

September 17, 2023~ 11:00 a.m.

First Congregational UCC ~ Sarasota



*Church
Dedication*

September 17, 2023

Rededication Sunday

11 a.m.

Flowers given by: **Sara Little** and **Barbara Shaver**, in memory of mother, **Aletha Little** and brother, **Jim D. Little**. **Ann Spencer**, in celebration of **Guy Spencer's 90th** birthday. **Dennis Crooks**, in celebration of Evelyn's birthday. To **Lorraine Matthews**, in loving memory of 43 wonderful years together, Your Beloved Husband.

PRELUDE

Fanfare and Processional

Lynn Trapp

INVITATION to WORSHIP

One: Our church's story begins on Valentine's Day 1954,

Many: Our church is built on the foundation of God's love.

One: In March of 1956 the very first worship service was held in this sanctuary.

Many: For sixty-seven years, the walls around us have absorbed our prayers and praise.

One: For sixty-seven years, we have stood on this holy ground as a witness to God's redeeming and reconciling love.

Many: Over three thousand five hundred Sunday mornings, not to mention Christmas Eve candlelight services, weddings, celebrations of life, and so much more!

One: This sanctuary hums as the sacred hovers here.

Many: We gather on this re-dedication Sunday, blessing the new tile on which we stand and cushions on which we sit. This is a day to celebrate! Alleluia and Amen!

*OPENING HYMN

What Gift Can We Bring

#370

What gift can we bring, what present, what token? What words can convey it, the joy of this day? When grateful we come, remembering, rejoicing, what song can we offer in honor and praise?

Give thanks for the past, for those who had vision, who planted and watered so dreams could come true. Give thanks for the now, for study, for worship, for mission that bids us turn prayer into deed.

Give thanks for tomorrow, full of surprises, for knowing whatever tomorrow may bring, The Word is our promise always, forever; we rest in God's keeping and live in God's love.

This gift we now bring, this present, this token, these words can convey it, the joy of this day! When grateful we come, remembering, rejoicing, this song we now offer in honor and praise!

*OPENING PRAYER

God, You shelter and give us safe sanctuaries where we can be fully ourselves. We gather with heartfelt gratitude for those who have blessed this sacred space. We give thanks to those who purchased the pews and hymnals, those who recycled the bricks from the Tampa Courthouse, those who planned a renovation in 1980s with the tile on which we stood just a few months ago. On this holy day, we express our appreciation for all who

made this renovation possible. For those who dreamed dreams, talked with designers, pondered over color choices, and removed baseboard. For those who moved pews, pulled up tiles, laid wires for a new t-loop, sewed these cushions, and for the leadership of this church. We re-dedicate this sanctuary to be a safe place to gather as sisters and brothers in Christ, who is the firm foundation. We re-dedicate this holy ground to be a place of welcome, worship, belonging, caring, justice, and stewardship for the next generation. To You, O God, we give the glory and praise and our prayer that this will be a home for countless years to come. Amen.

*HYMN

All Are Welcome

Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live. A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive. Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace, Here the love of Christ shall end divisions: All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where prophets speak, and words are strong and true. Where all God's children dare to seek to dream God's reign anew. Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God's grace; Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus, All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where love is found in water, wine and wheat; A banquet hall on holy ground, where peace and justice meet. Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space, As we share in Christ the feast that frees us; All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone, To heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known. Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face, Let us bring an end to fear and danger: All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard And loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word. Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace. Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter: All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

A CELEBRATION of GRATITUDE

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

2 Samuel 6

As the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, and she despised him in her heart. ¹⁷ They brought in the ark of the Lord and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before the Lord. ¹⁸ When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts ¹⁹ and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes.

SERMON

Daring to Dance

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.

ANTHEM

O How Amiable

Ralph Vaughn Williams

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen**

*PRAYER of DEDICATION

*CLOSING HYMN

God, You Have Set Us

#372

**God, you have set us in this time and place, Called us as stewards of your love and grace.
O keep us faithful, set our souls afire, And by your Spirit all our work inspire.**

**We dedicate this work of human hand; Built for your glory, may it firmly stand. Let
truth be preached and justice rightly done. In Christ our Savior make us truly one.**

**Let floors and hearts provide a welcome here. Let walls and voices ring with songs of
cheer. Let windows speak of beauty and of light. Let smile and gesture show your love
aright.**

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ SUNDAY, September 17, 2023

Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity (SURE) ~ tomorrow night, Monday, September 18th, at 6 p.m. at First Congregational United Church of Christ will hold our kickoff as well as a meet and greet with Mackenzie Grimes as the new lead organizer. First Congregational UCC will host our annual House Meeting after both services on Sunday, October 15 in Syster Hall. Mackenzie is planning to participate with us on this day.

You are invited to an evening reception at the Lexow Gallery at the Unitarian Universalist Church (3975 Fruitville Rd) featuring our very own, **Brenda Robinson!!** The event is on **Friday, September 22nd from 5-7 pm.** The Art Show is entitled, "Our Stories are in our Scars". The show runs from September 17-October 12. Come and support Brenda!

DO YOU ENJOY KNITTING? Lindsey Huddleston and Carol Hagglund are hosting a Prayer Shawl Ministry group where knitters will gather in people's homes once a month to socialize, share knitting information and knit prayer shawls. These shawls will be available for anyone for both happy and sad occasions. The first meeting will be **Friday, September 22nd from 2-3:30 pm**. Text or call Lindsey (630-338-9294) or Carol (813-767-3782) for more information.

Sacred Conversations on Race Continues **September 27**: "We Need to Talk about an Injustice" - TED Talks by Bryan Stevenson All are welcome! You can join either in person in the **Oasis Center** or on **Zoom**. Please see Jim Crumel for more information

The Manasota Interracial Book Club (MIBC) fall meeting is hosting a panel discussion on **Saturday, September 30**. The meeting will take place from **10:00 am to 12:00 pm** at **First Presbyterian Church, 2050 Oak Street**. The panel will reflect on the question: "*What are the long term consequences of ignoring diversity, equity and inclusion in our society?*" Panel includes: **David Wilkins**, Esq and President, Manasota branch of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH); **Jill Lewis Spector**, 2nd Vice President, League of Women Voters of Florida Chair, LWV-FL & LWV-SRQ Education Action Teams; **Sharon Preston-Folta, Sr. Account Executive with WUSF Public Media in Tampa and Volunteer Programmer at WSLR 96.5 FM**; and **Pastor Wes. Renée James Gilmore**, Producer & Host of Empowering Voices at ABC7-WWSB will serve as moderator of the panel.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Sarasota (3975 Fruitville Rd.) will sponsor a showing of *A Walk to Respect* ~ recorded at the Kennedy Center. *A Walk to Respect* are words spoken and written by Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass over 150 years ago that still resonate today. There will be a panel discussion following. Event begins at 6:20 pm on Saturday, September 30th. Panel discussion begins at 7:30 pm. You can email eventsuucs@gmail.com for free tickets.

Project 180 is hosting a speaker and luncheon on October 19 at Michael's on East. Doors open 11:00 and program 11:30 to 1:00. *A Look Behind the Scenes: The Realities of Prisoner Reentry*. Laura I. Appleman, JD, discusses the myriad ways in which criminal justice costs—fees, fines, court costs, probation payments, mandatory classes, and non-payment penalties—affect reentering citizens and how these costs can lead to years of indebtedness. Professor Appleman is a member of the faculty at the College of Law at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon where she is the Van Winkle Melton Professor of Law and a University Research Integrity Officer. **Go to Project 180 to purchase tickets, \$40 each and include lunch.**

Food Collection For All Faith's Food Bank The newly established Food and Hunger Group is very pleased to be restarting the monthly collections for All Faith's Food Bank that were stopped during Covid. The collections will start on October 1 and take place the first Sunday of every month thereafter. **There will be a basket in the narthex labeled ALL FAITH'S FOOD BANK. Please place your items in the basket or next to it if the basket is full.** All Faiths would appreciate any items in jars and/or cans along with items that have a long shelf life like pasta, pudding, jello etc... The old standby items of peanut butter, jelly and spaghetti sauce are also needed. Please give what you think people will enjoy with an expiration date of mid 2024 or later.

LGBTQ+ Grief Support Group ~ A safe place to find strength and hope through the sharing and support of other grieving LGBTQ+ individuals. Not a therapy group, but an open discussion with others suffering the loss of someone close to them, whether a spouse, partner, friend, or family member. A twice monthly meeting to share, and to listen, and to find your voice. Meetings in the **Oasis Center** ~ **Contact Cas @ casbgroup1234@gmail.com**

SAVE THE DATE ~ Summer 2023 may well be remembered for Dangerous Floods and Deadly Wildfires, not to mention extreme heat. The scientists are telling us that the fires spread very quickly because the grasses are **invasive plants** rather than native. Have you ever driven north on I. 75 and seen the vast growth of kudzu, “the weed that ate the south,” on both sides of the highway? Every tree and bush and flower are covered by this invasive plant. What is the antidote to this and other plants gobbling up our world? The First UCC Women and the Green Team have assembled an **Environmental Panel: Why we must plant native flora in our gardens and be wary of invasive plants that destroy ecologies**. Join us on Tuesday, October 3, 2023, 11:30 am in Fellowship Hall. Panelists: Miri Hardy, Executive Director of the Friends of Myakka; Tom Heitzman, Sweet Bay Nursery; Lee Amos, Land Stewardship Manager, Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast. After the program, members of our Green Team will show us the native plants on our campus. Luncheon costs \$12. Sign up after either Sunday service or call the church office at 941-953-7044.

CALENDAR

Sunday, September 17 ~ Sanctuary Rededication Sunday!!

Sunday Worship, 8:45 am, **Sanctuary**

Sunday Worship, 11 am, in **Sanctuary** and online

Celebration Picnic, noon, Syster Hall

Monday, September 18

SURE Listening Process Kick-off, 6 pm, Syster Hall

Tuesday, September 19

Drumming as a Spiritual Practice, 3 pm, Chapel

Church Council, 6:30 pm, Oasis Center & Zoom

Wednesday, September 20

Wednesday Morning Bible Study, 11 am, Oasis Center and Zoom

Church Choir, 7 pm, Chapel

Thursday, September 21

Staffing Meeting, 3 pm, Zoom

Friday, September 22

Brenda Robinson Art Showcase, 5-7 pm, Unitarian Church

Sunday, September 24

Sunday Worship, 8:45 am, **Sanctuary**

Sunday Worship, 11:00 am, **Sanctuary and online**