

FAITHFUL follower

FAITH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

OPEN & AFFIRMING



December 2015

The Faithful Follower is published monthly by Faith United Church of Christ. **Editor:** Faith Quici

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Celebrating 50 Years!

St. Andrew United Church of Christ is celebrating 50 years on Sunday, December 6. They are inviting us to lunch immediately following their 10:30am service. Please call 941-922-7595 to R.S.V.P.



Stewardship

Operating Fund and Building for the Future Fund....Both are Important!

In some ways the last two years have been Faith UCC's "ready" and "set" years. In them God has blessed us in many ways as we worked with care to get ready to move ahead:

- We prayed and received direction for our ministry.
- We saw our building transformed into a beautiful and welcoming space.
- We have called a full-time and creative Pastoral Team.
- We have welcomed some wonderful new people.
- We have increased our use of media to reach out to the community.

All of these actions have prepared us to grow in both deeper faith, and in reaching more people in our community. Within just a few miles of us, hundreds of new apartments and houses are being built, and we know that many who will live there need to know the peace, joy and love God offers them.

We have so much to offer here at Faith UCC. As we prayerfully plan for 2016, we ask you to consider your giving estimate for the coming year. Outreach and growth require both energy and financial commitment. Our church council hopes to make church growth a high priority in the 2016 budget, but being good stewards, they will base that on our estimates of giving for next year. Toward that end

please complete the pledge card and return it on Sunday, November 22.

Please remember there are two funds you can pledge to. The first one is the Operating Fund, which is the fund all church expenses are paid from. The second is the Building for the Future Fund, this fund was developed to have seed money for future expansion, an emergency fund, and for non-budgeted items. Both are important to Faith UCC and to the future. Thank you in advance for considering both funds when you deliberate your giving estimate.

Thank you for all your generous giving of time, talent and treasure to Faith UCC. We feel so blessed to be part of such a vibrant and caring faith community!

Ready, Set.... GROW,

From Your Moderator

It is hard to believe that we are near the end of 2015. I believe this has been a very good year for Faith Church. We are blessed to have two wonderful pastors who share the pulpit and each deliver wonderful sermons and have new ideas to share with all our members.

I would like to thank all the church council members who have served this year and everyone who has volunteered to help at morning worship on Sundays, baked or made sandwiches for memorial services, helped

with the Potluck lunches and gave rides to members for various functions. A special thanks for all those who came out to help clean the church and get it ready for Christmas decorating, which will take place on Saturday, November 28 at 10am.

Faith Church has always been like an extended family to me and I hope the same is true for the rest of you.

Welcome to our new members! We are pleased to have you as part of our church family. May the Lord bless each one of our

members and visitors. Please check your December calendar and join us in the various activities. If there is something you need or any suggestions you have for the church, please contact the Pastoral Relations Committee or a member of the Church Council. Take a few moments from your busy days ahead to pray for those on the prayer list. Peace be with every one of you!

Love,
Marge Hooie, Moderator

THE PASTOR'S DESK

Rev. Brian and Rev. Judy Bagley-Bonner

Ready, Set...

Grow

We are so grateful to be a part of Faith United Church of Christ. In our time here God has empowered Faith to do many things. Almost 3 years ago Brian came alone to Faith to serve as a 1/2 time pastor. The sale of land to Thorntons was still in process and not "in the bag" with 2 hearings and votes to get through. The years before the sale, Faith seriously considered whether it could continue to be financially viable, but because of God's blessings: the Thorntons purchase, the arrival of Pastor Ramon and the Apostolic Assembly, and your faithful gifts of time, talent and treasure, we have moved forward to having a Full-time Pastorate (split between Jude and Brian). We also have refreshed building and grounds that express welcome and vitality; Excellent Book Studies that have drawn community members; More People on Sunday mornings; and a sense of hope and vision of a time of growing our ministry and outreach.

As we stand on the brink of more growth, we need to continue our good financial health and so we ask you to prayerfully consider an increase in your giving to Faith. Though new people are coming, some generous long-time members have recently left us, and so we need to continue to find the joy of generous financial giving. Second, to keep moving ahead we are in need of people willing to offer their time and talent to fill some very important roles at Faith:

Treasurer Current treasurer Marge Critelli has done a great job of organizing our finances with the banks and our upgraded Church Management software, but she is unable to continue in the position. Being

treasurer takes time, but except monthly council meetings and our annual meeting, when one does the work is entirely open. Part-year folks have done this job in the past and with the use of phones and computers this could be even easier. Working comfortably with a computer is a necessity for this role.

Children's Sunday School Rotating Teacher(s)

Currently Hattie Damianos and Earleen Nutting share one Sunday School Teaching role, but the increase in younger children gives us the opportunity to have a second class for younger children. If you would like to rotate for either the "Almost Teens" or the younger children's class please talk to Hattie or Pastor Brian

Pot-Luck Hosts

Our Monthly Pot-lucks are great time to get to know people both new and long-time attendees. Look for the article that gives the steps/tasks needed for this ministry opportunity. Other roles on Council may also be available as our current folks considers whether to continue. Please watch for more descriptions in our January Follower.

Some of our members have been faithfully serving in these roles for several years and we are grateful! It's time to take a back seat and find renewal. Won't you prayerfully consider what ways you could serve God and Faith UCC in 2016? God has great dreams for Faith; let us all find the wonder of joining in making those dreams a reality.

Blessings,

Brian and Judy

WORSHIP WITH US

2

DECEMBER 6, 2015

Flowers: Deb D'Angelo
Greeters: Council
Scripture: Marge Hooie
Ushers: Council
Communion: Council
Nursery: Marge Hooie

DECEMBER 13, 2015

Flowers: Available
Greeters: Available
Scripture: Janis Groth
Ushers: Available
Nursery: Babs Brownell

DECEMBER 20, 2015

Flowers: Available
Greeters: Pete and Janis Groth
Scripture: Joan Sheehan
Ushers: Available
Nursery: Linda Anderson

DECEMBER 27, 2015

Flowers: Available
Greeters: Available
Scripture: Available
Ushers: Available
Nursery: Marge Hooie

SUNDAY VOLUNTEERS

If you are serving for the first time and have questions regarding your duties, please look on the bulletin board. Detailed duties for each assignment are printed for you. Please take a copy if you wish. Thank you for volunteering.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

SEPTEMBER		OCTOBER	
INCOME	\$ 9,390.57	INCOME	\$10,669.81
EXPENSE	\$ 14,656.79	EXPENSE	\$11,954.48
DIFFERENCE	\$\$\$ 5,266.22	DIFFERENCE	-\$1,284.67

Besides offering, the totals above include insurance receipts and expenses related to the building flood.
~~\$\$\$ 5,266.22~~
 -\$ 5,266.22

ONECO FLORIST /// 941.756.1556

Oneco Florist is offering Church members \$5 off their first arrangement. Just mention this article.

SOCIAL ACTION & MISSIONS

DECEMBER food collection is: **Baby cereal, food and formula**

For December, we will be collecting **Baby Cereal, baby food & formula for the Food Bank of Manatee.**

In addition, we have an opportunity to **sponsor a special family for Christmas.** This is a Family who will participate in the Family Partnership Center gift program and they have 3 children and 2 adults. Please see the additional information below; it will also be on the bulletin board in the narthex. We are looking for individual families to sponsor one or more of the family members by purchasing gifts (and not wrapping them) from their wish lists so that the entire family is covered by the generous givers of Faith UCC. Please let Faith know which person you are purchasing for so we don't have duplication. We will also buy food for their Christmas dinner. Cash donations can be made and we will buy the food or gift cards. If you have any questions, please call the church office, or I can be reached at (941) [932-1289](tel:932-1289) or robinwentz@gmail.com. **We need to complete the purchases by November 30th.**

Jatonna (F) Adult Shirt (M)/Pants (10)/Shoes 7.5 Gifts: basic kitchen items-dishes/silverware, pots & pans

Gene (M) Adult Shirt (M)/Pants 32x30 Gifts: work pants and black tube socks

Bella (F) age 4 shirt (4T)/pants (4T)/shoes size 10-gifts: Doc McStuffins ball, needs clothes, books, blocks, learning toys

Abigail (F) age 2 shirt (3T)/pants (3T) shoes size 6-gifts Peppa Pig ball, needs clothes, books learning toys

Hope (F) age 8 mos shirt (9/12 mos)/pants, (9-12 mos),socks-gifts-stacking cups, needs clothes, books, blocks, learning toys.

And, last but by no means least, we will have **our last special offering of the year** which is **for the Christmas Fund.** You have the opportunity to be a part of this ministry that cares for the active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ through your participation in this year's Christmas Fund Offering. Your gift to the Christmas Fund will not only assist pastors, but also provide for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and provide Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks next December to low-income retirees. We will be collecting this offering on Sunday, Dec 20th.

THANK YOU for your continued generosity to the Food Bank and all the special offerings we have collected in the past year. "They will know we are Christians by our Love, by our Love, yes they'll know we are Christians by our Love."

Robin Wentz

Mark Your Calendars

MEN'S BREAKFAST

9am on Saturday,
December 5 at Norma
Rae's in Palmetto.

WOMEN'S BREAKFAST

9am on Saturday,
December 5 at Peaches
on Manatee Ave. W.

POTLUCK

We are looking for someone to host the potluck for December 13. Please contact the church office or sign up on the bulletin board.

DINNER & DESSERT

6pm on December 18 at Richard and Jimmy's home. Please bring your favorite dessert and enjoy a great time.

Children's Ministry Team

God has a purpose for you, and if you have a heart for children, then it could be to join the Children's Ministry Team. It's so easy to sign up for only a few Sundays out of the year. Contact Babs Brownell if you would like more information about this purposeful and rewarding ministry.
Call: 941.747.9643

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

Sunday School Rotating Teacher(s)

Currently Hattie Damianos and Earleen Nutting share one Sunday School teaching role, but the increase in younger children gives us the opportunity to have a second class for them and give some more attention to our Young Ladies. Hattie will continue to develop the curriculum, so all that is needed is to join the students in a great Bible exploration. If you would like to rotate in for either the "Almost Teens" or the younger children's class, please talk to Hattie or Pastor Brian

How to Host a Potluck

Hosting our monthly pot-luck is a way to provide a real service to your friends at Faith UCC. If everyone would consider hosting just once every two years our calendar would be full. Here are the basic steps usually best done by at least two people!

Before the Meal

- Pick a theme (holiday, ethnic, comfort food) or just go with "pot-luck"
- Arrange tables in the multi-purpose room including two serving tables. You can decorate with tablecloths, etc... or not! This can be done starting Friday after Pre-School through early Sunday morning. Plan for 25 - 40 depending on time of year.
- Gather plates, utensils, serving spoons, napkins, cups, pitchers of iced tea and lemonade and the coffee maker from the kitchen with cream and sugar/sweetener and a small wash container (soapy water and cloth) on our rolling cart (located in the furnace room - 1st room through door past Judy's office.)
- At 9:45 Sunday morning be in the kitchen to receive people's food-keeping things warm in the oven or cool in the fridge as appropriate. By 10:20 take any plug-in crock-pots to the back and plug them in.
- After the sermon you get to skip out of church to load the food onto the cart and take it back. Usually putting from right to left - plates/utensils, salads, main dishes, desserts and drinks (the cart is sometimes used to serve drinks)
- Start the coffee maker and arrange food with serving utensils
- Remake coffee and/or cold drinks as needed
- Enjoy the food

After the Meal

- watch and remind people to take their dishes home
- wipe off tables
- dispose of all trash and ask someone to take to dumpster and install new trash bag from bottom of trash bin
- return all left over plates, etc... as well as pitchers on cart to kitchen
- wash all dirty dishes and dry so they can be returned to shelves.
- Thank God you don't have to do that again for a while!

A checklist will be developed so you can see the steps more easily. Do not fear.... We will all be grateful for your hard work!

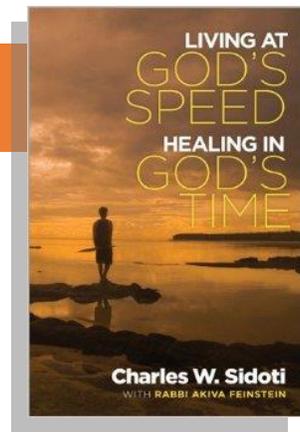
Christmas Eve Service

Thursday, December 24 at 7pm



Autumn Book Study

Jude Bagley-Bonner is leading a book study open to all. The book: [Living at God's Speed, Healing in God's Time](#) by Chaplain Charles W. Sidoti and Rabbi Akiva Feinstein is a book of sixty short devotionals (one or two pages each) which lend themselves to easy daily reading, and rich group discussion. We meet Sundays at 9am and Tuesdays at 6:30pm. This is a wonderful companion book for all who seek a deeper relationship with God. You can always check local bookstores or online for a copy of the book.



A Preschool Note

Wendi Steinbach, Director

The children are beginning to practice their songs for our upcoming holiday program. The program will be held on Wednesday, December 16th at 11:30am. Everyone is welcome to join us for this wonderful little program.

The preschool will be closed for Thanksgiving break from November 23 - 27.

Faith Preschool wishes everyone a
"Happy Thanksgiving"!



Climate Change March

Saturday, November 28
at 11:00 AM

Jim Willard has made us aware of a march in St. Pete to support the Climate Change Summit in Paris. The march was originally planned for Paris but due to the attacks it has been moved to cities around the world. Contact Jim if you want information or you need a ride. 941 531-4559 or sengpo4@msn.com



CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Faith United Church of Christ /// November 9, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 by Marge Hooie. Pastor Brian delivered the opening prayer.

PRESENT: Marge Hooie, Pastor Brian, Pastor Jude, Denny Wetter, Judy Wetter, Linda Anderson, Barbara Brownell, Marge Critelli, Faith Quicci and Robin Wentz. A motion was made by Judy Wetter to accept the October meeting minutes and was 2nd by Marge Critelli. The motion was carried with a unanimous vote.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Judy reported a total October deposit to the Bank of America operating account of \$9,892.03 and to the Bank of the Ozarks building for the future account a total of \$4,919.27 which included an insurance check of \$4,784.27 and the Bank of the Ozarks pass through account of \$856.77 for a total deposit of \$15,668.07.

TREASURE'S REPORT: Marge reported that the money market account is \$116,023.84. She also reported that the preschool has not paid their share of the cleaning bill for 2 months.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Pastor Brian reported that there were 4 potential members joining on Sunday. Stewardship letter went out. Pastors Brian and Jude have decided on the themes for sermons through the beginning of the new year. Pastor Jude said the book study was going good with 6 people in each group. She also found out that the 26th street church is working on a PFLAG group so we will not do that but M.R. was excited about starting an elderly support group for LGBTs. She asked for a time for Christmas

Eve service which was decided would be 7:00. A signup sheet would go up for carpooling for those that don't drive at night. December 27th there will be a need for a pastor since Brian and Jude will be up north. She also suggested that an alternative service may be appropriate. Pastor Jude asked if there was any feedback from the congregation regarding changes.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Faith reviewed the calendars for any changes.

NEW BUSINESS: December dinner and desert will take place at Richard's and Jimmy's house. Guests are asked to bring dessert. It was suggested that we invite the NA members to Christmas Eve service. There is no one for December potluck. Judy suggested we have a little tough love, no volunteers to host potluck then no potluck. Pastor Brian will make up a check list for the potlucks so everyone knows what to do.

OLD BUSINESS: Barbara said that we need some nominating committee members. Barbara requested that everyone email her what their duties and responsibilities are. Judy would like some time during service to talk about stewardship.

DEPARTMENTS: Building and Grounds: Denny reported that the crew has been busy with the lights and A/C filters among other things which can be found in the follower. Denny said he would call the electric company regarding the cost of putting some mercury vapor lights in specific areas around the church.

Pastoral Relations: The next meeting is 12/2/15.

SAM: Habitat Sunday was yesterday. The next collection will be for the Christmas fund on Christmas Eve.

Faith Care Team: the care team will meet 11/18/15 at 7:00 pm. Closing prayer was given by Pastor Jude.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40.

Respectfully submitted by

Linda Anderson.

K-Cups Wanted

We now have a coffee bar at our welcome center. If you have some K-cups you don't plan to use (*especially TEA or other non-coffee drinks*), we would love to offer them on Sunday mornings. You may drop them off at the church kitchen.



Faith UCC Welcomes Four New Members!

Amy Testa

Amy will be familiar to many as the daughter of beloved, late members, John and Nancy Potts. Amy reports that when visiting her parents prior to their own move to Florida from Andover, New Jersey, her family would worship at Faith, so coming back has felt like returning home. Amy works as a Patient Service Specialist in a medical office. She loves to read, cross stitch and listen to music. Welcome, Amy!

Bruce and Donna Blakey

Donna Blakey reports that she and husband, Bruce, have been coming to Bradenton as snow birds from Wallingford, CT, since 2012. They have recently become Florida residents, but will still spend some of their time up north. Donna is now retired, but formerly worked as a Finance Director and Finance/ Grants Consultant. Donna says she was drawn to Faith UCC because of its warmth, openness, and willingness to try new things in worship. She also appreciates the book studies. Donna enjoys reading, dining out and missions. Welcome, Donna!

Bruce Blakey is also a recently relocated snow bird from Wallingford, CT. He was drawn to Faith UCC because of its similarity to his northern Church. Bruce is a retired economist. His current hobbies include reading and making wine. Welcome, Bruce!

Ron Shively

Ron Shively is a resident of Braden River Lakes community, who found Faith UCC by its proximity. He has stayed because of the warmth and spirit. Ron works in Admissions and Student Services at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM) in Lakewood Ranch. He and his wife, Annette, are life-long Roman Catholics, and Ron has joined Faith UCC as an Associate Member. Welcome, Ron!

Faith Care Team checking in

The Faith Care Team wants to be sure that everyone in our Faith community knows that we are here to help in any way we can. Perhaps you are already someone we try to assist. But, if you are looking for someone to help you with transportation to go to medical appointments, grocery shopping etc., we are available.

Our goal is to be there for you in loving ways to make your life easier and better. To check in with us to see how we might help, please call me, M.R. Lembright, Faith Care Team Coordinator, at 941-758-5716, email me at lighthousepro@aol.com or catch me at church.



Your Staff

Pastors

Rev. Brian and
Rev. Judy
Bagley-Bonner
Cell:
941-718-3132



(with Janie)

PASTORS' OFFICE HOURS

Monday 10 am - 1 pm
Tuesday 9am - noon
Wednesday 8:30 am - *noon
Thursday 8:30 am - 9:30 am

Other times by appointment

**3rd Thursday at UCC meetings*



Office Hours
MONDAY-FRIDAY
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
746-8890
Fax 746-0670

Secretary

Faith Quici

Faith UCC Email:

faithchurchucc@verizon.net

Faith Website:

faithchurchucc.com

Prayer Team

If you or someone you know is in need of prayer, call one of the following:



Janis Groth
941.779.6988

Marge Hooie
941. 747.2734

Helen Nutting
941. 747.2734

**Sheryl
Overheidt-
Smith**
941.776.5589

Donna Rusch
301.825.9611

**Joan
Sheehan**
941.748.2498

Members of the Prayer Team want to keep the prayer list current. Please advise us when you would like a name removed from the list.

SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST

If you, a member of your family, or someone you know is ill or hospitalized, please let the office know as soon as possible. A member of Faith Church would like to make a visit to bring God's word of comfort. The church office telephone number is 746-8890 or email at faithchurchucc@verizon.net

2015 Church Council

Moderator:
Marge Hooie 747-2734

Financial Secretary:
Judy Wetter 755-4583

Social Action & Missions:
Robin Wentz 758-6575

Deputy Moderator:
Barbara Brownell 747-9643

Building & Grounds:
Denny Wetter 755-4583

Faith Care Team:
M. R. Lembright 758-5716

Secretary:
Linda Anderson 704-8772

Christian Education: OPEN

Worship Team Leader:
Richard Dilts 776-7293

Treasurer:
Marge Critelli 685-3807

Fellowship & Events: OPEN

Community Outreach:
Deb D'Angelo 610-704-4049



Just search for: **"Faith United Church of Christ, Bradenton ,FL"**



www.faithchurchucc.com

December 2015

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 5:30pm Inlets Annual Business Meeting 6:30pm Adult Study	2 7:00pm Pastoral Relations Mtg 7:00pm BAC	3 7:15pm NA	4 Church office closed Church Women United Mtg. 7:15pm NA 7:30pm BAC	5 9am Men's Breakfast 9am Women's Breakfast 10am NA & Nar-Anon
6 9am Adult Study 10:30am Service Communion 1:30 BAC NA 7:15pm	7	8 6:30pm Adult Study	9 7:00pm BAC	10 7:15pm NA	11 7:15pm NA 7:30pm BAC	12 10am NA & Nar-Anon
13 9am Adult Study 10:30am Service Potluck Poinsettia Orders due TODAY 1:30 BAC NA 7:15pm	14 7pm Church Council	15 6:30pm Adult Study 11:30am Prayer Mtg	16 7:00pm BAC	17 7:15pm NA	18 6pm Dinner and Dessert at Richard and Jimmy's 7:15pm NA 7:30pm BAC	19 10am NA & Nar-Anon
20 9am Adult Study 10:30am Service Christmas Fund Special Offering 1:30 BAC NA 7:15pm	21 7pm BR HOA Follower Deadline	22 6:30pm Adult Study	23 7:00pm BAC	24 Church office closed Christmas Eve 7pm Christmas Eve Service 7:15pm NA	25 Church office closed Christmas 8am/8pm NA Marathon 7:30pm BAC	26 10am NA & Nar-Anon
27 10:30am Service-Guest Pastor 1:30 BAC NA 7:15pm	28 7pm INT HOA	29 Church office closed	30 7:00pm BAC	31 New Years Eve 7:15pm NA	1 New Year's Day the Office is Closed	

HAPPY
Birthday

12/4 Floy Peterson
12/9 Kaitlin Morrell
12/9 Margy Stewart
12/12 Richard Sluss
12/25 Sheryl Overheid-Smith
12/26 Grace Rodgers

- **BAC:** Bradenton Apostolic Church – We church share with Pastor Ramon and his congregation.
- Monthly Prayer Meetings are held every 3rd Tuesday at Freedom Village at 11:30am.
- Our Monthly **Potluck** is every 2nd Sunday after service when someone has agreed to host. Subject to change on special occasions.
- **Dinner and Dessert** is every 3rd Friday at 6pm when someone signs up to host. The host picks a local restaurant to meet and dessert is followed at their home or another gathering spot.
- There are **Narcotics Anonymous** (NA) meetings here each week, and **Nar- Anon**, which is a group of family members affected by those with drug addictions, also meets. If interested in these meetings, please call the NA hotline at 941.257.5055.
- Several local neighborhood Home Owner Associations (**HOA's**) meet here monthly.