



November 2024



First Congregational UCC

CORNUCOPIAS OF GRATITUDE

In the cornucopia of my heart,
I hold these thanksgivings:

- My family (*Gina, Ethan, Olivia and our extended family*).
- My Florida family and friends (***All of you!!***).
- Making it through Hurricane Milton.
- Sunday morning worship including our amazing **choir, section leaders, Carol Hagglund** baking bread for communion Sundays, ushers and greeters and **Jeannie Mitchell** who organizes us on Sundays, **liturgists**, coffee hour hosts and **Sandy Smith's** tireless leadership of sharing hospitality, and **every person** who sings out with gusto in worship.
- **Glenn Priest and Stephen Fancher** who have shared/shined their light as guest organists and choir directors, and **Adam De Sorgo's** wonderful leadership this summer.
- **Our incredible staff** ~ Sherry, Pam, Heidie, Douglas and Mark who give of their full hearts and go the extra mile. We ask a lot of our staff. (*Since COVID, we have been running the church with fewer staff hours, and as we return to pre-pandemic programs and life, this stretches our staff even more.*)

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.



NEW WORSHIP TIMES

Worship ~ 9:00 a.m.
in the **Sanctuary**

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

Visit our website at

<https://www.uccsarasota.com>

- Our Moderators ~ **Harold Mezile, Carol McCloud, and Nancy Morris** who have led with love, faithfulness, and grace over this last year.
- **Our faithful teams** ~ Every person who serves on a team shares and shines their light in beautiful and diverse ways—we are blessed.
- **Our Covenants and Core Values** that give us direction and a destination to set our hearts toward and help remind us how to live in these days.
- **Moments of rest and renewal this year** ~ building Lego sets, walking in creation, laughing, feeling fully loved and cared about.
- **Ice Cream** on Friday nights.
- **Books** that inspire, podcasts that awaken new thoughts, and encounters that show us God's expansiveness.
- **Zoom** that allows us to connect even when we are away and **livestreaming** that draws over 40 people on Sunday mornings (*More during the week!*).
- Moments of **talking with you one-on-one**, sharing cups of coffee or lunch—these encounters with the Holy.
- **You, laughing** at my sermons' lame jokes.
- **Bible Study and small groups** where we connect, pray, study, grow, listen, learn, and love each other.
- For the upcoming year in all its beautiful, less-than-perfect polish, God-saturated and soaked unknowing-ness. I trust that whatever the days ahead may bring, we will find ways to share our prayers and praise. Please join us for worship throughout the month of November as we offer our cornucopias of gratitude to God from whom all blessings flow.



With deep thanksgiving and love for you ~ *Wes*

WORSHIP IN NOVEMBER

9:00 a.m. in the **Sanctuary**

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

November 3 ~ (*Set your clocks back Saturday night, November 2nd.*) We will celebrate our saints during both services. We will celebrate communion surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses whose candles will be burning brightly before us. Pastor Wes will preach on Isaiah 11:1-9. Choir will sing, "We Are Surrounded."

November 10 ~ 70th Anniversary of the Church. Join us as we conclude our year-long celebration. Pastor Wes will preach on Isaiah 40, *selected verses*. Susan Moore will share a poem, "Ain't Gonna Be 70 No More". We will laugh and love together.

November 17 ~ Stewardship Sunday and Trans Remembrance Sunday. Pastor Wes will preach on Isaiah 43, *selected verses*. We will dedicate our prayerful intentions to God for the coming year.

November 24 ~ Thanksgiving Sunday with Brass and Percussion ~ Choir will sing at BOTH services. Pastor Wes will preach on Isaiah 52. Please join us on this special Sunday.

December 1 ~ Beginning of Advent ~ Lighting the Candle of Hope and Communion. Pastor Wes will preach on selected verses from Isaiah 55/56.

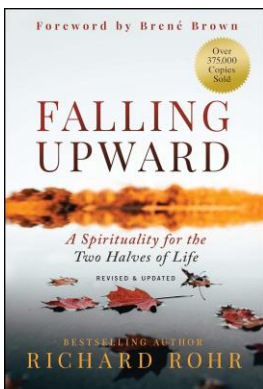
Daylight Savings Time Ends
~ November 3rd ~



Tuesdays ~ 6:30 p.m. ~ ZOOM

Wednesdays ~ 11 a.m.
Oasis Center and Zoom

All are welcome at both sessions!



***Falling Upward* by Richard Rohr**
A Book Discussion with Jim Butterworth

Monday Evenings ~ Oasis Center @ 4 p.m.
November 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th

"Most of us tend to think of the second half of life in chronological terms, but this book proposes a different paradigm. Spiritual maturity is found "when we begin to pay attention and seek integrity" through a shift from our "outer task" to the "inner task." What looks like falling down can be experienced as falling upward—and is not necessarily connected with aging. This new edition focuses on practical guidance that you can use to live a life of love and meaning in a world of suffering and challenge. *Falling Upward* is an invitation to living the gospel and a call to ongoing transformation."

November 10th

Very Special Fellowship Hour



CELEBRATING PASTOR WES' 10-Year Anniversary



*Ice Cream Sundaes
PowerPoint ~ Our Years with Wes
Special Gift Presentation
"Bucket" ~ Thank-You Cards*

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) November 13th @ 3 p.m. ~ **HYBRID** in the Oasis Center.

***Zoom links available
through Pastor Wes***

CELEBRATING OUR 70 YEARS



November 10th
Special Postlude Presentation
(at the 11:00 service)

INTENTION OF GIVING CELEBRATION

November 17th



New Member Opportunities

NEW MEMBER CLASS ~ November 3rd ~ Please join us in the **Oasis Center** **after the 11 a.m. worship service** to learn what it means to be a member of First Congregational UCC of Sarasota.



A light lunch will be served. You will have a chance to meet others and to ask any questions. All who are interested in exploring membership are warmly welcomed at this session.



NEW MEMBER SUNDAY ~ November 17th All who wish to join will be welcomed and received at our 11 a.m. service with fellowship time afterwards to meet and greet your new church family.

New Members Are Joining

Contact the church office or Pastor Wes for more information.

Worth Repeating ~ October 13th worship ~ after the storm **Gather Us In (Verses 1 & 4) ~ By Marty Haugen**

Here in this place new light is streaming; Now is the darkness vanished away.
See in this place our fears and our dreamings; Brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken; Gather us in, the blind and the lame,
Call to us now, and we will awaken; We shall arise at the sound of our name.

Not in the dark of buildings confining; Not in some heaven, light years away.
But here in this place the new light is shining; Now is the kingdom, and now is the day.
Gather us in, and hold us forever; Gather us in, and make us your own.
Gather us in, all peoples together, Fire of love in our flesh and our bone

Per the composer: *In the first stanza, we find that this community is one of hope where "new light is streaming." It is also a community of honesty where we can bring both "our fears and our dreamings" into "the light of this day." This is also a community of inclusiveness that includes "the lost and forsaken" and the "blind and the lame." Regardless of who we are, we have an identity in this community as we respond to "the sound of our name" (Christian), given at our baptism.*



The concluding stanza clarifies that the work of the kingdom takes place neither "in the dark of buildings confining, light years away." The work of the kingdom takes place now in the midst of the gathered, inclusive community.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES ~



October Resurrection House Donations Received

Estimated value: \$200 (assorted pants, shoes, sheets) ~ \$100 (toiletries)

*Actual value: **Priceless to those in need.***

Resurrection House is a non-profit day center for the homeless. Guests can have a meal, take a shower and get their laundry done. They gladly accept clothing, toiletries, canned goods, blankets and backpacks. **Place your items in the cabinet for Resurrection House in Syster Hall.**



Maria Duprez

"I am very happy to receive a prayer shawl because I know I will receive those prayers, and it will encourage me to continue praying for those who will benefit from my own prayers."

**Prayer Shawl Ministry ~ November 20th
2:00 – 3:30 p.m.
Oasis Center**

Calling all knitters and crocheters!

*Contact Lindsey Huddleston
at 630-338-9294
with any questions.*



Kathleen Meyer

Food Collection for All Faiths Food Bank ~ November 3rd

In just 12 months, we have collected **2581 lbs.** or just over **1.25 tons 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 ~



**~ Angel Tree Gift Tags ~
Available November 10th**

Tags will be available for in-person pickup after the 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services on November 10th. Should you not be present to get a tag, please contact Sandy Smith 941-260-8337, 940-277-5121 or sandysmithvi@gmail.com.

Three ways to shop and return gifts:

- Order online and have the gifts delivered directly to the Salvation Army. (Instructions will be provided with your tag.)
- Shop in person and deliver your gifts to the Salvation Army on Tuttle Avenue.
- Deliver your gifts to the church before/after worship on Sunday or during the week, Monday – Thursday.



Farm Bill Update ~ Your Food & Hunger Group



2018 Farm Bill on Extension
since 11/16/2023

Currently, the Farm Bill, which was the theme for our Bread for the World letter writing campaign this year, is still on an extension to the end of 2024. Due to national and international events, there is a push from Republicans to get a Farm Bill passed before the end of the year.

Things are looking like something positive could happen during the lame duck season. The SNAP program will continue to be funded at the current level.

Let's Be a Good Neighbor ~ Toy Drive for Alta Vista School November 11th to December 5th

Cori Jenkins, a school counselor from Alta vista Elementary School, has requested we help their students have a Merry Christmas.

The children range from ages 4 to 11. While shopping for our Angel Tree or young family members, could you include a board game, book, Legos or a doll to bring to church? You will find a gift box in the Narthex in which to place your gifts. They do not need to be wrapped.



Suggested toy list:

Board games/card games

Bluey toys

Building block sets

Cars/Trucks

Sensory items (Squishy toys)

Action figures (Superheroes/Marvel)

Dolls

Slime

Yo-Yo's

Hair accessories

Puzzles

Footballs

Dress-up items

Paw patrol toys

Coloring books/crayons

Journals/Diaries

Learning toys

Basketballs

Arts & Crafts

Legos

Books

LOL items

Outdoor toys

Baseballs

Community Meal ~ November 26th

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 to help prepare the appetizers and desserts and assist with setting up and serving the meal. We welcome our guests with a smile, friendly words, and a wonderful meal. **This month's dessert need is frosted cakes and brownies (9" x 13" pan size) which will be topped with ice cream. Please deliver your desserts to St. Paul's by 4 p.m.**

Please join us on **November 26th from 4-6:30 p.m.** Thank you for all **you do for those in need.** To volunteer and/or inquire for more details contact Carol Hagglund at carol.hagglund@gmail.com.

RACIAL JUSTICE COVENANT NEWS



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

November 13th and December 11th



*We will be watching a series of animated videos from the
Equal Justice Initiative (EJI).*

*According to the EJI "From the wrongful execution of a
Black 14-year-old boy
to widespread violent opposition to Black political
participation, the series explores critical moments in
our nation's history of racial injustice."*

If you'd like to watch the videos ahead of time, they are available at:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSOVnfXPJ2BRFw527tB4O-54Qg9D-hAcG>

To learn more about the Equal Justice Initiative, visit their website at <https://eji.org/>

Contact the church office for the Zoom link

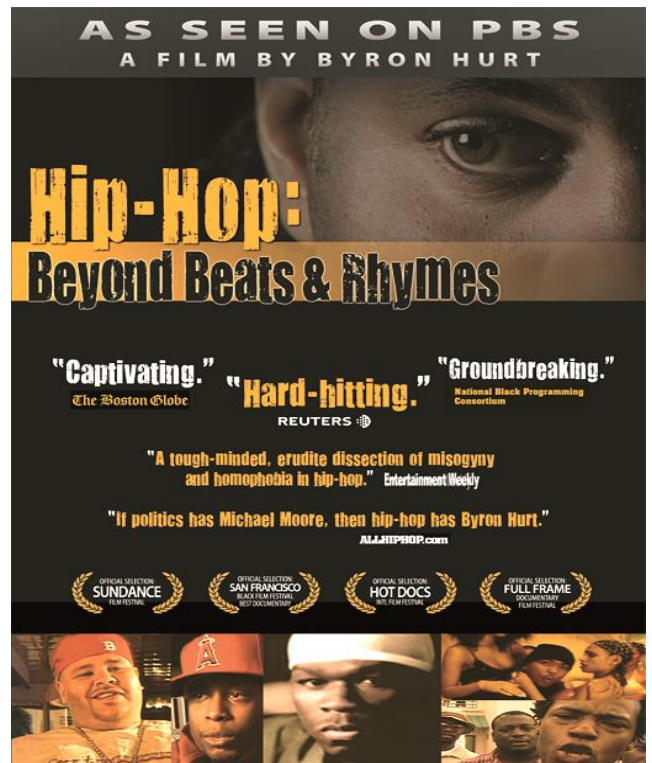
HIP HOP: BEYOND BEATS & RHYMES

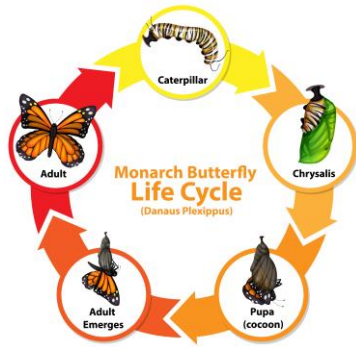
FREE Screening
Q & A with Producer, Byron Hurt

*The film addresses misogyny and
homophobia within hip-hop culture.*

NOVEMBER 14TH ~ 7 P.M.
Syster Hall

Refreshments will be served.



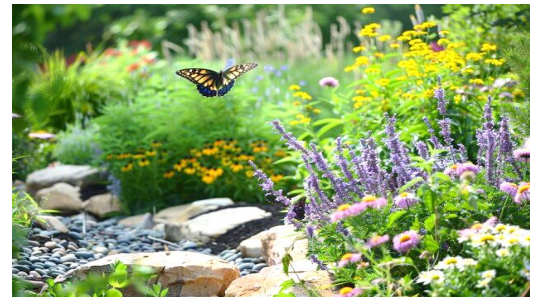


Butterfly Gardens on Our Campus

There are probably butterfly larvae (caterpillars) in your yard that you didn't even realize were already there living their lives. Florida butterflies lay their eggs on many native plants that are very common in our landscape, yet we may not realize they are there. But **Florida's butterfly population is imperiled due to loss of native habitat and host plants** that are necessary for them to complete the metamorphosis from egg to larva to adult.

By planting wildflowers that provide nectar, pollen and larval food for our native butterflies and moths, we can help fill the void between fragmented natural habitats. Even small native wildflower plots can be steppingstones in a pollinator pathway that help insects reach parks, natural areas and roadside wildflowers.

Your Green Team maintains a large butterfly garden and is currently extending into an adjacent area. These spaces help to beautify the church campus while providing an environment where Central Florida butterflies such as Swallowtails, Longwings and Monarchs can thrive. Come visit these areas by the labyrinth when you have an opportunity!



Wildflower Gardens ~ Pollinator Pathways

OPEN & AFFIRMING NEWS

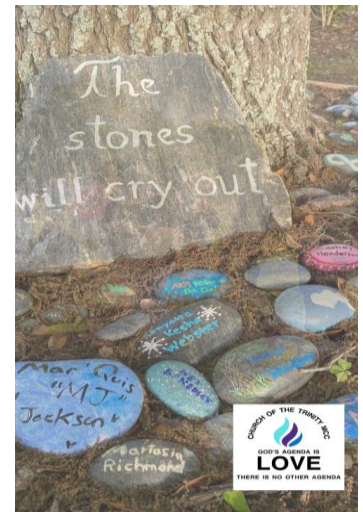


COLLAGE News

November 10th: Celebration Luncheon for Pastor Wes in lieu of our typical program and luncheon.

November 16th: Stone Painting @ 1 p.m., Church of the Trinity MCC Sanctuary

November 17th – 24th: Transgender Remembrance Week. Our 500 anti-LGBTQIA and especially anti-Transgender laws have been introduced in legislatures across our country in the past year. The state of Florida has been named unsafe for travel for all LGBTQIA folks by The Human Rights Commission. With this political anti-queer rhetoric, it is no wonder violence against our Transgender siblings is on the increase.



November 17th ~ Trans Remembrance Sunday Services @ First Congregational United Church of Christ

November 20th ~ Memorial Service @ 4:30 p.m., Church of the Trinity MCC Transgender Garden of Remembrance

(Church of the Trinity MCC ~ 7225 Lockwood Ridge Road in Sarasota)

<https://www.uccsarasota.com> ~ 941-953-7044

IN OTHER NEWS

First UCC Women's Luncheon Program November 5th ~ 11:30 a.m. ~ Syster Hall

All are welcome ~ Luncheon costs \$15
Sign up after either Sunday service or call the church office at 941-953-7044



On Tuesday, November 5, 2024, UCC Women have invited Yvonne Lefebre, Awareness Coordinator for **Selah Freedom** in Manatee and Sarasota Counties. **Selah Freedom works to "bring light into the darkness of sex trafficking".**

The average age of entry into sex trafficking of survivors Selah Freedom has served is 12-14 years old. While the subject can be viewed as depressing, this program will be uplifting, as we learn of the many successes Selah has achieved.

They are making a huge difference!
Yvonne says, "Ask me how you can help stop sex trafficking."

First UCC Women's Annual Christmas Program Tuesday, December 3rd



In anticipation of our annual Christmas program, please shop and **bring your Christmas Bag donations to the Narthex before December 3.** We provide gifts for men and women at Orchard Place and those who receive Meals on Wheels. **All items must be new.**

Personal Hygiene

*hand lotions
soaps
packaged toothbrushes
toothpaste
wet wipes
hand sanitizer
shampoo and conditioner
deodorant
tissues (pocket size)
combs
brushes
socks
handkerchiefs*

Stationery

*stamps
magnifying glass
packaged greeting cards
packaged pens
post-it-notes or scratch pads
coloring books with pencils or crayons
small puzzles (Sudoku and crossword)
devotional books
pocket calendars*

**NO WALL CALENDARS
NO CANDLES
NO CANDY**

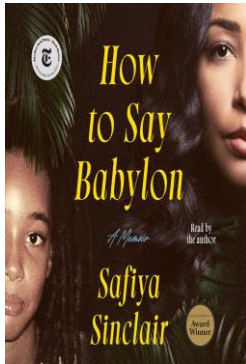
Miscellaneous

*Small stuffed animals
Christmas ornaments*



Ready Readers
November 14th @ Noon ~ Oasis Center

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.



November 14th: *How to Say Babylon* by Safiya Sinclair. Throughout her childhood, Safiya Sinclair's father, a volatile reggae musician and a militant adherent to a strict sect of Rastafari, was obsessed with the ever-present threat of the corrupting evils of the Western world outside their home, and worried that womanhood would make Safiya and her sisters morally weak and impure. For him, a woman's highest virtue was her obedience.

Safiya's extraordinary mother, though loyal to her father, gave her the one gift she knew would take Safiya beyond the stretch of beach and mountains in Jamaica their family called home: a world of books, knowledge, and education she conjured almost out of thin air. When she introduced Safiya to poetry, Safiya's voice awakened. As she watched her mother struggle voicelessly for years under relentless domesticity, Safiya's rebellion against her father's rules set her on an inevitable collision course with him. Her education became the sharp tool to hone her own poetic voice and carve her path to liberation. Rich in emotion and page-turning drama, *How to Say Babylon* is "a melodious wave of memories" of a woman finding her own power. (NPR)

Candlelight Concert ~ In the Chapel
Sunday, December 1st @ 7:00 p.m.



Featuring Marcelina Suchocka on vibraphone
and Phoebe Powell on harp



Tickets \$10

(Available on Sundays outside Syster Hall ~ Starting November 10th)

Limited seating ~ *(only 80 tickets available)*

Artful Prayer ~ November 14th @ 2 p.m. ~ Reed Chapel
In-Person Only



**Hear It, Sing It,
Own It, Share It**

This hybrid workshop, "**Singing that Builds Community**" led by **Greg Chestnut**, invites us to reconnect with singing as generations before us have done. In ancient times, congregational songs and folk hymns were led without printed music in the hands of the singer. Singing "by ear" can become a powerful spiritual practice as we explore themes of prayer, justice, nature, healing, hope, and community. Join with others as we create and engage in ways to contribute to our common life through song.

Brady Sarasota's 8th Annual Vigil for Gun Violence Victims
December 6th ~ 6 p.m. ~ Our Sanctuary *(Mark your calendars now).*

Patricia and Manny Oliver have been fighting for gun violence prevention since their son Joaquin ("Guac") was one of 17 people killed in the Marjory Stoneman Douglas school shooting on Valentine's Day 2018. They've been to Washington, DC; Tallahassee, and, in the past few years, have traversed the country in a repurposed yellow school bus to take their message to people around the United States.



Patricia & Manny Oliver
Photo Credit (Giffords)

Manny also has a one-man show, "Guac: My Son, My Hero" and other initiatives you can read about on their website [Home - ChangeTheRef.org](http://Home-ChangeTheRef.org).

On December 6th at 6 p.m., the Oliver's will bring their message to First Congregational UCC's Sanctuary as the featured speakers at Brady Sarasota's 8th Annual Vigil. This important and poignant evening of remarks, music, poetry, and a special lighting of candles has become a yearly event for many members of Brady, the community and this church.

Thank You! ~ To Our Cleanup Crew



Kathy Combs & Alleyne Kess



Doug Fields, Kathy Combs & Bud Rives



Susan Moore & Wes Bixby



Rich & Carol Rescigno



Sarah Melcher



Lynne Kirchoff

November Birthdays



11/1 Gretchen Friend-Jones
Charles Shipman Jr.

11/6 Cas Burleson

11/7 Christine Hoffman

11/8 Betty Goldman
Sandy Phelps

11/9 Donna Blakey
David Crane

11/11 Bob Goldman

11/12 Charles Hawkins

11/15 Valerie Fields
Sara Lindgren

11/17 Casey Taylor
Kayla Taylor

11/18 David Abel
Julia Detloff
Jeff Smith

11/21 Janet Baker
Mary Kukainis

11/22 Jodi Kleppinger

11/23 Dennis Crooks
James Moody
Ian VanArsdall

11/24 Lindsay Prospect
Eric VanArsdall

11/25 Leonard Hoffman
Betsy Traba

11/26 Olivia Ellis

11/27 Mae Reid

11/28 Susan Mitchell

November Anniversaries



11/3 ~ Dan & Pam Gansche-Boythe

11/7 ~ Sylvia Abreu & Michael Keane

11/25 ~ Harold & Peggye Mezile

11/28 ~ John Fairweather & Carol Fredrich

In Case You Missed It



"Gun Violence Prevention Since Sandy Hook
The Next 10 Years"
Po Murray, Newtown Action Alliance



After Hurricane Milton

90+ Wise Birthdays ~ Shower with Cards ~



11/1 ~ Charles Shipman Jr.
11/23 ~ James Moody



Johnnie Williams



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



The 2024-2025 Flower Chart is ready for YOU! Do you have a special occasion you would like to celebrate at a 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
Interim Secretary Susan Moore
Pastor Emeritus Dr. John Syster
Minister of Music Emeritus Greg Chestnut
Contributing Photographer Susan Moore
Newsletter Carol McCloud, Susan Moore

***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 worshipping on-line via livestream each week at 11 a.m.

**The service is posted to our website for
streaming by 1 p.m. each Sunday afternoon.**

