

March 31, 2024 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.
First Congregational UCC ~ Sarasota

EASTER

Sunday



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

PRELUDE

Solemn Entry

Richard Strauss

Gianluca Farina and Noah Rampmaier, Trumpets; Alex Moore, horn;
Brad Williams, trombone; Nate Seman, Tuba; Marcelina Suchocha, percussion

INVITATION to WORSHIP

One: One word defines, describes, and distinguishes this day,

Many: *Alleluia.*

One: One word can cause our souls to leap, our hearts to feel strangely warmed, and our lives to take an expected, enthusiastic turn.

Many: **Alleluia!!**

One: One word changes *everything*, because it echoes off an empty tomb that re-authors our life every day.

Many: **We sing out for all Sarasota to hear today the good news that Christ is risen, he is risen indeed! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

*OPENING HYMN

Fanfare and Hymn for Easter

arr. Paul Sjolund

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia! Sons of men and angels say: Alleluia! Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia! Sing, ye heav'ns and earth reply: Alleluia!

Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia! Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia! Once He died, our souls to save, Alleluia! Where thy victory, O grave? Alleluia!

Loves redeeming work is done, Alleluia! Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia! Death in vain forbids Him rise, Alleluia! Christ hath opened paradise, Alleluia!

Sing we to our God above, Alleluia! Praise eternal as His love, Alleluia! Praise Him, all ye heav'nly host, Alleluia! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Alleluia!

*OPENING PRAYER

God of Easter mornings that echo across the centuries and reverberate in our souls today, we gather as Your people. We come to hear afresh the mystery that life is more than we can ever explore and exhaust. We draw near to the tomb with the women, we realize that sometimes what is empty is full of Your emphatic, “Yes”, to life and love. Grant us the courage to soul spelunk into the caves we carry into the sanctuary. Grant us an openness that not everything can fit neat and tidy into what we control and comprehend. Grant us trust that You still meet us when we are baffled, bewildered, and a bit frightened. You bring life where we expected only death to dwell. Let Your transforming Easter truth find a place to rest and reside this day *and* every day in the coming year. In the name of the One whose love is a light breaking forth in our souls. Amen.

ANTHEM

Rise To Sing! The Light Is Breaking

Eric Nelson

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS (11 a.m.) ~ Anne Low and Alex Mitchell

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

Luke 24:1-12

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. ²They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³but when they went in they did not find the body. ⁴While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. ⁵The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen. ⁶Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷that the Son of Man must be handed over to the hands of sinners and be crucified and on the third day rise again.” ⁸Then they remembered his words, ⁹and returning from the tomb they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. ¹¹But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹²But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

SERMON

The Transforming Tomb

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.

OFFERING/ANTHEM

Joy To the Heart

K. Lee Scott

*DOXOLOGY/PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Former choir members are invited to come forward stand on the floor to sing with the choir

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above you heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *(Repeat)*

Alleluia, sing praises to the Lamb, Alleluia, Gloria!

Alleluia, we worship and adore; Alleluia to the Lord! *(Repeat)*

*CLOSING HYMN

Thine is the Glory

Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son; Endless is the victory you o’er death have won.

Angels clothed in radiance rolled the stone away;

Conquered is the grave in which your body lay.

Refrain: Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son; Endless is the victory, Thou o’er death has won!

See, it is Jesus, Jesus has appeared; Do not doubt at all for nothing you will fear. Let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing; Tell it without ceasing: death has lost its sting. *Refrain*

Am I still frightened? One whom I adore, Jesus, lives again, gives peace for evermore. Jesus is my victory, life and strength and Head; Jesus is my glory, nothing shall I dread.

Refrain

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Praise The Lord! With Drums and Cymbals

Sigfrid Karg-Elert

ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ Easter Sunday

Greeters and Ushers: Phil Swain and Chuck Jarman (9 a.m.)
Dave & Karen Abel, Ed & Jan Andersen, Dennis & Evelyn Crooks,
John Ristow (11 a.m.)
Liturgist: Jane Hunder (11 a.m.)
Bus Drivers: Page and Carol McCloud

Please join the UCC Women for their monthly lunch and program on **Tuesday, April 2, at 11:30 am** in Fellowship Hall. We will hear from yoga instructor Michelle Winton, who will lead us in chair yoga before lunch. Please wear comfortable clothing and footwear. We ask each attendee to bring a child-size umbrella to benefit SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SUPPORT, INC. Children living in poverty are much more likely to stay home from school if it's raining because they don't have umbrellas. 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.

Handbells invitation ~ **beginning on Thursday, April 4 at 6 p.m. in the chapel**, you are invited to be part of our handbell choir. We are looking for people of all levels ~ we especially welcome beginners who want to learn more. Please see Pastor Wes for more information.

Brenda Robinson & Wojtek Sawa Art Exhibit Opening Night Reception, **April 5th, 2024**
Friday 6:00 – 8:00pm @ SPAACE Galley 2051 Princeton St. Sarasota, FL 34237. Exhibition Dates: April 5th – April 27th | Gallery Hours | Fri, Sat, 10:00 - 2:00 or by Appt. Theme: Common Ground are twofold: To normalize mental health experiences and reduce stereotypes, and to empower individuals with lived experience to serve as educators and advocates for a positive change in our attitudes about mental health.

Food and Hunger Group Shop Once and Help Both All Faiths Food Bank AND Second Chance Last Opportunity **On Sunday, April 7th** Lucy Hedrick will be in the parking lot with her trunk open for donations to Second Chance Last Opportunity include: Cases of Cases of water bottles, Hawaiian Punch, yellow rice, canned vegetables, canned beans, paper towels, toilet paper, toothbrushes, personal hygiene items, packages of meat and frozen vegetables. Collections for All Faiths Food Bank will be in the usual spot in the narthex. Remember for All Faith's Food Bank, the rule of thumb for donating is, "if you would enjoy having it, they would appreciate having it."

The Giving Challenge of 2024 sponsored by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, will be from **Noon Tuesday, April 9 to Noon Wednesday April 10th**. Many organizations the church supports will be participating. See the Midweek Message or April newsletter for more details on how to donate and how to get assistance in navigating the online process.

Sacred Conversations on Race ~ gathers at 3 pm in the Oasis Center and on Zoom on the following dates: April 10th *“Life with God from the Renovare Institute”* podcast (Sho Baraka interview about George Washington Carver). **April 24th** Focus Group ~ Director of Music

SUNDAY, APRIL 14th 7pm Evening Choral Artists presents a performance **CONSIDERING MATTHEW SHEPERD**. After Matthew Shepard was brutally beaten and left to die on a fence in Wyoming, a national conversation regarding bullying and homophobia took center stage. Craig Hella Johnson takes us on a musical journey that tells the story of Matt, a young man whose ordinary has left an extraordinary legacy for us to consider. Combining a variety of musical styles from country to gospel to chant and, the experience is powerful and moving for audiences.

Location: Church of the Palms, 3224 Bee Ridge Rd. Advance discounted tickets at \$35 Cash or checks to be made payable to Choral Artists. Duration is 105 minutes without intermission.

Student Scholarship Applications ~ Due April 30th First Congregational UCC student scholarship applications are due April 30th. Applications are available through the church office via the Spiritual Education and Growth Team. All applications and supporting materials must be returned to the church office by April 30th for consideration. Email: admin@uccsarasota.com.

The Wayless Way ~ Your Life as a Curriculum ~ The April book is, *No Cure for Being Human* by Kate Bowler. We will meet **April 8 and 22** at 4 p.m. in the Oasis Center/Zoom.

Looking Ahead – mark your calendars for **April 21, the date of our 2nd Annual Chili Cookoff!** We are recruiting Chili Chefs to offer your best batch chili on that Sunday, at 12:15 in Syster Hall. The congregation will vote on their favorite, and the winner will receive a **modest** prize and lots of praise! If you would like to participate, please contact Sandy Smith ~ sandysmithvi@gmail.com or 240-227-5121 (text or call).

THIS WEEK

Sunday, March 31 ~ Easter Sunday Worship with Choir and Brass!

Early Worship, 9:00 a.m., Sanctuary
Sunday Worship, 11 a.m., in Sanctuary and online
Fellowship Time, noon, Syster Hall

Monday, April 1

Food and Hunger Group, 11 a.m. Oasis and Zoom

Tuesday, April 2

First UCC Women Board Meeting, 10:30 a.m., Syster Hall
First UCC Women’s Program and Lunch, 11:30 a.m., Syster Hall
Drumming as a Spiritual Practice, 3:30 p.m., Chapel
Director of Music Search Team meeting, 3:30 p.m., Oasis Center and Zoom
Tuesday Night Bible Study, 6:30 p.m., Zoom Only

Wednesday, April 3

Bible Study, 11 a.m., Oasis and Zoom
Embracing Our Difference Tour, 1:30 p.m., Bayfront

Thursday, April 4

Plymouth Harbor Circle Group, 2 p.m., MacNeil Chapel, Plymouth Harbor
Handbell Choir, 6 p.m., Chapel

Sunday, April 7 ~ Honoring Greg Chestnut

Early Worship, **8:45 a.m., Chapel**

Sunday Worship, 11 a.m., in Sanctuary and online

Reception for Greg, noon, Syster Hall

First Congregational United Church of Christ

Phone: (941)953-7044 *Our website:* www.uccsarasota.com

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