



Monthly publication
United Church of Santa Fe
Santa Fe, New Mexico

October 2026

PRAYERS FOR A NEW SEASON

God, stir the soil,
Run the ploughshare deep,
Cut the furrows round and round,
Overturn the hard, dry ground,
Spare no strength or toil,
Even though I weep.
In the loose, fresh mangled earth,
Sow new seed.
Free of withered vine and weed
Bring fair flowers to birth.

Christian Church of Singapore



Deep peace of the Running Wave to you.
Deep peace of the Flowing Air to you.
Deep peace of the Quiet Earth to you.
Deep peace of the Shining Stars to you.
Deep peace of the Christ of Peace to you.

Celtic Christian Tradition



This day wilt Thou strengthen us.
This day wilt Thou bless us.
This day wilt Thou uplift us.
This day wilt Thou visit us for good.
This day wilt Thou inscribe us for happy life.
This day wilt Thou hear our cry.
This day wilt Thou accept our prayer in mercy and favor.
This day wilt Thou support us with Thy righteous hand.

Morning Litany for the Jewish New Year



Here am I, Lord. Send me.

Prayer of the Prophet Isaiah



A Prayer for Children (and on the rest of us) On All Hallows Eve (aka Halloween)

From ghosties and ghoulies,
And long-legged beasties,
And things that go bump in the night,
Good Lord, deliver us!

**UNITED CHURCH
OF SANTA FE
A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1804 Arroyo Chamiso
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Phone: 505-988-3295
E-mail: unitedchurchsf@gmail.com
www.unitedchurchofsantafe.org

The Rev. Talitha Arnold
Senior Pastor

Sam Elkind
Moderator of the Congregation

Dana Bender
Director, Family Ministry

Michelle Schumann
Director of Music/Pianist

Elijah Marquez
Videographer/
Media Coordinator

Lin Raymond
Office Administrator

Maria Navarette
Children's Ministry Assistant

Tracy & Ed Church
Nurture Center Volunteers

**Covenant of
The United Church of Santa Fe**

In the Lord's name we gather together
here in Santa Fe
to worship and grow
in the Christian tradition,
to minister in love to all persons,
to strive for justice and peace,
to respond to God's word.

We celebrate the heritage of Santa Fe
and give ourselves to its challenges
and opportunities.

We endeavor to live in harmony with all
creation as stewards of the earth.

We share in the life and mission of the
United Church of Christ and of
Christians everywhere.

To these purposes we unite and
covenant with God and one another,
watchful for the guidance
of the Holy Spirit.

Pastor's Message

Dear Friends,

October 4 is St. Francis Day, the patron saint of Santa Fe (*La Villa Real de la Santa Fé de San Francisco de Asís* or "The Royal City of the Holy Faith of St. Francis of Assisi"). This year, October 4 falls on a Sunday and we'll have our annual "Blessing of the Animals" in both the 8:30 and 10:00 services (both outdoors).

The good saint is known for his connection to creation. He tamed a wolf and preached to the birds. He composed *Il Cantico delle Creature* – the "Canticle of the Creatures" – praising everything from Brother Sun and Sister Moon to Brother Wind and Mother Earth.

Francis was also a war veteran. With his friends and other young men of Assisi, Francis rode off to do battle with the neighboring hill town of Perugia. These knights in shining armor were routed by the Perugians, Francis' friends were killed, and he himself spent a year in a dungeon as a prisoner of war until his father bailed him out.

When he returned home, Francis was neither the *bon vivant* nor the great warrior he'd imagined himself to be. He knew the horror of war and so devoted the rest of his life to making peace and caring for the poor. He even travelled to Egypt during the 5th Crusade to try to persuade both Christian and Moslem leaders to stop fighting. He succeeded with the Sultan, but not the Bishop.

It's not certain if Francis actually wrote the well-known "Instrument of Your Peace" prayer attributed to him—but its message reflects his commitment to loving all God's people as much as his *Il Cantico delle Creature* sings of his love for all creation. As we look to a new month in this increasingly anxious and angry world, this 13th century prayer to be "an instrument of God's peace" is a prayer for our time, too.

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
where there is hatred, let me bring your love,
where there is injury, your pardon,
and where there is doubt, true faith in you.*

*Where there is despair in life, let me bring hope,
where there is darkness, only light,
and where there is sadness, ever joy.*

*O Divine Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love with all my soul.*

*For it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving that we receive,
and in dying, we are born to eternal life.*

May Francis' words and wisdom speak to us across the centuries. May we pray every day for the fullness of God's peace to be known in this world. May it be the peace that overcomes hatred with love and despair with hope. May it be the peace that is rooted in justice and care for our brothers and sisters, the deep peace that is rooted in God's love for us and all people.

And may we also pray daily to be instruments of that peace, in whatever ways God empowers us to be.

Blessings,

Worship in October

What Do We Seek? What Do We Worship?

Many of the scriptures this fall focus on idols. Although most of us don't have golden calves or statues of Zeus or Marduk in our backyards, our world is filled with things that entice (or demand) our attention and our lives. Perhaps October is good time to take stock of what's truly at the center of our lives. Then, just as a farmer plows under the old crop to make room for new life, we might want to let go of those things that don't give life to us or others.

The Love that Moves the Sun and All Stars | October 4 – St. Francis Pet Blessing Sunday

"All praise be Yours through Brother Sun, Sister Moon," proclaimed Francis of Assisi. He echoed the long-ago Psalmist who praised the Creator for creating everything from rocks and mountains to the rock badgers to live there. Filling our lives with praise for the Creator is good way to deal with idols. So too is joining in our annual Pet Blessing services, whether or not we have a four-legged friend.

A Refuge and a Feast: What to Remember | October 11 – Indigenous People's Sunday

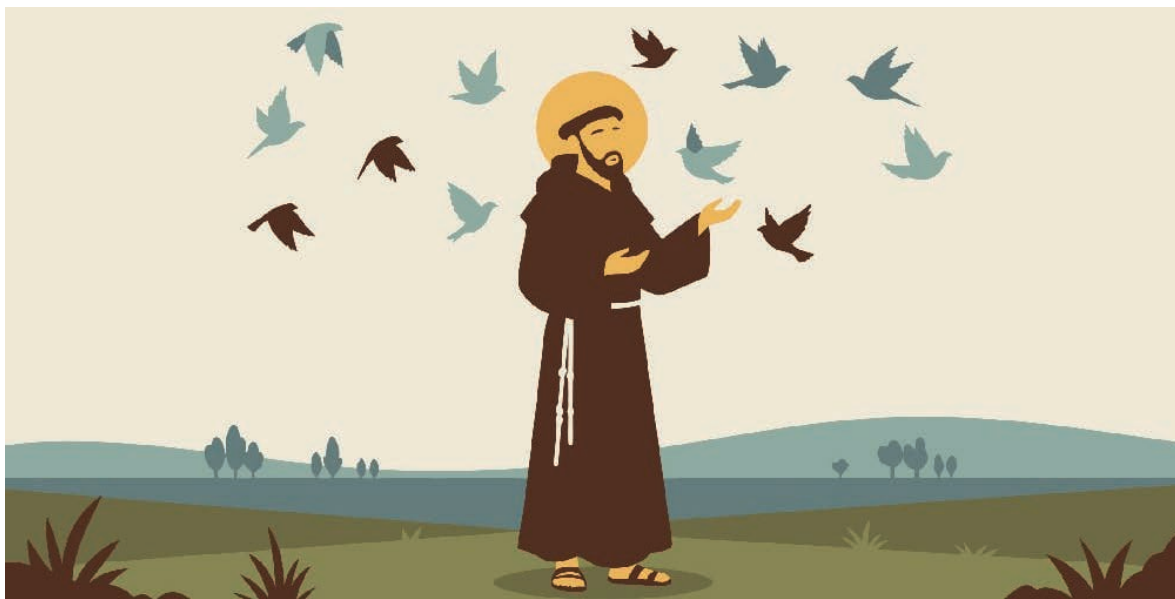
While Moses was on the mountaintop, talking with the one true God, the people created a calf made of their jewelry and gold, roasted some fatted calves, and had a grand old party. Centuries later, Isaiah offered a different vision of God's feast. The prophet saw a great celebration that was a refuge for the poor and needy from "the ruthless." A feast to which all nations were invited, and no one went hungry. Whose feast would you choose?

What Do We Seek? What Do We Worship? | October 18

In his letter to the church in Thessaloniki, Paul extols new Christians to turn from Rome's idols of power and wealth. (I Thess 1:1-10) In Matthew's gospel, Jesus makes a clear distinction between building our lives around Caesar and following the one true God. (Matt 22:15-22) The Bible repeats itself a lot. Maybe it's because our idols are so enticing.

Sharing the Gospel, Sharing Ourselves | October 25 – Reformation Sunday

The development of the first Christian churches was often a messy affair. For one, even the Gospels didn't agree on the details of Jesus' life and ministry. Two, lots of people had lots of ideas about this new faith—how to live into it, what it required. In his first letter to the Thessalonians (his earliest extant letter), Paul addressed such concerns and also laid out the hows and whys of sharing this new faith—e.g., that it wasn't for personal gain, greed, deceit, or trickery. In Paul's last letter (to the church in Rome) he urges the new Christians "not to be conformed to this world but be reformed by the renewal of their minds." (Romans 12:1-2)



Music

Michelle Schumann, Director of Music / Pianist

We'll highlight multiple annual traditions this October at United, each offering special ways to express our faith through music! Although the choir takes off **St. Francis Sunday** (Oct. 4), plan to bring your outdoor voices (and pets) to this outdoor service for our annual **Pet Blessing**!

Also, that afternoon of October 4th, I will present my first of a series of "**Schumann Chamber Players**" concerts, this one featuring trios for violin, cello, and piano by Beethoven and Mendelssohn. I'm very excited to present chamber music at United and hope you will join me!



October 11, the Sanctuary Choir returns to celebrate **Indigenous People's Sunday** with several selections from the "Mass for St. Kateri Tekakwitha," by composer Bill Svarda. On October 25th, we celebrate **Reformation Sunday** with a service that traditionally is one of the "Big-Sing" occasions of the year! Plan for a wonderfully musical celebration of our faith and beliefs. I hope you're looking forward to all of this as much as I am!



Children & Youth

Dana Bender, Director of Family Ministry

Kids United (1st through 5th graders) Sunday mornings during 10:00 Service

We gather most Sundays after the "Blessing of the Children" in worship. Using short Bible verses and stories, songs, collaborative activities, and edible crafts, we explore how these stories can help shape us in our own lives.

We begin October 4 (St. Francis Sunday) with the adults, youth, and our pets for **United's Annual Pet Blessing**. Then over the month, we'll explore **All Saints Sunday**, how it began, and how various cultures celebrate it today.

- Oct. 4: Pet Blessing – Kids join with youth, adults & animals
- Oct. 11: Blessing and Letting Go – wrap-up
- Oct. 18: All Saints Day – What is it? How did it begin?
- Oct. 25: All Saints Day – Who are saints today? Are we called to be "saints?"

Youth Together (6th graders through High Schoolers) Sunday mornings after worship

United's Youth are gearing up for our overnight retreat to **Ghost Ranch** (Friday, Oct. 23-Saturday, Oct. 24). Before that, all youth (and their pets) are invited to the **Annual Pet Blessing** (Sunday, Oct. 4). On **Oct. 18**, we plan for the Retreat and possibly get a jump start on our Advent service (Dec. 20). And on **Oct. 25**, we'll help lead worship.

Youth and families will also start greeting and welcoming people to the Sunday 10:00 service. And we're in the beginning stages of planning a special worship service for the **4th Sunday of Advent** (5 days before Christmas). Stay tuned!

Help Put the Children's Garden to Bed

The Children's Garden will soon need to be cleaned out for the winter. If you can help, we would love to have you! Please contact Dana Bender dana@gmail.com.

Outdoor Play and Exploration Space In the Hands of the City 😊

In early spring, we learned that the City is requiring a building permit to develop our Outdoor Play and Exploration Space. That meant a lot of meetings, forms, etc. But we hope to get it approved and started by the time you read this! (Keep the project in your prayers. 😊)

Care and Concern

Prayer of Thanks for:

- **Firefighters, support crews, first responders, and all** who are working to control and end the fires throughout New Mexico, Spokane, the rest of the U.S. West, Canada, and Europe. And prayers for those continuing to work to mitigate climate change that results in such devastation.
- Everyone who wrote annual reports (and who organized the work documented in the report 😊), and all who joined in the 46th Annual Meeting of the United Church.
- For the **continuing Council members** (Sam Elkind, Leslie Fagre, Sarah Sawtell, Karen Wilbanks, Diane Darby, Louise Cavatta, Bob Ansheles, Larry Maldegen) and new Council members (David Darby and Dana Cagle).
- For the life of **Jim Dorris** – and prayers of comfort and strength for his wife **Kris** and family.
- For the lives of **Tom and Joyce Allen**, longtime supporters of United who lived in Chicago but came regularly to Santa Fe and shared in United's life and ministry. Joyce died earlier this year, Tom in August (at age 100).

Prayer of Blessing and Congratulations for:

- **Anne Hillerman**, receiving the Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts.

Prayers of Healing and Hope for:

- **Clay Ellis**, following the death of his sister **Dru** who died "peacefully at home" after a long illness; **Danna and Lee Armstrong**, as Danna is under home hospice care due to metastatic cancer and complications from treatments; **Evan and Joan Bauer**, as Evan continues at Mayo Clinic; **Kathy Flynn**, in rehab due to pulmonary embolism; **Joe Jones' brother John**, following hospitalization and rehab; the son of United friends, recently hospitalized, another son dealing with severe PTSD.
- Persons dealing with cancer and those who love and care for them: **Shauna Wilbanks, Greg Gaertner, Jim Ashby** (Sarah Sawtell's brother), **Mary Romero** (Louise Cavatta's sister-in-law); and persons with ongoing health issues: **Kurt Burk and Ken Latz**, with a severe autoimmune situation; **Jan McGough**, on 3-day/week dialysis; **Leonard Stovall, Mary Deane Lynn, Helen McCabe, Carol Ingells, Brooke Roberts**, and others.
- Families, couples, and individuals going through divorce and other difficult times.
- Persons dealing with dementia or memory loss and those who love and care for them: **Natalie Wells and Jim Mills** (Kingston); **Sandra Johnson** (Faye Granieri's mother); **Rev. Christine Vogel** and her husband **Paul; Linda Knapp, Rev. Roger Knapp** (Montecito); and others.
- Persons in assisted living: **Sylvia Ortega** (Tammie Ortega's mother), **Ray & Nancy Lutz** (Legacy), **Ann Noss** (El Castillo), **JoAnn Bolleter**'s mother.
- Persons living with Parkinson's or other neurological conditions (**Msgr. Jerome Martinez**, and others).
- Individuals and families dealing with mental health and/or addiction issues. (If you or someone you love is struggling emotionally, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (988) provides 24/7, free, confidential support.)
- Persons with families in other countries: **Blanca Surgeon** (Honduras), **Maria Navarette** and **Destiny Muñoz** (El Salvador), **Joohee Rand** (Korea), **John Walker** (Scotland), **Avril Ekstrand** (whose mother is under Hospice care in Ireland), **Kim Zeilik** (son in Spain), **Leslie Fagre** and **Eric Poppele** (Jasper and family in England), **the Darby Family** (Makayla in Prague), **Larry and Nyla Rasmussen** (daughter-in-law's family in Colombia), **Dana and David Cagle** (daughter in Italy), **Corrine Jones** (Ali in London, **Luci** in Rome).
- The people—especially immigrants and persons of color—of **Santa Fe** and other cities and towns dealing with ICE raids, and those held in ICE detention centers and dealing with inedible food and lack of medical care.
- Prayers for the people of **Nepal, Colombia, and Venezuela** in the wake of devastating floods and earthquakes; continued prayers for the people of **Iran, Gaza, and the rest of the Middle East, Nigeria, Sudan, Ukraine, Central America**, and other places impacted by war; refugees who have fled their homes in war zones; people seeking asylum from violence; policymakers who determine their fate; the **Congo** and other countries impacted by the Ebola virus.
- Military people and law enforcement officers, including those in our congregation.
- Prayers of care and commitment for those with major **increases in health care costs or reduction of support from SNAP, USAID, Medicaid or Medicare**, or who are unhoused or are persons of color, LGBTQI+ or female.

Prayer Chain Keeps Others in Prayer

United has an email prayer chain of people who have offered to hold others in prayer, particularly in difficult times. If you would like to be part of it, please let us know. (unitedchurchsf@gmail.com)

Congregational Care for October:

On Call: Dana Hollifield

303-242-9681

Outreach

LOVE GOD, NEIGHBOR, CREATION

Outreach Opportunities – Thank you!

Go online to unitedchurchofsantafe.org or send a check to 1804 Arroyo Chamiso, Santa Fe NM 87505.

LOVE GOD, LOVE NEIGHBOR

United's Shelter Supper Ministries Offer Food and Care

United provides supper (entrée, veggie casserole, salad, dessert) monthly to Santa Fe Shelters. Want to help? Come to **"Chop and Grate" Friday, Oct. 16 (9:00 am)**, or deliver food to shelters that afternoon or make meatloaf at home. Please contact Cathy Garrett (cathygarrett1@gmail.com) for info. You can also help with check or online donations (memo: shelter meals). Thank you!

Summer Drive for the Food Depot Raises \$2000!

Thank you to all who contributed to this summer's drive for the Food Depot! Your generosity helps feed hungry children and adults throughout northern New Mexico. And a big shoutout to *United Kids* (and Dana, Donna, and Bob) for all the fresh vegetables they grew and harvested from the Children's Garden.

Hygiene Kits Offer Dignity and Hope Sunday, Oct. 11

On Oct. 11 after the 10:00 service, children, youth, and adults are invited to assemble hygiene kits to send to Church World Service for distribution to refugees. Each kit contains basic essentials (toothbrush, bar of soap, comb, nail clipper, wash cloth, small towel, band aids) needed by children and adults in emergency situations. We invite you to help underwrite the project with your check or online donation. And please spread the word to friends and co-workers who are looking for a way to help. Thank you!

LOVE GOD, LOVE CREATION

Care for Creation and Offset Your Carbon Use

United's "Carbon Offset Program" helps plant trees and change policies to address climate change. It's simple to do: track your car mileage and/or plane flight hours and donate through United to Tree New Mexico and NM Interfaith Power and Light. Info: unitedchurchofsantafe.org/creation-care.

Compost Collection—It's a Miracle!

Reunity Resources turns food waste, meat scraps, garden clippings, etc. into life-giving compost. Pick up compostable garbage bags at church (**NO** standard plastic bags, please), fill at home, and put in the green bin by the Children's Garden. More things in compost bins means less in landfills. Thanks!

Also, on Sunday mornings, after you enjoy a cup of coffee or tea or a cookie, please put your cups and napkins in Community Room compost bin to be turned into great compost, too!



Santa Fe River Cleanup

We are planning one this fall – date and details to follow, so stay tuned.



How Does United Church Feed Us? (So we can feed others!) All Church Burrito Brunch November 15 – Stewardship Sunday | After BOTH Services | Save the Date!

Through our United community, God feeds us in a multitude of ways—a caring community in times of need, programs for all generations, a beautiful worship space, hopeful words of courage and peace, music that sings our souls, and opportunities to serve our neighbors and love God's creation.

On Stewardship Sunday, November 15, after both the 8:30 and 10:00 services, you're invited to feast on both food and fellowship, as we share a Breakfast Burrito Brunch and also time with one another in the United community. It's also an opportunity to make our pledges of financial commitment for the coming year. More details later—but save the date Sunday, November 15—thank you!

Adult Faith Formation

ADULT FORUMS — Sundays at 11:15 am

*From Pets to Parkinson's to Pastoral Care
Adult Education in October*

October 4 - Fellowship Time after the 24th Annual Pet Blessing

Whether or not you have a pet, plan to stay after United's Annual Pet Blessing to pet a puppy or cuddle a collie. We'll have treats for both us two-legged ones and the four-legged who are our special guests that Sunday.



October 11 - Punching Out Parkinson's

We welcome Richard White, Director of Santa Fe's "Rock Solid" program, for persons with Parkinson's to help keep them active and strong. He'll share what the program offers, how our understanding of Parkinson's has changed through the years, and also how he got involved. All welcome!

October 18 - Getting Ready for the Midterm Elections: What We Need to Know

October 25 - Congregational Care – What's Needed? How Can United Help?

The Congregational Care Team (June Yoder, chair) invites all to a special forum focused on the changing and increased needs for pastoral care in our congregation. Those needs have increased four-fold over the last ten years. Whether you're a young parent balancing work and raising children or an older adult facing decisions about health care and living situations, we want to engage your thoughts and ideas for strengthening this important part of United's ministry.



GROUPS AND GATHERINGS

Wednesday Women's Study Group "The Hate U Give"

Oct. 7 & 21 at 10:00 am

From September through May, the group reads lots of great books. We meet to discuss them on the first and third Wednesdays of each month (10:00 to 11:30 am). You're invited to join in! This month's book is *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas. For more info: Cheryl Morton (515-240-4523, MomMorton@gmail.com), Jenn Wynn (817-219-0707, home@wynnes.us).

Pretty Good Guys

Books That Didn't Make It into the Bible

Wednesdays, Oct. 14 & 28 (10:30 am – Noon)

Not all Gospels or other accounts of the early Christians made it into the Bible. What were those books? And why weren't they included? Join these lively discussions in the Men's Study Group the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month.

Zoom Study Group

What Does the Bible Really Say about Forgiveness?

Thursdays, 8:00 – 9:00 am (MDT)

Join others from around the country to explore this challenging and important topic. Info/register at unitedchurchsf@gmail.com. All welcome!



Tuesday, Oct. 6, 2026 (5:30–7:00 pm) Behavioral Health Community Forum United Church of Santa Fe

NAMI Santa Fe hosts a Behavioral Health Community Forum at United, with a reception at 5:00 pm. Residents join Santa Fe City and County leaders for a conversation about local mental health challenges, successful initiatives, and opportunities to support individuals and families affected by mental illness. We want to hear from you! Please share questions or topics you would like addressed via our website: www.namisantafe.org. The forum is free and open to the public.

THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE
A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

1804 Arroyo Chamiso - Santa Fe NM 87505

Phone: 505-988-3295 | Fax: 505-988-2353
Email: unitedchurchsf@gmail.com
www.unitedchurchofsantafe.org

Mailing Date - September 22, 2026

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 198
Santa Fe NM 87501

WELCOME TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE

The United Church of Santa Fe invites you to join us as we grow in faith and hope. We are a part of the United Church of Christ, a progressive and inclusive Christian tradition that emphasizes freedom of thought and belief as well as a commitment to “Love God, Neighbor, and Creation.” As Christians, we are many individual members, each with different gifts to offer and contributions to make. We are also one body in Christ, members of one another.

As an expression of the practice and conviction of this congregation, we declare ourselves to be an “open and affirming church,” welcoming people who share a faith journey with Christ and who share with us the covenant that binds us together regardless of age, gender, race and ethnic background, mental or physical disability, or sexual orientation. We welcome you!

IN-PERSON AND LIVESTREAM WORSHIP SERVICES OFFERED

United Church is also United (in-person and online) Church! We offer the **10:00 am Sunday service in-person and also livestreamed online** (access it on United’s website: unitedchurchofsantafe.org). **We also offer an 8:30 am Outdoor Contemplative Communion Service.** For more information about United’s programs, please call 505-988-3295, send an email to unitedchurchsf@gmail.com, or go to our website. Thank you!