

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

October 2024

PRAYERS FOR OCTOBER

The Feast of St. Francis

(and any other day, too)
(Oct. 4)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.

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

(attributed to Francis of Assisi, c. 1181 – 1226)

For a Challenging Time

(a month before the election)

I add my breath to your breath
that our days be long on the Earth,
that the days of our people may be long,
that we shall be as one person,
that we may finish our road together.

Laguna Pueblo Prayer

The Start of the Stewardship Campaign

(Oct. 20)

Thank you, God,
for giving me what I need,
not what I want.
Open my heart—and my wallet—
to support a community that supports me
and supports others. Amen.

Reformation Sunday

(Oct. 27)

Dear Lord God,
Awaken us.

All Hallows' Eve (aka Halloween)

(Oct. 31)

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

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**UNITED CHURCH
OF SANTA FE**

A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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**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,

Each October 4th, Santa Fe celebrates Francis of Assisi—the 13th century Italian reformer best-known, especially by Santa Feans, for his love of “Brother Sun, Sister Moon,” all birds, and animals. A statue at City Hall depicts Francis preaching to a prairie dog (or perhaps a gopher).

But Francis' care wasn't limited to four-legged or two-winged creatures. He also loved his human kindred. Francis and his followers fed the poor and clothed the naked. Despite his terror of leprosy, he offered God's love to those afflicted with the disease by binding up their wounds.

Nor was Francis' love limited to his Christian brothers and sisters. It also included Brother Moslem. As a boy, he dreamed of becoming a Crusader, fighting the “infidels” to win back the Holy Land for Christianity. He fulfilled that dream, but not as he expected—not with sword or spear, but with compassion and understanding.

During the Fifth Crusade (1219), Francis journeyed to Egypt to convert the Moslem Sultan and his army. But it was Francis who was converted.

The carnage was horrific, with atrocities committed by both sides. The Moslem Sultan, Al-Kamil, had offered to negotiate, but Cardinal Pelagio refused. In the Christian camp, Francis preached, nursed the sick and wounded, and tried to persuade Pelagio to negotiate. The Cardinal wouldn't listen to him either.

Francis decided to go to the Sultan himself. He was captured sneaking into enemy territory. He escaped immediate execution only because the guards mistook him for a Sufi mystic.

When Francis was hauled before the Sultan, Al-Kamil's religious advisors wanted him beheaded. But the Moslem leader was so amazed—and amused—by the audacity of the little man in sackcloth he instead invited Francis to stay, tell him stories about Jesus and make his plea for peace.

The two men were the same age. Both were dedicated to their faith. But according to biographer Donald Spoleto, the Sultan was also someone “who appreciated true faith wherever he found it.” He admired Francis' character, commitment, and clear contempt for the luxuries of the world. Al-Kamil promised to never condemn Francis to death.

Francis himself was also converted—not specifically to Islam, but to the Sultan's vision of peace. Al-Kamal again offered to negotiate with the Crusaders, stop the fighting, and even return Jerusalem to Christian control. Francis again pled with the Cardinal for peace, to no avail.

The bloodshed continued. Francis felt he'd failed. Perhaps in the short term, yes—but 800 years later it's the little man of Assisi who is remembered, not the crusading Cardinal.

One person with a vision of hope and peace. One person who saw someone of another faith not as an enemy, but as a neighbor.

In Santa Fe and all around the world, there's no time when we have needed Francis' kind of Christianity more than we do now. When political and religious leaders cast war as God's will, we need Francis' understanding of true holiness. When our faith is used to justify violence and hatred, Christians must tell the story of this Christian saint who saw all God's creatures as Brother Sun, Sister Moon, and even Brother Moslem.

Blessings for St. Francis Day – and all through the month.

Worship in October

Job's Dilemma, Job's Discovery

After our annual “St. Francis Pet Blessing” service, worship in October explores the story of Job, the righteous person whose life is turned upside down due to a bet between God and Satan. It’s one of the most challenging books of the Bible—and also one of the most misquoted and misunderstood. It’s also one of the most important for it takes on the deeply human question: “Why do people suffer?” Or, as Rabbi Harold Kushner framed it, “why do bad things happen to good people?”

Join in this exploration – and invite a friend to do so, too.

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



Ask the Animals

Pet Blessing and Outdoor Worship **St. Francis Sunday – Oct. 6**

“But ask the animals, and they will teach you;” Job told his friends who had come to help him in his troubles. “Seek the birds of the air, and they will tell you.” (Job 12:2) Given the less-than-helpful advice those friends offered (i.e., that his suffering was due to his sin), it’s no wonder Job turned to God’s other creatures for solace and wisdom. “Ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you, and the fish of the sea will declare to you.” It’s a perfect text for our annual Pet Blessing. Bring your critters (on a leash, in a carrier, or as a picture). Invite your friends and their critters, too!

A Deal with the Devil – October 13

The book of Job begins with an odd story—Satan tricking God into a bet God is sure to lose. (Job 1:1, 2:1-10) It’s also a bet that ensnares a good and righteous person in the competition between the Creator of Heaven and Earth and a fallen angel. What could such an ancient and strange story have to teach us modern humans? Quite a bit actually.

With Friends Like This. . . – October 20

Within a few short verses, Job loses his cattle, his camels, even his children. Then he loses his health and is covered in boils. Three friends sit shiva with him, wrapping the grief-stricken Job in silence for seven days. Then they open their mouths, and Job’s suffering really begins. Each friend offers their reasons for his ills—it must have been his fault, his children’s fault, or the animals’ fault. It’s a normal human response. If we can find a reason for someone’s misfortune, we can distance ourselves from their suffering. Surely it can’t happen to us. But Job’s story tells us otherwise—and demands we not be deceived by such easy answers.

The Divine Advocate

Reformation Sunday – October 27

In the 10:00 service, the Sanctuary Choir offers Johann Sebastian Bach’s Cantata #80, based on Martin Luther’s most famous hymn, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.” Luther took the problem of evil and suffering seriously. So did the author of Job, thousands of years before. In the very depth of his suffering, Job cries out his faith that he has not been abandoned. Arguing against his friends’ facile “advice,” Job proclaims, “I know that my advocate lives.” (Job 19) He is not alone. Job puts his faith in the One who will take up his case and triumph over evil. For Martin Luther, that One was and is Jesus Christ—who triumphed over death itself and who taught us God’s ways of life as well. What a full and rich Sunday.



Job Praying (1960)
Marc Chagall

Answer to Job

All Saints Sunday – November 3

When God finally engages Job directly, the Almighty’s answer to his suffering is odd. No extended theological explanation, no real pastoral care. Instead, God asks “Where were you when I made heaven and earth, horses and hippopotami? Do you, Job, control the stars in their courses or rein in the rivers?” (Job 38-41) Is God just pulling rank? “I’m God, you’re not.” But perhaps God is doing something else—putting Job’s life in perspective, connecting him to the whole world, revealing that the mystery of life is a mystery of infinite creativity and wonder. On All Saints Sunday, perhaps saints are those who understand God’s answer to Job and have found their place in God’s never-ending circle of life.

It’s just a thought.

Festival Choir Offers Bach Cantata Oct. 27

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” is not only a statement of our belief, and a strong Protestant hymn, it’s also a magnificent cantata by J.S. Bach. It will be sung as a part of worship on Reformation Sunday, October 27, at the 10:00 am service. The Festival Choir, with guest instrumentalists and soloists, will incorporate the piece into that day’s worship.

The piece was written for Reformation Day 1723 and, like most of Bach’s sacred cantatas, it is based on a hymn tune. It follows the typical Bach cantata form in that the hymn tune is the basis for the opening movement by the choir which, in this case, is an elaborate fugue on “A Mighty Fortress,” followed by arias and duets that comment on the words of the hymn. The cantata concludes with the entire congregation joining in the final movement, which is the hymn itself. And that’s how we’ll do it at United.

If you’re interested in joining the Festival Choir, email me and plan to attend Wednesday evening rehearsals starting on September 25 through October 27. And for everyone reading this, please mark your calendars for this special event. And, as Bach concluded all his pieces, *Soli Deo Gloria*.

Brad

Children’s, Youth, and Family Ministries

New Children’s Ministry Staff

We welcome Andrea Gonzales as a Sunday Children’s Ministry teacher during the 10:00 service. A native of Santa Fe, Ms. Gonzales works part-time with Growing Up New Mexico and is also a part-time student in the Early Childhood program at Santa Fe Community College. She joins Maria Navarette in helping United’s children (toddlers through 5th graders) experience God’s love and to show that love through Jesus way of “loving neighbor and loving creation.” Please welcome her on Sunday mornings!

Update on Developing Outdoor Exploration, Re-creation, and Education Spaces

On Fiesta Sunday, a great group of youth, parents and other adults brainstormed lots of ideas for developing United’s outdoor spaces for children, teens, and parents, including a possible sports court, natural material climbing spaces, enhancing the reflection trail, etc. We’re currently seeking a landscape architect with background in children/youth play and learning areas. Stay tuned!

Other October Offerings

Serenade to Music by Vaughan Williams Coro Lux Concert – Sunday, Oct. 6 – 3:00 pm St. Paul Lutheran Church, Albuquerque

The sixty-voice auditioned chorus led by Artistic Director Bradley Ellingboe also offers the world premiere of a new piece, *This Breath, This Life, This Song* by Will Todd. Tickets: abqcorolux.com. Jody and Peter Spalding, Yasmeen Lookman, Rebecca Brunette all sing in Coro Lux.

Dona Nobis Pacem by Vaughan Williams Santa Fe Symphony and Chorus Sunday, Oct. 27 – 3:00 pm St Francis Cathedral (free)

The Santa Fe Symphony and Chorus offer a powerful musical call for peace. Joan Snider, Elizabeth Roghair, and Talitha Arnold sing with the seventy-voice choir, directed by Carmen Flórez-Mansi.



Blessed . . . to be a Blessing.
2025 Campaign for United
Concert with Ken Medema
Saturday, November 9 (4:00 pm – with dessert at 3:00 pm)
10:00 Worship Service, Sunday, November 10
(Both Saturday concert and Sunday Service
in-person and livestreamed)

We welcome back composer and pianist (and friend of Brad Ellingboe) Ken Medema for an afternoon of “Cookies, Conversation, and Concert” the second Saturday of November. We’ve sung Ken’s music at United for many years (*Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying; Tree Song*, etc.). Ken’s music sings of God’s beauty, grace, and care—all reasons to give thanks to God by sharing our blessings. That’s the essence of Christian Stewardship. On Sat. Nov. 9, Ken offers a concert of his music, including songs he will make up on the spot from **your** stories. We’ll also offer our own pledges of support for United’s future. We hope you’ll join in both the 3:00 pm dessert and the 4:00 concert for all ages! (Ken will also be our guest in the 10:00 Sunday service.)



FebFest 2025—Saturday, Feb. 8 - Sunday, Feb. 9
Renowned Conductor Brandon Boyd





CARE AND CONCERN

PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCH AND OUR WORLD



Prayers of Thanks for:


- All who helped make the visit and events with our Roots visitors (Mr. A’wad Noor and Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger) such a success. You showed United’s hospitality to both our guests from Palestine/Israel and those from the wider Santa Fe community.
- The **Prayer Child Pray-ers** who have committed to praying for a child or youth in the United community through this year.
- **Parish Life Chair Louise Cavatta** and her team of volunteers who hosted such a great Fiesta Burrito Brunch and two other fellowship events for *Roots* and **Discipleship Development Chair Diane Darby**, for arranging extra greeters, etc.
- All who are helping us stay connected, sane, faithful, healthy, and hopeful!

Prayers of Blessing and New Life for:

- **Emily Glover**, who is back from New York and now in the theater department at New Mexico State University.
- **Cynde and Bob Christie** who are moving to California.

Healing and Hope for:

- **Constance Romero** and her extended family following the death of her sister Vickie; **Rabbi Neil Amswych** and his family, mourning the loss of his mother-in-law.
- Those continuing to recover from accidents or other health concerns: **Diane Bethune, Dave Wilkison, Rev. Kathleen Jimenez, Maria Navarette, Maureen McCarthy**, and others.
- Those dealing with continuing health issues (**Rev. Roger and Linda Knapp, Dorothy Patinka, Rhae Burden, Janyth Fell, Theresa Kline, and others**) and members and friends dealing with Covid.
- Those living with cancer and those who love and care for them (**Alice Casey and Cliff Beck’s daughter Jenna**, whose cancer has spread; **Greg and Linda Gaertner, Prof. David Daniels, Anna Spalding, Diane Bethune’s brother Jeffery, Mary Hasbah Roessel’s brother Monty**, and others).
- Those with **memory loss** and all who care for them (including **Royce and Carolyn Stewart, Rev. Christine and Paul Vogel**, and others); persons living with Parkinson’s or other neurological conditions (**Cliff Beck, Sandy Vermillion, Diane Johnston’s sister, Msgr. Jerome Martinez, Sara Vacha**, and others); those with chronic illness (**Brooke Roberts, Cynde Christie, Jan McGough**, and others).
- Persons in long-term care or assisted living (**Helen Wagner, Merry and Al Converse, Natalie Wells**, and others).
- 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.)
- Persons who are imprisoned and those who love them.
- The children and teachers of the Apalachee School in Georgia and all other children, youth, and adults who have been impacted by gun violence in our country.
- The people of Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, and Lebanon, along with Jews, Palestinians, and other Muslims living in the U.S. as war and violence continue; government and military leaders in Israel/Palestine, as well as the U.S. and other countries who need God’s wisdom, guidance, and commitment to a just peace.
- Continued prayers for Ukraine, Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, Venezuela, and other places also impacted by war; immigrants seeking asylum from violence; **policymakers** who determine their fate.
- Military people and law enforcement officers, including those in our congregation.

<p>United’s “Prayer Child” Ministry Almost Complete We’re just a few volunteers away from having enough Prayer Child Pray-ers” for every United child and youth. Will you pray daily for one child or youth this year? Sign up at church or unitedchurchsf@gmail.com. Thank you!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Congregational Care for October</p> <div style="text-align: right;"></div> <p>On Call: Paul Vogel (847) 366-0677 Food: Dusty Pruitt (302) 393-3265</p>
<p>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)</p> <div style="text-align: right;"></div>	<p>Care Notes for Gail Mattson can be mailed to: (Concord Royale assisted living facility) 4230 Clayton Rd. Rm. 147 Concord, CA 94521</p>

Outreach

LOVE GOD, LOVE NEIGHBOR, LOVE CREATION

Outreach Opportunities – Thank you!

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

LOVE NEIGHBOR

Get Involved



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

\$1,860 Donated for Summer Food Drive

Thanks to the generosity of United members and friends, we raised \$860 for the Food Depot and also donated a dozen boxes of groceries. We also added \$1,000 from the outreach budget to the individual donations. Thank you!

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. 25 (9:30 am) or deliver food to shelters Monday, Oct. 28 or make meatloaf at home. Interested? Please contact Pat Roach (proach102@comcast.net). You can also support this ministry with check or online donations (memo: shelter meals). Thank you!

United Church’s Immigration and Refugee Task Force Welcomes You!

We engage our United community in advocacy, policy work, education, and direct support for refugees and immigrants around the world, at the U.S./Mexico border, and in Santa Fe. The commitment is a monthly meeting (2nd Monday), plus Immigration and Refugee Forums and sponsored events (Advocacy Day, etc.). Interested? Please contact Avril Ekstrand (avrilekstrand@yahoo.com, 505-490-8164).

Supporting Our Diné/Navajo Brothers and Sisters

Your financial support for food and cleaning supplies along with gardening needs continue to make a difference. Donations are sent to United’s long-time partner, the Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, in Fort Defiance, Arizona.

LOVE CREATION



United’s Carbon Offset Program Addresses Climate Change (and Climate Disasters)

When you drive or fly, mitigate the carbon you put into the air through United’s “Carbon Offset Program” that supports climate advocacy of *NM Interfaith Power and Light* and hands-on work of *Tree New Mexico*. The math is easy. When you fly, donate \$4 for every hour in flight. If you drive, it’s \$4 per 1,000 miles. More info at: unitedchurchofsantafe.org/post/unitedscarbonoffsetprogram.



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 them at home, and bring back to put in the green bin by the Children’s Garden. More things in compost bins means less in landfills. Thanks! Also during Fellowship Time, please put used cups and napkins in the compost bin in the Community Room.

PING-PONG AT UNITED?

Whether you call it ping-pong or table tennis, we invite United members and friends who are Enthusiasts, beginners, and those in between to potentially join us for a ping-pong session (future date(s) and time(s) to be determined). We have a wonderful ping-pong table here at United and are looking to plan a gathering of sorts this fall. Interested? Please contact Elijah at unitedchurch.elijah@gmail.com.

**YOU
JUST
GOT
SERVED**

Adult Faith Formation

October Sunday Forums – 11:15

October 6 ***A Solar Tour***

From the adobe trombe wall in United's original sanctuary to the multitude of windows throughout the building to the solar panels and EV car charge outside, United Church has relied on the power of the sun to reduce our carbon footprint and "love God by loving Creation." We invite you to take a "solar tour" inside and outside United, as we join in the "Great American Solar Tour!"

October 13 – TBR

October 20

What's the Problem with Being Christian?

We live in a time when the term "Christian" can have many negative associations, from Christian Nationalism to Christian opposition to LGBTQ rights. What does the word "Christian" mean to you? What does it mean to identify with the "United Church of Christ?" As we consider revising our church's covenant to include Jesus Christ, join in this conversation.

October 27

Seek Christ's Face:

Images of Jesus in Art Through the Ages

with Molly Elkind (see series description below)

November 3 (2 opportunities)

- A. ***Seek Christ's Face*** (with Molly Elkind)
- B. ***What's Happening at the New Mexico Border*** (Immigration/Refugee Task Force)



"To Seek Christ's Face" with Molly Elkind ***Sunday Forum Series on the***

Images of Jesus in Art—starting Oct. 27

As United explores who Jesus was and is for us, join Molly Elkind for a four-week series that looks at images of Jesus in art, from the earliest days in the catacombs up to the present. What can we learn from the ways in which Jesus has been and is today portrayed in visual terms? Molly will present "Seek Christ's Face," a slide lecture/discussion, in the Sunday Forums on Oct 27, Nov. 3, Nov. 17 and Nov. 24.

Groups and Gatherings

Wednesday Women's Study Group **Oct. 2 & 16 (10:00 am)**

The Wednesday Women's Study Group meets on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. They continue reading *The Making of Biblical Womanhood* by Beth Allison Barr and begin reading *The Personal Librarian* by Heather Terrell and Victoria Christopher Murray. You're invited to join in! For more info, please contact Cheryl Morton (515-240-4523, mom_morton@gmail.com) or Jenn Wynn (817-219-0707, home@wynnes.us).



Victoria Christopher Murray & Heather Terrell

Pretty Good Guys Start ***The Greatest Prayer: Rediscovering the*** ***Revolutionary Lord's Prayer*** **(2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 10:30 to 12:00)**

We say the Lord's Prayer on a regular basis, which means it can become just rote—but scholar John Dominic Crossan challenges us to engage the prayer's revolutionary message. The Pretty Good Guys welcome all men to join them in their exploration of Crossan's "The Greatest Prayer," starting Sept. 25 and continuing Oct. 8 and 22. Books available for purchase in the Community Room.



Resiliency and Hope: The Gospel of Mark **Thursday Mornings at 8:00 (MT) on Zoom**

Engage the Gospel of Mark, start to finish (don't worry, it's the shortest Gospel), using the United Church of Christ Study Guide (written by Talitha). Info/register at unitedchurchsf@gmail.com. All welcome!

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

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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!

OUTDOOR, 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 **outdoor 8:30 am Contemplative 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!