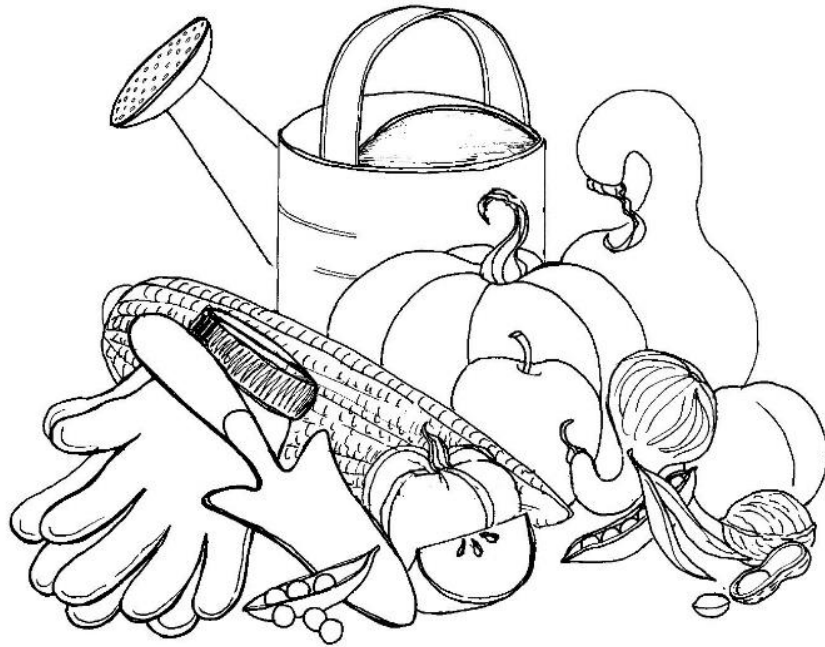


September 1, 2024 10:30 a.m.

# First Congregational UCC ~ Sarasota

*You care for the land  
and water it;  
you enrich it  
abundantly.*

Psalm 65:9



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## INVITATION to WORSHIP

One: God, in the beginning, You sang to the watery chaos a hymn of love.

Many: **You sang to the light and night, sun and stars, fish and flamingos and ferrets and even featherless bipeds, crafting each with Your imprint.**

One: And we join with all Creation, singing out with joy!

Many: **It is good to be here to join our voices in praise!**

## \*OPENING HYMN

*I Sing the Mighty Power of God*

#12

**I sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise, that spread the flowing seas abroad, and built the lofty skies. I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day; the moon shines full at God's command, and all the stars obey.**

**I sing the goodness of our God that filled the earth with food; God formed the creatures with a word, and the pronounced them good. Oh, how your wonders are displayed, where'er I turn my eye: If I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon they sky!**

**On earth there's not a plant or flower but makes your glory known. The clouds arise and spread their showers by order from your throne. All life is but a gift from you and ever in your care; Wherever people gather, you, O God, are present there.**

## \*OPENING PRAYER

**Creator, Restorer, and Sustainer, You move in our lives through beauty and brokenness. You still surf over and sing to the chaos around us and within us. You continue to call us to be collaborators, discovering faithful and creative ways to live our Beloved-ness. On this Labor Day weekend expand our imaginations to see our calling as *more than* that for which we are compensated financially. You call us to share our time, talents, presence, and light with others. Fan to flame a spark in our souls that we let shine, feed and fuel our light with Your divine breath, we pray. Amen.**

## \*RESPONSE

*This Little Light of Mine*

#524

**This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, let is shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

(2xs)

## PAUSE to BREATHE and BE

## ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

Psalm 65:5-13

*You leave us breathless* when Your awesome works answer us by putting everything right. God of our liberation— You are the hope of *all creation*, from the far corners of the earth to distant *life-giving* oceans. With immense power, You erected mountains. Wrapped in strength, *You compelled* choppy seas, crashing waves, and crowds of people to sit in *astonished* silence. Those who inhabit the boundaries of the earth are awed by Your signs, *strong and subtle hints*

*of Your indelible presence. Even the dawn and dusk respond to You with joy. You spend time on the good earth, watering and nourishing the networks of the living. By preparing the land, You have provided us grain for nourishment. You are the gentle equalizer: soaking the furrows, smoothing soil's ridges, Softening sun-baked earth with generous showers, blessing the fruit of the ground. You crown the year with a fruitful harvest; the paths are worn down by carts overflowing with unstoppable growth. Barren desert pastures yield fruit; craggy hills are now dressed for celebration. Meadows are clothed with frolicking flocks of lambs; valleys are covered with a carpet of autumn-harvest grain; the land shouts and sings in joyous celebration.*

SERMON

*Animated by God*

OFFERING/ANTHEM

*The World Is Filled With Awe*

Mark Sirett

*The whole world is filled with awe, is filled with awe at your wonder, your wonder.*

*Where morning dawns, where evening fades, you call forth your songs of joy, you call forth songs, songs of joy and praise. You care for the land and water it. The streams of God are full. You drench its furrows, level its ridges, soften with showers and bless its crops. You crown the year with bounty, the grasslands overflow. The hills are clothed, are clothed, clothed with gladness. The whole world is filled with awe, is filled with awe at your wonder, your wonder. Fields filled with flocks, valleys mantled in grain. They shout for joy, they sing your praise, they sing your praise, and shout for joy, and shout for joy, and sing, sing your praise.*

\*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**

CELEBRATION of HOLY COMMUNION (adapted from Communion Liturgy UCC)

One: The Spirit of Creation swirl and stir with you.

Many: **And the Spirit of Creation sing to you.**

One: Open wide your souls.

Many: **We open our whole lives to the Author of Love.**

One: Let us give thanks to the God of all that is.

Many: **With joyous voices, hearts, and hands, we exclaim to God our praise.**

DISTRIBUTION of ELEMENTS

*You are invited to come forward with the center aisle holding your hands in the form of a cup, receive a bread and grape, and return to your pew by the side aisles. There is gluten free bread in the center. Pastor Wes will serve you in the pews for those who wish. Please hold the bread and grape until everyone has been served.*

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 THANKSGIVING

\*CLOSING HYMN

*Crashing Waters at Creation*

#326

**Crashing waters at creation ordered by the Spirit's breath, First to witness day's beginning from the brightness of night's death.**

**Parting waters stood and trembled as the captives passed on through, Washing off the chains of bondage channel to a life made new.**

**Cleansing water once at Jordan closed around the One foretold, Opened to reveal the glory ever new and ever old.**

**Living water, never ending, quench the thirst and flood the soul. Well spring, Source of life eternal, drench our dryness, make us whole.**

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Fanfare*

Nicolas Lemmens

Greeters/Ushers: Buck Greenlaw, Gregg Matthews, Jane Delgado-Semidei, Cheryl Beller, Carolyn Habel, Evelyn Crooks

Liturgist: Alleyne Kess

## ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ September 1, 2024

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

**Today is our last 10:30 a.m. worship.** Next Sunday, September 8, we return to **8:45 a.m.** in the chapel and **11 a.m.** in the sanctuary/online

**Beginning tomorrow, 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. Questions, please see Pastor Wes.

**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.

**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. Please plan to attend.

David LaMotte's TED Talk has garnered more than 48,762 views since Jul 30, 2024. He will be speaking at Peace Presbyterian Church at 12705 SR 64, Lakewood Ranch on **September 8, 2024 at 12:45 with concert at 2:00**. David LaMotte is a songwriter, speaker and author. He has performed over 3500 concerts and released thirteen full-length CDs of primarily original music, as well as four books, touring in all of the fifty states and on five of the seven continents over his 35-year career. He lives in Black Mountain, North Carolina, with his wife and son, an old dog, and five chickens.

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. **September 11:** The History Behind Racial Stereotyping by Dr Erika Hall. **September 25:** We Are Not All That Different: Race and Culture Identity 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, 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), Tsétsêhéstâhese (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.

**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).

**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.

**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, 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

#### Monday, September 2 ~ Labor Day ~ Church Office Closed!

#### Tuesday, September 3

Drumming as a Spiritual Practice, 3 p.m., Chapel  
Director of Music Search Team, 3 p.m., Oasis Center  
Tuesday Night Bible Study, 6:30 p.m., Zoom

#### Wednesday, September 4

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

#### Thursday, September 5

Plymouth Harbor Circle Meeting, 2 p.m., MacNeil Chapel Plymouth Harbor

#### Sunday, September 8 ~ Welcome Glenn Priest, Guest Musician

8:45 a.m. ~ Early Service, Chapel  
11 a.m. ~ Worship, Sanctuary and Online

Noon ~ COLLAGE speaker, India X. Miller, 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*