

January 19, 2025 ~ 11:00 a.m.  
**First Congregational UCC ~ Sarasota**



1031 S. Euclid Ave. Sarasota, FL 34237 ~ (941) 953-7044  
[www.uccsarasota.com](http://www.uccsarasota.com)

Flowers given by: Page and Carol McCloud in honor in  
**Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday.**

PRELUDE

*Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen*

Mark Hayes

INVITATION to WORSHIP

One: We open our ears to the wisdom of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Many: **The time is always *right* to do what is right.**

One: We must live together as siblings or perish together as fools.

Many: **We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.**

One: I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits.

Many: **Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects *all* indirectly.**

One: Let us worship in truth and spirit remembering the call to do justice, live loving kindness, and move humbly with God.

\*OPENING HYMN

*Lift Every Voice and Sing*

#593

**Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring, ring with the harmonies of the liberty; Let our rejoicing rise, high as the listening skies, let it resound loud as the rolling sea. Sing a song full of the faith that the harsh past taught us, Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us; Facing the rising sun of our new day begun, let us march on till victory is won.**

**Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod, felt in the days when hope unborn had died; Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet, come to the place for which our people sighed? We have come over a way that with tears has been watered, We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughter, Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.**

**God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, God who has brought us thus far on the way; God, who by your might, led us into the light, keep us forever in the path, we pray. Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met you, Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, forget you; Shadowed beneath your hand, may we forever stand, true to our God, true to our native land.**

\*OPENING PRAYER

**God of justice, peace, evolving love, we gather on this weekend to listen afresh and anew to the words of Dr. King. We struggle and stumble, O God, with living our baptismal belovedness among other humans. We are flustered and frustrated by systems that churn and hurt others. We are angry at our inability to fix things. We long, O God, for Your way to interrupt and disrupt, yet our human ways work against You. Call us back, O**

**God, to trust in You. Call us away from hate. Call us toward a world where Your love is the light, Your forgiveness is the path, and Your justice is our agenda for every day. In the name of the One who shows us the way to life here and now. Amen.**

\*RESPONSE

*Precious Lord*

**Precious Lord, take my hand; Lead me on, help me stand; I am tired, I am weak, I am worn; Through the storm, through the night; Lead me on to the light; Take my hand, precious Lord; Lead me home.**

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

Romans 8, *select verses*

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

REFLECTIONS on LETTER from a BIRMINGHAM JAIL

Readers: Susan Moore, Lois Wilkins, and Gregg Matthews

Reflections: Clarence Rogers & Sheila Gossett

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE 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.**

OFFERING/ANTHEM

*Total Praise*

Smallwood/Rao

\*DOXOLOGY/PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**To God, all glorious heavenly Light, To Christ revealed in earthly night,  
To God the Spirit now we raise, Our joyful songs of thankful praise.**

\*CLOSING HYMN

*We Shall Overcome*

#570

**We shall overcome, we shall overcome, we shall overcome some day:  
Oh deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall overcome some day.**

**We'll go hand in hand, we'll go hand in hand, we'll go hand in hand some day  
Oh deep in my heart, I do believe, we'll go hand in hand some day.**

**We are not afraid, we are not afraid, we are not afraid today;  
Oh deep in my heart, I do believe, we are not afraid today.**

**Our God will see us through, our God will see us through,  
Our God will see us through some day.**

**Oh deep in my heart, I do believe, Our God will see us through some day.**

**The truth will make us free, the truth will make us free, The truth will make us free some  
day. Oh deep in my heart, I do believe. The truth will make us free some day.**

**We shall live in peace, we shall live in peace, we shall live in peace some day.  
Oh deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall live in peace some day.**

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*He Never Failed Me*

by Robert Ray, arr. Glenn Priest

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ January 19, 2025**

**TODAY after worship we are celebrating National Pie Day AND National Popcorn Day.**

**PLUS ~ please see below** for a special presentation by Revs. Drs. Sarah Melcher and Robert Shore-Goss will present: "The Church as Eco-System." We will explore the history of the land First Congregational United Church of Christ occupies, who lived here before us, how they cared for the land, and how we can live a sustainable present and future on the land the church occupies.

**Baby Grand Piano ~ Yours for the taking. Contact Dale Moore or Steve Horowitz**

**The Wayless Way Offering ~ Your Life as a Curriculum ~ You are invited to explore your life ~** The event will be **hybrid** (in the Oasis Center and Zoom). **January 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> 4 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.** This week, Praying the Wayless Way (January 20<sup>th</sup>); and Listen/Discerning God in our Lives (January 27<sup>th</sup>). Please note, resources from previous weeks are available.

**The sanctuary will be open for you on Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 20 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m..** This is a time of openness to God's guidance and presence.

**Drumming as a Spiritual Practice ~ Tues 1/21/25 at 3 p.m. ~ Chapel.** Drums provided. New drummers welcome. Contact Lindsey Huddleston for more information (630-338-9294).

**Sacred Conversations on Race ~ January 22 at 3 p.m. ~ hybrid and Oasis Center.** We will discuss *Letter from the Birmingham Jail*. ALL are welcome.

**Be the CEO of your health ~ join Lisa Kauffman**, one of our snowbirds, as she shares what she has learned through a certification program on movement, sleep, food, and stress. She will share here knowledge, tools, and confidence. Lisa will begin with a chair yoga session and leave plenty of time for Q and A. **We will gather in Syster Hall on January 23 at 11 a.m.**

**ANNUAL MEETING ~ JANUARY 26<sup>TH</sup> ~ Noon ~ Sanctuary or Livestreamed** This year at our annual meeting we will vote on: ***Financial Reports 2024, Budget 2025, Nominating Report (Leadership Team) 2025.*** We will celebrate the work of this past year: Sacred Conversations on Race, Bible Study, Artful Prayer, Drumming, Choir, worship, new members, and the vital/vibrant Spirit that guides our church. The Annual Report will be posted on the website

**January 12<sup>th</sup>.** Financials are available via email or in the church office. Paper ballots are available in the office to vote beforehand. Questions? See Moderator Harold Mezile.

COMING SOON! FILLING OUR BUCKET WITH **“LOVE IS . . .”** statements. Let’s show everyone we know about love. Take one of the red hearts from the table in the Narthex and write a brief statement. *LOVE IS . . . “never having to say you are sorry.”* *LOVE IS . . . in a sweet hug.* *LOVE IS . . . seeing Nancy & Betty receiving communion hand in hand.* Please help us fill our BUCKET with LOVE. You never know when or where these love notes may appear. Please turn in your heart by January 31<sup>st</sup>. If you want to participate but do not attend in person, please call Carol at 630-779-1183 and a heart will be made for you.

This is an **Open Invitation to All** to attend this year’s **Leadership Retreat** on **Saturday, February 1, in Syster Hall.** We are excited to welcome **Carol McCloud, the famous author of the Bucket-Filling Book Series,** to lead us in a memorable exercise. You are welcome to join us for fellowship and refreshments beginning at 8:45. You will meet your 2025 moderator team, be led in prayer by Pastor Wes, and participate in a listening/sharing activity before we turn our morning over to Carol at 9:40. This is a wonderful opportunity to start our church year—filled with examples of kindness, compassion, and love. Did you know Carol has sold over 3 million copies of her books that appear in over 12 languages? Come, be inspired. Team meetings and pictures will start at 11:00.

**Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> ~ Noon ~ Syster Hall ~ Yoleidy Rosario-Hernandez,** program director of ASALH Freedom School. The Manasota ASALH Freedom School is a free, community-based Saturday program dedicated to enriching students' reading and literacy skills while providing comprehensive education on Black history. She will present, “Why do we need Freedom School? What do we teach? Lunch will be provided.

**Women’s Association Program for Tuesday, February 4, 2025** will feature the Children’s Guardian Fund, a non-profit organization that provides funding and support for children in foster and state care in Florida’s 12th Judicial Circuit. It responds to the needs of children removed from abusive or neglectful homes, promoting normalcy and enrichment in their lives. Our presenter will be **Svetlana Ivashchenko,** the Executive Director, who will speak on “Youth Transitioning Out of Foster Care.” Attendees are asked to bring a Gift Card in any amount from Walmart to help the teens in transition. All are welcome. Come to Fellowship Hall at 11:30 am, enjoy lunch at 12 noon (\$15), and our program at 12:30. Please sign up after church service, or call the church office, 941-953-7044. Questions? Call Terri Crawford, (239) 896-7029.

Bread for the World is launching ***Nourish Our Future***—an ambitious, multi-issue effort to convince Congress that we can and should end child hunger. This will be presented via ZOOM, **February 4 at 7:00 p.m.** Please contact Mike Keane for more information

**We welcome our Artist in Residence, Dr. Kevin Fenton, the weekend of February 14th.** Dr. Fenton is Professor of Choral Conducting and Music Education at Florida State University College of Music. He was a Fulbright Specialist, Sub-Saharan Africa. The music for Sunday, February 16, will be a global theme. Dr. Fenton will be joined by accompanist Dylan Rhodes who is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Music Degree in Piano Performance. The choir will take part in an all-day

workshop on Saturday, February 15th under Dr. Fenton's leadership, and sing 3 multi-cultural selections on Sunday February 16th. Join us as we celebrate global music!

**CALLING ALL ORIGAMI MAKERS! We need origami cranes for our Parent's Night Event at Alta Vista School on February 20<sup>th</sup>.** The directions and paper are in the outer office on the cabinet. According to Pastor Wes, "Many hands make light the work!" (We need 100!) The little cranes will be placed in the dream-holding buckets we are providing. If you have any questions, please contact Laura Taylor or Carol McCloud. Thank you!!!

### **THIS WEEK**

#### **Sunday, January 19, 2025 ~ Glenn Priest organist ~ Dr. King Sunday**

9 a.m. ~ Worship, Chapel

11 a.m. ~ Worship, Sanctuary and Online

Noon ~ Presentation by Revs. Drs. Sarah Melcher & Bob Shore-Goss

**Service for Rev. Dr. Robert Bryant, 1:30 p.m., Chapel**

#### **Monday, January 20, 2025**

Sanctuary Open for Prayer 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Growing and Caring Team, 11 a.m., Oasis Center and Zoom

Prayer Circle, 1 p.m., Oasis Center and Zoom

Wayless Way Gathering, 4 p.m., Oasis Center and Zoom

#### **Tuesday, January 21**

Drumming as a Spiritual Practice, 3 p.m., Chapel

Church Council, 6:30 p.m., Zoom

#### **Wednesday, January 22**

Bible Study, 11 a.m., Oasis Center and Zoom

Sacred Conversations on Race, 3 p.m., Oasis Center and Zoom

Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Chapel

#### **Thursday, January 23**

Be the CEO of Your Health, 11 a.m., Syster Hall.

#### **Friday, January 24**

Director of Music Search Team Meeting, 3 p.m., Oasis Center

#### **Saturday, January 25**

Service for Karen Barber, 11 a.m., Chapel

#### **Sunday, January 26, 2025 ~ Glenn Priest organist ~ Annual Meeting Sunday**

9 a.m. ~ Worship, Chapel

11 a.m. ~ Worship, Sanctuary and Online

Noon ~ Annual Meeting, Sanctuary and Online