

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

REV. TALITHA ARNOLD



Rev. Talitha Arnold has been the Minister of the United Church of Santa Fe since 1987, when the church was a 7-year-old new church start of the United Church of Christ. It is the only UCC congregation in New Mexico's capital city and throughout northern New Mexico. Since that time, the congregation has tripled in membership and is known in Santa Fe for its worship and music ministries, education programs for all ages, outreach and advocacy, particularly in the areas of public education, poverty issues, and the environment. United was the first congregation in the Southwest Conference to become Open and Affirming in 1994, and the church has been a leader in LGBT rights on a city and state level. The church has a 15-year partnership with two local elementary schools, as well as with the Santa Fe Watershed, and two local homeless shelters. Yearly mission trips for adults and youth go to both the Arizona/Sonora (Mexico) border and the Navajo reservation.

A native of Arizona and a graduate of Pomona College and Yale Divinity School, Rev. Arnold was the Interim Associate University Chaplain for Yale and served congregations in Connecticut and Arizona before being called to United Church of Santa Fe. In Santa Fe, she served on the city's first Children and Youth Commission, helped start both the Christian-Jewish dialogue and Muslim-Christian dialogues. She was President of Santa Fe Habitat for Humanity and is currently on the Ethics Committee of the local hospital. On a national level, she chairs the Faith Communities Task Force of the Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention and the Yale Divinity School Alumni Board. Her publications include the book, "Worship for Vital Congregations." She is a regular contributor to the UCC Still Speaking Daily Devotional and has published articles for The Christian Century, NPR's All Things Considered, The New Mexican and Albuquerque Journal. She is currently working on a book, "A Desert Faith for a Desert Time," with a fellowship from the Louisville Institute.