

“Love of Neighbor” Demonstrated Every Day

By Lynn Jones & Jean Simpson

At 92, Fran Collier still finds ways to demonstrate her love of neighbor. As a member of First Congregational UCC, Sarasota, Fran has proven that age is not a barrier to making others feel good, particularly on their Birthdays and Anniversaries! When Fran and her late husband, Wade, joined the church more than 20 years ago, she sang in the choir, served on the Faith Formation and Missions teams, and was active in the women’s group.

Now that Fran no longer drives, she wanted to find a way to still stay connected to her First Congregational friends, so she offered to call all of the members on their Birthday and Anniversary and play to them on her piano. Taking advantage of the church’s newsletter that lists all Birthdays & Anniversaries each month, and the church directory that keeps church members’ phone numbers updated, Fran is able to contact everyone on their special day and give them a personal greeting.

“This church has always been an important part of my life,” says Fran, “and this is one way that I can give back to my church family.” Thus, 365 days a year, Fran is at her piano serenading at least 1 member of the church, and on some days, 7 or 8. And believe me, it’s a phone call many of us look forward to every year on our Birthdays, so much so that I, for one, purposely don’t answer the phone so that Fran’s message is one that I can play over and over again. You might say that it’s the gift that keeps on giving...and Fran is the ultimate giver.