



February 5, 2023

11 a.m.

Flowers Given By: **Janet Tipton**, in memory of my mother **Natalie Tipton** and grandmother,
Corena Myers

PRELUDE

My Lord, What a Morning

arr. Raymond Haan

INVITATION to WORSHIP

One: From the moment we open our eyes, our heart awakens to sing,

Many: **Thank you, God, for waking me up! Thank you, God, for getting me up!
Thank you, God, for this moment to be in Your presence.**

One: And the candles burning brightly before us are a reminder that we are in God's
presence and the flames serve as a spark that we are called to let our light shine.

Many: **My Lord what a morning to gather at the river where You claim us as
"Beloved," so precious Lord take our hands, as we wade in the water of
worship.**

One: We sing out for all Sarasota to hear.

Many: **It is good to be here! Alleluia and Amen.**

*OPENING HYMN

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

#1

**Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible hid from our eyes, Most blessed,
most glorious, the Ancient of Days, almighty, victorious, Your great name we praise.**

**Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light, not wanting, not wasting, but ruling in might;
Your justice like mountains high soaring above, Your clouds which are fountains of
goodness and love.**

**Your life is life giving to both great and small; in all life You're living, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves and as flowers, then wither and perish but naught dims
Your powers.**

**So perfect Your glory, so brilliant Your light, Your angels adore you, all veiling their
sight; All praises we now render as Your angels do: in awe at the splendor of light hiding
You.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

**There are so many gospels around us today, O God. Everyone claims and clamors that
they *know* the way. We swim in a chaotic sea of information and cannot keep our heads
above water. Help us, O God. We know that Sophia, Your holy wisdom, cries out on the
corner of life, but how can we hear her amid the cacophony? We pause in prayer,
trusting that silence is Your first language. Open our ears, senses, sacred imaginations,
and souls to You. In this stillness, enter in to plant a seed of love of Your gospel medicine
for our souls now and this week. Amen.**

Silence

POEM

Touched by an Angel

Maya Angelou

We, unaccustomed to courage, exiles from delight,
live coiled in shells of loneliness until love leaves its high holy temple
and comes into our sight to liberate us into life.

Love arrives and in its train come ecstasies
old memories of pleasure, ancient histories of pain.

Yet if we are bold, love strikes away the chains of fear from our souls.

We are weaned from our timidity in the flush of love's light

We dare be brave and suddenly we see that love costs all we are and will ever be.

Yet it is only love which sets us free.

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:38-42

³⁸“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ ³⁹ But I say to you: Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also, ⁴⁰ and if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, give your coat as well, ⁴¹ and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. ⁴² Give to the one who asks of you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you. ⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I say to you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you

doing than others? Do not even the gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ Be wholehearted, therefore, as God is wholehearted.

SERMON

Wait... What Did Jesus Just Say?!

OFFERING/ANTHEM

In This Very Room

Ron Harris

HOLY COMMUNION

One: May the grace, love, presence, and peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: May God's good news and vision for life call out to you.

Many: We gather to taste the promise of God found in broken bread and a cup of juice.

One: Come those whose faith feels strong and those whose soul's wi-fi is offline; come those who are worn out and those who feel well-fed; come those who are confused and those who are certain.

Many: For there is a place set for each of us at Christ's table, all are welcome.

HYMN

Let Us Break Bread Together

#330

**Let us break bread together on our knees; let us break bread together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun, My God, have mercy on me.**

**Let us drink wine together on our knees; let us drink wine together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun, My God, have mercy on me.**

**Let us praise God together on our knees; let us praise God together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun, My God, have mercy on me.**

PASTORAL PRAYER and LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

*CLOSING HYMN

I Come With Joy

#349

**I come with joy, a child of God, forgiven, loved, and free, The life of Jesus to recall, in love
laid down for me, in love laid down for me.**

**I come with Christians far and near to find, as all are fed, The new community of love in
Christ's communion bread, in Christ's communion bread.**

**As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud division ends. The love that made
us, makes us one, and strangers are now friends, and strangers are now friends.**

**And thus we meet, and better know the Presence, ever near, And join our hearts and sing
with joy that Christ is risen here, that Christ is risen here.**

**Together met, together bound, in friendship we will stay, And go with joy to love the
world and live the way we pray, and live the way we pray.**

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Postlude in F

Eric Thiman



Sunday, February 5, 2023

Come one, come all, to the Women's Association's lunch and program on **Tuesday, February 7**, at 11:30a.m. in Syster Hall. **Linda Burry**, a fitness instructor for Crunch, will talk to us about "Mind, Body, and Spirit." Attendees are encouraged to wear comfortable shoes and clothes for gentle movements anyone can do. Linda is very much a woman of faith and believes strongly in the mind/body/spirit connections. Luncheon costs \$12. Sign up after either Sunday service or call the church office at 941-953-7044.

Artful Prayer, February 9th, ~ All Are Welcome on February 9th at 2 p.m., Oasis Center and Zoom ~ you are invited to be, Surprised by God!"

Rev. Donna Papenhausen leads us in a session of no-peek collage using words and pictures you will gather from one or two magazines, a glue stick, a sheet of drawing paper, and scissors. (Note: This is the session from November which had been cancelled due to weather.)

It is me standing in the need of prayer ~ Tuesdays in February

You are invited to pay attention to and set an intention toward prayer. **Tuesdays in February (7, 14, 21, and 28) at 1 pm in the Oasis Center and zoom**, this is an opportunity to both be in prayer and talk about prayer. The sessions will be recorded and posted to YouTube/Facebook so you can watch when convenient. In this month, as we celebrate Valentine's Day, the gift of God's love would be sweeter than chocolate, more abundant than those heart-shaped hard candies, and remind each of us that you are named and known by God as "Beloved". Please contact Pastor Wes for the Zoom link.

COLLAGE invites you to join us for our Monthly Box Luncheon on Feb. 12, 2023, immediately following the 11 am Church Service in Syster Hall. In addition to fellowship, COLLAGE will discuss goals for the coming year. Please sign up either in the Narthex on Sunday, Feb. 5 or by calling the church office with your selection of a sandwich or salad. **We hope you can all join us.**

The UCC Men's breakfast series continues Saturday, February 18! Past moderators, Jim Butterworth and Dick Miller invite **all the men** of the congregation, new and longtime members, to join them for breakfast in Syster Hall. Coffee will be on at 8 am and breakfast served (courtesy of chef Dale Moore) at 8:30 am. We will enjoy fellowship together and hear a short presentation by Dale Woodling, a board member with the local Salvation Army, about the good work which this organization does in our community. (A free will offering will be taken to cover breakfast costs.) **You may register by Thursday, February 16 by calling Sherry at the church office at 941-953-7044.** We hope to see you there!

Choral Artist in Residence ~ Sunday, February 19 both services at 9 and 11 am

Our choir is excited about working with **Dr. Eric Nelson**, Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at Emory University the weekend of February 18 & 19. Dr. Nelson is also the Conductor and Artistic Director of the internationally acclaimed Atlanta Master Chorale. On Sunday, February 19th, Dr. Nelson will lead our worship in a **Festival of Hymns** including five of his own creative hymn arrangements such as *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms* and *How Great Thou Art*. This special choral Sunday will be accompanied by **guest musicians including a Brass Quintet, flute, and cello.** Please plan to attend and bring a friend.

Please note your 2022 contribution statement has gone out via email or USPS to you (depending on your preferred communication style). If you have NOT received your statement from last year, please contact the church office. With gratitude for YOUR generosity.

Reader Readers is a book discussion group will meet on February 9th: We will be discussing *Sisters in Arms* by Kaia Alderson. Kaia Alderson's debut historical fiction novel reveals the untold, true story of the Six Triple Eight, the only all-Black battalion of the Women's Army Corps, who made the dangerous voyage to Europe to ensure American servicemen received word from their loved ones during World War II. As these courageous women help to form the 688th Central Postal Directory Battalion, they are dealing with more than just army bureaucracy—everyone is determined to see this experiment fail. For two northern women, learning to navigate their way through the segregated army may be tougher than book camp. For more information and further updates, contact Sandy Smith at sandysmithvi@gmail.com or 340-227-5121.

Calendar:

Sunday, February 5 ~ with Communion

Sunday Worship, 9 am, sanctuary

Sunday Worship, 11 am, in the sanctuary and online

Fellowship ~ Birthday Sunday, Syster Hall

Monday, February 6

Racial Justice Mission Group, 11 am

Tuesday, February 7

Women's Fellowship Group, 11:30 am, Syster Hall
Prayer Session, 1 pm, Oasis Center and Zoom (will be recorded)
Drumming as Spiritual Practice, 3 pm, Oasis Center
Bible Study, 6:30 pm, Zoom

Wednesday, February 8

Bible Study, 11 am, Hybrid ~ Oasis and Zoom
Sacred Conversation on Race, 3 pm, Zoom
Choir, 7 pm, Chapel

Thursday, February 9

Artful Prayer, 3 pm Oasis Center and Zoom
Service for Bob Phelps, 2 pm, University Park Country Club

Sunday, February 12

Sunday Worship, 9 am, sanctuary
Sunday Worship, 11 am, in the sanctuary and online
COLLAGE lunch, noon, Syster Hall

Upcoming:

February 22 ~ Ash Wednesday ~ two different opportunities for worship.

- **Noon** ~ Join us in the chapel for a time of quiet meditation. There will be prayer tables with a reading for you to ponder; you can light a candle; and center yourself as we begin the season of Lent. At 12:30 p.m., Pastor Wes will offer a short liturgy and ashes to anyone who wishes. (Note, this is a new opportunity).
- **5:30 p.m.** ~ Pancakes (Syster Hall) ~ Join us for our traditional pancake meal before worship.
- **6:30 p.m.** ~ Service ~ Join us for our traditional Ash Wednesday service in the **sanctuary and online**. Pastor Wes will preach, our choir will sing, ashes available for your forehead or back-of-your-hand, and we will open our hearts to begin the season of Lent.

Finally! Coming up in March - the long postponed First Congregational UCC **Chili Cook-Off!** We are recruiting Chili Chefs to offer your best batch chili on **Sunday, March 26, at 12:15 in Syster Hall**. The congregation will vote on their favorite, and the winner will receive a modest prize and lots of praise! If you would like to participate as a chef, please contact Sandy Smith.