



May 2024



First Congregational UCC

Music To Your Ears

On May 5th, we are excited to welcome Adam DeSorgo. Some of you may remember Adam, and his husband Samus, from 8 years ago. He served as the principal oboist of the Sarasota Orchestra for 15 years and has played with many symphonies around the country.

Adam has bachelor's and master's degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music. During his time in Cleveland, he also worked with local UCC churches as guest pianist and organist. Samus has a beautiful baritone voice and sang with our choir 10 years ago. Adam and Samus were married in our church in a wonderful celebration—Adam came in playing the accordion!! We will see if that makes a repeat appearance during his time with us.

Adam and Samus live in Chicago. Adam will serve as our interim choir director, organist, and pianist in May, June, and July. He has played at our church many times.

Please welcome Adam back home!

While we are talking music, Pentecost Sunday, May 19th, we are kicking off a First Congregational Hymnal Project. This will be an ongoing, unfolding opportunity that will offer different experiences. First up, we want to hear from you! **We want a list of favorite hymns from every member!**

Wait, you think, what's the catch? No catch.

*Do you mean, I could give you fifty hymns? Yes!! I'd appreciate the list **alphabetically** if you are going to do more than five, please.*

Ah, ha! I knew there was a catch!!

Office Hours

Pastor Wes:

Mon. - Thurs.: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Sherry Glover:

*Mon. - Tues.: 10:00 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Wed. - Thurs.: 10:00 a.m. – 2 p.m.*

Mark:

Mon. - Fri.: 7 a.m. – 3 p.m.



Worship ~ 8:45 a.m. in the Chapel

Worship ~ 11:00 a.m. in person in the Sanctuary and livestreamed on YouTube and Facebook.

Visit our website at

<https://www.uccsarasota.com>

Pastor Wes Vacation Days:

May 22nd – 28th



I am very *curious*. It is important for me to hear what is meaningful to you. It is important for our church to hear where we have consensus and where we are diverse.

In **June**, we are going to talk about the language of hymns. Why did “they” ...whoever “they” are...change the words to hymns? Who are new hymn writers? Are there Sundays we want the familiarity of words we know and Sundays we want to stretch ourselves with new hymns we have never heard? Again, where is there consensus and where is there difference?

Then, in **July**, there will be an **Ol’ Fashioned Hymn Sing**. It is my prayer that you will begin to give thought to hymns that are meaningful. And many of you know my favorite follow up question, “Why?” Why do you like the hymn you like? What is stirred in your soul?



During **May**, we hope to finalize the job description for the Director of Music and post it to the website. We will let you know when this happens.

I ask for your continued prayers in this process. As Easter People we know that we don’t know. There is a baffling bewilderment to faith. That, as Maggie Jackson says, **“Where there is no surprise, there is no learning.”** I pray the coming months will bring many, many moments for learning for our whole church.

With God’s love and blessings ~ *Wes*

WORSHIP

8:45 a.m. in the Chapel and 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary
(Livestreamed every Sunday at 11 a.m.)

NOTE: One Service on May 26th at 11 a.m.

May 5th ~ We welcome Adam DeSorgo as our guest organist over the summer. We will celebrate communion and Pastor Wes will preach on Luke 24 ~ the walk to Emmaus.



May 12th (Mother’s Day) ~ Pastor Wes will preach on Luke 18 ~ a Child-like, not Childish Faith.

May 19th (Pentecost) ~ Wear red to symbolize the Spirit. Pastor Wes will preach on Acts 2, selected verses.



May 26th ~ **ONE service at 11 a.m.** Rev. Dr. Jeff Jones will preach and lead worship.

**The Wayless Way ~ Your Life as a Curriculum (Oasis Center/Zoom)
May 13th ~ 4 p.m. ~ Oasis Center**

The Wayless Way Book Club invites you to ~ ***The Seventh Story Podcast***
by Brian McLaren.



All are welcome. Contact Pastor Wes with any questions.

Dear Church Family



It is impossible to find the words that express all the gratitude that I hold in my heart for 35 years of music making in this amazing congregation. The echoes of the recognition of my ministry on April 7th will be in my heart forever. I felt truly blessed to share in worship some significant memories with Pastor Wes, to lead our beautiful choir in singing one of my favorite anthems, and to accompany our congregation raising the rafters singing “Great Is Your Faithfulness.” God has indeed been faithful in blessing our ministry together. I am honored that you have bestowed on me the title of being *Music Minister Emeritus*, and I am beyond grateful for your **very generous** monetary gifts and bonuses.

The reception following the service was a rare gift of gathering our extended church family in celebration. Young and old, friends and special guests, packed into Syster Hall sharing great memories on an afternoon I will never forget. My sincere thanks to all who contributed their efforts in making this event so memorable. Of special note is the poster of words created by Carol Fields, the emotional video of history put together by Carol McCloud, and the overflowing basket of cards from each of you that express such love and support.

You are my family, and I look forward to finding a new path in your midst. I hold you in my prayers during this journey of transition and ask for your continued prayers as well. Thank you for the magnificent gift of cherished memories that flood my heart with love and treasured keepsakes that remind me of my abundant blessings.

In God’s love,
Greg Chestnut



Thank You Dear Church



The Racial Justice Mission Group (RJMG) thanks everyone who participated in signing and addressing postcards to ex-felons on March 24th in partnership with the League of Women Voters and COLLAGE. This project produced 187 postcards which tell ex-felons how they can re-register to vote after they have completed their sentences.

RJMG is planning to schedule another similar service opportunity in the future.

Special Thanks . . .

Kelly Pitcher & Cathy Ellis



**Who have graciously
provided housing
for our guest
Director of Music
this summer.**



Easter Love Update

Thank you for your generous gifts for our Easter Love collection.

As of the Sunday after Easter we have raised \$18,151.30.

Your kindhearted giving is such a blessing and makes us proud to be members of such a mission rich church.

Please remember our Easter Love money is given to those in need all over the world.

We can and are making a difference.

With grateful hearts,
*Your UCC Mission Team ~ Jan Andersen, Evelyn Crooks,
Gretchen Friend-Jones, Terri Crawford, Laura Taylor,
Nancy Taylor, John Ristow, Toska Strong*



Join the Zoom Conversations



COLLAGE ~ We meet the **4th Tuesday @ 11 a.m.** COLLAGE is our LGBTQIA+ and Ally Group. All are welcome to join our COLLAGE group on Zoom for support and faithful discussion.

Tuesday Bible Study @ 6:30 p.m. ~ We meet on Zoom to discuss the upcoming Sunday Bible passage.

Wednesday Bible Study @ 11 a.m. ~ **HYBRID** in the Oasis Center to discuss the upcoming Sunday Bible passage.

SCOR (Sacred Conversations on Race) 2nd & 4th Wednesdays @ 3 p.m. ~ **HYBRID** in the Oasis Center.

Zoom links available through Pastor Wes

A New Opportunity To Make A Difference

We are renewing our prayer request practice so that members, visitors, and neighbors can let us know if they need or desire prayers. Because we are a church that values caring and support for our brothers and sisters, we want our congregation to share in the **gift of praying for others.**



During his Maundy Thursday sermon, Pastor Wes said a great deal about prayer, our practices, and traditions. Among these he said, "Many of us often think that prayers won't do any good. Or maybe prayer is someone else's job, like say the Pastor." But Jesus wants us to reach out to others and let Him know what we are hoping for on behalf of others even when we have no assurances. As Pastor Wes said, "In short, prayer is less about solutions and more about solidarity."

With these thoughts in mind, **we invite you to consider becoming one of our Prayer Warriors.** A system to forward requests to you is being established. Please let Sherry Glover, Office Administrator, know if you would like to be one of our Prayer Warriors and want more information.

In God's Love ~ *Your Growing & Caring Team*
Jane Delgado-Semidei, Carol Seltzer, Susan Moore, Joy Kuhn, Vonda Leonard, Kyle Booth

MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS

Donna Blakey



Donna comes to us from Wallingford, CT and has been a resident of Bradenton since 2012. She was born in St. Petersburg and raised in Springfield, MA. Donna and her late husband, Bruce, were married 46 years and have two sons, two daughters-in-law and two grandsons.

As a volunteer, she served meals at a soup kitchen in Southington, CT. Donna also volunteered at the American Cancer Society, at elementary school libraries and, after training, visited persons living in the Masonic Home in Wallingford, CT. Over a span of 16 years, Donna was employed as finance director and as a grant consultant for the Friendship Service Center of New Britain, a non-profit that provides services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. She attended American International College and Western New England University. She is now retired.

Jim & Bernie Gottschalk



Jim and Bernie have lived in Sarasota for decades and have many interests, so it's easy to get to know them and they'd like to know you. But if you feel you need a prompt: Ask either of them about the fishing in our local waters, particularly tarpon fishing, and the conversation will flow!

Jim grew up in Illinois and attended Southern Illinois University, moving from Peoria to Sarasota in 1977. His working career has included restaurant management, sales, and retail store management and ownership. He also enjoys baseball and the outdoors.

Bernie (Bernadette) spent her early years in Michigan and Massachusetts and attended Oakland Community College in Michigan, before moving to Florida in 1973. While her work has centered in the tourism and hospitality industries, her interests also include gardening, reading, and cooking.

Family and special friends are most dear to both Jim and Bernie. They have a son, A.J. (Arthur James), daughter-in-law Karah, and grandson Ronan, age 2.

Carol Fredrich & John Fairweather



Carol and John enjoy splitting their time between Des Moines, Iowa, and Sarasota.

Originally from Ohio, Carol attended Capital University, in the Columbus suburb of Bexley, and Ohio State University. She worked for 40-plus years in social work administration, primarily at Lutheran social ministry organizations, was CEO at Lutheran Metro Ministry in Cleveland, and was selected for the Lutheran Metro Ministry's Founders Circle. Now retired, she remains active in many volunteer capacities in Sarasota. Carol particularly enjoys all the bird life she encounters on her regular walks along a nearby waterway.

Husband John, who grew up in Davenport, Iowa, attended Phillips University and Vanderbilt and holds ministerial and Ph.D. degrees. His varied career included teaching at the college level as both an associate and adjunct professor throughout much of his adult life, four years as county director for human services, 16 years as legislative liaison in the Iowa Department of Human Services, and 12 years in pastoral ministry. And, he says, he loved it all. Now, his interests include lots of volunteering, reading and travel.

Carol and John have a daughter, Susan Fairweather, and three grandchildren: Elizabeth, Emma, and Jacob.



Carolyn Habel



Carolyn comes to us from Colorado. Born and raised in Michigan, she came to Sarasota in 2016. Carolyn and her spouse, Vicente Cordero, have been together since 1977.

Carolyn served on several boards and committees at her church in Colorado (reader, literary chair, Eucharist leader, Aids research committee, and the Anawim Ministry). For a short time, Carolyn was a teacher. She enjoys hiking, biking, and traveling in the mountains.

A neighbor led Carolyn to First Congregational. She is now participating in COLLAGE and serving on the Peace and Justice Team.

Edward Hebert



Edward comes to us from Charleston, South Carolina. He grew up and lived in Massachusetts for many years.

Ed has two sons, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He attended the University of Massachusetts.

He currently works as a speech/language pathologist and as an interpreter for the deaf.

Linda Leaman



Linda comes to us from New Jersey. She is a full-time supply manager for SK Life Science.

A graduate of Montclair State University, Linda enjoys spending time on the beach. Her other hobbies include photography, crossword and jigsaw puzzles. She was formerly a motorcycle enthusiast.

Linda's family has been in the United States for 400 years and is a direct descendant of John Alden.

Michael Vincent Matles



Michael grew up and spent many years in Detroit, MI. He attended Welsh College in Troy, MI and served as a police officer in Detroit.

Michael moved to Sarasota in March 2020 from Charleston, SC. Now retired from director of accounting positions in Traverse City, MI and Springfield, MA, he currently volunteers with the Manatee County Humane Society.

Anne Low



Anne comes to us from Wilton, Connecticut. Raised in Seattle, she has lived in London, New York City, Cambridge, MA, and Port Lorne, Nova Scotia. She attended Harvard and is a retired teacher. Anne enjoys traditional folk music from the U.S., Canada, and Europe. You can add opera and symphony to that list. She also appreciates Shakespeare, regional literature, and history when she's not cheering on the Boston Red Sox and the Seattle Seahawks.

Anne and her husband Bill have three sons, one daughter, and seven grandchildren. Raised Presbyterian, Anne has attended Episcopal and Congregational churches in New England and the Pacific Northwest but has found a home here at First Congregational UCC in Sarasota.

Alexander Mitchell



Alex has the distinction of being one of our youngest new members. Although he recently hails from New Jersey, he was born in Sarasota and grew up in Hull, Massachusetts. He now resides in Nokomis. His Nana, Deb Hays, has been a member of First Congregational UCC since before he was born, so in some ways this church has always been a part of his life.

When asked about his interests and passions, Alex highlighted spending time with his wonderful family, which, besides his Nana, includes his father, one older and one younger brother, and his dog Noah, whom he calls Mr. Beans. (You'll have to ask him why.) Boating is another activity he enjoys.

His love of working with kids, coupled with a stint as camp director in New Jersey, led Alex to his current position as Program Coordinator at the Palmer Ranch YMCA. That allows him to create and direct a number of programs for kids.

Alex wasted no time getting involved with First Congregational UCC of Sarasota. From reading scripture as the Liturgist, to helping with ticket sales for "*Considering Matthew Shephard*", there's little doubt we will see him participating in many ways.

Lauren Patsos



Lauren grew up and lived in Boonville, IL before moving to Sarasota in 2011. She enjoys singing, acting (Opera), MLB (go Yankees) and fixing up her house.

Lauren directed/produced and performed in a World Premier Chamber Opera "*Baby Shower*". She found FCUCC through Greg Chestnut. She was auditioning for Gloria Muscaï and Greg overheard the audition.

A graduate of Wagner College (BA), Illinois State University (MM), and Adirondack Central Schools, Lauren has been teaching music for eight years.

Mark Patsos



Mark, who was born in central New York, has a rather long drive to church these days. He and wife Micki Robinson live across the Sunshine Skyway in St. Pete. But they have a strong connection to FCUCC in their daughter, Lauren, soprano and soloist in our superb choir.

Mark was raised on a New York dairy farm and, after attending Waterloo High School and SUNY Cobleskill, remained in the dairy industry until the family moved to Pennsylvania in 2005, and then on to Florida five years later. He was also a coach driver for 25 years, until retiring last year.

Sheryl Overheidt-Smith



Sheryl grew up and lived in Chicago, Illinois. She taught English and humanities to gifted students for 33 years and is a recipient of the Christa McAuliffe National Teacher Award and Scholarship. Sheryl also taught literature and history at several universities in Illinois.

Sheryl volunteers locally as a tutor and thrift store worker. She currently resides in Parrish.



Doug Potter & Greg Partridge

New Yorkers Doug and Greg have been enjoying the Snow-bird life since 2016, dividing their time between Sarasota and Keuka Park, New York, in the Finger Lakes region.

Doug and Greg have been together as a family for 40 years. They were married in Canada 20 years ago by a Canadian Unitarian chaplain and their Presbyterian (P.C., USA) pastor, Rev. Dr. Janes Spahn, before it was legal in New York or permitted by the church. Reverend Spahn was subsequently brought up on disciplinary charges in the Presbyterian Church courts for her participation.

They spent four years living in Cleveland, Ohio, while Doug finished an obligation in the U.S. Public Health Service. The work took him to an inner-city clinic. He noted: "I worked at a clinic in Cleveland, in the shadow of THE Cleveland Clinic, where my patients were not welcome." They then moved back to Rochester, New York, where Doug was a primary care internist for 30 years before retiring. Greg worked in information technology and data analytics. He was president and CEO of Focused Medical Analytics and recently retired from NextGen Healthcare, a medical records software company.

Both enjoy traveling (ask about their recent visit to New Zealand!) They have discovered the joy of kayaking in our local waters as they do on Keuka Lake in the summer. But perhaps for both of them, little could top the simple pleasure of packing up folding chairs and settling in for a beautiful Sarasota day on the beach.

Joining as associate members, they are also members of Downtown United Presbyterian Church in Rochester.

George & Laura Taylor



Originally from Independence, Missouri, George and Laura attended Kansas University, raised their family in Colorado and, eventually went on to enjoy a very, very extended stay in beautiful Hawaii.

George, who did his graduate studies at Rutgers, worked for Bell Laboratories for nearly three decades. When he took early retirement following the government break-up of AT&T Systems, he and Laura decided it was time for a change.

And change they did, moving westward across many time zones to the island of Kauai, where they lived for more than 30 years. George remained active at various jobs; Laura was founder and director of the Aloha Peace Project on Kauai.

After their many years on the island, they moved to Florida—first to Jacksonville and then, last year, to Sarasota. They have three boys, Kent, Bruce, and Chad; five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

Lydia Ubry



Lydia grew up in New Castle, Pennsylvania and moved to Sarasota in 2021 to attend New College of Florida for a BA in Environmental Studies and Marine Biology.

She currently works as an environmental specialist with Sarasota County Planning & Development Services and leads code compliance investigations during sea turtle nesting season as well as tagging adult turtles while they nest.

Lydia enjoys all sorts of outdoor recreation including scuba diving, kayaking, gardening, going to the beach, and taking long walks and runs with her dog, Ruffles. Additionally, she loves to sing, dance, and play instruments, and hopes to soon become part of the music ministry at FCUCC.

Lydia could not be happier to have a church family who supports and embraces her for who she is!

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES ~ LOVE in ACTION



"A prayer shawl is a wonderful way to be wrapped in God's love."

~ Nancy McElroy

Prayer Shawl Ministry ~ May 15th

Calling all knitters and crocheters!

The next gathering of the Prayer Shawl Ministry Group will be on **Wednesday, May 15th, from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. at Judy Jones' house in Lakewood Ranch.**

Text Judy @ 508-322-0709 or email judycjones@comcast.net for address and to give her your name for gate entry.

Refreshments will be served.

Community Meal ~ May 27th

The monthly community meal that we continue to provide at St. Paul's Lutheran Church feeds those who are hungry and in need of fellowship. Our guests are treated to a Sandy Smith home cooked meal. The home-baked items provided by our church family add a sweet treat that is heartily enjoyed.

Our mission is to feed the hungry and offer fellowship to our guests.



Please volunteer with preparing our take-out meals while renovations are ongoing at St. Paul's. **We will be providing dessert cookies this month—homemade would be extra special. We need your cookies no later than 4 p.m.**

Please join us on **May 27th from 4-6:30 p.m.** to assemble the meals. Thank you for all you do for those in need. To volunteer and/or inquire for more details: Carol Hagglund at carol.hagglund@gmail.com.

Food Collection for All Faiths Food Bank ~ May 5th

In just seven months, we have collected **1590 lbs.** of food. The **first Sunday of each month** is the collection of non-perishable foods for the food bank.



Any items in jars and/or cans along with items that have a long shelf life like pasta, pudding, Jello etc., are appreciated. The old standby items of peanut butter, jelly and spaghetti sauce are also needed.

There will be a basket in the narthex labeled **ALL FAITHS FOOD BANK**. Please place your items in the basket or next to it if the basket is full. Thank you for your generosity in these times of increased food insecurity.

Your Food & Hunger Group

The Food and Hunger Group says "Thank You"



A big THANK YOU to all who participated in the **All Faiths Walk to End Summer Hunger**, which was the kickoff event of the Campaign Against Summer Hunger. Thirteen (13) people registered and eight (8) made the one-mile walk.

Nearly half of the students enrolled in Sarasota County schools participate in free and reduced-price meal programs. In DeSoto County, that number is 100%. **When school ends, hunger begins.** If you would like to help feed children this summer, you still have time to donate to the campaign. **The campaign runs through May 15th. Donations will be matched until a goal of \$1 million is reached. To donate before the 15th, go to allfaithsfoodbank.org/campaignagainstsummerhunger.**

Many thanks to all of you for participating in this year's **Bread for the World Offering of Letters**. We wrote 73 letters to Congressmen Greg Steube and Vern Buchanan, urging them to support reauthorization of the Farm Bill. Our goal was 70 letters for the Church's 70th anniversary, and we beat it!



Thank you for all the donations to **Second Chance Last Opportunity** as well as the monthly collection of food items for **All Faiths Food Bank**.

Bread for the World ~ Listening Session "Nourish our Future" ~ Monday, May 6th 4:00 – 5:30 p.m., Oasis Center/Zoom

Mark your calendars for Monday, May 6th. The Church will be hosting a **Bread for the World Listening Session, "Nourish our Future."**

During this Listening Session, we will discuss the following topics which are part of the platform **Bread for the World** has established to address food insecurity:

- Fully funding and modernizing WIC for all eligible participants
- Expanding a Child Tax Credit that prioritizes cutting child poverty and ending hunger
- Addressing college student hunger
- Developing an international "Children's Jubilee" which includes:
 - Global nutrition
 - Debt relief
 - Addressing climate change to secure the future of our food systems



The Listening Session will take place at the Oasis Center.
A Zoom Link will be sent if you wish to attend the Listening Session remotely.

Thank You & A Ribbon-Cutting Invitation
Second Chance Last Opportunity Food Distribution Center
Monday, May 20th ~ 11:30 a.m.

I am so grateful for your generosity to Second Chance Last Opportunity. Lucy Hedrick arrived on the Monday after the April 7th Food Collection, her car overflowing with contributions to "Re-stock Our Shelves." Thank you so much.

I would like to invite all your congregants to the **Food Distribution Center ribbon-cutting, 1933 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, at 11:30 a.m. on Monday, May 10th**. Please come and admire the renovations that you and so many other churches and synagogues have helped us achieve.



Thanks to this expansion, Second Chance will be able to serve many more persons and families in need.

With warmest regards,

Dr. April Glasco
Second Chance Last Opportunity

CREATION JUSTICE NEWS

New Native Plants on Campus



For the last several months, the Facilities and Grounds Team, with assistance from the Green Team, has been researching and planting new 'native' plants in our gardens. **Our initial focus has been on the Memorial Garden where our beautiful cross is located.**

Florida Native plants require much less maintenance overall and can withstand less water especially in the summer when the rains may be less than normal. This occurred last summer. Native plants will survive more easily without the need for supplements or fertilizer. **This is a Win-Win situation for the church.**

Native plants were added to our Memorial Garden and to the beds on both sides of the Sanctuary. Look out the windows of the Sanctuary when you have a chance! It will take several months to for these new plants to grow and fill in the spaces. Hopefully, the new plants will require much less weeding in the summer when the heat and humidity are so high.

The most important reason for using native plants is that they provide and create much needed habitat for our wildlife such as birds and butterflies. We look forward to enjoying these new plants as they mature and add more beauty and peaceful spaces on our campus.



We thank our Lord for creating such a beautiful green place for us to worship. This entire project has been made possible by a generous donation from a member of our congregation.



**COLLAGE Mother's Day Luncheon for All
May 12th ~ Syster Hall ~ After 11 am. Service**

A light lunch will be served by members of COLLAGE on this Mother's Day—a tradition COLLAGE offers each year with pleasure and gratitude.



Please bring a picture of your mother or mother figure labeled with "mother's" name and your name. Each table will be invited to share a short story about their mother, grandmother, or mother-like figure. What is the best advice you were ever given?

Please sign up in advance in the Narthex for this light-bites luncheon.

**COLLAGE NEWS~ by Rev. Katrina Roseboro-Marsh
Executive Director of the Open and Affirming (ONA) Coalition of the UCC**

Roseboro-March uses the acronym LGBTQIAN2S+ to describe the people she serves. She began using this acronym soon after beginning her role at the ONA Coalition following conversations with individuals who felt left out with the LGBTQ+ acronym. The "I" is for intersex, the "A" is for asexual/agender, the "N" is for non-binary or (gender) non-conforming, and the "2S" is for two-spirit.

"I wanted something that could intentionally broaden honoring the even more marginalized within the already existing marginalization of the community," she said.

ONA webinar: Beyond the Binary Webinar, May 28th, *Using the Bible to Unpack Attraction.*

ONA National Gathering: September 18th – 22nd, Cincinnati, OH.
For more information see Pauline Geary or contact the ONA website: <https://openandaffirming.org>



RACIAL JUSTICE COVENANT NEWS



**Sacred Conversations on Race (SCOR)
May 15th
3 p.m. ~ Oasis Center/Zoom**

"He Saw That It Was Good" by Sho Baraka (book discussion)

All are welcome to join in the conversations.

IN OTHER NEWS . . .

First UCC Women's Luncheon ~ May 7th 11:30 a.m. ~ Syster Hall Celebration of Music and Verse with Tea



Think tea pots and china cups, think spring posies, tea sandwiches and petit fours. The UCC Women invite one and all to a **Celebration of Music and Verse with Tea** on **Tuesday, May 7th**, at **11:30 a.m.** in **Syster Hall**. **Luncheon costs \$12.**



We will enjoy readings by Lucy Tobias, Linda Butler, and Francesca Simon, along with musical selections performed by Marsha Kindall-Smith, Lynne Woodman, and Sarah Melcher. This end-of-season celebration will also be an opportunity to tell us what kinds of programs you would enjoy next year.

In addition, we will approve the nominations for the 2024-2026 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 ~ *Ruth Ann Waid*
- ✓ Treasurer ~ *Roxanne Schwoch*



We ask each attendee to contribute towels for the clients for **Mothers Helping Mothers**. **New or gently-used towels of any kind—bath, kitchen, beach . . .** are much needed.

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.

Knitting Group ~ Chair Needed

Since the retirement of Ethel Rudy, we are looking for a new chair to lead this group. If you like to work independently and knit at your own pace, this ministry opportunity is for you. We knit hats, mittens, and scarves for the Native American residents of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

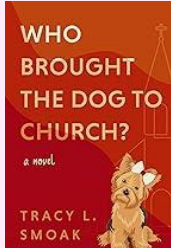


Supplies and instructions are provided. Knit with friends, while watching TV or during your daily prayers. The chair gathers the finished items from you at your home and ships them to our brothers and sisters in South Dakota. Help us continue this important ministry.

For more information, contact Nancy Morris at 941-953-7932.

Ready Readers ~ May 9th

We meet on the **second Thursday of each month at noon in the Oasis Center**. We welcome and encourage the participation and input of new members even if you are not able to attend every discussion. For more information, contact Sandy Smith at sandysmithvi@gmail.com or 340-227-5121.



May 9th

In *Who Brought the Dog to Church?*, "Tracy L. Smoak has done something remarkable—she's woven serious topics such as death, immigration, and domestic violence with the laugh-out-loud antics of a bunch of small town church ladies to produce a funny, heartwarming, and thought-provoking tale. The relationships between Betty, Letitia, Ida Lou, and Elizabeth are darling! Fun connections and revelations sprinkled throughout the book make it a page-turner not to be missed, and the whole story wraps up in a wonderfully satisfying and sweet conclusion. This book gives readers hope for abundant joy, even during pain, and, most of all, points us to the unfailing love of the Savior."—Heather Norman Smith



Lighting Up the Ringling Bridge in June for Gun Violence Awareness Month Saturday, June 8th ~ 8 p.m. Bayfront Park

Brady Sarasota, along with Moms Demand Action and other local organizations, will gather at the **Bayfront Park** on Saturday, June 8, at 8 p.m. to watch and celebrate as the Ringling Bridge's lights turn **orange for gun safety**. The city commission approved this lighting for June 8-10 for the first time this year.



Please join us **just beyond O'Leary's** and across from the children's splash park, even if you've never been to a Brady event. Gun violence is a public health issue, and everyone believes in safety. Our program, which should last a little over an hour, will include a few short speeches, some singing and definitely some cheering. See Carol Rescigno if you have questions.

Brady again thanks this church and its members for all their support. Brady held its final meeting of the season last month in the Oasis Room, where the Sarasota Police Department's Sgt. Robert Morrison spoke about how the department works to curb crime in our area. The assemblage also filled out postcards to send to Floridians, urging them to have a voting plan to put gun-sensible officials into office this year.

Wear Orange to Church ~ Sunday, June 2nd

Second Annual Chili Cook-Off

VOTED BEST CHILI



**"Soul of the
Midwest Chili"**

**By
Chef Ed Andersen**

May Birthdays



May Anniversaries



5/1	Cheryl Beller	5/16	Barbara Edelin Gregory Partridge
5/2	Charles Jarman Sue Shiffrin	5/20	Richard Sparrow
5/6	Wesley Horner Blaine Pool	5/22	Debbie Hays Carmen Landers Robert Quarles
5/7	Jerry Travis	5/26	Helaine Eckstein
5/9	Gina Bixby	5/27	David H. Kerrigan
5/10	Anne Low Patricia Rolf	5/28	Virginia Cardozo Taylor Steele
5/11	Bettye Smith	5/29	William Hansen
5/12	Elizabeth Early Becky May	5/30	Ed Andersen Greg Chestnut
5/13	Garvey Clarke Sandy Smith	5/31	Christine Millar Norman Wilcox
5/14	Harold Mezile		

5/1 ~ Donald & Kate Harris
5/3 ~ Steve & Kathy Combs
5/3 ~ Ray & Naya Staib
5/6 ~ Drue & Len Murray
5/11 ~ Rick & Jean-Marie Steele
5/16 ~ Craig Collemer & Gary LaParl
5/23 ~ Donald & Dannie Vance
5/25 ~ Jim & Max Althouse
5/28 ~ Jeff & Sarah Sands
5/30 ~ Fernando & Betsy Traba



90+ Wise Birthdays

~ Shower with Cards ~



5/2 ~ Charles Jarman



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC CHURCH
 1031 Euclid Ave
 Sarasota, FL 34237
www.uccsarasota.com



The 2024 Flower Chart is ready for YOU!
 Do you have a special occasion you would like to celebrate at an upcoming Sunday service?

Each Sunday, there is an opportunity for two bouquets. **The cost is \$40 per bouquet, payable to the church.**

Please sign up for a Sunday by emailing admin@uccsarasota.com

We are grateful for the fresh flowers every Sunday that bring the beauty of God's creation into our worship space.

STAFF

Senior Minister Rev. Dr. Wes Bixby
 Minister of Music Interims
 Campus Manager..... Mark Swain
 Media Specialist..... Douglas Kingsley
 Bookkeeper..... Pam Ganshe-Boythe
 Financial Clerk Heidie Heath
 Office Administrator..... Sherry Glover

OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Moderator..... Harold Mezile
 Vice Moderator..... Carol McCloud
 Past Moderator Nancy Morris
 Co-treasurers Robin Reich & Roxanne Schwoch
 Pastor Emeritus..... Dr. John Syster
 Minister of Music Emeritus.....Greg Chestnut
 Contributing Photographer Susan Moore
 Newsletter Carol McCloud, Evelyn Crooks

***We are an open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ
 in the Florida Conference of the UCC.***

Telephone: (941) 953-7044; Fax: (941) 952-5245

Email: admin@uccsarasota.com Website: www.uccsarasota.com

We are worshiping on-line via Livestream each week at 11 a.m. and the service is posted to our website for streaming by 1 p.m. each Sunday afternoon.

