



First Congregational UCC

The Easter Story

As we turn our calendars to April, we will enter, explore, and experience our Holiest Week. We begin by joining the Palm Sunday parade. But the shouts and songs of “Hosanna” will soon be silenced, and backs turned on Jesus.

We join the disciples in the Upper Room on Maundy Thursday. Maundy means, “commandment”, as in the commandment to love as God/Christ loves us. At the same time, there is tension on Maundy Thursday. Even as Jesus preaches and teaches and embodies love, Judas, one of Jesus’ friends, slips out the side door to betray him.

Many of us know moments when those closest to us betray us. The tension mounts as Peter declares he will **never** desert Jesus ~ only we soon learn he does. A few of the disciples head to a garden to pray with Jesus. (*Note this setting may be an echoing of Genesis 1, where in a garden there is prayer in the presence of God.*) But the disciples fall asleep ~ they can’t stay awake.

To be sure, one of the coping mechanisms is to distance and disconnect ourselves from pain. We can numb the pain through television/internet, shopping, alcohol, drugs, even being too busy ~ the urgency of **do something**. As Judas comes into the garden followed by the military guard, he gives Jesus a kiss to indicate who the guards should seize.

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.
- **Worship ~ 11:00 a.m. in person in the Sanctuary and livestreamed** on Facebook, YouTube and our website.

We try to reserve the side pews for those who wish to wear a mask. The 9 a.m. service has more room for social distancing.

Hold that **heartbreak** ~ an intimate symbol for betrayal. Apparently, the guards didn't even know **who** to arrest! Jesus is led away, put on trial (which is a sham), and the crowd who a few days earlier asked Jesus to save them (that is what "Hosanna" means), now chants "Crucify him." Notice, name how we still look for **someone** to blame when things don't go our way, or don't go according to our plans. We still think and say life will be so much better when **that** person is no longer around.

For me, Good Friday, Jesus on the cross isn't paying some debt. God didn't have an accounting problem. God continually demonstrates in the Hebrew Scriptures the capacity to forgive humans again, and *again* and **again**. God's loving kindness (the Hebrew word is *hesed*) is offered to humans so many times ~ even when we go astray. The cross is a symbol of self-giving love. The cross challenges all the scripts of life where it is about getting ahead or making money or being number one. And Jesus, God's love in the flesh, dies there ~ seeking to defeat our need to scapegoat and blame and shame. While the cross challenges the cultural scripts, these ideas still hover in the air and take up space in our hearts. Both are within us.

There is the silence of Saturday when resurrection doesn't even seem a possibility.

On Sunday, the very first Easter Sunday, the women faithfully, fiercely, courageously go to the tomb. In some gospels it is to anoint the body, but in Matthew...*well* you will just need to come and **celebrate Easter with your church on April 9th at 9 and 11 a.m.**

This is my 10th Easter with you. We have not only told and sung this story before, but we are also a people seeking to embody and embrace this story. I pray that Easter this year will be more than one day on the calendar, but a **way of life**. Remember, the world wasn't magically better for the disciples. They lived in a time of Roman oppression. Caesar had his sandals on the neck of people. Taxation rates left people barely hanging on by a financial thread. Jesus didn't overthrow the government or even the religious institutions. But he offered us *Gospel*, good news, in those times when Good Fridays persist and are too pervasive. Easter sets us free from scoreboards and scapegoating and trying to "win" life. Easter shows us life amid the brokenness and less-than-perfectness.

My prayer is for you to be caught up in the mystery and majesty of our Holiest Week ~ letting this story help you author your story in these days. I look forward to seeing you all in April.

With God's Easter-ing Love to you ~ *Wes*

Holy Week Worship ~ 2023



Palm Sunday, April 2nd @ 9 and 11 a.m. ~ Join us for the triumphant entry into Jerusalem as we wave palm branches and sing out our Hosannas!!! Our Chancel Choir will sing at both the 9 and 11 a.m. services. Our 11 a.m. service will be livestreamed. All are welcome and bring a friend!

Maundy Thursday, April 6th @ 7 p.m. in the sanctuary ~ We gather around the table with the disciples on the last night of Jesus' life to experience and encounter the Bread of Life. Members of the Worship Team will help lead our service and we will celebrate Holy Communion. This service will be livestreamed.



Good Friday, April 7th @ Noon in the sanctuary ~ Beneath the cross of Jesus we gather to open our hearts to the One who meets us in our pain. Our Chancel Choir will sing, and this service will be livestreamed so you can watch it at any time.

Easter Sunday Celebration, April 9th @ 9 and 11 a.m. ~ We gather to sing and share the gospel truth, Christ is risen, he is risen indeed, Alleluia!!! We welcome our brass quintet and choir at both services. 11 a.m. will be livestreamed. All are welcome and bring a friend.



Worship

9 a.m. ~ Beginning April 16th ~ Outside at the Oasis Center

11 a.m. ~ In the Sanctuary & Livestreamed (Facebook, YouTube, Website)

April 16th ~ We continue the season of Easter with worship @ 9 and 11 a.m. ~ Pastor Wes will focus on Matthew 28:16-20. **Please note, our 9 a.m. worship will be OUTSIDE at the Oasis Center today.** The 11 a.m. worship will be in the sanctuary and online.

April 23rd ~ Earth Day Sunday Celebration ~ **Join us at 9 a.m. as we worship OUTSIDE at the Oasis Center in God's Creation.** Members of our Green Team will help lead our worship at both 9 and 11 a.m. The 11 a.m. worship will be in the sanctuary and online.



April 30th ~ We begin a sermon series on **Apostle Paul's Greatest Hits!** Over the coming weeks, we will land in each of Paul's letters and focus on some of his most important claims about our faith. Paul wrote over half the New Testament; his influence shaped our faith. **We will begin with selected verses from Romans 5-6. The 9 a.m. service is OUTSIDE at the Oasis Center.** The 11 a.m. worship will be in the sanctuary and online.

Easter Love Offering



The Mission Team has turned its attention to Easter and the upcoming Easter Love Offering. We have kept our Covenants and our core values in mind as we made our selections.



We have chosen five UCC missions and six **other missions that support the nation and** the world. All have received at least a 90 rating from Charity Navigator this year.

Supporting Our UCC Missions:

One Great Hour of Sharing whose Lenten offering supports disasters and refugees is one of our UCC missions. The **Joseph Henry Evans Scholarship Fund** is to honor our Racial Justice Covenant and the **Open and Affirming Coalition for the UCC** honors our Open and Affirming Covenant. The other UCC missions are **Neighbors in Need UCC** and **Strengthen the Church**.

Missions Supporting Our Nation/World:

- **Back Bay Mission** does tireless work on the Mississippi Gulf Coast to strengthen neighborhoods and seek justice.
- The **Coalition of Immokalee Workers** does so much to advocate for farm workers and is expanding from helping those in Florida to Maryland, Tennessee, and Colorado.
- **Partners in Health** works tirelessly to provide high quality health care globally to those who need it the most.
- **Bread for the World Institute** whose mission is to educate and equip people to advocate for policies and programs to end hunger in the United States and throughout the world.
- **Church World Service** is a faith-based organization that works on sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement, and disasters.
- **Water Engineers for the Americas and Africa** honors our Creation Justice Covenant. They send engineers all over the world to bring clean water to those in need.

Easter is the time we send love and caring to our neighbors all over the Globe. We have researched these organizations to ensure your dollars are spent wisely. Please give generously.

Envelopes in which to place your donations are available in the Narthex and pews. You may also send a check with Easter Love in the memo line. Thank you for your generosity.

www.uccsarasota.com ~ 941-953-7044

Join the Zoom Conversations



COLLAGE 2nd & 4th 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.

Zoom links available through Pastor Wes



Grief Group



There is room in our Easter faith for Good Fridays that persist!!! We will be hosting a **grief group starting on Thursday, April 13th at 4 p.m. in the Oasis Center.**

This group will run for several Thursdays in April and May. This is an opportunity to share together, support one another, and offer God's love. This group is open to all whose hearts are heavy. Grief takes many forms and faces. **Please sign up by calling the church office.**

Core Values Discussion ~ April 30th



Over the last two months, our Leadership Teams have been reviewing our Core Values. **Why?** I am so glad you asked.

The current set of Core Values has guided our congregation since before I came to the church. Since that time, we have received several new members ~ many who now faithfully serve on Leadership Teams. In fact, *almost half* of our current membership has joined since I began my ministry. This year we are reflecting and discussing our Core Values, Mission, and Vision Statement. And **NOW** is your chance to join in the fun.

After the 11 a.m. service on April 30th, you will have a chance to share your reflections during fellowship time. If you are not able to attend this conversation, please see Pastor Wes or Nancy Morris.

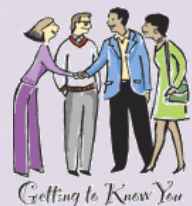
In the coming months, a small working group will be wordsmithing the Core Values, then seeing how these changes might impact our wording in the Vision and Mission Statements. We also want to consider our three Covenants in these conversations. We hope you will consider sharing your thoughts on these Core Values and pray for the work being done this Spring to articulate who we are and who we want to be in these days.

- Worship** is at the heart of what we do and who we are.
- We are an inclusive **community** and love each other, not despite our differences, but because of them.
- We are grounded in Sarasota reaching out beyond our walls to neighbors near and far in **service**.
- We strive to offer an **extravagant** welcome to all.
- We strive to **respect** each other in our diversity.
- We are a **joyful** covenant partner with the United Church of Christ.

April Fellowship

Fellowship during April is sponsored by **The Endowment Team** whose members are *Steve Combs, David Mithell, Gib Mitchell, Cindy Woodling, Hal Kamm and Nancy Morris.*

- ✓ April 2 ~ Birthday Sunday (*See Bread for the World on page 6*)
- ✓ April 9 ~ Easter Sunday with Simple Treats
- ✓ April 16 ~ "Themed" Treats (*See Legacy Society on page 6*)



Legacy Society

TOGETHER WE CAN SECURE THE FUTURE



Planned Giving

What is a planned gift?

Planned gifts are planned for during the donor's lifetime but not given to the church until the donor's death. It is a way to support our church in the future through arrangements you make today.

Why Give?

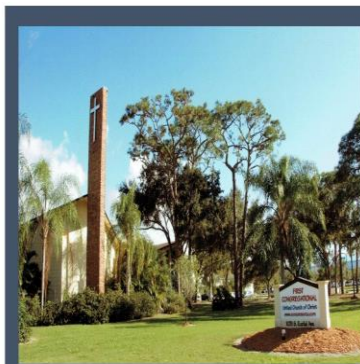
Why an Endowment Fund?

The Endowment Fund allows your donations to work both in perpetuity and right now. A share of earnings goes to the annual operating budget each year and supports church operations in the future.

The Legacy Society

Why join other donors?

No matter the size of your gift, your generosity strengthens the church now and in the future. As part of our Legacy Society your own gift will encourage others to think about making planned gifts.



LEARN MORE AT COFFEE HOUR APRIL 16

We will celebrate Legacy Society members, share why they love the church, why they made a planned gift. Be part of it by making your own planned gift this year. Contact a member of your Endowment Committee for questions – Cindy Woodling, Chair; David Mitchell, Secretary; Gib Mitchell; Hal Kamm; Steve Combs.

Bread for the World Ending Hunger in our Lifetime

THANK YOU to all those who participated in the Bread for the World **Offering of Letters** on March 26th. Many letters were gathered and are being mailed to our Florida congressional representatives. This year the letters are encouraging leaders to pass the Farm Bill due for renewal in September.

If you were not able to attend this event and are interested in sending letters, it is not too late. There will be another opportunity on **April 2 (Palm Sunday)**. **After each service there will be refreshments and an opportunity to attend a Meet and Greet with Sandy Lindahl who works for Bread for the World.** She will talk about the intersection between hunger, climate change and racial injustice.

Templates for crafting your own letters will be provided.

Please come to learn about **Bread for the World** and join in advocating to end hunger in our lifetime.



SURE News

Dai Bear Thao resigned as Executive Director of SURE effective February 28th. We wish Dai all the best in his future endeavors. In the meantime, our support of SURE remains strong. The Personnel Board is already at work to find a new director, but it will take time to find the right person.

The Board of Directors has voted to cancel the Rally scheduled for April 3rd and the Nehemiah Action scheduled for April 24th. In their place a "Justice Gathering" has been scheduled for **April 24th at 6:00 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, 2050 Oak Street in Sarasota.** SURE continues to actively work on Affordable Housing, Mental Health, Restorative Practices and Criminal Justice issues.



Brady News

Brady Sarasota has been working hard to urge people to reach out to their legislators to stop a bill that would allow Floridians to carry concealed weapons without purchasing permits or undergoing training. The governor has said he would sign SB 543 when it reaches his desk, but there's still time to make some calls or send an email.



James Buchanon (R-H74), james.Buchanan@myfloridahouse.gov, 850-717-5074
Michael Grant (R-H75), michael.Grant@myfloridahouse.gov, 850-717-5075
Fiona McFarland (R-H73), fiona.Mcfarland@myfloridahouse.gov, 850-717-5073
Joe Gruters (R-S22), gruters.Joe.web@flsenate.gov, 850-487-5022

Meanwhile, Brady rallies will continue at the southern end of the Sarasota Bayfront parking lot from **4 to 5 p.m. every Thursday through April 6**. Come on out; the chapter has signs for you to use and free t-shirts for those who would like to become a part of this worthy mission.

Mark your calendars for the **spring wrap-up on April 13 at 4 p.m. in our own Oasis Center**. There will be food and time to share ideas for activities going forward. You do not have to be a Brady member to attend. Brady Sarasota's Council will publish a 2023-24 calendar well before the rallies resume in October.

Student Scholarship Reminder – Due April 30th

First Congregational UCC student scholarship applications are due April 30th. Applications are available through the church office via the Spiritual Education and Growth Team.

All applications and supporting materials must be returned to the church office by April 30th. Email address: admin@uccsarasota.com.



Our Library/Resource Center News

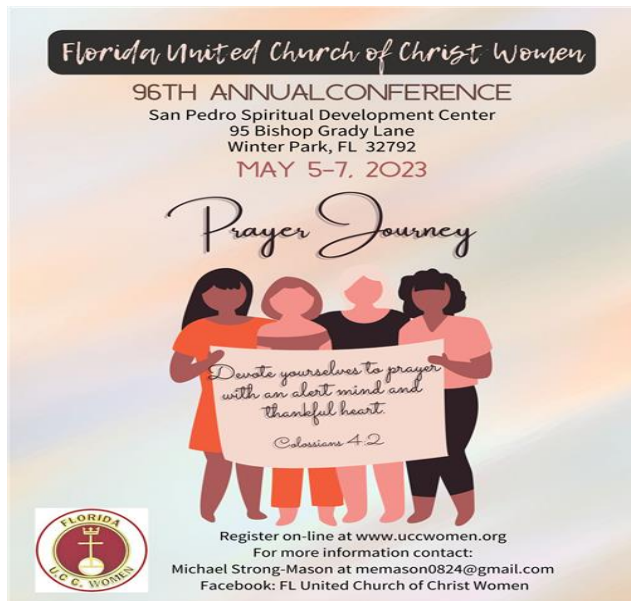
Your team has been busy updating the library/resource center located in Syster Hall. New carpeting has been installed, painting has been completed and books have been evaluated and re-shelved.



If you have books you would like to donate, please place them on the bottom shelf of the cart along with a list of the books you are donating. Covenant team members know to look there and will review and decide if the donated items belong in our library, our Little Library outside or should be given away. Guidelines have been established to assist in these evaluations.

Those involved with the leadership of Lois Wilkins includes Warren Bacon, *Racial Justice Ministry Group*; Lynne Woodman, *Racial Justice Ministry Group*; Sarah Melcher, *Green Team*; Sandi Armstrong, *COLLAGE*; Sandy Smith, *Library Committee (Ready Readers)*; Lucy Tobias, *Library Committee (Green Team)*, and Julia Detloff, *Spiritual Education and Growth*.

Please stop in, grab a book, and see for yourself what we have to offer.



Florida United Church of Christ Women May 5-7, 2023

We currently have five members of FCUCC who will be attending this conference. Won't you join us for a weekend of networking with other Florida UCC Women?

~ The registration deadline is April 1st ~

Registration forms can be found on the Florida Conference website and registration can be done online. The cost of \$180 includes sharing a room and all meals. For more information, see Terri Crawford or Nancy Morris.

First Congregational United Church of Christ Church Council Letter Regarding New College

*Note: This letter was approved at our February 2023 Council meeting and appeared in the **Sarasota Herald-Tribune** on March 7th, 2023. This was also emailed to Governor DeSantis, Sen. Joe Gruters, and Reps. Michael Grant, James Buchanan, Fiona McFarland, Will Robinson and Tommy Gregory.*

As the lay leadership of First Congregational United Church of Christ, Sarasota, we decry the elimination of the Office of Outreach and Inclusive Excellence at New College on February 28th and raise our voices with concern for the college's change of direction.

In 1959, Rev. John Whitney MacNeil – our then senior pastor - gathered business and religious leaders to form a diverse, non-sectarian institution that has always encouraged freedom of thought. This goal was solidified with funds donated nationally by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and members of our own church.

Today's New College Board pushes a politically discriminatory agenda with actions that contradict the grounding principles -- principles, in fact, fostering students' success academically and beyond.

In many ways, New College has succeeded, despite continual underfunding by the state - funding now suddenly available to promote a political agenda.

As founders, we are an inclusive, diverse church grounded in the teachings of Jesus Christ, and with love and respect for all of God's Creation and beings. We welcome all.

During the January meeting of the New College Board of Trustees, much was said about the future New College becoming a "Christian" school with "Christian" values.

With respect, we take exception to the use of a "Christian" label that does not embody the love and values of Jesus Christ.

The Church Council, Lay Leaders of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, Sarasota, with the full support of the church's pastor, the Rev. Dr. Wesley D. Bixby.

Thank You



Thank you to the many who donated toiletries for **Orchard Place**. What a joy to walk into the Narthex and see the many items that gathered for our friends at Orchard Place.

Your generosity knows no bounds and goes a long way toward helping those with very limited incomes. There truly is joy in giving!



Summer Reading

Your Spiritual Education and Growth Team wants to know a **FAVORITE book** you have read **this past year**. We are looking for good fiction books. Please note, these do not need to be serious and somber. There is a prayerfulness in playfulness.

For example, one of my favorite books this last year is *A Lesson in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. This story chronicles a female scientist in the 1960's ~ the challenges. Garmus has a sharp writing style. And there is a dog in the story who has a great commentary on human beings. I also adore the *Amari* books by B.B. Alston. Amari is an African American teen with . . . well . . . don't want to spoil the plot. The two books in this series offer a thoughtful and imaginative way to be in the world today.



What good fiction books have warmed your heart, stirred your soul, and maybe helped you laugh out loud? You can send your title suggestions to Pastor Wes.

Request for Drivers (Taxi Team? Carry Corps?)



Among the not-so-great realities of giving up driving, either voluntarily or required, is the inability to get where you want to go. Coming to First Congregational on Sunday has been a ritual for many of our members, yet they no longer have the means to get to church.

We are looking for volunteers who might be willing, not necessarily every Sunday, to offer a **welcoming ride to church**. Some of you are already doing this and you know how much it means to both of you. If you believe this is something you are being called to do, **please let the church office know**. We are hopeful we can match you with someone who lives nearby.

Thank you for considering,
Your Growing & Caring Team

CREATION JUSTICE COVENANT NEWS

Footprint ~ *by Lucy Tobias (Green Team)*

Do you know the size of your feet? Yes, of course. That was easy. Now, let me ask this question—Do you know the size of your carbon footprint?

Carbon footprint came up in the recent Green Team forum Contagious Hope: Making a Difference on Climate. Panel member Jerry Larson from Congregational UCC in Punta Gordo told us how his church installed solar and lowered its carbon footprint by 40 percent.



What is carbon footprint? It is measure of the amount of carbon dioxide and other carbon compounds emitted due to the consumption of fossil fuels by a particular person, group, church, organization, etc.

Find your footprint by measuring the type of food consumed (carnivores have a bigger carbon footprint than vegetarians), calculating the fossil fuel used by car trips, airplane trips, heating a house, buying new clothes instead of used.

You can take a test—short, like five minutes, at several websites. I used <https://carbon-calculator.climatehero.me/>?

Part of me wants to think I'm doing a good job – recycling, walking, riding bikes—but the test showed I could do more to reduce the size of my carbon footprint. What is your carbon footprint? Take the test!

OPEN AND AFFIRMING COVENANT NEWS



April Zoom Dates: April 11th & 28th @ 11 a.m.

No lunchbox meeting this month ~ See you in May!

RACIAL JUSTICE COVENANT NEWS

Visit Ringling's Exhibits – April 17th @ 10 a.m.



Members of the Sacred Conversations on Race (SCOR) invite you to join them at **10:00 a.m. on Monday, April 17th, at the entrance to the Ringling Museum complex.**

We will walk to the art museum to view the new exhibit of Seminole art entitled "Reclaiming Home: Contemporary Seminole Art" as well as "Glimpse of the Artist: A Community Celebration" presented by the Sarasota African American Coalition.

For more information on these two exhibits, go to <https://www.ringling.org/events/type/exhibitions>
No RSVP needed. Just meet us there!

Sacred Conversations on Race (SCOR)

After providing an opportunity for FEAST participants to sample SCOR with a hybrid version of the discussion group on Thursday mornings, SCOR resumed its regular **Zoom meetings at 3:00 p.m. Wednesdays on March 29th.**

We are hopeful that several new participants who joined us during FEAST will continue to attend our SCOR meetings. After an open discussion about our next steps, we are beginning each session with a check-in, providing attendees an opportunity to share any joys, sorrows and/or learnings.

We are suspending heavy reading assignments for the immediate future. Instead, we will utilize podcasts, articles, and videos. In selecting discussion topics, we will make every effort to be sensitive to the needs of both those who are seeking more awareness and those who are seeking healing. We will also seek a balance between covering history and current events. If you have any suggestions, please let Jim Crumel and Pastor Wes know.

In the meantime, please know there is **ALWAYS** space and place for you to join in this conversation or you can come to listen. Truly, **ALL ARE WELCOME HERE!**

Artful Prayer ~ April 13th @ 2 p.m.



Please join us on April 13th at 2 p.m. in the **Oasis Center or on Zoom** to create Artful Prayer Doodles (or "tangles"). No art experience required. All supplies will be provided for those at the in-person session.

If joining via Zoom, you will need heavy paper or card stock cut into 4" squares, black pens (preferably non-smear art pens), soft pencils, Q-tips, and optional colored pencils. Contact the church office for the Zoom link.

Community Meal ~ April 25th

The monthly community meal that we continue to provide at St. Paul Lutheran Church feeds those who are hungry and in need of fellowship. Our guests are treated to a Sandy Smith home cooked meal. The home-baked items provided by our church family add a sweet treat that is heartily enjoyed. As important as this is, our mission to feed the hungry does not only include the food we lovingly provide. We also extend our hearts in fellowship in this safe and welcoming space.



Please volunteer with set-up/serving/clean-up functions at St. Paul's Fellowship Hall. *(Several of our new members have already signed up to be helpers.)* Please join them in this important mission.

We need your **home-baked items (brownies and frosted cakes—9x13 size)**. Please join us on **April 25th from 4-6:30 p.m.** Thank you for all you do for those in need.

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



Kings And Queens Bridge ~ April 10th

Kings and Queens Bridge will play on **Monday, April 10th @ 1 p.m.**

New players who like to play contract bridge are warmly welcomed. We meet the second Monday of each month if we have at least eight people able to play. Please call or email Ethel Rudy @ 941-727-0122 or email loisrudy253@gmail.com.

First UCC Women's Luncheon ~ April 4th @ 11:30 a.m.

Come to the UCC Women's lunch and program on **Tuesday, April 4th, at 11:30 a.m. in Syster Hall.**

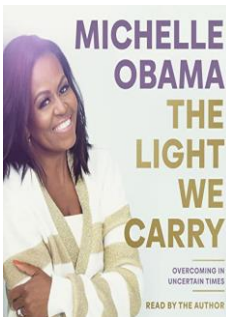
MARIE SELBY
BOTANICAL
GARDENS



We look forward to showcasing "**Insights into Selby Gardens**", presented by Wendy Deming, Chief Operating Officer of Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. Wendy will discuss how Marie Selby chose Sarasota Bay for her home and will tell us about her choice of trees and plants. The vision of Selby Gardens for the future will also be shared.

Luncheon costs \$12. Sign up after either Sunday service or call the church office.

Ready Readers ~ April 13th

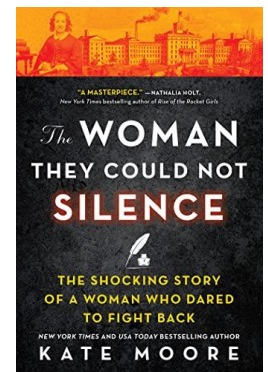


April 13th we will be discussing *The Light We Carry* by Michelle Obama. Michelle Obama offers listeners a series of fresh stories and insightful reflections on change, challenge, and power, including her belief that when we light up for others, we can illuminate the richness and potential of the world around us, discovering deeper truths and new pathways for progress.

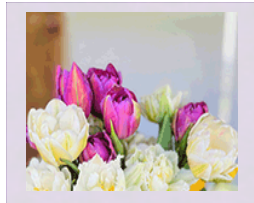
"When we are able to recognize our own light, we become empowered to use it," writes Michelle Obama. A rewarding blend of powerful stories and profound advice that will ignite conversation, *The Light We Carry* inspires listeners to examine their own lives, identify their sources of gladness, and connect meaningfully in a turbulent world.

Looking ahead ~ **May 11th** we will discussing Kate Moore's *The Woman They Could Not Silence*. 1860: As the clash between the states rolls slowly to a boil, Elizabeth Packard, housewife and mother of six, is facing her own battle. The enemy sits across the table and sleeps in the next room. Her husband of twenty-one years is plotting against her because he feels increasingly threatened ~ by Elizabeth's intellect, independence, and unwillingness to stifle her own thoughts. So Theophilus makes a plan to put his wife back in her place. One summer morning, he has her committed to an insane asylum.

Elizabeth's refusal to be silenced and her ceaseless quest for justice not only challenged the medical science of the day and led to a giant leap forward in human rights, it also showcased the most salutary lesson: sometimes, the greatest heroes we have are those inside ourselves.

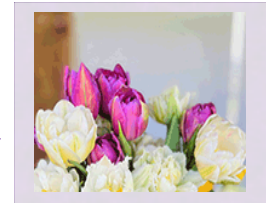


April Birthdays



4/1	Tom Fields Beverly Laier	4/17	Laurie Etter Florence Jackson Barney Kavanagh Carol McCloud
4/3	Bruce Knight	4/20	Betty Farrar
4/5	Bethany Harmon	4/21	Phillip Swain
4/6	Ruth Olson	4/23	Jim Marsey
4/7	Ashley Burroughs Carolyn Hinrichs	4/24	Gordon Quimby
4/8	Jan Weston	4/25	Carol Hagglund
4/10	Robin Reich	4/27	Nancy Arnzen Cynthia Woodling
4/12	James Hunder Sara Little Diane Miller Fernando Traba	4/28	Teri Grob
4/13	Rich Rescigno	4/29	Mary Jane Hamilton Loren Kolpin
4/14	Sally Hohenthal	4/30	Dorothy Dumford

April Anniversaries



4/4	Joseph & Barbara Yocum
4/12	Ed Dupree & June Wolgemuth
4/18	William & Judith Hansen
4/22	Rich & Carol Rescigno
4/29	William & Judith Plerhoples
4/30	Felix & Nancy McElroy III

April 90+ Wise Birthdays



4/6 Ruth Olson

4/30 ~ Dorothy Dumford

***Please let Sherry in the office
know if you are going
to be celebrating a
90+ Wise birthday—we don't
want to miss you!***



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



The 2023 Flower Chart is NOW ready for YOU! Do you have a special occasion coming up this year? Would you like to celebrate at 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
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 Financial Manager..... Susan Fields
 Office Administrator..... Sherry Glover

OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Moderator..... Nancy Morris
 Vice Moderator..... Harold Mezile
 Past Moderator Jim Butterworth
 Co-treasurers Robin Reich & Dale Woodling
 Pastor EmeritusDr. John Syster
 Contributing Photographer Susan Moore
 On-line Newsletter....Carol McCloud, Evelyn Crooks

***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 Livestream each week at 11 a. m. and the service is posted to our website for streaming by 1 p.m. each Sunday afternoon.

