



## First Congregational UCC

*We have a story to tell!* This is our theme for Stewardship 2022. We have a story to tell about **inclusive love** for all people because of God's unconditional love for all creation. We have a story to tell about being **good stewards** of God's creation through composting, recycling, and exploring solar panels. We have a story to tell about racial justice and ***Sacred Conversations on Race*** going two and half years **strong** with holy discussions. We have a story to tell about **music that moves our souls** every Sunday and the leadership of Greg Chestnut.

We have a story to tell of an amazing staff who give of their energy and care every day. I am so grateful for **Greg Chestnut, Sue Fields, Sherry Glover, Douglas Kingsley, and Mark Swain.**

I am so grateful to **Robin Reich** who has stepped in following Julian Bermudez's resignation in October. Robin shares and shines her light in many ways with us. Thank you, Robin, for all you do. We welcome **Dale Woodling** who will serve as co-treasurer with Robin in the coming year. We are in the process of looking for a new Financial Administrator to fill Julian's vacancy.

I give thanks for the privilege of being your pastor. There are so many blessings I encounter in my conversations with you every day and each week. I thank our moderator team of **Jim Butterworth, Nancy Morris, and Carol Fields.** Each has worked so hard this year chairing efforts at reviewing

### Office Hours

**Pastor Wes:**

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

**Sherry Glover:**

*Mon.-Tues.: 10:00 a.m. - 1 p.m.*

*Wed.-Thurs.: 10:00 a.m. - 2 p.m.*

**Mark:**

*Mon. - Fri.: 7 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

**Greg:**

*Tues. - Sat.: various hours*



- **Worship ~ 9 a.m.** in the sanctuary with masks and social distancing.
- **Worship ~ 11:00 a.m. in person in the Sanctuary and livestream** on Facebook, YouTube and our website.

***See our revised mask statement on Page 2 "November Worship"***

By-laws (*which you will hear at Annual Meeting in January*), Security, and Communication efforts in our church.

***Thank you to everyone who chairs a team or volunteers to serve.*** We have accomplished a great deal in the past year, and we have much to look forward in 2023.

As we move into the month of November, I pray each of you will find time to ponder prayerfully the people who have helped to shape your story. There is a “we” inside every “me”. I hope you will reach out to others and let them know how much they mean to you. November is a holy time, to take time, to express our thanksgiving to others.

I am excited that ***over 30 people*** have begun to read the Bible in a year. This is an incredible blessing. I give thanks for the Tuesday and Wednesday Bible groups who are so faithful and fun loving. With eager anticipation I look forward to our **worship** in November, where every Sunday is holy ground.

*With thanksgiving and God's love to all ~ Wes*

## Join the Zoom Conversation



**COLLAGE 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> 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 discussion.

**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**

## NOVEMBER WORSHIP ~ 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. ~ IN THE SANCTUARY

*We are currently at **GREEN COVID** level meaning masks are encouraged and we reserve the two side sections of the sanctuary for those who wish to be masked.*

**November 6 ~ All Saints Day** ~ We honor the great cloud of witnesses by lighting candles for each of our saints. Many of the names this year are family members of people who call our church, “Home”. Both 9 and 11 a.m. will feature the lighting of candles. Our Growing and Caring Team have made a paper angel for each of our saints. The candle and angel are a gift to the family with love from our church.

**November 13 ~ Stewardship Sunday** ~ We culminate our Stewardship by dedicating our time, talents, and treasure to God for 2023. This sacred Sunday is also **Transgender Remembrance Day**. Following the 11 a.m. service, there will be a brief prayer time and dedication of a memorial rock made by our very own **Cas Burleson** in loving memory of our Transgender brothers and sisters who have died. Please join us on this holy day.

**November 20 ~ Thanksgiving Sunday ~ Yes** There will be brass at both services. **Yes** ~ Michael Cross will share his incredible talents by creating a Thanksgiving altar table. **Yes** ~ Our choir will sing out with praise at 11 a.m. There will even be a sermon concluding our journey through Exodus. Come, ye, thankful people come.

**November 27 ~ Advent 1 Candle of Hope** ~ We begin the journey of preparing for God with the words of Isaiah 52 where the prophet invites us to “awaken to God.” How might this invitation stir our souls forward to Bethlehem this year?

### Invitation for New Members

**New Member Class: November 6<sup>th</sup>** ~ Please join us after the 11 a.m. worship service in the Oasis Center for a time to learn more about what it means to be a member of First Congregational UCC. A light lunch will be served, there will be time to meet others, and ask questions. All who are interested in exploring membership are warmly welcomed to this session.



**New Member Sunday: November 20<sup>th</sup>** ~ All who wish to join will be welcomed and received at our 11 a.m. service with fellowship time afterwards to meet and great.

Contact the church office or Pastor Wes for more information. **All are welcome here!**

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**Remember to VOTE ~November 8th**



**Daylight Savings Time Ends**

**November 6<sup>th</sup>**



## Join the Thursday Rallies for Brady Sarasota



Join us at the southernmost tip of the parking lot at the Bayfront. We have the signs to wave at passing cars in the years-long effort to raise gun-safety awareness.

These rallies are held most Thursday into May.

Come as you can!

## Sorella Duo, cello and piano Candlelight Christmas Concert ~ Friday, November 25<sup>th</sup> @ 7 p.m. Reed Chapel and Music Center at First Congregational UCC

**Limited Seating - Advanced tickets only. \$20.00 each.** Available on Sunday mornings and through the church office Monday & Tuesday 10:00 - 1:00; Wednesday and Thursday 10:00 - 2:00.



Embracing their Italian heritage, Sorella, meaning sister, Natalie and Rebecca Helm have enjoyed performing together since they were young children. Their deep musical connection has opened doors for them to perform throughout Italy, Japan, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and the entire U.S. They have performed with Celine Dion, Il Divo, Yo-Yo Ma, and others.

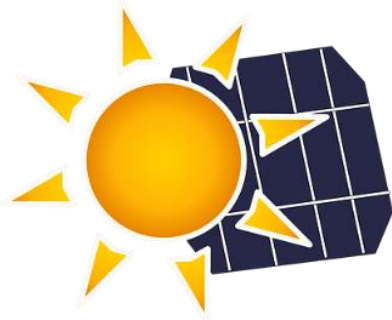
Both sisters are currently working as professional musicians. Natalie is the principal cellist for the Sarasota Orchestra and Founder Upward Notes, Inc. Rebecca, pianist, is the Director and Founder of Go Go Allegro Music School in Boston.

Their CD, "Holidays with the Sorella Duo" was created to specifically have a reflective and nostalgic effect on the listener. This candlelight concert will give you peace and an opportunity to relax and unwind while enjoying some of your favorite holiday carols and classics.

Be sure to purchase your tickets soon.



## Exploring Solar Alternatives for Our Church



At their June 2022 meeting, Council asked a working group to explore the feasibility of a solar alternative approach to the church's energy needs. Council set out specific questions to be answered in this preliminary research, which was done.

The group - composed of Pastor Bixby, our Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Immediate Past Moderator, and representatives of Finance, Facilities & Grounds, and the Green Team - divided up tasks, and set to work.

Working Group members reached out to the Florida Conference, UCC Environmental Minister Rev. Brooks Berndt, other local/regional churches/temples that have installed solar panels, and our insurance contact, as well as researching potential funding sources/grants. In addition, the group greatly benefitted from the expert input and preliminary analysis of a retired electrical engineer who is an Advisory Board member of Southface Sarasota and is successfully working with non-profits as a project manager on renewables for Partners in Green Spaces. His services were free to our church.

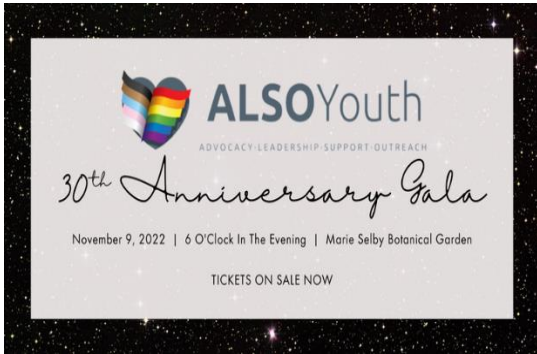
The summer research was summarized in a report to Council, and presented at the September Council meeting, with a request for further study. Preliminary analysis showed:

- A positive opportunity to convert the electric meter on the Outreach Building to solar, with a short-term payback (~ 11-12 years), and a substantial savings in long term energy expense.
- A possible future opportunity to similarly convert the Sanctuary Building electric meter to solar input, subject, however, to the availability to non-profits of Investment Tax Credits under the Inflation Reduction Act or grant sources.

In September, Council approved this exciting ongoing research and education. **Can you help us?** Are you an engineer? Do you have technology skills? We need you! Contact Barbara Smith-Bacon or Pastor Wes for further information.



# OPEN AND AFFIRMING COVENANT NEWS



## Join us at the Gala on November 9<sup>th</sup>

COLLAGE sponsored two workshops recently by ALSO Youth's Outreach Coordinator Christine Grossman. Both events were well attended in our Syster Hall.

On September 11<sup>th</sup> Christine explained ALSO Youth has had a 30-year presence in Sarasota acting as a safe haven for LGBTQ+ youth.

On October 9<sup>th</sup> Christine helped us understand the meanings of "gender" and "orientation". Included were "gender fluidity" and what it means to our youth as well as helping us understand new descriptive definitions and respectful language to use to help our LGBTQ+ community feel safe. Our learning is necessary in our efforts to be supportive and caring of our kin and friends. And it is very important ALL of our youth have a place to fit in and feel safe.

We thank Christine for her loving and respectful ways and for her graciousness in providing her PowerPoint slides to us. If you were unable to attend either of these gatherings and are interested in viewing them, COLLAGE has the PDF download.

ALSO Youth's work of advocacy, support, leadership and outreach has helped many teens who might have otherwise become homeless, dropped out of school, committed self-harm or suicide.

Please join us at the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala to show our support and encourage their continued work for our youth. **We hope to see you November 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Marie Selby Botanical Garden.**

## COLLAGE Zoom Meetings and Box Luncheon Dates

*All are welcome and encouraged to join us!*



### Zoom Meetings: (11 a.m. – Noon)

- ✓ November 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>
- ✓ December 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>

### COLLAGE Box Luncheon: (After 11 a.m. service in our Memorial Garden)

- ✓ November 13<sup>th</sup> (Trans Day of Remembrance Celebration)



## RACIAL JUSTICE COVENANT NEWS



### The Racial Wealth Gap Learning Simulation Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup> ~ 10:00 – 12:30 (Lunch provided)

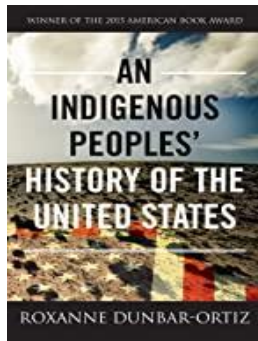


The rich keep getting richer and the poor keep getting poorer as the saying goes. But why is this true? What factors created this inequality and continue to keep it in existence?

**The Racial Wealth Gap Learning Simulation**, a program of Bread for the World, is an interactive tool that helps people understand the connections among racial equity, hunger, poverty, and wealth. Participants learn how federal policies have created structural inequalities, increasing hunger and poverty in communities of color.

You are invited to a FREE session of The Racial Wealth Gap Learning Simulation on November 12<sup>th</sup> beginning at 10 a.m. The program lasts 90 minutes with a free box lunch to follow. In keeping with our goal as a Green Church, you are encouraged to bring your own water bottle to reduce the need for plastic cups. **Registration deadline is October 30<sup>th</sup>.**

### Sacred Conversations on Race (SCOR)



We continue our Sacred Conversations on Race on **Wednesdays at 3 p.m.** We are starting our study of **An indigenous Peoples' History of the United States** by **Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz**, winner of the 2015 American Book Award.

There is **ALWAYS** space and place for you to join in this conversation or to just listen. Each week we marvel at what we are learning. Truly, **ALL ARE WELCOME HERE!**

If you have questions or need a **Zoom** link, let Pastor Wes know.

### **CANCELED** ~ A Private Tour of ECHO Farm ~ November 10<sup>th</sup>



Due to Hurricane Ian, the private tour of ECHO farm (north Fort Myers) has been canceled and will be re-scheduled in the spring.



## Community Meal ~ November 22<sup>nd</sup>



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

We need your **home-baked items**, and if you are able, we could use **help in serving our guests**. Please volunteer with set-up/serving/clean-up functions at St. Paul's Fellowship Hall. You will be richly rewarded by this ministry to others and will have opportunities to talk with our guests.

Please join us on **November 22<sup>nd</sup> from 4-6:30 p.m.** Volunteer and/or inquire for more details: Carol Hagglund at [carol.hagglund@gmail.com](mailto:carol.hagglund@gmail.com).



## Kings And Queens Bridge ~ November 14<sup>th</sup>

Kings and Queens Bridge is looking for new players, if you are interested in playing contract bridge for fun. We play on the second Monday afternoon from **1:00 - 4:00** in **Room 9** of the **Education Building**. **Please join us.**



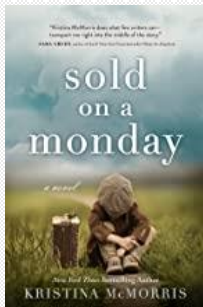
**We welcome ALL**--whether you have been playing for years, have been on hiatus or if you have always wanted to learn how to play, this is the group for you.

Please call Ethel Rudy at 941-727-0122 or email me at [loisrudy253@gmail.com](mailto:loisrudy253@gmail.com) if you are interested in playing with us or wish to learn more.

## Ready Readers ~ November 10<sup>th</sup>

Ready Readers is a book discussion group that meets on the second Thursday of every month at **noon in the Oasis Center**. 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](mailto:sandysmithvi@gmail.com) or 340-227-5121.



We will be discussing **"Sold on a Monday" by Kristina McMorris**. **TWO CHILDREN FOR SALE**. The sign is a last resort. It sits on a farmhouse porch in 1931 but could be found anywhere in an era of breadlines, bank runs and broken dreams. It could have been written by any mother facing impossible choices.

For struggling reporter Ellis Reed, the gut-wrenching scene evokes memories of his family's dark past. He snaps a photograph of the children, not meant for publication. But when it leads to his big break, the consequences are more devastating than he ever imagined.



## Artful Prayer ~ November 10<sup>th</sup>

**On November 10<sup>th</sup> @ 2 p.m.** Artful Prayer invites you to be, *Surprised by God!*

Rev. Donna Papenhausen leads us in a session of “no peek collage making” using words and pictures you will gather from one or two magazines, a glue stick, a sheet of drawing paper and scissors.

Contact Pastor Wes for the Zoom link or come in person to the Oasis Center.



## First UCC Women's Luncheon ~ November 1st @ 11:30 a.m.



Besides luxurious high-rises and McMansions under construction, we have homeless families and youth in Sarasota. Some live in their cars, some in the woods, and some wherever they can find a bench.

The Women's Association has assembled a panel of experts to give us an update on homelessness on Tuesday, November 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:30 a.m.

Chris Johnson, Executive Director of the Partnership to End Homelessness will lead the discussion; he will be joined by Ms. Alex Dustin from CASL (Community-Assisted Supported Living) and Jim Rouches from Harvest House.

We welcome our neighbor, The Sisterhood of Temple Shalom, to join us. Cost for lunch is \$12. All are welcome. Please sign up to attend after Sunday worship or call the church office.

## Angel Tree Gift Tags ~ Available November 6<sup>th</sup>



The Angel Tree tags will be here soon! Tags will be available for in-person pickup after the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services on November 6<sup>th</sup>.

Should you not be present to get a tag, please contact Sandy Smith (941-260-8337, 340-227-5121 or [sandysmithvi@gmail.com](mailto:sandysmithvi@gmail.com))--she will see that you are included.

There will be three ways to shop and return gifts:

1. *You may shop online and have the gifts delivered directly to the Salvation Army. (Instructions about how to do that will be provided with your tag.)*
2. *You may shop in person and deliver your gifts to the Salvation Army on Tuttle Avenue.*
3. *You may deliver your gifts to the church before/after worship on Sunday or during the week on Monday -Thursday.*

**The deadline for donating your gifts is Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>.**

**Save The Date ~ December 6<sup>th</sup> @ 11:30 a.m.**  
**Christmas is coming to Syster Hall**  
**First UCC Women's Association SENIOR CHRISTMAS BOX FILLING EVENT**

**Come one, come all** to the annual Women's Association's annual Christmas luncheon on Tuesday, **December 6<sup>th</sup>**, to fill and wrap Christmas boxes for shut-in seniors in our community.



To put all of us in a holiday mood, we will also have a Christmas sing-along, accompanied by some of the church's musicians.

A \$12 lunch will be served, and Carols will be sung! **Sign up after the 9 a.m. service with Joy Kuhn or after the 11 a.m. service with Connie Toops or call the office at 941-953-7044. ALL ARE WELCOME.**

To make these boxes special and meaningful, we ask that **ALL donations be NEW, UNOPENED, and PRE-PACKAGED.**

This list will help you get started on your shopping. This is a wonderful way to brighten someone's day. May the joy you experience in making them be wrapped in each box.

***New Personal Hygiene Items***

*Hand lotions*  
*Soaps*  
*Packaged toothbrushes*  
*Toothpaste*  
*Wet-wipes*  
*Hand sanitizer*  
*Shampoo and conditioner*  
*Deodorant*  
*Tissues (small for pocket or purse)*  
*Comb*  
*Brush*  
*Socks*  
*Handkerchiefs*

***New Stationery Items***

*Stamps*  
*Magnifying glass*  
*Boxed or prepackaged greeting cards*  
*Pre-packaged pens*  
*Post-it notes*  
*Pre-packaged colored pencils*  
*Coloring book*  
*Small puzzles, Sudoku, crossword books*  
*Devotional book*  
*Pocket calendar*

***Other***

*Small stuffed animal*  
*Christmas ornament*

**\*Please, NO wall calendars, candles or candy that may melt**

*November Birthdays*



- |       |   |       |  |
|-------|---|-------|--|
| 11/1  | Gretchen Friend-Jones<br>Charles Chipman, Jr. | 11/18 | David Abel<br>Julia Detloff<br>Jeff Smith      |
| 11/2  | Patricia Lipton                               | 11/21 | Janet Baker<br>Mary Kukanis                    |
| 11/4  | Cory Kuhn<br>Ethel Rudy                       | 11/22 | Jodi Kleppinger                                |
| 11/6  | Kathleen Burlison                             | 11/23 | Dennis Crooks                                  |
| 11/7  | Christine Hoffman                             | 11/24 | Lindsay Prospect<br>Eric VanArsdall            |
| 11/9  | David Crane                                   | 11/25 | Majorie Hall<br>Leonard Hoffman<br>Betsy Traba |
| 11/11 | Bob Goldman                                   | 11/27 | Mae Reid<br>Johnnie Williams                   |
| 11/12 | Charles Hawkins                               | 11/28 | Susan Mitchell                                 |
| 11/17 | Casey Taylor<br>Kayla Taylor                  |       |  |

*November Anniversaries*



- |       |                           |
|-------|---------------------------|
| 11/10 | Charles & Marilyn Shipman |
| 11/25 | Harold & Peggye Mezile    |
| 11/27 | Sarah & Michael Dousa     |

**Remembering Our Saints**

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Gloria Adams          | Beverly Lulow          |
| Wally Beckstrom       | Mel Kestner            |
| Melissa Bonhar        | Dona Knoch             |
| Fred Brockmann        | Helen Mahoney          |
| Donna Brown           | Sandra H. Matthews     |
| Joan Byrd             | Nancy McCloud          |
| Randy Carlson         | Virginia McIntire      |
| Yvonne Clarke         | Steven Moore           |
| Carol Ann Chellew     | Vera Montemayor        |
| Roxie Fenkner         | Larry Mitchell         |
| Ray Fuller            | Marion McClellen       |
| Monica Geary          | Manny Neal             |
| Joyce Harmon          | Kristen Papenhausen    |
| Lillian Harris        | Scott Pitt             |
| Gwen Harris-Bos       | Hal Ralph              |
| Mary Martha Henderson | Joanna Riley Skillings |
| Don Helgeson          | Connie Taber           |
| Elaine Heverdjs       | Roger Tegenkamp        |
| Harry Hinrichs        | Pat Wanta              |
| Louise Lashley        | Bruce Wagner           |
| Manuel Maqueda Lugo   | Donald T. Gale         |





FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC CHURCH  
 1031 Euclid Ave  
 Sarasota, FL 34237  
[www.uccsarasota.com](http://www.uccsarasota.com)



**The 2022 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](mailto: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 Manager .....Mark Swain  
 Media Specialist.....Douglas Kingsley  
 Financial Administrator .....TBD  
 Financial Manager.....Susan Fields  
 Office Administrator .....Sherry Glover

**OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEERS**

Moderator..... Jim Butterworth  
 Vice Moderator ..... Nancy Morris  
 Past Moderator .....Carol Fields  
 Co-treasurers..... Robin Reich & Dale Woodling  
 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](mailto:office@uccsarasota.com); Website: [www.uccsarasota.com](http://www.uccsarasota.com)

**We are worshipping on-line via Livestreams each week at 11 a. m. and the service is posted to our website for streaming by 1 p.m. each Sunday afternoon.**



