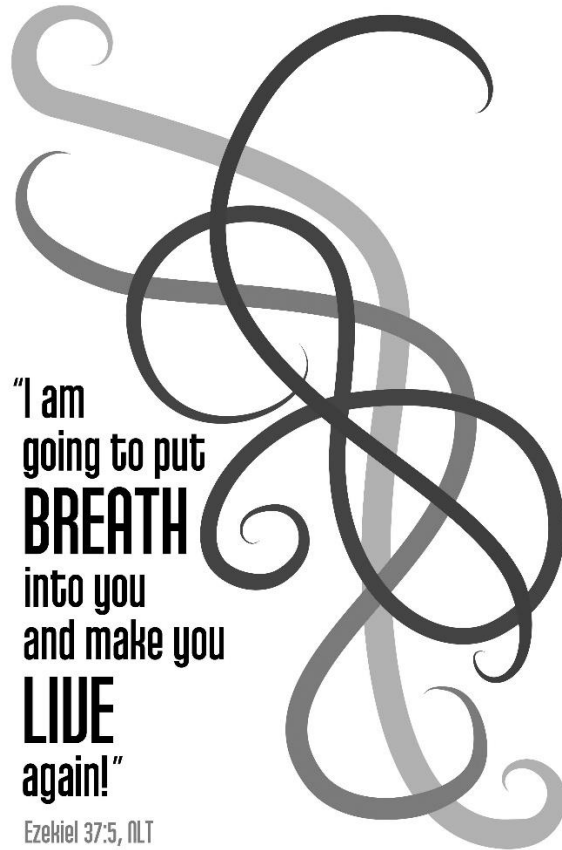


August 25, 2024 10:30 a.m.

# First Congregational UCC ~ Sarasota



"I am  
going to put  
**BREATH**  
into you  
and make you  
**LIVE**  
again!"

Ezekiel 37:5, NLT

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

[www.uccsarasota.com](http://www.uccsarasota.com)

Flowers given by **Jeannie Mitchell**, blooms of healing for **Gib Mitchell**

PRELUDE

*Morning Has Broken*

Dawn Swain, Mountain Dulcimer

INVITATION to WORSHIP

One: Circle-drawing God, You continue to evolve in all directions to enfold all that is.

**Many: Guide us, O God, to live the wisdom of Your expanding embrace.**

One: Empower us to find creative ways to reach out to others.

**Many: Evoke within us curiosity about the mystery of life.**

One: Reassure and remind us that You are not finished with us yet.

**Many: Enliven our worship and our lives every day. Alleluia and Amen!!**

\*OPENING HYMN

*Creator God, Creating Still*

#278

**Creator God, creating still, by will and word and deed,  
Create a new humanity to meet the present need.**

**Redeemer God, redeeming still, with overflowing grace,  
Pour out your love on us, through us, make this a holy place.**

**Sustainer God, sustaining still, with strength for every day,  
Empower us now to do you will. Correct us when we stray.**

**Great Triune God, for this new day we need your presence still.  
Create, redeem, sustain us now to do your work and will.**

\*OPENING PRAYER

**God, there are moments we feel like we are preaching and proclaiming Your love to a valley of dry bones who are *not* listening. All our good intentions and best efforts produce none of the results we thought, and we want to bang our heads against the wall. We know on the one hand that we cannot change another person. We know that we struggle to change *ourselves*. On the other hand, could You please intervene and interrupt *that* person who is always pushing our buttons? Help us, O God, when we can't find our voice to sing out Your love. Help us, when we are silent on the sideline. Fill us with an Ezekiel-like faith that renews and refreshes the dry bones that are *in each of us today* with Your wind of grace. Amen.**

\*RESPONSE

*Amazing Grace*

Dawn Swain, Mountain Dulcimer

**Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost, but now I'm found, Was blind, but now I see.**

**When we've been here ten thousand years bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.**

PAUSE to BE AND BREATHE

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

Ezekiel 37:1-10

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. <sup>2</sup> He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. <sup>3</sup> He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." <sup>4</sup> Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. <sup>5</sup> Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. <sup>6</sup> I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord." <sup>7</sup> So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. <sup>8</sup> I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. <sup>9</sup> Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." <sup>10</sup> I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

SERMON

*Dried Up*

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

*"I Believe"*

Mark Miller

\*DOXOLOGY/PRAYER 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**

\*CLOSING HYMN

*We Seek You With Our Questions*

tune: Ellacombe

**We seek you with our questions, God, with open heart and mind;  
we long to live a fresher life and leave our past behind,  
for all that we have known before has faded and grown worn.  
We seek you with our questions, God, that we might be reborn.**

**We wonder why things come to pass and how to come alive.  
Where do your living waters flow? How can dry bones revive?  
Who are you, God, who meet us here with wisdom and with sign?  
We seek you with our questions, God, we yearn for truth divine.**

**We search for you in garden green where once you gave us birth;  
We search for you in desert parched and all throughout the earth.**

**With wonder, worry, doubt, and awe we search through night and day.  
We seek you with our questions, God, at home and far away.**

**You seek us with your questions, God, inviting us to dare  
to know you and to love you more, to grow through act and prayer.  
“Who will you trust and follow now? My truth is all around.”  
You seek us with your questions, God, you seek and we are found.**

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*We Shall Come Overcome* Dawn Swain, Mountain Dulcimer

**We shall overcome, we shall overcome, we shall overcome someday;  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall overcome someday.**

**We are not alone, we are not alone, we are not alone today;  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, We are not alone today.**

**We'll walk hand in hand, we'll walk hand in hand;  
We'll walk hand in hand someday.  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall overcome someday.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ August 25, 2024**

We are delighted to welcome **Glenn Priest** as our guest choir conductor and organist.

**Our last 10:30 a.m. service will be next Sunday, September 1.** We will return to two services (8:45 a.m. in the chapel ~ 11 a.m. in the sanctuary/online on **September 8**).

**Beginning on September 1, you are invited to read the Gospels in 50ish days.** As students are heading back to school, we will ground ourselves in the four narratives of Jesus' life. Your natural first question is, "How many chapters a day is that?" It works out to about two chapters. Or you may wonder, "Why the Gospels? Another great question! Reading Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John can deepen our faith as we hear familiar stories or discover ones we forgot were there. It is fascinating to discover similarities and differences between the four Gospels. And this is a wonderful invitation for the church to embark on together. More information will be available next Sunday as we prepare to launch this initiative together. Questions, please see Pastor Wes.

**Family Promise is Seeking Volunteers for a Special Project** to help at their table at the Disaster Recovery Center, where survivors of Hurricane Debby will come to meet with FEMA and other services organizations. It will be open for a month starting August 19, and will be held at the Sarasota Christian Church on Ashton Road. Volunteers will be helping people fill out applications for assistance. NO prior knowledge or experience is needed, just a compassionate nature and patience. The hope is to cover 2 to 4 hour shifts, depending on your comfort level seated at the table. **The recovery center will be open during the following times: Monday through Saturday 9 AM to 7 PM and Sundays from 1 PM to 5 PM.** There will be a brief training that

shows you the application and explains what is happening around you within the recovery center. If you are interested, please email Tara Maffei [tara.maffei@familypromisesarasota.org](mailto:tara.maffei@familypromisesarasota.org).

**There is still time to donate funds to Alta Vista for New School Year ~** Funds are used for both individual student and classroom supplies. Alta Vista is a K-5 school with an Adult Education Center. There are 473 students from diverse backgrounds. Most are eligible for free lunches. A food pantry is open twice a week for their families and is supported by Sarasota Rotary Club and All Faiths Food Bank. Please give generously.

**India X. Miller -delightful, intelligent and funny will be our speaker at COLLAGE Luncheon Sept. 8, 2024, Syster Hall at 12 noon.** She is a transgender woman who you may have seen at the Sarasota Farmer's Market doing one of her favorite things- "Transplaining." India will share her story and trans information she's gathered from around the world as well as answer any questions about transgender issues you've always wanted to ask but have been afraid to. Please plan to attend.

Please join our very own, **Lucy Tobias** for the launch of her new book, *Floating in Florida* at **Bookstore1 on September 9 at 5 p.m.** - registration is requested (free ~ see midweek message) and there will be *cookies!!!!* From Pastry Art. Yum.

Our Sacred Conversations on Race will begin meeting on Wednesdays in September at 3 p.m. Here are the days and topics: **September 11:** The History Behind Racial Stereotyping - TED Talk by Dr Erika Hall **September 25:** We Are Not All That Different: Race and Culture Identity - TED Talk by Seconde Nimenya

**SURE (Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity) House meeting will be September 15 following the 11 a.m. worship.** This is a sacred conversation for us to listen and learn about what is on each other's hearts. We will receive updates on Affording Housing, Restorative Justice in school, and future issue work. **A light lunch will be served during this holy time.**

The Green Team is excited to sponsor a showing of the movie, "Kiss the Ground," on **Thursday, September 19 at 7:00 p.m. in Syster Hall.** The movie offers a hopeful message about regenerating the earth. How we treat the soil can be the basis for combatting climate change and degradation from pollution. Please join us for this inspiring film, featuring Woody Harrelson as narrator and environmental activist. We offer a showing of this film as part of the activities celebrating the Season of Creation in the month of September.

**The Missions Team invites all of you to a special coffee hour on September 22<sup>nd</sup> to see a presentation from CenterPlace Health.** This vital service in our community has open doors for all folks in need without regard to race, creed, age, housing status, citizenship status, sexual orientation or ability to pay. CenterPlace Health has operated successfully for the past 6 years, managing to expand both their range of services and their service area. With seven locations throughout Sarasota County plus mobile and pop-up sites, they are now negotiating with the Senior Friendship Center to provide services to seniors, the new "working poor." This is in addition to multilingual services for women, children, behavioral health, dental care and more. CenterPlace Health relies on a combination of federal funds, private grants, and charitable contributions. When Florida refused to accept over \$600,000 in Medicaid funds, their patient load forecast increased

substantially. Come join us to learn more about how we can live our Covenants by supporting these vitally needed services.

Our Racial Justice Mission Group and Green Team are sponsoring: [Dr. Lyla June Johnston](#) on September 27-28. She is a scientist, public speaker, poet, hip-hop artist, and acoustic singer-songwriter of Diné (Navajo), Tsétséhestâhese (Cheyenne), and European lineages whose wide-ranging work focuses on Indigenous values, hidden histories, and their relevance to today's climate crisis. She completed degrees in environmental anthropology, indigenous studies, and American Indian education. At the heart of her teaching lies the Diné concept of Hózhó, a belief system that incorporates moral values such as beauty, harmony, goodness, relatedness, well-being, balance, and order. The topics are wide-ranging—from climate change and environmental racism to recovery and restoration, from intergenerational and interethnic trauma to healing, resilience, and community organizing. Registration is online and the link is in the midweek message.

**Gathering of the Waters** ~ As you travel this summer, please collect water from wherever you visit! Remember you can gather water from local Florida areas or wherever you find yourself in the coming months. On October 20th we will celebrate our annual Gathering of the Waters.

**Church Directory** ~ Do you need a new photograph for our online directory? Susan Moore will be available **after** worship today if you'd like to have a new picture for the Directory. You can go to [instantchurchdirectory.com](http://instantchurchdirectory.com) to verify your address is correct. If you need help, please contact the church office.

**Drumming as a Spiritual Practice** meets the **first and third Tuesday** in the Chapel. Our next meeting is on **Tues 9/3 at 3:00pm**. New drummers are welcome; drums are provided.

### **THIS WEEK**

#### **Sunday, August 25 ~ Welcome Glenn Priest, Guest Musician**

ONE Service at 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary and Online

#### **Monday, August 26**

Prayer Circle, 2 p.m., Oasis Center and Zoom

SURE (Sarasota United Responsibility and Equity) Training, 6 p.m., St Andrew

#### **Tuesday, August 27**

COLLAGE hybrid, 11 a.m., Oasis Center and Zoom

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

#### **Wednesday, August 28**

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

#### **Sunday, September 1 ~ Welcome Glenn Priest, Guest Musician**

ONE Service at 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary and Online with Communion

Birthday Sunday, following worship, Syster Hall

**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*

**Reading the Gospels in 50ish Days**

September 2	Mark 1-2
September 3	Mark 3-4
September 4	Mark 5-6
September 5	Mark 7-8
September 6	Mark 9-10
September 7	Mark 11-13
September 8	Catch up day – Yay!
September 9	Mark 14-15
September 10	Matthew 1-2
September 11	Matthew 3-4
September 12	Matthew 5-7 (Sermon on the Mount)
September 13	Matthew 8-9
September 14	Matthew 10-11
September 15	Catch up day – Yay!
September 16	Matthew 12-13
September 17	Matthew 14-15
September 18	Matthew 16-17
September 19	Matthew 18-19
September 20	Matthew 20-21
September 21	Matthew 22-24
September 22	Catch up day – Yay!
September 23	Matthew 25-26
September 24	Matthew 27-28
September 25	Luke 1-2
September 26	Luke 3-4
September 27	Luke 5-6
September 28	Luke 7-9
September 29	Catch up day – Yay!
September 30	Luke 10-11
October 1	Luke 12-13
October 2	Luke 14-15

October 3	Luke 16-17
October 4	Luke 18-19
October 5	Luke 20-21
October 6	Catch up day – Yay!
October 7	Luke 22-24
October 8	John 1-2
October 9	John 3-4
October 10	John 5-6
October 11	John 7-8
October 12	John 9-10
October 13	Catch up day – Yay!
October 14	John 11-12
October 15	John 13-14
October 16	John 15-16
October 17	John 17-18
October 18	John 19-20
October 19	John 21
October 20	Catch up day – Yay!