

# FAITHFUL FOLLOWER

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

| 941-746-8890

| faithchurchucc.com



## JULY 2024

### *A Word from Pastor Joe:*



As I write this I reflect on this past month. June, Pride month, ONA Sunday, Juneteenth. 67<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UCC. So much to celebrate and so much work to be done.

“On “Freedom’s Eve,” or the eve of January 1, 1863, the first Watch Night services took place. On that night, enslaved and free African Americans gathered in churches and private homes all across the country awaiting news that the Emancipation Proclamation had taken effect. At the stroke of midnight, prayers were answered as all enslaved people in Confederate States were declared legally free. Union soldiers, many of whom were black, marched onto plantations and across cities in the south reading small copies of the Emancipation Proclamation spreading the news of freedom in Confederate States. Only through the [Thirteenth Amendment](#) did emancipation end slavery throughout the United States.

But not everyone in Confederate territory would immediately be free. Even though the Emancipation Proclamation was made effective in 1863, it could not be implemented in places still under Confederate control. As a result, in the westernmost Confederate state of Texas, enslaved people would not be free until much later. Freedom finally came on June 19, 1865, when some 2,000 Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay, Texas. The army announced that the more than 250,000 enslaved black people in the state, were free by executive decree. This day came to be known as "[Juneteenth](#)," by the newly freed people in Texas.”<sup>1</sup>

The word ‘pride’ means a feeling of satisfaction from one’s achievements or, collectively, the achievements of those with whom one is closely associated, such as our UCC Denomination.

The word ‘pride’ is an integral cultural concept within

resistance to discrimination and violence. Its associated symbolism (e.g., rainbow colors) communicates to individuals that LGBTQI members are welcome as valuable members of the community.

Our ONA covenant makes a difference to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer+ adults who have personally experienced silence or condemnation in other churches. It makes a difference to LGBTQ+ youth who are at higher risk for suicide when they experience bullying or mistreatment because of their sexual orientation or gender expression. It makes a difference to parents of LGBTQ+ children whose families need the same affirmation and support congregations offer to other families. It makes a difference to LGBTQ+ seniors who are often closeted and isolated. It makes a difference to all those who attend or are affected by our congregation, who experience a deeper understanding of the Gospel.<sup>1</sup>

I pray as we move into July and we celebrate the founding of this great nation we remember that our legacy as the United church of Christ goes all the way back to the Puritans. Our history as a denomination is one of growth and inclusivity, one of service and care for the marginalized, and one that proclaims and lives out no matter who you are or where you are in your life journey you are welcome here!<sup>1</sup>

Blessings,  
*Pastor Joe*

<sup>1</sup> <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/historical-legacy-juneteenth>

<sup>1</sup> <https://openandaffirming.org>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ucc.org/who-we-are/about/history/#early-church>

## Divinely Evolved By Sylvia Hull

My father, who passed away at the age of 96, was a man of science, having spent 35 years working for the Weirton Steel company (Weirton, WV) as a Metallurgist. But he was also a man of God. Many believe it is impossible to be both. But he believed (and taught me to believe as well) that it was indeed possible. My father believed in evolution. Not because he thought it to be so but because science has proven it to be so. Did this then mean that he believed there to be no creation? Quite the contrary. His belief, that we evolved from a one-celled amoeba, took nothing away from the divine mystery of an all creating God. He believed the creation story with which we are all familiar was humankind's attempt to understand and put into words (in the most probable way possible at that point in time), how life came to be. "But could it not be possible," he often opined, "that the gradual evolution of the human species was actually all part of God's plan? Could it be that God breathed into life the very basic elements for human existence and from that point on, in a very orchestrated and intentional process, humankind was born?" It is not necessary to deny science in order to be certain there is a creating God.

My father was also a lover of poetry, and the following poem is one that I heard him recite many times over. It explores the concept of the divine through various natural and human experiences. It reflects the scientific and philosophical debates of its time, contrasting the theory of evolution with religious belief. I read it at his funeral.

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### Each in his Own Tongue By William Herbert Carruth

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A fire-mist and a planet,  
A crystal and a cell, A jellyfish and a saurian,  
And caves where the cave-men dwell;  
Then a sense of law and beauty  
And a face turned from the clod —  
Some call it Evolution,  
And others call it God.

A haze on the far horizon,  
The infinite, tender sky,  
The ripe rich tint of the cornfields,  
And the wild geese sailing high —  
And all over upland and lowland  
The charm of the golden-rod —  
Some of us call it Autumn  
And others call it God.

Like tides on a crescent sea-beach,  
When the moon is new and thin,  
Into our hearts high yearnings  
Come welling and surging in —  
Come from the mystic ocean,  
Whose rim no foot has trod, —  
Some of us call it Longing,  
And others call it God.

A picket frozen on duty,  
A mother starved for her brood,  
Socrates drinking the hemlock,  
And Jesus on the rood;  
And millions who, humble and nameless,  
The straight, hard pathway plod, —  
Some call it Consecration,  
And others call it God.

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# Spirit & Spirituality

There will be no S & S on July 10<sup>th</sup> instead we'll have an informal gathering at 6:00 pm at: 3-Keys Brewing  
2505 Mantee Ave. E., Bradenton  
Join us for some good food, drink  
SEE YOU THERE !

**BABY NEEDS !** The Manatee County Food Bank is assembling emergency baby baskets with critical care items for infants and toddlers in need. With your help, they will be successful in helping many families. Here is a list of needed items You can drop off your donations in the big yellow bucket in the Narthex.

**Emergency Baby Baskets** contain critical care items for infants and toddlers in need.

## Critically Needed Items

- Diapers (Sizes Newborn to 7)
- Infant Formula
- Nighttime Potty-Training Pants (Good Nights or Pull-ups)
- Baby Wipes
- Baby Cereal/Baby Food
- Sippy Cups
- Baby Bottles
- Pacifiers
- Burp Cloths
- Bibs



## A BIG THANK YOU !

Thanks to my friends at Faith for the calls, e-mails, cards, prayers and positive thoughts during my recent illness. Special thanks to Ron Serfas. I truly appreciate your kindness.

Blessings, *Sheryl Overheidt-Smith*

## SCRIPTURE READERS

If you would like to be on the scripture reader team, please let us know! It is an easy and accessible way to participate in your church worship and serving in God's house. You can sign up on the sheet in the Narthex or by emailing:

[faithchurchucc@verizon.net](mailto:faithchurchucc@verizon.net)

Scripture still Needed for:  
JULY 7, 14, 21, & 28

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**  
7/29 – Cheryl Thomas

## SAM (Social Action and Missions):

Our **Strengthen the Church** donations in May totaled: ?????  
Thanks to all who dug deep and helped make this possible.  
Our next "Five for Five" collection will be in October for **Neighbors in Need**.

## JULY: CEREAL.

The Food Bank is asking for our help  
**PICK UP** - We will be happy to come to your home and pick up your items! (call Babs at 747-9643).  
**DROP OFF** - You may wish to deliver to church during office hours. Mon.-Fri. 10:00-2:00 or bring it with you to worship.  
**SHIPPED** - 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

Funds are always needed so you may wish to send contributions directly to Meals On Wheels at 811 23rd Avenue East, Bradenton 34208. And through the link to the right:



**Meals on Wheels PLUS**  
OF MANATEE



**THE FOOD BANK**  
OF MANATEE

### CRITICALLY NEEDED ITEMS

- CANNED VEGETABLES
- CANNED FRUITS
- MAC 'N' CHEESE
- PEANUT BUTTER
- JELLY
- BOXED RICE
- BOXED PASTA
- CANNED SOUPS

- CANNED MEAT
- 100% FRUIT JUICES
- BREAKFAST BARS
- OATMEAL
- POWDERED MILK
- APPLESAUCE
- DRIED BEANS
- TRAIL MIX

*Donations can be dropped off or shipped directly to:*  
**Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee**  
811 23rd Avenue East, Bradenton, FL 34208

**Pastor Joe** is looking for pictures of church events, happenings, and people that can be used on our website that we are looking to update and give a face lift to. If you have any such pictures please email them to the church email at: [faithchurchucc@verizon.net](mailto:faithchurchucc@verizon.net)

**MAURADERS** – JULY 13<sup>th</sup> - Take me out to the ball game..... Sign-up in the narthex Sunday or email your reservation to the church to join a group from Faith UCC to attend Pride Night at the Mauraders ball game. Come celebrate and honor the LGBTQ+ community for a pregame Pride Parade and to check out the variety of displays on the Plaza. Gates open at 5:30. Tickets are \$15 and with that comes a hat and a soda. What a deal! Also, don't say I told you, but Rev. Joe is gonna have a special shirt on you won't want to miss.



**Narcotics Anonymous** – Meets at Faith United Church of Christ every Thursday at 7:15 pm and Saturday at 10:15 am. Brochures are available on the bulleting board In the church narthex or you may log on to <http://sucoastNA.org> for other local meeting locations, times and maps in the area.

# JULY 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom  7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	5 7-9pm Prayer Mtg BAC	6 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
7 10:30am Service <b>Communion</b>  2:30pm BAC	8 5:30pm Braden River Lakes HOA	9 6pm San Casciano HOA- Back room	10 Spirits and Spirituality 6pm – 3 Keys Brewing Bradenton 6:00pm  7pm BAC service	11 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom  7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	12	13 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
14 10:30am Service  2:30pm BAC	15 6:15 Inlets HOA  No Council Meeting	16	17 7pm BAC service	18	19 7-9pm Prayer Mtg BAC	20 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
21 10:30am Service  2:30pm BAC	22	23	24 7pm BAC service	25 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom  7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	26 7-9pm Prayer Mtg BAC  <b>FOLLOWER DEADLINE</b>	27 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
28 10:30am Service 2:30pm BAC	29	30	31 7pm BAC service			<b>BAC= Bradenton Apostolic Church</b>