

January 26, 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: Gib Mitchell in honor of **Jeannie's birthday** on January 27<sup>th</sup>!

PRELUDE

*Allegretto*

G. F. Handel

INVITATION to WORSHIP

One: God for faith that comforts and consoles us in times of trial,

**Many: We lift our prayers and praise to You.**

One: For faith that never stops exploring and is endlessly open to You.

**Many: We lift our bewildering bafflement to You.**

One: For faith is lived *not* as an isolated individual on an island, population 1.

**Many: We raise our diverse voices in worshipping You this day! It is good to be here.**

\*OPENING HYMN

*The Church's One Foundation*

#386

**The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord; we are Christ's new creation by water and the word; From heaven Christ came and sought us in love to set us free; with precious blood Christ bought us for all eternity.**

**Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth, one charter of salvation, one God, one faith, one birth. One name together blessing, one holy food we share, to one hope we are pressing, at one in work and prayer.**

**'Mid toil and tribulation and tumult of our war, we wait the consummation of peace forevermore; Till with the vision glorious, our longing eyes are blessed, and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.**

**Yet we on earth have union with God, the Three-in-One, and mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won. O happy ones and holy! God, give us grace that we, like them, the meek and lowly, may live eternally.**

\*OPENING PRAYER

**God within You there is an *entire* community of connection. Within You there is a curious Creator; loving Redeemer; strengthening Sustainer. Within You there is all that was, is, and will be. We honor that in the beginning You sang, "Let us create!" We celebrate and claim that community is who You are. Yet, honestly, God, have You been to an HOA meeting recently? We confess that too often we call on Your name at the beginning of church meetings, then quickly leap to our agenda and want things *our* way! On this Annual Meeting Sunday, help us be a community of Christ here. We know the point is not perfection or polished halos or heavenly sashes with lots of badges. Your invitation is to live fully and wholly as You continue to craft us in Your image. May Your vision, values, mission, and wisdom be our guide in the year to come. Amen.**

\*RESPONSE

*Community of Christ (vs. 1-3)*

#314

**Community of Christ who make the Cross your own, live out your creed and risk your life for God alone; the God who wears your face, to whom all worlds belong, whose children are of every race and every song.**

**Community of Christ, look pass the church's door and see the refugee, the hungry, and the poor. Take hands with the oppressed, the jobless in your street, take towel and water, that you wash your neighbor's feet.**

**Community of Christ, through whom the word must sound – cry out for justice and for peace the whole world 'round: Disarm the powers that war and all that can destroy, turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish into joy.**

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:1-11

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he began to speak and taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. "Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

SERMON

*Can We Do This?*

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

*Come Build a Church*

Ken Medema

\*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

*Call as Partners in Christ's Service*

#495

**Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace, We respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace. May we learn the art of sharing, side-by-side and friend with friend, Equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.**

**Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth, Let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth. Men and women, richer, poorer, all god's people young and old, Blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.**

**Thus new patterns for Christ's mission, in a small or global sense, help us bear each other's burdens, breaking down each wall or fence. Words of comfort, words of vision,**

**words of challenge, said with care. Bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues free and fair.**

**So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life that surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife. Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase, messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.**

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Festive Processional*

David Laskey

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ January 26, 2025**

**TODAY ~ 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.*

**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 27<sup>th</sup> 4 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.** This week, Listen/Discerning God in our Lives (January 27<sup>th</sup>). Please note, resources from previous weeks are available. **Follow up to the Wayless Way:** You are encouraged to read all of Matthew chapters 5-7 to ground yourself in the way of Jesus. You are welcome at the Bible Study table on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom and Wednesday mornings at 11 a.m. in the Oasis Center/Zoom to discuss the Sermon on the Mount in February. You are also welcome to a conversation with Pastor Wes on Richard Rohr's book, *Eager to Love* on **Feb. 10 and 17 at 4 p.m. in the Oasis Center or on Zoom.** This is a wonderful complement to reading the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Pastor Wes has a few copies of the book to buy for \$16.00.

**Food and Hunger Mission Group: *Taking Action to End Hunger* ~ New Volunteer Opportunity to provide “Daily Bread”.** The Food and Hunger Group and Church Council recently approved having our church partner with Resurrection House to provide lunch on the first Thursday of every month. Sandy Smith has agreed to arrange the meals and one to two volunteers are needed each month to help prepare and serve. To volunteer please call or email Carol Hagglund.

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 Walmart Gift Card in any amount to help the teens in transition. All are welcome. Come to Fellowship Hall at 11:30 a.m., 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.

**Drumming as a Spiritual Practice ~ Tues 2/4 and 2/18 at 3 p.m. ~ Chapel.** Drums provided. New drummers welcome. Contact Lindsey Huddleston for more information (630-338-9294). 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

**Sacred Conversations on Race ~ February 12:** "The most powerful woman you never heard of" - TED Talk by T. Morgan Dixon and Vanessa Renae. **February 26:** "The Mission to Safeguard Black History in the US" - TED Talk by Julieanne L. Richardson

**We welcome our Artist in Residence, Dr. Kevin Fenton, the weekend of February 14th.** Dr. Fenton is a Professor of Choral Conducting and Music Education at Florida State University College of Music. He was a Fulbright Specialist in Sub-Saharan Africa. The music for Sunday, February 16, will have a global theme. Dr. Fenton will be joined by accompanist Dylan Rhodes who is 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 three 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 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**

**Monday, January 27, 2025**

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

**Tuesday, January 28**

COLLAGE Gathering, 10:30 a.m., Oasis Center and Zoom

Tuesday Night Bible Study, 6:30 p.m., Zoom

**Wednesday, January 29**

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

Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Chapel

**Saturday, February 1**

**Leadership Retreat, 8:30 p.m., Syster Hall**

**Sunday, February 2 ~ Glenn Priest organist ~ Communion Sunday**

9 a.m. ~ Worship, Chapel

11 a.m. ~ Worship, Sanctuary and Online

Noon ~ Birthday Sunday Fellowship