelings. There may be a need for upfront funding. And, the financial governance process for reviewing and committing to ministries is not yet well defined. Dialogue and support are critical through this ongoing adjustment.

I understand very well the financial challenges facing COH; however I also know it is critical to balance that concern with other things of value both now and in the future. The existing reserves and proceeds from land sales will give COH a financial cushion. What is done with this cushion will directly affect our long term viability. We can’t continue to do exactly what we have been doing and expect a different result. Also, sometimes we can’t control the timing or sequence of events, but we need to respond in the best interests of COH when opportunity knocks. The road to COH future has had, and will continue to have, many twists and turns. Sometimes one needs to overlook the minutiae and make the decision for the long term goal. The bottom line is that we need to choose our ministry activities such that we receive the most “bang for the buck”.

We must consciously “seek to understand” the other’s perspective; we must trust the other’s intent –that they are seeking to respond in the best interests of the COH, themselves and the wider community. And, as in these examples, companions need to be willing to take on leadership and administrative roles. We know it works as we have seen much activity that can raise the profile of COH. We have seen people step forward to help.

Finally, our personal lives are again in transition. We were presented with an opportunity in Pittsburgh, PA, we weighed the pros and cons, and we have decided to accept. Our decision was not done fleetingly, but with a great deal of deliberation. We believe it is in our personal best interest to take this opportunity. Without question, one of the challenges in making our decision was the positive and influential role we see Community of Hope play, and the companions that have become our friends. We will be relocating over the summer. Over the next couple of months and indeed, after our move we expect to be in Tulsa on occasion, to hear of the continued positive impact of COH, and to attend evening worship.

In the meantime, we challenge you and cheer you on. Be the model for the future; find your vision; as others have done, get up off that “comfortable” pew and engage; don’t simply watch and adjudicate from the sidelines.

Peace,
Barry & Viola

BEVERLY DUFFIELD MEMORIAL BENCH



The Tulsa Bicycle Club provides this update on Beverly Duffield's memorial bench. The bench has been ordered and is expected to arrive in July. Installation is planned for late August or early September, near the 1-year anniversary of Beverly's passing. The bench will be placed in a prime location along the River City Trail in Sand Springs where Beverly often rode. Cyclists, friends and family of Beverly will be invited to attend. More details to come.

Total donations received exceeded the cost of the bench. The Tulsa Bicycle Club has graciously decided to donate the excess funds to Community of Hope.

S.O.S

COH Finance Team reminds you that our expenses don't go on vacation, so please don't let your financial commitment to COH go on vacation! Create your personal Summer Offering Schedule now!



EXCITING COMMUNITY OF HOPE NEIGHBORHOOD GARDEN UPDATE!

by Tess Tucker-Trainum

Saturday June 19th the Community of Hope Neighborhood Garden community came together from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and finished nineteen raised garden beds. The group was a unique mix of people from the broader community, neighbors from both Hoover and Lortondale and the Community of Hope. We worked together in teams and shared a lot of talking, laughing, stories and cold water! We were fortunate to have Sharon Flowers share her gift of massage with us which was truly an unexpected pleasure for our tired, sore muscles!

Progress on the garden is slower than anticipated due to the fact that materials are on order for more cedar. We have six persons who have signed up to be team leaders and thirty-seven plots. Each gardener fills out a gardener application that the Land Use Team, with the help of three members of the broader community constructed which was based on the experience and insight of other community gardens. Each gardener was given a set of "Gardener Guidelines" which outlines the expectations for each gardener. This is designed to insure that

each plot is maintained responsibly using organic gardening methods and that each plot holder is responsible for the appearance and condition of their plots. A new gardener application will be required of each gardener by December 31st and plots must be removed of all dead plants and non-plant materials by December 1st. The responsibilities of the team leaders include working with each gardener to insure that the gardener guidelines are followed. For example, when a plot holder goes on vacation they are expected to contact their team leader in order to arrange harvesting, watering and other maintenance activities in their absence.

After the materials arrive and the remaining twenty-one raised beds are constructed we will arrange the beds and fill them with compost from Gem Dirt in Jenks. These materials are part of a grant and do not cost the church any money. We will get free mulch from the City of Tulsa mulch site to use in the pathways between the beds. This will insure that no mowing is necessary in the garden and will significantly reduce the amount of mowing required to maintain our property. Workshops on composting, organic gardening, fall planting guidelines and gardening basics are planned and will be scheduled during the month of July. All are welcome and encouraged to attend these workshops whether you have signed up for a plot or not and their dates and times will be forthcoming. It is not too late to reserve your own plot!

If you are on the internet, please

check out our fan page on Facebook! We are listed as Community of Hope Neighborhood Garden and we already have 86 "fans" on our site! Woo hoo! This is getting big and the public exposure on Facebook and in other areas will garner more attention to the Community of Hope. Thank you from the Neighborhood Garden team for your vision and support of this broader community mission! Your consensus gives us the ability to truly share what we have been given (land) with those outside of our walls that wish to garden in community with others. In addition, individuals may elect to give the proceeds from their labor to the Tables to Go and Friends Nourishing Friends ministries, which helps us to assist others by providing healthy nutritious organic food to those who need it in the future!

I would also like to add my individual thanks to all of my companions on my journey for allowing me the opportunity to better merge my personal life with the church. As a graduate student of Environmental Science, many of you already know that my passions lie with environmental justice, water and food security issues and sustainability. I am a member of the Buy Fresh Buy Local Steering Committee and have been asked to attend the Food Security Council meetings in Tulsa as well. I believe that my journey is becoming more intertwined with the journey of the church as we work for justice in the world of our still-speaking God. So thanks ya'll. Put on your seat belts because we are going on a wonderful magical ride!



NICARAGUA NEWS

IVAN FROM CHACRASECA VISITS COH

Ivan Hernandez, the Vice Chair of the Pastoral Committee in Chacraseca, visited Tulsa recently. This was his first trip to the United States. He attended Connie and Armin's pool party on Tuesday, attended Spanish classes at TCC on Wednesday, visited the Aquarium and took in a Driller's game on Thursday, took a tour of Langston University and traveled to OKC on Friday, and then returned to Tulsa on Sunday in time for worship. He shared stories of our companions from Chacraseca and put his hand on our wall as our newest companion. It was a terrific opportunity for us to learn more, first-hand, about the various projects in Chacraseca and our companions there.



This wonderful experience for Ivan and for us was the result of many people assisting with numerous aspects of his trip. THANK YOU to Bob, Connie and Armin, Lizette, Julie S, Shannon, Cathy Cole, Tracy, Leslie and Steve Penrose, Penny and Jose, Barbara and Stan Grogg, and Tess. It was a true community effort.

NICARAGUA TEAM ANNOUNCED

This year, five companions from Community of Hope will travel to our partner community of Chacraseca, Nicaragua. The team leaves on Saturday, July 24th, and returns on Sunday, August 1st. Those on the team are Gina Woods, Barb Hayes, Maranda Hayes, Donnie Eberly, and David Hoot. The group will be renewing old friendships and discovering new ones as well. Projects will include assisting with the building of a new home for a family, touring the schools, visiting the local health clinic, and getting updates on existing needs in the community. We will be commissioning the team during worship service on Sunday, July 18th. Please plan to attend worship that evening to send the team off with your prayers and blessings.

CITY COUNCIL REJECTS PROPOSED ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE

The proposed ordinance to amend the current City Charter to require the E-Verify system to regulate city contracts was dismissed 6 to 3. This proposal would have subjected the city of Tulsa to unnecessary work that will ultimately waste taxpayers' money. Beyond that, the system simply is not ready. Its well-documented weaknesses include database errors and misuse of the program by employers. A study commissioned by

the U.S. Department of Homeland Security found that the E-Verify database "is still not sufficiently up to date" to meet the requirements for accurate verification. On February 25, 2010, The Wall Street Journal reported that the E-Verify system fails 54% of the time. A study conducted by the Social Security Administration inspector general found 17.8 million errors in the SSA database. Several State representatives have

stated that they will introduce a law similar to Arizona on the next Legislative session. The Tulsa Hispanic Resource Association, The American Dream Coalition, The Hispanic Chamber of commerce, along with other organization will be proactive to insure that such legislature is not introduced. Thanks to our Pastor who spoke at the meeting to state our Community's opposition to this proposal!

THE FINANCE TEAM IS LOOKING FOR HELP!



Weekly tasks include recording donations and writing checks. (This takes typically about an hour per week when familiar with the procedures.) Monthly tasks include bank reconciliation, creating a 'balancing' journal entry and preparing reports for the newsletter and Coordinating Council. Many of the reports are pre-formatted and very easy to create. (Typical time requirement is two to three hours for this task.) You need to be comfortable working with a computer and able to maintain private and confidential information. We will gladly train you on the necessary procedures. Talk to Betsy or Barry about this important opportunity.

CHURCH RENEWAL CONFERENCE

The Center for Progressive Renewal, an affiliated ministry of the United Church of Christ, is offering a special conference as part of the New Church Leadership Institute entitled “The Seven Secrets”. The conference will be in Atlanta, GA from August 9-13. The Coordinating Council is looking for individuals who are interested in joining our Pastor for this exciting event designed to help with church revitalization here at Community of Hope. If you are interested in attending, please contact Bob Lawrence at pastor@cohope.com, or call the church office. The anticipated total cost to attend this conference is between \$1,500 and \$1,750 per person, including conference fees, hotel, airfare, and meals, and we are working on funding so that attendees won't have to pay from their personal funds. If you are able to donate frequent flyer miles and/or hotel affinity points (Holiday Inn) to reduce those expenses, please let Bob know. Here's the information on the conference:

THE SEVEN SECRETS

Assets - Beginning Where You Are: Through processes like Asset Mapping and Appreciative Inquiry each individual and church discovers their unique strengths, passions, competencies, and assets. This must be the starting place on the journey to vitality.

Vision – Seeing Where You Are Going: Having identified our unique strengths we now move to discovering where the Spirit is leading us. Through discernment, goal setting, strategic visioning, etc we articulate the future into which God calls us.

Mission – Turning the Church Inside Out: Having discovered our strengths and seen the future our church could have we begin the process which moves a church from being internally to externally focused, from a program and management orientation to a service and missional orientation.

Communication – From Identity Formation to Market Saturation: Learning to be “as cunning as a serpent and as innocent as a dove” in terms of branding/re-branding and effectively communicating the values and vision of the church in a way that is irresistibly attractive to those who need its message and ministries.

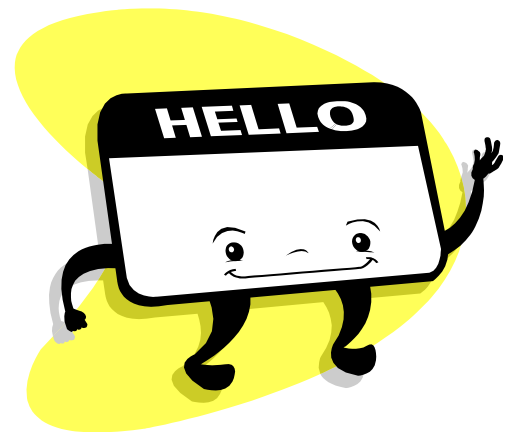
Connection – Creating Transformational Community: Creating transformation connections by practicing extravagant hospitality. Recognizing the new kinds of connections such as Facebook, the church must offer opportunities for authentic community to in which people are changed

AdMinistryation – Managing for Mission: Shifting from managing for maintenance to creating systems and structures that support and enhance the ministry of the church and its mission in the world. Managing data is more important in today's culture than managing money.

Transformational Worship – The Heart-beat of Vital and Vibrant Church: Any church that offers 52 energetic, relevant, and transformational worship services a year will grow. The community gathers for an authentic experience of God and an hour or so later scatters to be the Church.

REVITALIZATION TRACK

- Transformational Worship
- Spiritual Grounding
- Intuitive Discernment
- Strategic Planning
- Asset Mapping
- Working with a Coach
- Restoring Trust through Congregational Communication
- Re-Branding and New Identity
- Mastering the Media
- Building Your Database - Grow your Church!
- Fundraising and Stewardship
- Re-imagining for Renewal
- Building/Transforming Your Church through Spiritual Practices
- Unbinding the Gospel
- New Spiritual Appetites



RESULTS FROM KIN-DOM DAY | VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

On Saturday, June 19, some of our Companions gathered to work on various projects around Community of Hope. They were joined by about a dozen of our neighbors who worked in the hot sun building raised beds for our new Community of Hope Neighborhood Garden (see article about the garden). While the neighbors worked outside (along with some Companions), many of the following projects were completed inside. (Some of these projects were completed during the week before our Kin-dom Day and others have been completed since then.)



- replace a broken toilet seat in one of the bathrooms
- caulk the exterior-facing wall of one of the storage closets in the Community Room
- caulk the north-facing exterior wall of the Community Room
- dust the blinds in the Worship Space
- re-paint the stalls and the door in one of the bathrooms
- organize the computer equipment in the nursery to make that space safer and more kid-friendly
- remove non-working monitors and other computer peripherals from the nursery
- check building fire extinguishers
- clean out the cigarette receptacle near the Community Room exterior door
- organize our storage closet in the Community Room
- maintain garden and flower beds along the front and side of the building

The following projects were not completed. If you are available to come by during the week or before church on a Sunday, please call the church office:

- re-wire the outdoor lights spotlighting our sign
- fix the toilet in one of the bathrooms (the flushing mechanism is faulty)
- replace the drain stopper for the sink in one of the bathrooms
- replace stained and/or sagging ceiling tiles in the Community Room
- replace missing HVAC vent in the Community Room
- inspect the roof for damage (must be done by roofing contractor)
- fix a broken speaker over the piano in the Worship Space
- paint the ceiling in the nursery
- finish painting one of the bathrooms (including walls and ceiling)
- paint the walls in the Community Room
- paint the doors in the hallway
- move computer equipment out of the nursery
- purchase and install smoke detectors
- organize the storage shed and treat for ants
- determine working status of the lawnmowers
- clean out the utility room in the hallway
- secure the wooden fence along the north property line near the outside door to the Community Room
- have a professional evaluate the health/safety of the large pine tree on the northwest corner of our building

FUND RAISER NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

The Show-Stopping Case of the Missing Nun Nabber is looking for volunteers for the performances on **Wednesday, August 11** (Dress Rehearsal 6:30 pm) and **Saturday, August 14th** (Performance 6:30 pm). Both performances will be at Trinity United Methodist Church. The Saturday performance will be a dinner theater, so we are looking for talented people help to cook and serve. We also need people to help with publicity and ticket sales for both performances. Please let Lizette know if you are interested in this fundraising effort where 100% of all proceeds go to COH. Thank you Tracy Megli for arranging this!



A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Community of Hope
A SHALOM BASE COMMUNITY

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We are a multiracial, multicultural, open and affirming, accessible to all,
just peace church where God is still speaking!
Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

THE BULLETIN BOARD

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!



THE WONDERFUL COMPANIONS OF COMMUNITY OF HOPE RECENTLY GATHERED TOGETHER FOR KIN-DOM DAY, TO PERFORM A LITTLE TLC ON OUR HOME! HOWEVER THEY WEREN'T ABLE TO FINISH EVERYTHING AND THERE ARE A FEW TASKS THAT STILL NEED TAKEN CARE OF—SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS!

Our vision is to be a community of faith, committed in the way of Jesus to the struggle for justice, compassion, and life-giving spirituality for all people; and our mission is to witness, in and through our life together, to the good news that the way of God is in our midst...and the journey is our home.