



First Congregational UCC

*"Not my sister, not my brother, but it's **me**, O Lord,
standing in the need of prayer."*

These words capture what is in my heart in these days. I hold prayers of praise for people sitting outside the Oasis Center at 9 a.m.; prayers of thanksgiving for the generosity of our church; prayers of hopefulness as new people connect with our church; prayers for strength as we grieve friends who have died; prayers of healing; and so much more - my heart feels full to overflowing.

Prayer is vital in these days. Prayer is our connection to the Source of life and Ground of being. Prayer is a way to both name where we need support and where we can feel God's support. Prayer is a dialogue with the Divine.

Many of you may know the famous quote from Mother Teresa on prayer. Dan Rather once asked Mother Teresa what she said during her prayers. She answered, "**I listen.**" So, Dan asked, "Well then, what does God say?" Mother Teresa smiled with confidence and answered, "**He listens.**" For an instant, Dan didn't know what to say. "And if you don't understand that," Mother Teresa added, "I can't explain it to you."

In June, we will be centering our hearts around **the Lord's Prayer**. In these sixty-six words we say every Sunday, we find wisdom and insight. I wonder, how might the Lord's Prayer guide and ground you in these days? How might praying the Lord's Prayer daily be a source of connecting with the Sacred? This month, I want to invite you to consider several opportunities to connect:

- ❖ **Dale Moore has written a wonderful devotional on the Lord's Prayer.** You can purchase Dale's devotional from the church for \$6.
- ❖ **Every day in June, at noon, we encourage you to pause what you are doing and pray the Lord's Prayer.** What might stir knowing that the whole church is saying these words at the same time from Sarasota to Ohio to Illinois to Canada to Georgia back to Bradenton? There is grace in this invitation in knowing that even if you happen to forget one day or don't get to say the Lord's Prayer until 3 pm, **it's okay!** The words hover and hang in the air currents – Spirit still connects us.

June Hours

Pastor Wes:

Mon.-Thurs.: 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Terri Chapman:

Mon. & Thurs.: 10:00 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Mark:

Mon. – Fri.: 7 a.m.-3 p.m.

Greg:

Tues. – Fri.: various hours

Worship Options



- **Outdoor worship ~ 9 a.m.** on the Wendling Terrace. You are welcome to sit **inside wearing a mask.**

For outside, bring a lawn chair and if you have been vaccinated and feel comfortable, you can lower your mask.
- **On-line worship ~ 10:55 a.m.** Livestream on Facebook, YouTube and our website.
- **In-person, in-the-sanctuary with masks, social distancing and only the soloist singing.**
- **Zoom Coffee Hour at noon** will continue in June.

- ❖ Each Sunday I will preach on a portion of the prayer.
- ❖ On **Thursday, June 10 and Thursday, June 24 at 1 p.m.**, I invite you to the Wendling Terrace for a time of in-person prayer! We will explore pathways of prayer, talk about what gets in our way of prayer, and practice praying together. I pray everyone reading this will try one of these sessions.

The Lord's Prayer has been said millions of times by billions of people, through good times and not so-great times. I pray this series this June will connect us as a community in these days.

With great love to you all ~ Wes

Worship in June



During the entire month of June, we will celebrate Pride Month! This is an opportunity for us to honor our covenant to be an Open and Affirming Church. We will lift up the voices of our LGBTQ brothers and sisters. I pray June will help us honor the ways our church is incredibly

blessed by our COLLAGE community (*see sidebar if you want more information on COLLAGE.* **Better yet, attend a Tuesday COLLAGE zoom in June!**)



June 6 ~ We will celebrate Holy Communion with **Rev. Bonnie Lipton and Rev. Dr. Craig Collemer** presiding with Pastor Wes at Christ's table. Focus passage is the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:7-13

June 13 ~ We lean in and listen to the Lord's Prayer, Luke 11:1-4. We will also hear a testimony from a member of COLLAGE.

June 20 ~ We will celebrate Father's Day! We will focus on the "forgiveness" part of the Lord's Prayer and connect to Matthew 18:21-35. We will also hear a testimony from a member of COLLAGE.

June 27 ~ Stonewall Sunday ~ We will honor this important day and listen to Romans 7:14-25 concerning God's presence in times of trial named in the Lord's Prayer. We will hear a testimony from a member of COLLAGE.

July 4 ~ **ONE Service ONLY. NO 9 a.m. outdoor service today.** Pastor Wes will be on vacation. We will hear from several church members on the Lord's Prayer, including our very own Dale Moore!

Join the Zoom Conversation



- **Sunday Coffee Hour at Noon** ~ You are **always welcome** to join in the conversation and connect with other members!
- **COLLAGE Tuesdays @ 11 a.m.** ~ Collage is our LGBTQ and Ally Group. All are welcome to join our Collage group on Zoom for support and faithful discussions.
- **Tuesday Bible Study @ 6:30 p.m.** ~ We meet on Zoom to discuss the Bible passage for the upcoming Sunday.
- **Wednesday Bible Study @ 11 a.m.** ~ We meet on Zoom to discuss the Bible passage for the upcoming Sunday.
- **Wednesday @ 3 p.m.** ~ **Sacred Conversations on Race**

Sacred Conversations on Race

We continue our Sacred Conversation on Race on Wednesdays at 3 p.m. We will continue to discuss the PBS series *The Black Church*. Having completed all four hours of the video, we will step back to see the threads and themes that run through the whole series. If you were not able to participate in the conversations in April and May, you are invited to watch the series. The whole four hours are on YouTube.



June 18th at noon the Manasota Bar Association will host a “lunch and learn” on Juneteenth. Our very own **David Wilkins** will be one of the panelists. More information to come soon.

First Congregational UCC’s Juneteenth 19th on Zoom at 2 p.m.! This is a wonderful **NEW** tradition in our church. Please put both dates and times on the calendar.

Staffing Team Update

The Staffing Team is continuing to discuss and prayerfully discern the job description for our Office Administrator. As we continue to work through staff configurations, we have hired **Terri Chapman** as temporary support. Terri began in late May and will work on Mondays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Please help Terri feel warmly welcomed as she helps us bridge from what was to what might be in the coming months.



Easter Love Thank You

“Generosity is the most natural outward expression of an inner attitude of compassion and loving-kindness.” —The Dalai Lama XIV

Our Easter Love donations spread God’s presence to organizations worldwide. Through the generosity of our church, we were able to raise \$17,000—an amount surpassing the previous year! Checks have already been sent and you will notice many of these organizations support our covenants. Our Easter Love donations reflect our values and you were incredibly generous. Thank you for making a difference.

Our 2021 Easter Love donations support:



- One Great Hour of Sharing
- Neighbors in Need
- Strengthen the Church
- Church World Service
- Back Bay Mission
- Joseph Evans Scholarship Fund (*supports our Racial Justice Covenant*)
- Coalition of Immokalee Workers
- UCC Coalition LGBTQ concerns (*supports our Open & Affirming Covenant*)
- Partners in Health (Dr. Farmer Ministry)
- Helps International (*supports sustainable/Creative Justice Covenant*)

Green Team: Protecting Our Pollinators



Today I saved a beautiful brown beetle's life. He (she?) was flailing in the bird bath water, unable to swim. While doing morning garden rounds, I came upon the struggle. With a bare hand, I scooped

up the beetle, bent down, and placed it gently on the grass. The beetle gave a shake, tested its wings and flew away. It's a good day when you can save a beetle.

That beetle is very special. Turns out that the little things (insects) rule the world. Life as we know it depends on insects. They are the currency in our ecological bank account. How so? Insects are pollinators, flitting from plant to plant, transferring pollen, making it possible for the propagation of fruits and foods – thus making food for humans to eat. Bottom line: no insects, no humans.

Plus, insects are the primary diet for birds all year and especially when feeding their young. More insects mean a better survival rate for baby birds. But we've not been taught to love insects. Instead,

we reach for the toxic spray bottle or the fly swatter, killing the very insect that could help save our lives. Insects include all kinds of bugs—beetles, dragonflies, butterflies, bees, wasps, hornets, flies, mosquitos. I am never going to love the green bottlenose fly that lands on the rim of my coffee cup, but I do appreciate that the fly is important to the chain of life. So now I have a fan, the kind you open by hand, for swishing away that fly and its friends.

Doug Tallamy, the author of **Bringing Nature Home**, has a webinar on YouTube entitled "A Guide to Restoring the Little Things that Run the World." <https://youtu.be/mFcNLxjL104>.

It's a good start to appreciating pollinators and biodiversity.

Other easy things to do: turn off security lights (bugs die in the lights) or change to yellow LED lights, plant natives (in the ground/in a pot) like red Penta and milkweed that attract pollinators, and dig up some grass areas to plant different, more insect friendly ground cover like sunrise mimosa or perennial peanut.

Oh, and get a lovely folding fan. Mother Nature thanks you in advance for all you do.

Green Team: Post July 4th Clean-Up!

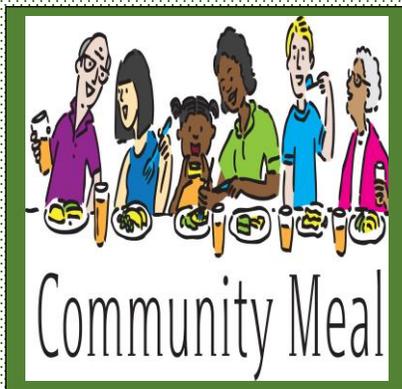


As we are freed post-vaccination, consider signing up to clean a **beach** or local **park** after the July 4th holiday.

You can do this wherever you will be – if you are local, here are two useful links (*volunteers must sign up individually*):



- Keep Sarasota County Beautiful: Park and Beach clean-up opportunities. <https://www.scgov.net/government/public-utilities-water/keep-sarasota-county-beautiful>
- Manatee County Volunteers. https://mymanatee.org/departments/parks_natural_resources/volunteer



Community Meals:

We continue to provide a monthly community meal at St. Paul Lutheran Church. Our meal is cooked by Sandy Smith with home-baked cookies from the many bakers in our church added as a sweet treat.

We need your **home-baked cookies**, and if you are able, we could use **help in preparing our take-out meal**. Please join us on **June 22 from 4-6 p.m.**



Volunteer and/or inquire for more details—Carol Hagglund or church office.

First UCC Women's Association

We are thankful for the generosity and support of our ministry programs. It is with grateful hearts we are awarding \$500 to each of the following charities:

Echo Farms – a Christian organic farm in Fort Myers

C. I. W. – Coalition of Immokalee Workers

Second Chance Last Opportunity – Sarasota food distribution and life skills training center

Family Promise – shelter, meals and support to homeless children and their families

Project 180 – clean & sober housing, etc. for the recently incarcerated

All Faiths Food Bank – food distribution center

Meals on Wheels – delivers nutritious meals to persons in their home

SPARCC – Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center assisting those living with domestic violence

Baby Basics – distributes free diapers to the babies of the working poor

Selah Freedom – anti-human trafficking organization



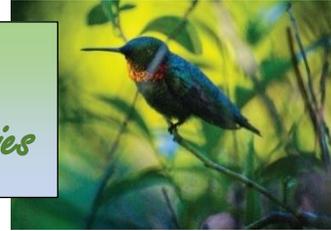
As you can see from the brief descriptions, the need is great and we are blessed to have these ministries to help meet that need. Blessings to all who have made our contributions and support possible.

Nancy Morris, President

June Birthdays



June Anniversaries



6/1 James Butterworth
 6/2 Nancy Roberts
 6/3 Nancy Morris
 6/4 Sallie Lutz
 6/6 Jerry Long
 6/7 Pamela Hendrickson
 Scott Nutter
 6/8 Jean McMurren
 6/9 Jerry Oliver
 6/10 Jeanne Wanning
 6/11 Carol Fields
 George Francis
 6/12 Dona Knoch
 6/14 Peggy Mezile

6/15 Sandy Plette
 Lloyd Kalisak
 6/16 Richard Wharton
 6/17 Alleyne Kess
 Shirley Mohr
 6/19 Barbara Green
 John Metzger
 6/22 Kenneth Briggs
 Jeanette F. Potts
 Mary Lou Starcher
 6/23 Gene Rump
 Elizabeth Segars
 Lee Smith
 6/25 Susan Gornto
 6/27 Jack Mahoney
 David Wilkins
 Chris Chismar
 6/28 Norman Hervieux
 6/29 Betty Dettery
 Jeff Sands

6/3 Chuck & Betty Gaskill
 6/4 Allyn & Kay Jones
 6/6 Bob & Christine Millar
 Gibson & Jeannie Mitchell
 6/7 David H. & Jean L. Kerrigan
 Suzanne & Larry Horner
 6/8 Fred & Lee Brockmann
 6/9 Earl & Nancy Alger
 Gene & Sharon Rump
 6/12 Charles & Mary Jane Hamilton
 Kenneth & Dona Knoch
 6/14 Jeff & Judy Jones
 Gregory & Lorraine Matthews
 6/16 William & Susan Moore
 6/19 Jim & Priscilla Crumel
 6/22 David & Karen Crane
 6/23 Andre & Sandy Plette
 6/24 Dale & Cynthia Woodling
 Nancy & Bruce Roberts
 6/26 Kyle & Lynn Kuhn
 Christy & Marc Boyer
 6/27 Sarah Melcher & Alleyne Kess
 6/29 Mo & Jeanette Sherrill
 6/30 Kenneth & Bonnie Briggs

In Loving Memory

*Michael Timmons
 Peggy Wallace
 Boyd Aebli
 Gail Taylor*



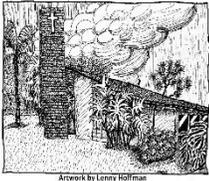
Lord's Prayer

June 2021

Please open your heart and join us...

1. **Everyday at noon** pray the Lord's Prayer wherever you are to connect with others.
2. **Devotional by Dale Moore** available - \$6
3. *Every Sunday in June*, we will dig and dive into the words of this ancient prayer of Jesus.
4. Daily meditations on Facebook & videos on YouTube.
5. **Bible Study on Tuesday at 6:30 pm & Wednesday at 11 am - *Please join us!***
6. Thursday in-person on the Wendling Terrace Oasis Center at **11 am** on **June 10th and 24th.**
7. Juneteenth Celebration on **June 19th on Zoom.**

**May your soul sing every day with a
sweet hour of prayer.**



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC CHURCH
 1031 Euclid Ave
 Sarasota, FL 34237
 www.uccsarasota.com



Altar Flowers

The 2021 Flower Chart is NOW ready for YOU! Do you have a special occasion coming up this year? Would you like to celebrate on an upcoming Sunday service?

Each Sunday, there is an opportunity for two bouquets.

The cost is \$40 per bouquet, payable to the church. Please sign up for a Sunday by emailing admin@uccsarasota.com We are grateful for the fresh flowers every Sunday that bring the beauty of God's creation into our worship space.

STAFF

Senior Minister.....Rev Dr. Wes Bixby
 Minister of Music.....Gregory Chestnut
 Campus ManagerMark Swain
 Office Admin.....Terri Chapman
 Media Specialist.....Douglas Kingsley
 Bookkeeper Bill Lewis
 Collector..... Gordon Quimby

OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Moderator..... Carol Fields
 Vice Moderator Jim Butterworth
 Past Moderator Warren Bacon
 Co-treasurers... Robin Reich & Michael Johnston
 Pastor Emeritus..... Dr. John Syster
 Contributing Photographer Susan Moore
 On-line Newsletter ... Carol McCloud, Wes Curry

We are an open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ in the Florida Conference of the UCC.

Telephone: (941) 953-7044; Fax: (941) 952-5245

Email: office@uccsarasota.com; Website: www.uccsarasota.com

We are worshipping at 9 am and on-line via livestream/in-person in the sanctuary at 10:55 a.m.