



First Congregational UCC

There are so many things going on around the church. I pray you will read through the following items. Please let me know if you have questions or want to talk more about any of the following items:

We are sad to announce that **Bill Lewis** has resigned from being our bookkeeper. Bill has faithfully served in this position for 3 years. We now have two staff positions in transition. We ask for prayers as the Staffing Team discerns the next faithful steps.

I will be on **vacation June 29-July 5**; Greg will be here to help with any concerns. I continue to work on my devotional book for husbands and hope to have a rough draft ready at the end of summer.

Worship continues at 9 a.m. at the Oasis Center. The 10:55 a.m. service continues both in person and online. We are committed to offering options for worship. We will continue to **livestream the 10:55 a.m. service for the remainder of 2021!** Wherever you are this summer, YOU can stay connected with us on Sunday mornings. Please watch your Midweek Message for specific information regarding the services.

Regarding masks at 9 a.m. Oasis Center Worship, the Church Council has dropped the mask requirement for all those who are vaccinated. This is a service of the Word and **does not have any singing**. There is soft piano music to stir your soul. You are welcome to remain masked if you feel more comfortable.

Regarding singing at 10:55 a.m., the Church Council approved softly singing with masks at the 10:55 a.m. service. We continue to encourage our members to be vaccinated before attending worship. Please wear your mask for the entire service. This is a way to love our brothers and sisters who have weakened-immunity issues.



Regarding technology, the Church Council approved investing in new cameras to enhance our online worship at 10:55 a.m. In addition to improving our camcorders in the back, you will soon see a camera angle of the choir loft/organ. I hear your cheers!!!

Summer 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.
- **On-line worship ~ 10:55 a.m.** Livestream on Facebook, YouTube and our website.
- **In-person, in the sanctuary with masks, social distancing and softly singing.**
- **Zoom Coffee Hour will take most Sundays in July and August off. HOWEVER, watch your Midweek Message for a special Sermon Feedback Sunday over the summer.**

The Technology Team is investigating problems we have for those in-person during funerals. Our funerals are increasingly hybrid with people in-person in the sanctuary and online. We anticipate this will continue in the future. **For those in the sanctuary, when we try to show digital photos and videos, we need to wheel in a television and run cords on the sanctuary floor to connect to the soundboard. This creates a tripping hazard and the television is not visible to the whole church.** It is less than ideal as we minister to grieving families. I also know that the sanctuary is sacred space; our history is not to use screens in our sanctuary. The Technology Team will be meeting in July to discuss the problems we have specifically with photos/videos at funerals and ways we can solve the problem. We will also discuss how this would impact our sanctuary and Sunday mornings as well. [I pray everyone is reading this paragraph and will talk to me if you have questions.](#)



On **Thursdays, July 8 and 22 at 11 a.m.** we will gather on the Wendling Terrace for a time of prayer. If the weather is too humid or raining, we will move inside the Oasis Center. If vaccinated, you do not need to wear a mask. However, if you feel more comfortable, you are welcome to do so.

Our **Tuesday and Wednesday Bible Study groups** will take a break during July and reconvene on Zoom in August.

I pray this summer holds moments of encountering and experiencing God's love. I am so grateful for each of you! You are a blessing.

With great love to you all ~ Wes

STAFF VACATIONS



Pastor Wes's Vacation Dates:

June 29 – July 5
August 2 – 8
August 23 – 29

Greg's Vacation Dates:

August 14 - 27



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!

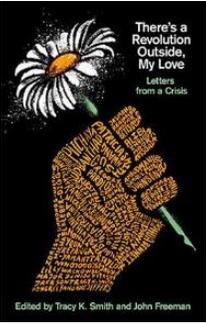


Bible Study

Bible Study will take a break for the month of July. Please watch your Midweek Message for information regarding Bible Study in August.



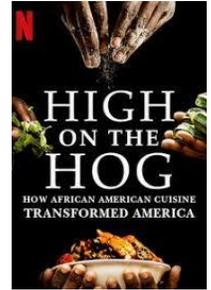
Sacred Conversations on Race



We continue our Sacred Conversation on Race on Wednesdays at 3 p.m. We will be reading the book, *There's a Revolution Outside, My Love: Letters from a Crisis* by Tracy K. Smith. This book features poetry and prose from BIPOC (black, Indigenous and people of color). This inclusive book will introduce us to important voices across races and ethnic identities.

Please join us starting **July 7th** for the conversation. Please contact Pastor Wes for specific chapters we will be discussing each week.

Several folks have recommended the show, "High on the Hog: How African American Cuisine Transformed America" on Netflix. We hope to have a conversation around this great documentary this summer. Please watch your Midweek Message for specific days and times.



Peace and Justice Network News

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) that attract pollinators like a red Penta and milkweed, and dig up some grass areas to plant different, more insect-friendly ground cover, such as 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 Meal Dates—July and August



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 **July 27 and August 24 from 4-6 p.m.**



Volunteer and/or inquire for more details: Carol Hagglund.



July Birthdays



July Anniversaries

- | | | | |
|------|--|------|---|
| 7/2 | John Hilficker
Kenneth Knoch
Donna Papenhausen | 7/17 | Woody Fletcher |
| 7/4 | Olivia Bixby
Chris Cooper | 7/18 | Lovette Harper |
| 7/5 | Gwen Harris-Bos | 7/19 | Ruth Ann Waid |
| 7/6 | Alstead Cady
Craig Collemer
Kathryn Sheila Noyes | 7/21 | Earl Alger |
| 7/7 | Maryanna Daniel
Roger Weiss | 7/23 | Janet Raines |
| 7/8 | Bonnie Briggs | 7/24 | Bob Niemiller
Janet Tipton |
| 7/9 | Joy M. Mayer
Ginny McIntire | 7/25 | Julie Chismar
David Mitchell
Robin Snuttjer |
| 7/10 | Buck Greenlaw
Emma Wilbur | 7/26 | Stephen Scott
Joan Sheil
Kevin White |
| 7/11 | Barbara Shaver | 7/27 | Thomas Green
Jeanette Sherrill |
| 7/12 | Kate Harris | 7/29 | Margaret D'Albert |
| 7/13 | Phyllis Collins
Chuck Gaskill
Millie Small | | |

- | | |
|------|---|
| 7/1 | Lois & Bernard Watson |
| 7/2 | James & Sandy Butterworth |
| 7/11 | Peter & Ashley Burroughs |
| 7/15 | Dr. Richard Wharton &
Dr. Lou Bertha Wharton |
| 7/16 | Thomas & Barbara Green |
| 7/17 | James Moody & Marjorie
Englehard |
| 7/18 | Jeffrey & Donna Carlson |
| 7/20 | Roger & Thela Leach |



August Birthdays

8/1	Sandi Armstrong	8/17	Lynn Jones Marjorie Long
8/2	Roy Burns		Larry Ream Becky Rives
8/3	Bill Brackett Joy Kuhn	8/18	Tim Toops
8/4	Eric Hohenthal Linda Pursley	8/19	Jean-Marie Steele
8/5	Yvonne Clarke Joseph P. Mayer	8/21	Donald Dumford Howard Taylor
8/7	Chad Kalisak	8/22	Jim Fogle Brenda Robinson
8/10	Robert Kitterer	8/23	Prisilla Crumel
8/12	Jeanne Koren Kitty Miller	8/24	Ed Dupree Jane Hunder
8/13	Dan Brown Sue Fields	8/26	William Plerhoples Sarah Sands
8/14	Carole Sue Metcalfe	8/27	Dottie Peterson
8/15	James Cross Dr. Lou Bertha Wharton	8/29	Larry Smith
8/16	Pat Grubb Andre Plette	8/30	Jim Crumel
		8/31	Patricia Barkhuff



August Anniversaries

8/1	Jerry & Marjorie Long
8/5	Garvey & Yvonne Clarke
8/6	Bob & Betty Goldman
8/9	David & Lois Wilkins
8/11	Beverly & Edward Carrington
8/12	Kathy Kulakowski
8/14	Kristi Weiland & Michael Johnston
8/15	Janet & Harold Kamm
8/16	Roger & Myrna Morris
8/17	Ray & Janet Baker
8/19	Wesley & Gina Bixby Eric & Sally Hohenthal
8/23	Guy & Ann Spencer
8/24	John & Carrie Metzger
8/27	Dave & Karen Abel
8/28	Jim & Ellen Marsey Richard & Mary Jane Sparrow



July 4 ~ ONE Service at 10:55 am either in the sanctuary or online. Members of the Worship Team and Dale Moore will offer reflections on the Lord's Prayer. Pastor Wes on vacation.

July 11 ~ Resume 9 am and 10:55 am services. We kick off a sermon series on the book of Ephesians. We will focus on Ephesians 1:15-23.

July 18 ~ We will focus on Ephesians 2:11-22.

July 28 ~ We will focus on Ephesians 4:1-6, 12-16.

August 1 ~ We will celebrate Holy Communion together at both services. We will wind down and wrap up the sermon series on Ephesians focusing on 4:25-32.

August 8 ~ Pastor Wes on vacation – we welcome **Dr. Christine Hoffman** to preach.

August 15 ~ We will focus on 1 Corinthians 12:4-13 and the theme of collaborating.

August 22 ~ We continue with 1 Corinthians 12:14-26 and dive deeper into ways we collaborate.

August 29 ~ Pastor Wes on vacation – we welcome Rev. Dr. Sarah Melcher to preach.

September 5 ~ Labor Day Weekend - **ONE Service at 10:55 am** either in the sanctuary or online. The Worship Team along with Pastor Wes will focus on the Langston Hughes' poem, *Freedom's Plow*.

WORSHIP EVERY SUNDAY

We offer three amazing ways to worship EVERY Sunday:

9 am – inside and outside at the OASIS CENTER. If the temperature at 9 am is above 80 degrees, we will move inside the Oasis Center. This is a Service of the Word with no singing. If you have been vaccinated, you do not need to wear a mask.

10:55 am ~ in person in the sanctuary service. In order that we may softly sing, we ask everyone to remain masked for now. Church Council and the Worship Team continues to discuss best practices.

10:55 am ~ Livestream of service on Facebook, YouTube, and church website.



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
 Media Specialist.....Douglas Kingsley
 Office AdministratorTerri Chapman
 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 worshiping on-line via Livestreams each week at 10:55 a.m. and the service is posted to our website for streaming by 1 p.m. each Sunday afternoon.