



First Congregational UCC

Thank you to everyone who continues to infuse our life together with the Spirit. We are blessed in many ways.

I am grateful to **COLLAGE and Sara Little for a beautiful Coming Out Sunday** in October. I rejoice with **Gordon Quimby, Lucy Tobias, and Jerry Long** for inviting each of us to consider our intention of giving to the church for 2022.

I give thanks to John Ristow (our seminary student) for sharing a bit of his story with us on October 17th.

I am also grateful that on November 30th, my book, ***52 Devotions for Husbands***, is released. You will hear more on that in the coming weeks.

There are so many reasons to give thanks for First Congregational UCC.

As we turn toward November we will:

- **Celebrate our Intentions of Giving for the coming year.** In this holy moment on November 7th, we will rededicate our time, talent, and treasure. Please remember YOUR intention of giving helps support the ministry and mission of our church. Your financial gifts will help support several important events in 2022 including: Artist-in-residence, Kathy Bullock, on Rev. Dr. King Sunday; a cost of living increase for our amazing staff; continuing to live our covenants of Creation Justice and Open and Affirming; and working toward a Racial Justice Covenant in the coming year. This is faithful work we do together. I pray you will fill out your intention of giving card prayerfully and join us in sharing God's love in the coming year!
- On November 14th, we will **hear a testimony from our Racial Justice Mission Group**. This remains an important part of who we are becoming. I pray you will continue to keep your heart open for the calling of our whole church to see all people as created in God's image.

Office 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. - Sat.: various hours

Welcome to Worship



- **Outdoor worship ~ 9 a.m.** in the Oasis Center. Please bring a lawn chair if you'd like to sit outside. **Masks are encouraged.**
- **On-line worship ~ 10:55 a.m.** Livestream on Facebook, YouTube and our website.
- **In-person, in-the-sanctuary with masks, social distancing. Our choir has returned and wearing masks to lead our singing/prayer/praise.**
- **Coffee Hour in Syster Hall. At this time, Zoom Coffee Hour is on hold. Please watch for an upcoming fun Zoom experience in November.**

- On November 21st, **we will celebrate Thanksgiving.** After prayerful conversations with Worship, Music Camp; Fine Arts, and Church Council, ***there will be brass players in-person at 11 a.m. in the sanctuary.*** If this is not a comfort level for you right now, please consider worshipping outside with us at ***9 am*** amid the beauty of creation. What better way to give thanks to our Creator than outside? If you have questions about this, please let me know.
- On November 28th, **we begin the season of Advent.** Please see the important invitation from your Worship Team regarding Advent this year.

There is much gratitude in my heart for each of you. I am blessed to serve as your pastor. I pray November will open your heart, God's love will guide your life, and you will sense that you are on Holy Ground each day.

May God's love be with you every day. ~ Pastor Wes

Worship in November

Every Sunday we worship at 9 a.m. in the Oasis Center, at 10:55 a.m. in-person in the sanctuary, and at 10:55 a.m. online (Facebook, YouTube, Website)



November 7th – Stewardship Sunday ~ focus scripture is Matthew 7:24-29.

November 14th - Racial Justice Testimony ~ focus scripture is Luke 15:1-11.



November 21st – Thanksgiving Sunday ~ focus scripture is Mark 12:28-34.

November 28th – First Sunday in Advent ~ focus scripture is Isaiah 65:17-25.



Join the Zoom Conversation



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.

~ **HYBRID** in the Oasis Center to discuss the Bible passage for the upcoming Sunday.

Wednesday @ 3 p.m.

~ Sacred Conversations on Race (SCOR)

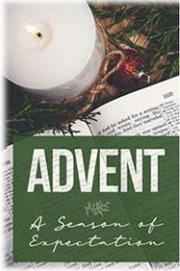
****Zoom links available through Pastor Wes.***



Reminder:

Daylight Savings Time Ends November 7

Advent 2021 ~ A "Less is More" Christmas



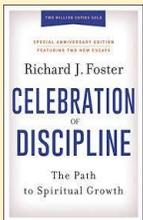
Christmas has become the biggest holiday in North America, and arguably the biggest in the world - and in many ways, it's become a holiday of "more": more presents, more stuff, more events, more expectations, more stress.

But as it turns out, if we dial back the more, we get closer to the heart of Advent and Christmas. "A 'Less is More' Christmas Poster and Devotional" is a fun-filled, faith-filled way to help you and your family do exactly that!

Beginning on November 14th, we will have two resources for you:

- A poster you can put in your house of activities to engage in with another person.
- A daily devotional reading. These are our **GIFTS** to you. We want you to experience and explore the beauty of Advent and prepare your heart for Christmas. More than that, we want to offer a way for church members to connect. You will be hearing more about this opportunity in the coming weeks. Please listen and open your heart to the One we are preparing to welcome anew this year.

NEW FALL SERIES CONTINUES Mapping Your Spiritual Life



This is a five-week journey (which began on October 25th) that is a space for you to discover a richer spiritual life infused with joy, peace and a deeper understanding of God. During this series we will read and discuss one of the best modern books ever written on Christian spirituality, The *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster, which explores the central spiritual practices of the Christian faith.

Even if you are not able to participate in this class, we encourage everyone to read this important book. You will learn about the interior and exterior parts of your life as well as our life together. If you want to discuss this book more, but are not able to be a part of the Monday class, please see Pastor Wes or Vice-Moderator, Jim Butterworth.

The program will be held in the Oasis Center on Mondays from 4:00 until 5:30 p.m.

on November 1, 8, 15 and 22.

You are welcome to join us in person or through Zoom each week.

Vice Moderator Jim Butterworth will serve as facilitator for the series and will be joined each week by a variety of clergy including Pastor Wes and Reverends Craig Collemer and Jeff Jones.

Please email Jim Butterworth at jbutterworth@albany.edu with questions.

CREATION JUSTICE NEWS

Green Team News: Tour Organic Farm – November 3, 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.



Fall is upon us, and our local organic farms are about to burst with fresh produce! Have you considered buying locally for the freshest products, organic certified products, and saving on emissions because the items have not been trucked in from another state or country?

Below are links to several well-known area organic farms. Some offer CSAs (a subscription service, described below), others offer online ordering, and many will deliver to locations as stated on their websites. Each is different, and some team together to offer you, the consumer, more options. All will be fresh and tasty. Pick what works for you!

One idea is to share a CSA, such as Blumenberry Farm offers. What is that? CSA means "Community-Supported Agriculture." It's a partnership between a farm and its community. CSA members pay a subscription fee at the beginning of the growing season, which the farm then uses to buy seeds and supplies. In return, the farm harvests "the cream of the crop" for members and delivers it each week to a pick-up location. The CSA model creates a direct connection between farmers and eaters.

We are planning a tour of Blumenberry Farms on **November 3rd, between 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.** This tour will provide participants with an opportunity to learn more about local organic farming.

Some useful links:

- <https://blumenberryfarms.eatfromfarms.com/>
- <https://www.jessicasorganicfarm.com/>
- <https://groveladderfarmllc.grazecart.com/store>
- <https://the-homestead-hydroponic-farm.square.site/>



Carpool information:

Please meet at the church no later than 9:20 a.m. for our 9:30 a.m. departure. If you would rather meet us at Blumenberry Farms, please meet at 9:50 a.m. **Register in advance with Pamela Gore Meade and indicate if you wish to carpool.**

Green Team Opportunity – Nourished by Nature:



The Green Team continues to cultivate a relationship with natural Sarasota. If you would like to join us, please contact Bill Lewis. You will be sent directions and helpful information to make the most of your exploration of one of our local preserves. Although the dirt trail won't be too long, it will probably be uneven and sandy. You will explore this site on your own or with a friend.

On November 4 @ 2:00 p.m., we will gather via Zoom to discuss what we noticed, what we learned about God and ourselves as well as what invitations we felt.

Green Team Opportunity – Guided Labyrinth Walk with Lucy Tobias:

What can you do right now that does not require a mask? One answer – walk a labyrinth. A labyrinth is not a maze. There are no dead ends. You cannot get lost.

This short but significant walk leads around curves, turning, turning, always moving towards the center and back out again. Your feet do the walking, or dancing or skipping. Whatever works!

Labyrinths go back thousands of years. They are being rediscovered again, a purposeful walk that reflects life's journey and acts as an antidote to chaos.

Behind our church is a lovely labyrinth with an adjacent butterfly garden with a bench for meditation on one side. I find butterflies come fluttering by any time I walk this labyrinth.

Inspired? There are seven labyrinths to be found in Sarasota County—all are outdoors. One is embedded in a sidewalk in downtown Sarasota. Another is a garden labyrinth in Venice. All are accessible.

Not up for walking? Sit and use the included finger labyrinth found at this [LINK](#) (miniature below):

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?ui=2&ik=7ac309c806&view=att&th=17c939c20757217c&attid=0.2&disp=thd&safe=1&zw>



Need quiet time?
Use this finger labyrinth
to destress and relax.
Before you begin, breathe deep
and focus. Let your finger follow
the path to the center. Pause,
be thankful, and pray whatever works
for you then journey out again.
For a challenge use your
non-dominant hand.

Finger labyrinths are found
etched on ancient rocks and
embedded in the ground.
Millions of people have walked
labyrinths. Enjoy the journey.
VISIT www.lucytobias.com
to buy her engaging book:
*Circle the Center:
Labyrinths in Florida*
and LIKE the Facebook page
Labyrinth of the Week.

Walking the walk, your mind gets a much-needed rest, slowing down so clarity, peace and even resolving inner conflict can happen.

Take a deep breath. Open your heart to possibilities and take the first step on a labyrinth.

Your Invitation - Join a Guided Labyrinth Walk

The Green Team invites you to join a guided area labyrinth walk led by Lucy Tobias, member of our church, author of *Circle the Center: Labyrinths in Florida*, and creator of the linked guide to seven Sarasota and Venice labyrinths. The walk will take place in November at a mutually convenient time.

Please contact Barbara Smith-Bacon to register your interest no later than November 8, 2021.

www.uccsarasota.com ~ 941-953-7044



Sarasota County Labyrinths
A labyrinth is not a maze. There are no dead ends. You cannot get lost.
All Sarasota County labyrinths are outdoors, open to the public at no charge.
Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey
you are welcome to walk a labyrinth.

PEACE AND JUSTICE NETWORK NEWS

Sacred Conversations on Race

We continue our Sacred Conversations on Race on Wednesdays at 3 p.m. There is ALWAYS space and place for you to join in this conversation. We pray that in the coming months, you will participate. We will be viewing the video, *How to Fight Racism*. If you have questions, let Pastor Wes know.



Little Free Library Project – Service Opportunity



The Sacred Conservation on Race group has a service opportunity to offer the entire congregation!

It has been agreed to build and maintain a little free library on the church grounds as a way of providing books promoting diversity to the public. Books will be for all ages.

We are looking for people to help with building the little library, creating bookplate stickers, supplying books (we can provide suggestions) and maintaining the library by doing a weekly check.

If you would be interested in helping with this project or donating funds to buy supplies and books, please contact Nancy McElroy at fnmcelroy@gmail.com or 941-527-7257.



First UCC Women



The First Congregational Women's Association invites all members to join in an informative presentation by a farm worker from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (C.I.W.) on Tuesday, November 2nd, at noon in Syster Hall. Based in Immokalee, Florida, the C.I.W. is a worker-based human rights organization internationally recognized for its achievements in the fields of social responsibility, human trafficking, and gender-based violence at work. All are welcome. Come early to visit with one another.

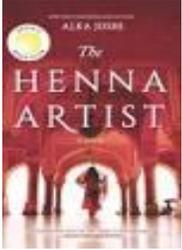
Please sign up with Joy Kuhn at the 9:00 a.m. service or with Connie Toops after the 10:55 a.m. service. You can also call or email Connie Toops. Luncheon before the program is \$12 per person and payable on November 2.

REMINDER: Our December activity is to assemble shoeboxes for shut-ins. Bring a shoebox and what you can from the following list of suggested items: travel size shampoo, conditioner, hand cream, soap, deodorant, wipes, toothpaste, tissues, and hand sanitizer. Also appreciated are socks, combs, hairbrushes, small stuffed animals, toothbrushes, Christmas decorations, small change purses, games, crossword puzzles/activity/coloring books, and colored pencils. You will have fun in the assembly and will smile knowing you will be brightening someone's day—a win-win!



Ready Readers

Ready Readers is a book discussion group that meets on the second Thursday of every month at noon in the Oasis Center. The books we read are chosen from a yearly list provided by the Florida UCC Women and selected by the chair of the organization's Reading for Renewal. Current lists of possible selections are available in the Syster Hall library as are several present and previously selected books.



Monthly selections are posted in the newsletter and the midweek message. We welcome and encourage the participation and input of new members even if you are not able to attend every meeting. For more information and further updates, contact Sandy Smith at sandysmithvi@gmail.com or 340-227-5121.

Please join us **Thursday, November 11, at noon in the Oasis Center.** We will be discussing *The Henna Artist* by Alka Joshi. New members are always welcomed.

Kings And Queens Bridge

Kings and Queens Bridge resumes **Monday, November 8, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in Room 9 of the Education Building.** We welcome new players who are interested in playing contract bridge for fun.



Please contact Ethel Rudy at 941-727-0122 or email Ethel at ethelhr@verizon.net whether you are a new or returning player.

Community Meal



We continue our monthly ministry of providing and serving a hot, nutritious and balanced community meal at St. Paul Lutheran Church.

While Sandy Smith cooks our meal to share, **we need your home-baked 9x13 cakes** for the dessert.

We need help setting up and serving the meal at St. Paul's Fellowship Hall from 4 to 6:30 p.m. on **Tuesday, November 23—just before Thanksgiving.**

We will wear masks and we will be careful. If you can help in any way, please let Carol Hagglund know. Your offerings of food & fellowship are always very much appreciated.

Volunteer and/or inquire for more details: Carol Hagglund at carolhagglund@gmail.com.

Artful Prayer



Please join Cindy Woodling and Lindsey Huddleston on Zoom on **Thursday, November 11 @ 2p.m.**



All that is needed is paper, pencil, color markers/pencils or crayons. Come with an open heart and willing hands—no previous art experience is ever necessary.

Honoring our Saints - Rev. Dr. Joseph Evans

by Dale Woodling for the Racial Justice Mission Team



On Sunday, October 31, our church celebrated All Saints Day, recognizing our deceased saints and their contributions to the fabric, culture, and history of our church. The Racial Justice Mission Group would like to lift up and honor one such saint, the Rev. Dr. Joseph Evans. His contributions throughout his life were critically important not only to our church, but to our entire denomination, the United Church of Christ.

Joseph Evans was born in Kalamazoo, Michigan, in 1915. He received his A.B. degree from Western Michigan University and his M.Div. from Yale Divinity School. At the first church he was called to serve, Harlem's Grace Congregational Church, he

met a classically trained ballet dancer, Harriet Clark, who would become his loving wife and partner for 63 years. He went on to serve at Mount Zion Church in Cleveland and then the Church of the Good Shepherd in Chicago where he also served for four years as President of the Chicago Urban League.

In 1967, he was elected as Secretary of the United Church of Christ, a position he held for 16 years. In 1976, he was elected to serve as the third President of the UCC, the first African American to hold that position and the first African American to hold both the positions of Secretary and President of a mainline church in the United States. He retired from the UCC in 1983 but continued to serve interim ministries in Ohio, Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Rev. John Thomas, a past UCC president, called Rev. Evans "a leading figure" in our denomination's history and added, "our work rests on the legacy of great leaders like him." Rev. Evans was awarded honorary doctorates from Chicago Theological Seminary, Western Michigan University and Cedar Crest College.

In 1990, Joe and Harriet retired to Sarasota where they became devoted and beloved members of our congregation. Joe passed away in 2008 and Harriet in 2020. They are survived by their three daughters, one of whom, Barbara Edelin, is a member of our church.

We are honored to count Joe and Harriet Evans among the saints of our church.

Estate Planning – Sponsored by COLLAGE (Open to All Church Members)

What will you and your loved ones need to protect you and your assets as you age? Have you been meaning to make or redo a will? Do you have questions about what Estate Planning includes? Come learn about Living Wills, Durable Power of Attorney, Probate, Elder Law, Trusts, Guardianships, Medicaid Planning/Qualifications.



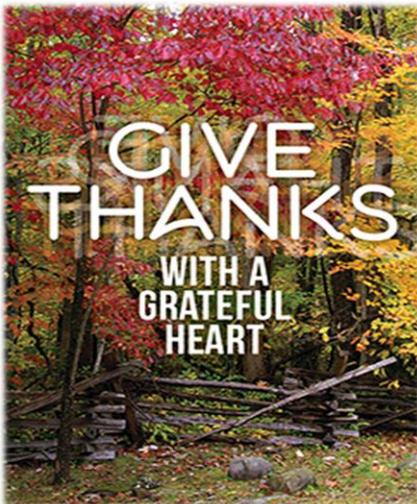
On **Tuesday, November 9 from 11 a.m. to noon**, you can attend, **via Zoom**, this informative presentation by Dana Gerling, Esq., www.gerlinglawgroup.com (named a Five-Star Wealth Manager of Sarasota), all while not leaving your home.

By November 4, please contact sarajlittle@me.com by sending her your full name, phone number and email address. You must pre-register. Dana Gerling's office will be sending you written information to accompany her presentation. A Zoom link will be provided the day before.

November Birthdays



- | | | | |
|-------|----------------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 11/1 | Gretchen Friend-Jones
Charles Shipman Jr. | 11/21 | Janet Baker
Mary Kukainis |
| 11/2 | Patricia Lipton | 11/22 | Jodi Kleppinger |
| 11/4 | Cory Kuhn
Ethel Rudy | 11/23 | Dennis Crooks
James Moody |
| 11/7 | Christine Hoffman | 11/24 | Lindsay Prospect
Eric VanArsdall |
| 11/8 | Betty Goldman
Roger Leach
Sandy Phelps | 11/25 | Marjorie Hall
Leonard Hoffman
Betsy Traba |
| 11/9 | David Crane | 11/27 | Mae Reid
Johnnie Williams |
| 11/11 | Bob Goldman | 11/28 | Susan Mitchell |
| 11/18 | David Abel
Jeff Smith | 11/30 | Steven Moore |
| 11/20 | Dottie Donovan | | |



November Anniversaries

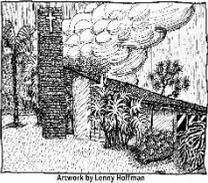


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|-------|-------------------------------|
| 11/6 | Cat & AnnMarie Drennen |
| 11/10 | Charles & Marilyn Shipman Jr. |
| 11/25 | Harold & Peggye Mezile |
| 11/27 | Sarah & Michael Dousa |



Remembering our Saints

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Boyd Abeli* | Jamie Hulse |
| Richard "Dick" Arter | Sophie Janesic |
| Pat Barkhuff* | Barbara Johnson |
| Ruth Barnard* | Jane Johnstone |
| John Butler* | Bernice Kennerly |
| Dr. Ronnell Lovelace Bright | Jervey Kennerly |
| Bruce Crawford* | Chuck McConnell |
| Jason Crumel | Judith Merrill* |
| Daniel Delort | Carole Sue Metcalf* |
| Eugene Donaldson | Sigrid "Siggi" Moser |
| Gael Donovan | Jennifer Ann Patrick |
| Matthew Early, Sr. | Barbara Richter |
| Ernestine Harris | Sadie Robinson |
| Douglas Hayes | Eddie Schneider |
| Margaret Hoffman | Brian Shaw |
| George Hoza | Cherie Stiefvater* |



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



The 2021 Flower Chart is ALWAYS 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
 Bookkeeper.....Pam Hendrickson
 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
 Online 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 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.

