

February 4, 2024 11:00 a.m.
First Congregational UCC ~ Sarasota



**Come to the
Table**

1031 S. Euclid Ave. Sarasota, FL 34237 ~ (941) 953-7044
www.uccsarasota.com

February 4, 2024

11 a.m.

Flowers given by: Gib and Jeannie Mithcell in loving memory of our daughter, **Karyn Humphreys** and Lisa MacBlane in memory of my mom, **Joanne Curry**

PRELUDE

Meditation

Arthur Foote

INVITATION to WORSHIP

How do you know when you're hearing from God by Amena Brown

*OPENING HYMN

My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

#403

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' love and righteousness; I dare not trust this earthly frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Refrain: On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand, all other ground is sinking sand.

When shadows veil my Savior's face, I rest upon unchanging grace; In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil. *Refrain*

Christ's oath and covenant and blood support me in the rising flood; When all around my soul gives way, Christ then is all my hope and stay. *Refrain*

When Christ shall come with trumpet sound, oh, may I then in love be found. Dressed in God's righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne. *Refrain*

*OPENING PRAYER

God, we know what it is like to be the disciples caught in storms that come out of nowhere. When the phone rings or notification dings or someone says something that stings, we bring our storms to You. When family or friends say words that hurt and harm, when our minds are in constant alarm, when the world keeps offering evidence of why we are not safe and secure, we bring our lives to You. When we feel stuck, stymied, tossed to and fro and we don't know which way to go, we bring our desire for guidance to You. Meet us here in the boat of life. Meet us amid the storms inside and outside. Meet us with that word, "Peace," Jesus spoke the chaos of waves centuries ago that might calm, even momentarily, what is raging within us today. All this we pray in the name of the One who sings softly and tenderly to us, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

ANTHEM

The Storm Is Passing Over

Charles Albert Tindley

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

Luke 8:22-25

One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they put out, and while they were sailing he fell asleep. A windstorm swept down on the lake, and the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. They went to him and woke him up, shouting, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And waking up, he rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they ceased, and there was a calm. Then he said to

them, “Where is your faith?” They were terrified and amazed and said to one another, “Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water and they obey him?”

SERMON

The Soundtrack of the Storm

OFFERING/ANTHEM

And Peace Shall Guard You

Michael John Trotta

*DOXOLOGY/PRAAYER 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.**

CELEBRATION of COMMUNION

One: Here at this table, we celebrate the paradox of faith;

Many: We are dust and breath, we are beloved and befuddled, we are holy and human.

One: We are the people who God continually fashions and forms by a Spirit that swirls in ways we cannot control or comprehend.

Many: We come with hunger and thirst, we come needing to be called by name, we come with our vulnerabilities open to God.

One: God meets us with a presence that holds us, hears us, and helps to heal us.

Many: May the promise of God’s presence and peace meet, feed, and form us as we come to Christ’s table.

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.

PRAYER of GRATITUDE

*CLOSING HYMN

Be Still, My Soul

#488

**Be still, my soul: for God is on your side; bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
Leave to your God to order and provide; in every change God faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul; your best eternal friend through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.**

**Be still, my soul: for God will undertake to guide in future days as in the past.
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake; all now mysterious shall be clear at last.
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know how Jesus’ power ruled them long ago.**

**Be still, my soul: the hour will soon be here when we shall be with God whom we adore,
With disappointment gone, no grief nor fear, sorrow replaced with joy forevermore.
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past, all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.**

*BENEDICTION

ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ SUNDAY, February 4, 2024

Today, Sunday, February 4 at 12:00 p.m. is Birthday Sunday. Help us honor February birthdays. **Also, after worship, in the Oasis Center,** we will offer a time for prayer and healing. As Trevor Hudson writes, “We all sit by a pool of our own tears”. If you need time and space to process pain, please join Pastor Wes for this opportunity.

2023 Giving Statements have been emailed (1/23) and mailed (1/30). If you have not received yours, please let the church office know. Thank you for your continued generosity. You are a blessing!!

Please join the UCC Women’s Association for their monthly lunch and program on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 11:30 am in Fellowship Hall. We will hear from Lt. Col. Matthews about the **Sarasota branch of the Salvation Army.** She will explain the many life-changing programs of the Salvation Army of Sarasota County and how we can help. Our church boasts four individuals who serve on the Board of Advisors: Warren Bacon, Dale Woodling, Deborah Hayes, and Lynn Jones, all of whom will be on hand to share their experiences. Luncheon costs \$12. Sign up after either Sunday service or call the church office at 941-953-7044. Questions? Call Lucy Hedrick, 203-561-9590, or lucy@lucyhedrick.com. **For Baby Basics of Sarasota County, please bring new or gently used baby books for ages birth to three.**

ARTFUL PRAYER – THURSDAY FEB 8 at 2 PM OASIS CENTER OR ZOOM

February’s session is led by **Cindy Woodling** and celebrates **Valentine’s Day** with a focus on the heart as an icon, a message of love, and a vital part of life. Supplies required for zoom participants are paper, colored pencils/crayons/marker. Contact Pastor Wes or the church office for the zoom link.

February 11, next Sunday at 11 a.m., as part of our Black History Month honoring, **Priscilla Crumel** will bring to life the amazing story of Mary McLeod Bethune ~ a pioneering educator and college founder.

You are invited! First Congregational United Church of Christ’s COLLAGE group invites you to a special event taking place at 12:30 pm on Sunday, February 11th. in Syster Hall. Enjoy a light lunch on us! We're excited to have **Gina Duncan**, nationally recognized speaker and director from TransAction Florida, as our guest speaker. Gina’s story as a transgender person with her advocacy for LGBTQ rights in Florida is inspiring. Her journey of overcoming adversity needs to be heard! COLLAGE is First Congregational’s LGBTQ+ open and affirming group. This event includes not just a complementary light lunch, but much food for thought - a real growth and learning opportunity. Don't miss out on this truly special event! Join us! For questions, call John Ristow. On **Tuesday, February 6 at 6 p.m.**, Pastor Wes will participate in the You Are Not Alone Class for our LGBTQ community, sponsored by the Good Samaritan Counseling Center. If you would like to join via zoom, please see Pastor Wes.

The Wayless Way ~ Your Life as a Curriculum ~ February book is *Hope Leans Forward* by Valerie Brown. We continue to lean in and listen to the wisdom of others in our Wayless Way Book Club. This month we hear from an African American Buddhist-Quaker on ways we can be in God's presence, especially amid the storms of life. This is a wonderful book that will nourish your soul. We meet on **Feb. 12 and 26 at 4 p.m. in the Oasis Center or on Zoom**. The March book is the Return of the Prodigal Son by Henri Nouwen, a must read Christian classic on the parable from Luke 15. Sessions on Nouwen's book are March 11 and 25.

Wednesday, February 14 ~ Ash Wednesday ~ beginning of Lent. Two opportunities ~ at **noon**, we will offer a traditional Ash Wednesday service in the chapel. Pastor Wes will preach on Luke 9:12-22, *Who Do YOU Say Jesus Is?* Ashes will be available to anyone who wishes. At **5:30 p.m.**, we will offer a wonderful worship moment in Syster Hall, which is holy ground from our worship there this summer. We will enjoy a simple soup dinner. Then, around tables, we will begin the Lenten Theme of *Connecting Conversations*. There will be a few hymns mixed in and ashes available at the close of the service. Please note that the 5:30 p.m. is not the traditional experience, but will be worship, nevertheless.

NEXT UCC MEN'S BREAKFAST ON FEBRUARY 17 The UCC Men's breakfast series continues on Saturday, February 17 and all the men of the congregation, new and longtime members, are invited to join for breakfast in Syster Hall then. Coffee will be on at 8 am and breakfast served at 8:30 am. **Doug Fields** will be manning the kitchen for breakfast and afterward **Mike Keane** will be introducing us to the Breath Prayer. You may register by Thursday, February 15 by calling Sherry at the church office at 941-953-7044. We hope to see you there!

Sunday, February 18 ~ Our Church's 70th Anniversary Celebration, Greg's 35th Anniversary, and Pastor Wes' 10th Anniversary at both services. Following the 11 a.m. service there is an ALL-church potluck celebration. Please plan to attend!

During February, we welcome the return of **FEAST (Friends Eating And Studying Together)**. We will meet on Thursday mornings beginning **February 22** (as well as **February 29, March 7 and 14**) at **10:30 a.m.** for coffee, fruit, and goodies. This will be a holy time of conversations that connect us. Lent this year is a time to celebrate our relationships as a church, as well as welcome new folks to share parts of their life and faith. We live in a world where isolation is a problem, this gathering will offer the holy experience of sharing stories and getting to know each other better. Please plan to attend and bring 10 friends!

Racial Justice Mission Group and COLLAGE are co-sponsoring a viewing of *Rustin* right after worship service on **Sunday, February 25 in Syster Hall**. The movie tells the story of Bayard Rustin who orchestrated the 1963 March on Washington. He faced racism and homophobia as part of his participation in Civil Rights. Bayard Rustin famously proclaimed, "We need, in every community, a group of angelic troublemakers." The film stars Oscar best actor nominee, Colman Domingo. A light lunch will be served and discussion will follow the film.

The 2024 Altar flower chart is now available and waiting for you! If you have an anniversary, birthday, or special occasion in the coming months, please call and reserve a Sunday today. Cost of bouquet is **\$40 each**. Thank you for bringing the beauty of creation into our worship on Sunday.

CALENDAR

Sunday, February 4 ~ Communion at both service

Early Worship, 8:45 a.m., Chapel
Sunday Worship, 11 a.m., in Sanctuary and online
Birthday Sunday, noon, Syster Hall
Time for Prayer and Healing, noon, Oasis Center

Monday, February 5

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

Tuesday, February 6

First UCC Women's Board Meeting, 10:30 a.m., Syster Hall
First UCC Women's Luncheon, 11:30 a.m., Syster Hall
Drumming as a Spiritual Practice, 3 p.m., Chapel
Tuesday Night Bible Study, 6:30 p.m., Zoom

Wednesday, February 7

Wednesday Morning Bible Study, 11 a.m., Oasis Center and Zoom
Worship Team, 1 p.m., Zoom
Chancel Choir, 7 p.m., Chapel

Thursday, February 8

Technology Group, 1 p.m., Zoom
Artful Prayer, 2 p.m., Oasis Center and Zoom

Sunday, February 11

Early Worship, 8:45 a.m., Chapel
Sunday Worship, 11 a.m., in Sanctuary and online ~ Priscilla Crumel Sharing!
COLLAGE luncheon, noon, Syster Hall

90+ Wise Birthdays ~ February ~ Please help us shower with cards:

2/4 ~ Marilyn Brandt