

May 4, 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)

May 4, 2025

11:00 a.m.

Flowers given by: Bob Procter

Anniversary with Mary Kukainis

PRELUDE

Nearer My God to Thee

arr. By Diane Bish

\*SUNG CALL to WORSHIP

*Joyful, Joyful We Adore You*

#4

**Joyful, joyful, we adore you, God of glory, God of love; Hearts unfold like flowers before you, opening to the sun above. Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the storms of doubt away; Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.**

**All your works with joy surround you, earth and heaven reflect your rays, Stars and angels sing around you, center of unbroken praise. Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea, Chanting bird and flowing fountain, teach us what our praise should be.**

**You are giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blessed, Wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest! Loving Spirit, Father, Mother, all who love belong to you; Teach us how to love each other, by that love our joy renew.**

**Mortals, join the mighty chorus which the morning stars began; boundless love is reigning o'er us, reconciling race and clan. Ever singing, move we forward, faithful in the midst of strife, Joyful music leads us onward in the triumph song of life.**

*Called as Partners in Christ's Service* (vs. 1, 2, 4)

#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.**

**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.**

\*OPENING PRAYER

**Beckoning, blessing, beholding and *bewildering* God, what are humans that You partner with us? Have You *seen* the news lately? We are defensive and divisive. We confess to You our frustration, fear, and fragility that too often we'd rather push down in denial or frost over with confidence. We confess that we let the gospels of economics, politics, and opinions have say and sway in our lives rather than Your Eastering good news. Help us lay down that which we think we "should" or "have to" do as if we could earn Your love. In that open space, remind us that grace is unconditional and uncontrollable. Remind us grace is *who* You are. Just as Jesus commissioned the first disciples who worshipped *and***

doubted, may You call us through our prayers and uncertainties. In the name of the One who invites us to be partners, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

\*RESPONSE

*Glory, Glory Hallelujah* (vs. 1, 3, 4)

#2

**Glory, glory hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down. Glory, glory hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down.**

**Feel like shouting, “Hallelujah!” since I laid my burdens down. Feel like shouting, “Hallelujah!” since I laid my burdens down.**

**I am dancing Miriam’s dance now, since I laid my burdens down. I am dancing Miriam’s dance now, since I laid my burdens down**

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

Matthew 28:16-20

<sup>16</sup> Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

SERMON

*Motivating Words*

OFFERING/ANTHEM

*We Are Surrounded*

by Joseph Martin

\*DOXOLOGY/PRAAYER OF DEDICATION

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

CELEBRATION of HOLY COMMUNION

One: This table is worn and weathered with the prayers of people for generations.

Many: **The table absorbs the petitions and praise from our hearts.**

One: This table welcomes all to come.

Many: **Those whose faith feels sure and those running on fumes.**

One: We gather here at the table of love poured out for all.

Many: **Taking our places, each a beloved in the body of Christ.**

COMMUNION ANTHEM

*My Master from a Garden Rose*

by Eleanor Daley

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE and LORD’S PRAYER

In the Korean congregation, the people practice Tongsung Kido (praying aloud). The pastor will give a prayer prompt, and they are invited to pray aloud at the same time. You don’t need to worry about others. Rather, concentrate on your own earnest prayer, longing for the Spirit to surface over the holy chaos of this moment.

**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.

\*CLOSING HYMN

*We are Called*

*see insert*

**Come! Live in the light! Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord! We are called to be light for the kingdom, to live in the freedom of the city of God!**

*Refrain: We are called to act with justice, we are called to love tenderly, we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God!*

**Come! Open your heart! Show your mercy to all those in fear! We are called to be hope for the hopeless, so all hatred and blindness will be no more! Refrain**

**Sing! Sing a new song! Sing of that great day when all will be one! God will reign, and we'll walk with each other as sisters and brothers united in love! Refrain**

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*"Toccata" from Organ Symphony V*

by Ch. M. Widor

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ May 4, 2025**

Please join us for fellowship, following worship today, as we celebrate **May birthdays**.

**Pastor Wes will be away on vacation May 5<sup>th</sup>- May 11<sup>th</sup>; Rev. Micki Robinson** will preach on Mother's Day. We will welcome **Stephen Fancher** as our organist.

**Summer with the Psalms** ~Exhausted, exasperated, exceedingly unsure of what will happen next ~ that summarizes the state of many people's souls recently. **Beginning on May 12<sup>th</sup>**, we will begin reading the Psalms to ground ourselves in deep wisdom. There is a **handout** in the back with tips for reading the psalms. Starting next Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, Pastor Wes's daily meditations on his blog and Facebook will reflect on the psalms for each day. On **Monday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, at 4 p.m.** Pastor Wes will lead the first hybrid gathering on the Psalms. It is our prayer this practice of engaging the Psalms will help you connect with our ancestors, who have sung their prayers and praise to God over the centuries.

Think teacups; think spring posies, tea sandwiches, and homemade cookies. The UCC Women invite one and all to A CELEBRATION OF MUSIC AND WORDS WITH TEA on **Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30 a.m., in the Fellowship Hall**. Please bring your own teacup and be prepared to share a story about it around the table. We will enjoy readings by **Lucy Hedrick**, plus violin selections by **Zoocy Ibara**, our office manager. Zoocy moved to Sarasota, FL, to return to her musical roots and spread the healing power of music. Besides her passion for helping organizations stay organized, she also now serves as a trauma-informed Sound Meditation instructor and composer, facilitating public & private sound bath events, and teaching the art of inner journeying & mindfulness for emotional resilience. **The UCC Women collection this month is for Second Heart Homes**. They would greatly appreciate gift cards accompanied by an inspirational or positive affirmation note. Preferred gift cards include those for **The Exchange, Lowe's,**

**HomeGoods, Amazon, or Uber.** They are also accepting new 2025-day planners. At this luncheon, we will also approve the nominations for the 2025-2026 Executive Committee of the UCC Women's Board: **President:** Jane Hunder; **First Vice President:** Terri Crawford; **Second Vice President:** Joy Kuhn; **Secretary:** Donna Blakey; **Corresponding Secretary:** RuthAnn Waid; **Treasurer:** Roxanne Schwoch. This end-of-season celebration will also be a chance for you to share what kinds of programs you'd like to see next year. The luncheon costs \$15. You can sign up after Sunday service, or by calling the church office at 941-953-7044.

**On May 10<sup>th</sup>,** Glenn Priest will be the featured pianist performing the Choral Fantasy of the Beethoven concert at the Opera House. This is a Key Chorale event. Tickets cost \$20-\$55 and are available at <https://keychorale.org/concerts/beethovens-ode-to-joy/>.

The Annual Mother's Day Luncheon, hosted by COLLAGE, will be held on **May 11<sup>th</sup>**. Everyone is invited to bring a photo of your mother/mother-like figure to be displayed in Syster Hall during the luncheon. Please label the photo with her and your name. Drop off the photo in Syster Hall before church service. Our special guest presenter will be Elcin Haskollar, Ph.D. of the Ringling School of Design. She will be sharing how COLLAGE donations to the Ringling students have benefited their lives.

**Sacred Conversations on Race ~ May 14<sup>th</sup>:** "Thriving in Turbulent Times" - an interview with Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, III. **May 28<sup>th</sup>:** "Courage, Clarity & Community: Navigating Change and Uncertainty with Purpose and Heart" - excerpts from a program by Parker J. Palmer and Valerie Brown.

**Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> ~ Mental Health Awareness Day ~ Syster Hall (after the 11 a.m. service)**  
Many today are struggling with cognitive overload. It is both the amount and the pace of information that is dizzying and disorienting. Please join us in Syster Hall as we welcome folks from **SRQ Strong** to help us breathe and learn more about resiliency. This is a wonderful opportunity to check in with yourself mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. **All are welcome, and bring a friend.**

Please join our own Lenny Hoffman for Arts and Minds: Celebration of NAMI Sarasota Manatee's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Wednesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$100, which include hors d'oeuvres and drinks, and live music by The Geniuses Jazz Trio, with five local artists showcasing work. Information to purchase tickets is in the Midweek Message.

### **THIS WEEK**

**Sunday, May 4 ~ Communion Celebration and Food Pantry ~ Glenn Priest, Organist**

9 a.m. ~ Morning Service, Chapel ~

11 a.m. ~ Worship, Sanctuary & Online ~

**Noon ~ Birthday Sunday**

**Monday, May 5**

**Pastor Wes on vacation through May 11**

Facilities and Grounds meeting, 10 a.m., Oasis Center and Zoom

Racial Justice Mission Group, 11 a.m., Zoom

## Tuesday, May 6

First UCC Women Board Meeting, 10:30 a.m., Syster Hall  
First UCC Women Spring Tea, 11:30 a.m., Syster Hall  
Drumming as a Spiritual Practice, 3 p.m., Chapel

## Wednesday, May 7

Lay Visitation Ministry Team, 10 a.m., Chapel  
Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Chapel

## Thursday, May 8

Ready Readers, 12 p.m., Oasis Center

## Sunday, May 11 ~ Mother's Day, Stephen Fancher, Organist

9 a.m. ~ Morning Service, Chapel ~ **Rev. Micki Robinson** preaching  
11 a.m. ~ Worship, Sanctuary & Online ~ **Rev. Micki Robinson** preaching  
Noon ~ **COLLAGE** luncheon

## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*Phone: (941)953-7044 Our website: [www.uccsarasota.com](http://www.uccsarasota.com)*

*We are a **Creation Justice; Open & Affirming; and Racial Justice** Congregation of the United Church of Christ*

**MINISTERS:** All the Members

**STAFF:** Rev. Dr. Wes Bixby, **Pastor:** [wdbixby@yahoo.com](mailto:wdbixby@yahoo.com)  
Glenn Priest, **Organist & Choir Director**  
Zooey Ibarra, **Office Admin:** [admin@uccsarasota.com](mailto:admin@uccsarasota.com)  
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Pamela Sell-Snider, **Custodian**

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**OFFICERS:** **Moderator:** Carol McCloud  
**Vice Moderator:** Ray Baker  
**Past Moderator:** Harold Mezile  
**Co-Treasurer:** Robin Reich  
**Co-Treasurer:** Roxanne Schwoch  
**Secretary:** Susan Moore

**Morning Meditations** posted every weekday: on Facebook &  
Pastor Wes' blog ~ [www.gracetraces.blogspot.com](http://www.gracetraces.blogspot.com)