

Faithful Follower

FAITH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

OPEN & AFFIRMING



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Faith United Church of Christ 4850 SR 64 E, Bradenton, FL 34208

| 941-746-8890

| faithchurchucc.com

JANUARY 2022

FROM YOUR MODERATOR

This is my first Christmas message as Moderator and so much has happened since the last Christmas Season. Covid continued to plague us but did not beat us.

Our Pastors Judy and Brian retired, the interim search committee was successful in finding a designate-interim pastor who will be with us in January, we were able to come together again for church service, Sylvia Hull graciously accepted to be our acting Pastor and she is doing a wonderful job, we have returned to our monthly fellowship and birthday celebrations after service and your council continues to work hard to keep things running smoothly.

I thank each and every one of them: **Dorathy Gallo, Richard Dilts, Ken Followell, Pete Cohoon, Sharon Cohoon, Amy VanDell, Babs Brownell, Sylvia Hull, Marge Kirchner, Faith Quici, and in memoriam, Linda VanBuskirk.**

I want to also thank you, the members of this church congregation, for your understanding and patience and support during these past few months of transition. You are amazing!

Sadly, we have lost some of our church family but happily we have welcomed some new folks to our church. We have been through a great deal of change this year and I am confident that our resolve will see us through as it has in times past. *"We are a small but mighty church."*

May the spirit of love gently fill our hearts and homes. In this loveliest of seasons may you find many reasons for happiness. As the New Year draws close, I hope it's filled with the promises of a hopeful tomorrow.

Peace
and love,

thank you

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Faith Church Family,

Welcome to 2022! I want to thank you for your warm welcome on my first Sunday here. I had the chance to meet many of you and I'm thrilled to be here. I am slowly getting settled here and I've noticed that it takes no time to get adjusted to the warmer Florida climate. Wyoming winters can be as brutal as Florida's summers.

I look forward to getting to know you and your family. I would love to grab a cup of coffee with you at your convenience when it fits with your schedule. You can email me at: TWeberFaithUCC@protonmail.com to set up a time.

This Sunday we're starting a brand-new sermon series

called "Three Questions for You" based on Psalm 126 that focuses on your feelings about our church. We hope to see you there or on Zoom.

Grace and peace,

Todd

JUST FOR LAUGHS!

I was at lunch with an old friend & pointed at two elderly ladies across the room and said "That will be us in 10 years". She said "That's a mirror".

Please don't ride with me if you're going to grab the dash or scream every time we run off the road. It makes me nervous.



Submitted by PJ Widerman

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

Bah Humbug! UNDECK THE HALLS

Join us Saturday, January 8 at 10 am as we undecorate the church and put away all the Christmas decorations until next year. We will have a good time as we clean up. The more people the less time it will take. We will have snacks!

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, January 30 after the service. Please plan to attend this important meeting.

CHURCH COUNCIL 2021

If you are interested in participating on the church council for next year, please contact Moderator, PJ Widerman.



THANK YOU

The year end Christmas love offering from the congregation was so generous and appreciated. I just wanted to thank everyone who blessed me in this way.

~ Faith

SAM (Social Action and Missions):

January is: Pet Food

Our local food pantries are critically low on food, and we still want to be a help in any way.



PICK UP

1. We will be happy to come to your home and pick up your items! (call Babs at 747-9643).

DROP OFF

2. You can deliver to church during office hours. (Call Faith for info on those hours 941-746-8890)

SHIPPED

3. You can purchase groceries online and have them delivered right to the food bank address. Call Meals on Wheels for more info at: 941-747-4655

MONETARY DONATIONS

4. You can send contributions directly to Meals On Wheels at 811 23rd Avenue East, Bradenton 34208. And through this link:

<https://securepayment.link/mealsonwheelsplus/one-time-donation/>

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS for JANUARY

JAN 2, 2022

Scripture: Sylvia Hull

JAN 9, 2022

Scripture: Dorothy Gallo

JAN 16, 2022

Scripture: Joanne Dahlgren

JAN 23, 2022

Scripture: PJ Widerman

JAN 30, 2022

Scripture: Joan Sheehan

If you would like to read scripture, please let us know! You can sign up by emailing: faithchurchucc@verizon.net

Financial Snapshot

Nov 2021

2022-PER CAPITA

Per Capita is \$15 per person donation for members which is sent to support the National and State Conference. It is a new year and we are committed to 100% paid membership. Thank you for your prompt attention to this conference responsibility.

**FAITH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 13, 2021**

in February. A generous donation will cover 90 percent of these costs. 3

PRESENT: Barbara Brownell, Dorathy Gallo, Sylvia Hull, Marge Kirchner (by proxy), Faith Quici, Amy VanDell, PJ Widerman

ABSENT: Peter Cohoon, Sharon Cohoon, Richard Dilts
The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m.
Sylvia Hull opened the meeting with prayer.
A motion was made by Sylvia Hull to accept the October minutes as published in the November Follower, a second by Dorathy Gallo and the motion was carried.

TREASURER REPORT:

Dorathy Gallo reviewed the financial reports. Even though attendance has been down, we are up in giving and are in good position at this time. A motion was made by Barbara Brownell to accept the financial report, a second by Amy VanDell and the motion carried.

MODERATOR COMMENTS:

PJ Widerman said she will include her comments in the agenda items to follow.

CHURCH SECRETARY REPORT:

Faith Quici reviewed the church calendars making a special note of Apostolic events coming up. Council discussed considering an increase in the building rental for outside groups such as the local HOA's. There are currently 6 HOA groups using the church facilities each month.

Annual reports are due January 14, 2022 in order to present to the congregation at the annual meeting on January 30, 2022.

PASTOR REPORT:

Sylvia Hull said she has been busy with visits and working on a Christmas Eve service expected to be awesome. A special music solo piece will be presented by Ron Serfass. There are members in our congregation with special talents and interests and it was suggested that we begin to do a special section in the Follower to highlight these individuals.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Exterior painting of the church has been postponed to January/February.
- Vicky Followell has offered, with the assistance of Scott Brownell, to paint the pastor's office in preparation for Todd Weber's arrival.
- Raised restroom toilets and hand rails will be installed

- Justice Ministry update: Amy VanDell and M.R. Lembright attended a recent meeting. Amy said the ministry has done a great deal of the leg work and is well organized. Faith UCC has decided to focus on the criminal justice issue with the ministry. This requires minimal support from us as a church, and will mostly as for our support in attending the meetings.

NEW BUSINESS:

- The 2022 proposed budget was reviewed line by line. Some adjustments were made and a final budget will be reviewed by Council at the January meeting and a final budget will be presented at the Annual Congregational meeting.
- Council meeting dates and time for 2022 will be discussed at the January meeting.
- Council Vacancies: Christian Education-Richard Dilts is stepping down and Janis Groth has been nominated for this council position.
- New Council Committee: Addition of a new position-AV Technology was introduced and approved by council. Matt Lipinski was nominated for this position. This will require amendment to the By-Laws.
- Stewardship Drive-the final letter was approved by Council and will be sent to the congregation on Friday, December 17, 2021. Pledge cards are due by December 31, 2021.
- Collection and Deposit of Church funds: In keeping with Section 3.2.3.4 of the Faith UCC By-Laws, Barbara Brownell made a motion for the collection and deposit of all monies be completed following church service on Sundays. Two individuals will be present for this activity and the deposit will be made on Sunday at the OZK Bank "night drop." The motion was carried.
- A reminder that the Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on January 30, 2022.
- Submission of Annual reports due January 14, 2022.
- January 2, 2022 service will be conducted by Todd Weber and Sylvia Hull. Fellowship reception will follow in the Narthex.
- Love Offering-an email will be sent to the congregation in the mid-week message and will also be projected on the screen during service.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

NEXT MEETING: January 17, 2022

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:17 P.M.

CLOSING PRAYER: Sylvia Hull closed us in prayer.

Our Christmas Season



It was such a special time with old friends and new ones at our Christmas Eve services. Thank you to our volunteers and to Rev. Sylvia for your help in leading us for the past few months.



New Season



January 2, 2022 we welcomed Pastor Todd Weber. We look forward to a great year ahead!

Manatee Justice Ministry Members Meet and Gain Steam for S.T.R.E.A.M

Criminal Justice Reform and Affordable Housing the Focus for Change

On December 7th, ninety-three representatives from 16 faith organizations in Manatee County gathered to discuss the two issues the group had chosen to be the most critical issues facing Manatee County: Criminal Justice Reform and the Affordable Housing Crisis.

At this meeting, the group learned some of research that has been done on these two issues and the next steps to make a real change for the people of Manatee County. M. R. Lembright, representing Faith United Church of Christ said, "this meeting was well run and presented ways to take on the tasks ahead of us with a well-thought out plan."

Members chose either Criminal Justice or Affordable Housing and broke into two groups to learn and discuss the issues further. Each group was facilitated by a member of the leadership team to share personal stories and suggest leaders in Manatee County to meet with to share our mission. The lists of people the committees recommended included leaders in Government, Law Enforcement, Education, Healthcare, civic and non-profit organizations.

Haley Grossman, from DART, talked about how our organization is unique because we rely on the power of organized people, pushing for change. "It will create tension, but we will get respect." Meetings are taking place now with some of the leaders the group recommended to present the case for change and gather their feedback.

If you would like to get involved and learn more attend the next meeting at Faith UCC.

The next meeting for S.T.R.E.A.M at Faith UCC is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 8th at 6:30pm.

The following meetings are planned for all members of S.T.R.E.A.M. (locations will be announced later with more details)

- Next Team Assembly for All Team Members, Tuesday, Feb 22 at 6:30pm
- Rally Mon, March 7th, 2022 at 6:30 pm
- Nehemiah Action, Monday April 4th, 6:30pm
- Joshua Assembly, Monday, May 16th at 6:30pm

If you have interest in joining or knowing more about STEAM the justice ministry, please contact either Sylvia Hull or Amy Van Dell.



MINUTES FROM:
STREAM Research Kick-Off
Tuesday, Dec. 7th, 2021
@ Gethsemane Baptist Church

Opening: Rev Stephen Barthell, St Stephen AME, called the meeting to order at 6:45, which was followed by an opening prayer.

Roll call was taken. A total of 93 people were present (expected about 85).

Our Vision: Fr. Glen Graczyk (St. Mary's Episcopal Church), shared a homily of STREAM's vision based on Nehemiah and Micah, reminding us that justice ministry as important at mercy ministries.

Issue Training: Haley Grossman, DART, talked about our organization is unique because we rely on the power of organized people, pushing for change will/may create tension but we can/will get respect. She also advised the group to avoid the 7 "D" – Deflect, Delay, Deny, Deceive, Divide, Discredit or Destroy, Discount. (See pages 3-5 attached)

Moving Forward: Fr. Matthew Grunfeld (Church of the Annunciation), reminded group of upcoming dates and to continue inviting new people to join the group:

- Confirm your congregation's Team Meeting and Network Meeting dates
- Next Team Assembly for All Team Members, Tuesday, Feb 22st at 6:30pm
- Rally Mon, March 7th, 2022 at 6:30 pm
- Nehemiah Action, Monday April 4th, 6:30pm.
- Joshua Assembly, Monday, May 16th at 6:30pm

Individual Research Committees

The large group broke into two research committees, Affordable Housing and Criminal Justice Criminal Justice Committee

The group was led through an exercise which will keep the team on task and to be efficient and effective when meeting/discussing issues with decision makers. The group:

- Narrowed down/identified the problem – racial problem.

Asked:

- How much is this happening
- Where is it happening
- Were arrests necessary – minor incident, false arrests, people with mental health issue
- What is the process
- When do arrests happen
- Are arrests evaluated
- Determined who to meet with
- ACLU
- Someone with the statistics (Clerk of Court)
- Mental health experts
- Public defender
- Judges
- Other experts

Pastor Joreatha Capers informed the committee and provided background on the DART FL Criminal Justice Collaborative. It consists of 12 other DART organizations. Pastor Capers then made two recommendations:

1st Recommendation 6
Deal with the problem of people getting arrested unnecessarily
Ossie Reid made a motion to move forward with recommendation. Motion seconded by
2nd Recommendation: Join the DART FL Criminal Justice Collaborative made a motion to join the collaborative.
Motion seconded by Pastor Kim Uchimura

Affordable Housing Committee – Was not in this group to take minutes.

Both groups came together for closing prayer by Pastor Eric Reaves (Gethsemane Baptist Church).

Meeting adjourned at 8:45
Respectfully submitted,
Diane McCoy

Cutting a Successful Issue

DEFINITIONS

Problem: Statement of what is wrong

Issue: Specific statement (solution) of what you want

Decision Maker(s): Have the authority to implement the solution

Direct action: Straight forward, exercise of power to confront a decision maker on a specific issue, face to face, in a large public setting

ISSUE CRITERIA

- **POPULAR:** Will the issue appeal to a broad segment of people within our Organization's congregations? Will it generate widespread support among them? How many?

UNIFYING: Will the issue not divide us?

WINNABLE:

1. Specific—Is there a clear, concrete & measurable statement of what we want?
(What? When? Where? How much?)

2. Local (accessible) Decision-maker—Is the decision-maker accessible and has authority to give us what we want?

3. Organization's Maturity—How much experience and credibility do we have?

4. Power—How much power does the organization have in relation to the decision maker(s)?

- **BUILD THE ORGANIZATION:** Will the issue bring in new congs, leaders to our Organization? Which ones?

- **CONTROVERSIAL:** Will the issue bring the organization into the public eye? Will it create excitement? Media attention? Who is against it?

Public and Personal Relationships
Circles of Relationships

JANUARY 2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 New Year's Day 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
2 10:30am Service with Communion Pastor Todd's first Sunday <i>Welcome Reception After service</i> 2:30pm BAC	3	4	5 Articles for the Jan Follower are due	6 Preschool Resumes 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom 7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	7 8am Annual Fire Panel Inspection (CES)	8 10am Undecorate the church 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
9 10:30am Service 2:30pm BAC	10	11	12	13 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom 7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	14 Annual Reports are due	15 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
16 10:30am Service 2:30pm BAC	17 6:30pm Council Meeting	18	19	20 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom 7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	21 Articles for the Feb Follower are due	22 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
23 10:30am Service <i>Distribute Annual Reports</i> 2:30pm BAC	24	25	26	27 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom 7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	28	29 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
30 10:30am Service Annual Congregational Meeting – after the service 2:30pm BAC	31					