

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

June 2025

PRAYERS FOR THIS TIME

For Hope and Courage

God of the present moment,
God who in Jesus stills the storm
and soothes the frantic heart;
bring hope and courage to all
who wait or work in uncertainty.
Bring hope that you will make us the equal
of whatever lies ahead.
Bring us courage to endure what cannot be avoided,
for your will is health and wholeness
for your human family and your creation.
You are God, and we need you.

Adapted from New Zealand Prayer Book

A Tewa Prayer

*O our Mother Earth, O our Father Sky,
Your children are we: with tired backs
we bring you gifts that you love.*

*Then, weave for us a garment of brightness.
May the warp be the white light of morning,
May the weft be the red light of evening.
May the fringes be the falling rain.
May the border be the standing rainbow.
Weave for us a garment of brightness,
that we may walk fittingly where birds sing,
where grass is green.*

*O our Mother Earth, O our Father Sky,
weave for us!*

A Prayer for Father's Day

For all who have carried us in their arms and in their hearts,
For all who have wiped away our tears and listened us back to life,
For all whose Dad jokes made us groan and whose faith in us gave us hope,
We give you thanks, O God—Creator, Father, Mother of us all.

For A Child (any time, any age)

*Bendice a tu hijo, Señor, con tu amor,
con tu esperanza, con tu valor, este día y todos los días.*
(Bless your child, Lord, with your love,
your hope, your courage, this day and every day.)

Inside this issue:

Pastor's Message	2	Care and Concern	5
Worship	3	Outreach	6
Music / Children's & Youth Ministries / Endowment	4	Adult Faith Formation	7

**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

E-mail: unitedchurchsf@gmail.com
www.unitedchurchofsantafe.org

The Rev. Talitha Arnold
Senior Pastor

Sarah Sawtell
Moderator of the Congregation

Bradley Ellingboe
Director of Music

Michelle Schumann
Pianist

Dana Bender
*Director of Family, Youth, and
Children's Ministry*

Elijah Marquez
*Videographer/
Media Director*

Lin Raymond
Office Administrator

Maria Navarette
Children's Ministry Assistant

Destiny Muñoz
Children's Ministry Assistant

**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,

"What does it mean to be a Christian community in American 2025?"

On a beautiful Saturday morning in May, over 50 United members and friends gathered to engage in that question. Some had been part of United for decades, many were new in the last three to five years or even the last few months. So, we began by taking time in small groups to get to know one another, sharing our hopes and concerns for our country, world, and church.

We also engaged stories and teachings of Jesus that tell who he was and what he did. Parables like the "Last Judgement" (Matthew 25:31-46) that affirms Christ is found as "the least of these" or Jesus' assertion that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him to proclaim "sight to the blind and release to the captives" (Luke 4), which also challenged us—individually and as a church—to figure out what it means to follow Jesus in our time.

The May retreat was only the beginning of this new stage of United's journey. We'll continue the conversation in a variety of settings over the coming weeks and months. At the same time, we will try—as individuals and as a church—to live more deeply into the love, justice, and compassion to which our faith calls us.

Although the May retreat didn't prescribe specific actions, the impetus for the gathering came from the Lenten course, offered by Larry Rasmussen, on the witness and actions of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Nazi Germany. A theologian and pastor by training, Bonhoeffer not only wrote about resisting the rise of fascism, anti-Semitism, and violence in his country. He and his community also took actions to counter it. He also redefined the Christian (and especially Lutheran) understanding of God's grace—differentiating between "cheap grace" and costly grace.

"Cheap grace is grace without discipleship," he wrote, "grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate." For Bonhoeffer, true grace meant costly commitment and sacrifice, risking the world's disapproval and putting one's life on the line.

True grace, Bonhoeffer affirmed, "is costly because it costs a [person their] life, and it is grace because it gives [them] the only true life."

To be a Christian, to be true to the God of all life and all love, in America 2025 demands our trust in God's costly grace. But that trust is not simply a matter of individual will. The ability to commit to a life of costly grace comes from our commitment to life together. Discipleship is not a solitary endeavor. We need one another's prayers and songs to face the struggles and disappointments. We need each other's encouragement to resist despair and to nourish the compassion and courage that life in America 2025 demands.

Thanks be to God for that costly, and true, grace. And thanks be to God for a community like United that gives us the courage and compassion to live into such grace, in this time and all times.

Blessings,

Worship in June

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSIVITY – IT’S IN THERE!

The Almighty might not pass current government standards, but God is definitely a champion of inclusivity, diversity, and equity – and so was (and is) Jesus Christ. In June, the scriptures are chock full of stories about what the early Christian community looked like – and what United Church is called to look like, too.

8:30 Outdoor Communion — 10:00 Sanctuary Service with Choir and special music
Online services continue, too!

Who’s in Your Circle? **7th Easter – June 1**

A wealthy widow, an enslaved girl, and a guard at the NM Penitentiary. All of them were part of the first Christian community in Philippi—okay, so the guard was at the Macedonian pen. (Acts 6:16-34) Their story challenges us to consider not only who’s welcome at United—but whom do we actually reach out to and invite? And whom do we meet where they are—in their places of work and neighborhoods?

A Little Lower than Angels

Father’s Day Sunday – June 15

“Who are we,” Psalm 8 asks, “that God should care for us?” Yet, the Psalmist continues, God has made us “a little lower than angels and crowned us with glory and honor.” Quite an image, yes? It means you’re pretty special, yes?

But it also means everyone else is pretty special, too—even if they don’t look like us, think like us, act like us. All beloved children of a loving God.

A great passage for the secular holiday of Father’s Day, and a great one for a day that we celebrate two baptisms: Sasha Smucker and Jack Smucker.



A Most Inclusive Spirit **Pentecost Sunday – June 8**

In the traditional story of the first Pentecost from the Acts of the Apostles, God’s Spirit appears as a mighty wind and tongues of fire. (Acts 2) But God’s Spirit is manifest throughout the Bible: the Spirit that is with us wherever we go (Psalm 139); the cleansing waters of Baptism (be it Jesus’ or the Ethiopian Eunuch’s); the descending of the dove over those waters. No matter what form the Spirit takes, it always brings new life and new understanding of God’s community.
(Come at 9:00 for the first Summer Drop-in Choir!)

Deeper than the Clamor, Confusion, and Chaos **June 22**

When the prophet Elijah fled to the wilderness, his head was filled with the sounds of war, chaos, and death threats. Yet he still couldn’t escape the tumult. Hiding in a cave, waiting for some word from God, the prophet was beset by the howl of the wind, then the crash of an earthquake, and finally the roar of a fire. Yet God’s voice was in none of that. It came only in “the sound of sheer silence.” (I Kings 19:1-9, 11-13) In our tumultuous time, how can we hear God’s still, small voice?

Show Us the Path of Life **June 29**

“You show us the path of life,” proclaims the Psalmist, “and in your presence is the fullness of joy.” A great passage for Pride Sunday—because being in God’s presence means being in the presence of God’s people, **all** God’s people. (Psalm 16)

Music

Bradley Ellingboe: Director of Music

Children & Youth

Dana Bender: Family Ministries Director



Sumer is icumen in. Sing cucu!

In the words of a medieval round I learned in music school: *Sumer is icumen in. Lhude sing cuccu. Growep sed and blowep med and springþ þe wde nu. Sing cucu!* Which is to say, “Summer has arrived. Loudly sing, cuckoo! The seed is growing, and the meadow is blooming. Sing, cuckoo!”

After reading that you probably think I’m a little cuckoo, but we all get a little friskier as the good weather of a northern New Mexico summer is upon us. During these charming days of summer, we invite you to join us for our once/month Drop-In choirs – Pentecost Sunday (June 8), July 20, and August 10. There’s no Wednesday evening rehearsal in the summer; just “drop in” on one of those Sundays for the 9:00 am rehearsal. We’ll whip up an anthem (“just add water and stir”) and sing for the 10:00 am service.

On June 1, we welcome Janet Vrudny as guest choir conductor and also soloist Mr. Wyclif Gitonga, a church song leader from Kenya and the ED of the “Changing Lenses, Changing Lives” nonprofit (started by Jenn Wynne). Details about other special summer music will be in July’s newsletter. For now, I want to thank the Sanctuary Choir for all their hard work this year. Well done, all!

Brad

Uniting Children and Youth In Belief, Belonging and Behavior

Recently I read a New York Times article titled “Americans Haven’t Found a Satisfying Alternative to Religion.” Writer Lauren Jackson observes that, while 40 million Americans have left churches, attempting to replace them with other communities, many still yearn for what sociologists call “belief, belonging, and behavior” that faith communities provide. Research shows that, for now, the mass exodus from churches seems to have plateaued.

My first Sundays at United Church have confirmed what I have been fortunate to know my entire life—namely, being a part of a community that walks together in faith and has thought-provoking discussions about what it means to be a Christian in these uncertain times is important, regardless of age or socioeconomic status.

We are stronger together! This is an overarching theme that we’ll engage with United’s children and youth in upcoming sessions.



Children’s Ministry this summer focuses on Jesus’ parables, with different stories and activities each Sunday. We’ll also continue to tend to our garden and draw parallels from the Parable of the Sower. Just as plants need all the right conditions to grow, we need the right foundation to grow in faith.

For our **Middle School and High School youth**, we’re bringing back the Youth Initiation program, perhaps slightly differently than in the past.

I look forward to getting to know you all and creating opportunities for fun, connection, and faith formation!

Two Who Made a Difference

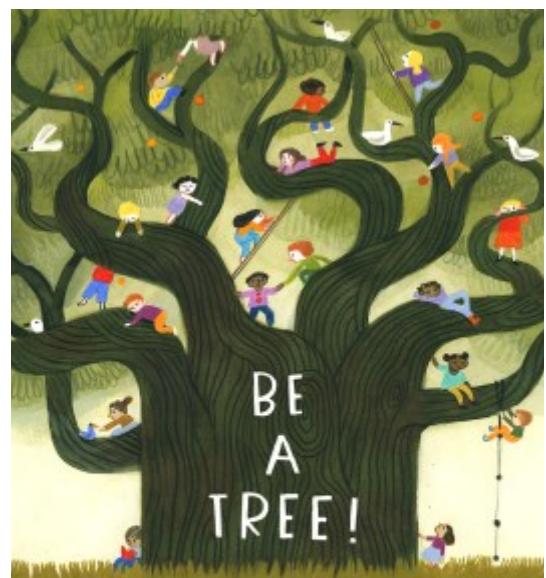
In late April, United Church received an unexpected gift from the estate of Dilys Evans and Sheila Paterson who were active members since the early 2000’s until health issues kept them from coming. Sheila served on the Church Council. Dilys, a renowned children’s book publisher, was active with children and youth.

They were married twice at the United Church – once “illegally” in 2005 and then again in 2014 after New Mexico allowed same-gender marriages.

Sheila died several years ago, and Dilys passed away last August. We had no idea the church was in their will, but it was. Their bequest has made a difference in the current financial uncertainty and ensures United will continue to invest in family, children’s and youth ministry.

If you have already United in your will or estate planning, please let us know. If you’d like to include United, please let us know that, too.

Thank you from United’s Endowment Committee (Frank Wilbanks, Chair).





CARE AND CONCERN

PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCH AND OUR WORLD



Prayers of Thanks to:

- **Parish Life Chair Louise Cavatta** and her great team for organizing and hosting receptions for four memorial services over a 3-week period and co-hosting May's All-Church, All-Age Breakfast Burrito Brunch, and All-Church Retreat.
- **The Church Council** and all 55 people who participated in the "Christian Community" retreat in May.
- **The Sanctuary Choir, Director Brad Ellingboe, Pianist Michelle Schumann and Choral Scholars Quiara Cortez, Becky Brunette, Yasmeen Lookman, and Javier Ortiz** for a great year of choral music and leading the congregation in our singing!

Prayers of Blessings for:

- **The nine new members** who joined United on May 18: Barbara MacPhee, Judy and Bob Crawford, Nannette Farrelly, Kurt Burk and Ken Latz, Cindi and Don Duncan, and Rev. Jim Hogue.
- **Cheryl Haskin**, graduating in June from Denver's Iliff Divinity School with a Masters in Divinity (M.Div.).
- **Sasha and Jack Smucker** (and their parents Jessica and Phil and grandparents June and Fred Yoder) as they prepare for their baptisms on Sunday, June 15.
- **Dave Borton and Lorena Armijos**, whose wedding was celebrated at United on May 10.
- **Pope Leo XIV and Catholics** around the world celebrating his election and his commitment to the poor and the vulnerable.
- **Serena Natonabah**, graduating from Colorado State University with a master's degree.

Healing and Hope for:

- The family and friends of **Denise Kusel** and of **Ricco Tapia**, whose memorial services were both in May; **Mark Muth** and the rest of the family and friends of **Carla Muth**, whose memorial service is June 7; **Pam Hyde**, who has lost both a close friend and a cousin this past month; **Jim and Avril Ekstrand**, following the death of Jim's stepmother.
- **Maggie Popp, George Duncan**, and others recovering from surgery; **John Walker**, preparing for a second cataract surgery; **Frank Wilbanks**, preparing for a knee replacement; and others also dealing with difficult health issues (**Ken Bordner, Sophia Zulema and Larry Thorpe's daughter, Helen Natonabah McCabe, Ray and Nancy Lutz, Rev. Kathleen Jimenez, Ann Noss (Marty Wilder's mother), Kay Burdette's grandson Max**, and others).
- Others living with cancer and those who love and care for them (**Greg and Linda Gaertner, Jen Wilkison (Dave and Nancy's daughter), Anna Spalding, Diane Bethune's brother Jeffery, Diane Johnston's brother**, and others).
- Those with memory loss and all who care for them (including **Tony Sawtell** (at Albuquerque's Retreat), **Royce and Carolyn Stewart, Rev. Christine and Paul Vogel, Rev. Roger Knapp** (at Montecito) and **Linda Knapp** (at Albuquerque's Spanish Trails), and others); persons living with Parkinson's or other neurological conditions, (**Monsignor Jerome Martinez, Dr. Karl Ray**, and others); or with chronic illness (**Brooke Roberts, Jan McGough**, and others); those in assisted living.
- **Individuals and families dealing with mental health, suicidal issues, 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 and crisis resources for people in distress.)
- Continued prayers for our nation and **those making decisions that impact the lives and well-being of others**; prayers for all whose lives are turned upside down by those decisions: immigrants and college students, children and adults in poverty, persons who are disabled, scientists and federal workers, and many more.
- Persons who are imprisoned in this country and elsewhere, and for those who love them.
- The people and all creation dealing with fires and tornadoes throughout the Midwest and South.
- **Immigrants and asylum seekers** at the U.S. border and those in our country, all facing uncertain futures and often deportation without due process.
- **The people of Ukraine, Gaza, Palestine, and Israel, Sudan, Pakistan and India** as war and violence continue; all government and military leaders in the U.S. and other countries who need God's wisdom, guidance, and commitment to a just peace.
- **Military people and law enforcement officers**, including those in our congregation.

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 June



On Call: John Shaffer (505) 466-4372
Food: June Yoder (505) 503-0555

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!

Summer Drive for the Food Depot

The Food Depot supplies schools, shelters, and agencies around Northern New Mexico with healthy food year-round. Bring any (or all) items to church: jumbo-size containers of canned vegetables/fruit, family-size packages of rice, pasta, beans and especially high-protein foods (dried beans, canned meats, chili con carne, soups); baby foods (powdered formula, cereal, jars of baby food); diapers. Monetary donations also welcome. Make checks to United Church (memo: Food Depot) or go online to unitedchurchofsantafe.org. Thank you!



Children's Garden Vegetables for Food Depot, too!

Produce from the Children's Garden goes to the Food Depot to provide fresh vegetables in the food bags. If you'd like to help with weekly weeding or harvesting, please contact Dana Bender or sign up at church. Also, as the summer progresses, if you have extra squash, etc. from your own garden, bring it to the church and we'll get it to the Food Depot!

Loving Our Neighbors in Santa Fe Supporting Santa Fe's Shelters

United Church provides full dinners monthly to Santa Fe Shelters. Lots of volunteer opportunities—making meatloaves at home; preparing casseroles at church ("Chop and Grate"); delivering food. Please contact Pat Roach: proach102@comcast.net or 505-988-7357. Details for June:

- Lots of meatloaves needed.
- June 20 (Friday, 9:30 am) – Chop and Grate
- June 23 (Monday) – Deliver to Interfaith, Casa Familia, and St. Elizabeth.

SANTA FE PRIDE PARADE SATURDAY, JUNE 28

United Church is marching in the 32nd Annual Pride Parade! Meet in the PERA parking lot (corner of Old Santa Fe Trail and Paseo de Peralta) by 9:30 am. Wear your green United "Heart-Hands" T-shirt (you can buy one at the church) and a hat, sunscreen, and walking shoes. Bring a full water bottle. Sign up by Thursday, June 26 in the Community Room or by email unitedchurchsf@gmail.com. More info: Pam Hyde (pshyde50@comcast.net). Let's show our United Pride! Thank you!

Immigration Task Force
June 29 Forum on Santa Fe Dreamer Project
Plan to join in the June 29 forum and watch for upcoming opportunities to act and advocate on behalf of immigrants and refugees, locally and worldwide.

LOVE GOD, LOVE CREATION!

Santa Fe River Cleanup

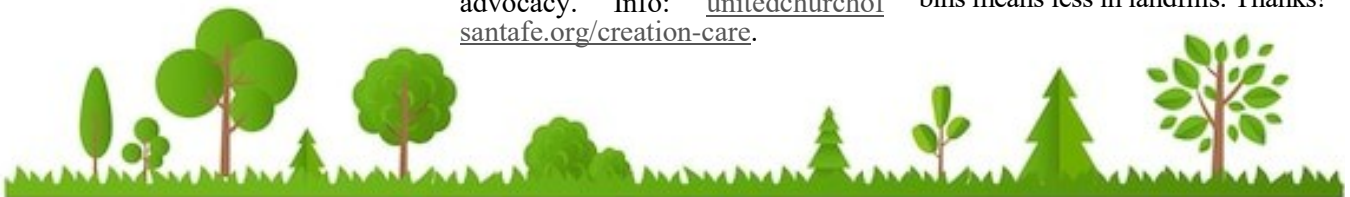
Many thanks to everyone who joined in the May 17 River Cleanup for the Santa Fe Watershed Association. We cleaned up 11 bags of trash and had a great time doing it! The next cleanup up morning will be Saturday, July 19. Watch for details in the July newsletter. All Creation thanks you!

Planning Your Summer Travels? Offset Your Carbon Use and Care for Creation

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

Compost Collection It's a Miracle!

United contracts with Reunity Resources to turn compostable products (food waste, meat scraps, etc.) into rich, life-giving compost. Pick up compostable garbage bags at the church (NO standard plastic bags, please), fill at home, and bring back to put in the green bin by the back fence. More things in compost bins means less in landfills. Thanks!



Adult Faith Formation

ADULT FORUMS — Sundays at 11:15 am

Joan Snider, Adult Faith Formation Chair

Changing Lenses, Changing Lives

Sunday, June 1

We welcome Wyclif Gitonga, Executive Director of the “Changing Lenses, Changing Lives” program in Kenya. A colleague of United member Jenn Wynne, he’ll share the work of this non-profit that is committed to ensure that children in developing countries have basic welfare and education needs met through funding projects and individual sponsorships.



Children of Changing Lens, Changing Lives

Next Steps for

“Being a Christian Community in America 2025”

Sunday, June 8

What better day than Pentecost—when God’s Spirit is poured out anew so “old ones can dream dreams and young ones see visions”—to continue our exploration of the question of the May retreat: “What does it mean to be a Christian community in America 2025?” Whether you participated in the retreat or not, come and engage with hope for the future of our congregation and the wider community and world.



The Four Vision Quests of Jesus

**Pretty Good Guys
Wednesdays,**

June 11 & 25 – 10:30 – 12:00

The Four Vision Quests of Jesus, by Episcopal Bishop and Choctaw Elder Steven Charleston, explores key events in the life of Jesus Christ through an indigenous lens. All United men and friends invited to join in the Pretty Good Guys’ summer study group. Copies of the book available for purchase in the Community Room.

(Info: 505-988-3295)

Life Circle Adult Care

Sunday, June 15

Lea VanMerkestyn, Director of Santa Fe’s *Life Circle Adult Day Center* is our guest to share the Center’s work and its commitment to be a place for elders and their families to balance the many needs associated with aging. *Life Circle*’s focus is to enhance their clients’ well-being with socialization and other services while also providing respite for family caregivers. Director VanMerkestyn will also have information on “pre-crisis planning” for families and individuals dealing with dementia or other challenges.

Sunday, June 22 – TBR

Santa Fe Dreamers:

Their Futures, Our Responsibilities

Sunday, June 29

Given the current administration’s actions toward immigrants and refugees, children who were brought to the U.S. by their parents seeking asylum, refuge, and safety for their families now face great difficulties and uncertainty. Since 2012, the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program has ensured safety from deportation and the opportunity to work in the U.S. legally—but the future of the program is in jeopardy. This Sunday we hear learn from leaders of Santa Fe Dreamers and young adults impacted by the uncertainty.

Groups and Gatherings

“United Church Night” at Fuego Baseball Game! Sunday, June 8 – 5:30 pm (sign up by Wed., June 4)

Join with your United community to cheer Santa Fe’s hometown baseball team, the Fuegos. We’re sponsoring the game, which means we get to throw out the first pitch, meet the players, get discounted tickets, and have United Church highlighted all through the game. Tickets are \$6 (33% off!). Families with kids are free. You can also help underwrite family tickets by including a donation with your ticket purchase. Friends welcome, of course! Sign up at church.

(unitedchurchsf@gmail.com)



Revelation—Really?

Thursdays – 8:00 am

via Zoom

The “Hope and Resilience” Zoom Study group focuses on the Book of Revelation this summer. If you’d like to join in the conversation, please let Talitha Arnold or Lin Raymond know. All welcome!

(unitedchurchsf@gmail.com)

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
E-mail: unitedchurchsf@gmail.com
www.unitedchurchofsantafe.org

Mailing Date — May 20, 2025

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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 Communion Service**. For indoor events, N95 masks are recommended. For more information about United’s programs, please call 505-988-3295, send an email to unitedchurchsf@gmail.com, go to our website. Thank you!