

June 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
2 10:30am Service- Communion 2:30pm BAC	3	4	5 7pm BAC service	6 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom 7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	7 7-9pm Prayer Mtg BAC	8 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
9 10:30am Service 2:30pm BAC	10 Braden River Lakes HOA 5:30pm	11	12 Spirits and Spirituality 6pm – Beef O’ Brady’s LWR 7pm BAC service	13 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom 7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	14 7-9pm Prayer Mtg BAC	15 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
16 10:30am Service 2:30pm BAC	17 6:45pm Council Meeting	18	19 7pm BAC service	20 Riverpointe HOA 6pm 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom 7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	21 FOLLOWER DEADLINE 7-9pm Prayer Mtg BAC	22 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
23 10:30am Service 2:30pm BAC	24 Inlets HOA 6:15pm	25	26 7pm BAC service	27	28 7-9pm Prayer Mtg BAC	29
30 10:30am Service 2:30pm BAC						

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

6/6 – Judy Cramer
6/15 – Marge Kirchner

Faithful Follower

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

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| faithchurchucc.com



JUNE 2024

A Word from Pastor Joe:



June is LGBTQ+ Pride Month. As an openly Gay Minister who has been on the frontlines as openly gay since 1981, this month means a lot to me and to the church. So I thought I would include a bit of History. “June 28, 1969 marks the beginning of the Stonewall Uprising, a series of events between police and LGBTQ+ protesters which stretched over six days. It was not the first time police raided a gay bar, and it was not the first time LGBTQ+ people fought back, but the events that would unfold over the next six days would fundamentally change the discourse surrounding LGBTQ+ activism in the United States. While Stonewall became well known due to the media coverage and the subsequent annual Pride traditions, it was a culmination of years of LGBTQ+ activism. Historians have noted that the shift in activism, if Stonewall truly represented one at all, was a shift primarily for white cisgender people, as people of color and gender non-conforming people never truly had the benefit of concealing their marginalized identities.”¹

“The first national UCC body to affirm civil rights for LGBTQ people did so in 1969. The Council for Christian Social Action, a predecessor body to Justice and Witness Ministries adopted the “Resolution on Homosexuals and the Law.” In 1972, the UCC ordained the first openly gay person into ministry, the Rev. William R. Johnson. In 1985, the UCC’s General Synod declared itself to be “open and affirming” and called upon all settings of the church to become similarly poised to welcome LGBTQ persons as full members of the church. Click here for a timeline. Although not everyone in the UCC is of the same mind concerning human sexuality*, the Open and Affirming (ONA) movement for full inclusion of LGBTQ persons continues to spread throughout all

witness of UCC as we live out the UCC mission to love all, welcome all, and seek justice for all.”¹ As I start my outreach and building relationships for this congregation I start where the church stands and then I reach out to what I know and from there expand outward. So I started to get to know members of our community at a primetimers meeting. A group that serves openly gay seniors. I seek out pride celebrations and opportunities for us to reach out that way. I heard that some people fear we might become a “Gay Church”. I hear and appreciate the concern.

“Won’t we become a “gay church?””

Unlikely. There are less than 50 ONA churches with primarily LGBTQ+ membership—out of nearly 2,000 ONA congregations in the United Church of Christ. When ONA churches publicize their welcome effectively, new members include both LGBTQ+ seekers as well as allies. Young heterosexual couples who are looking for a church with the values of an ONA covenant are typically part of the growth curve for new ONA churches.¹

I do encourage us to be more visible to the LGTBQ community. I encourage us to more responsive to our disabled brothers and sisters. I encourage us to be better stewards to the earth and her care. I encourage us to become a W.I.S.E. congregation. “A WISE congregation/organization has joined the mission to being Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged in the Mental Health of the community and the wider world.”¹

Now this all may seem like a lot but we will move slowly and intentionally into rebuilding our congregation and our community connections.

Blessings and Happy pride Month!

Blessings,
Pastor Joe

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

S.T.R.E.A.M.

Stronger
Together
Reaching
Equality
Across
Manatee

is what **STREAM** stands for. Its concentration is to promote projects to do just that. We are in year three of **STREAM** and with 14 other churches, **STREAM** is building on success. Over the first two years **STREAM** was able to get Manatee County Commission funding for several hundred units of affordable housing in. We also got support and a commitment to a new law enforcement approach to first offenders of minor offenses to avoid the life-long punishment of having an arrest on your record. This year's projects are two: First to get the Manatee County law enforcement agencies to fulfill their commitment and use the new diversion to civil citations much more than the rare frequency it was used in 2023. The second project is the pursuit of improving Mental Health services for underprivileged in the County. Stay tuned for more information about future meetings and ways you may become involved.



Spirit & Spirituality

Don't forget to join us on June

12th at 6:00 pm for Spirits &

Spirituality at:

Beef O'Brady's

1795 Lakewood Ranch Blvd.

Bradenton

Join us for some good food, drink
and lively discussion!

SEE YOU THERE !

June Reflections

By Rev. Sylvia Hull, Worship Leader

If any of you are like me, then I have to assume that the evening news weighs you down; weighs heavy on your heart, your mind, and your soul. I have become numb to the scenes in Ukraine, in Palestine, in Haiti, and dozens (if not hundreds) of other places around the globe that are mired in war. I turn away from scenes in which emaciated children are waiting in line for a cup of rice; where grief-stricken women are sobbing beside the dead bodies of husbands and children; where preventable diseases are ravaging entire communities; where people are born, live, and die in midst of civil war never, not once, knowing what peace looks or feels like. And then we hear from the environmentalists, and we are reminded that the globe is heating up, the glaciers and ice caps are melting, Arctic wildlife is dying. Every day we lose another species of plant, sea, and animal life all because we have raped and plundered Mother Earth. If we allow it, all of this can, and will, suck the very life out of us. But we mustn't let this happen! If we do our part by standing up for peace in our communities; by voting for leaders who have peace as a platform; by making our voices heard in whatever way we are able; by becoming better stewards of the environment, we can restore our hope and replenish our depleted souls.

June is Pride Month and as I was searching for something among my library of books, I came across one of my favorite spiritual reads: "Fresh Bread" by Joyce Rupp. Each chapter of the book is dedicated to a month of the year. She opens the chapter for June with this poem, appropriate on so many levels for times such as these.

A strong rainbow pours itself out, bending the
eastern sky with glory.

It brings with it a powerful beauty to soothe my
needy heart with hope.

And I do believe I hear the sun wild with wonder
and rejoicing,

Laughing at the once –darkened sky now parted in
colored splendor.

I remember then the One who came, who broke our
stormy dark apart,

And shook despairing hearts with hope;

This one told truth of things beyond and gave us
more than gold.

This rainbow filling late-June sky touches more
than just the earth;

It makes its mark within my deep and lets my heart
look up in hope.

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

SAM
(Social Action and Missions):
MAY: CEREAL.

The Food Bank is asking for our help by helping with cereal for May.

With school letting out the emphasis is on getting cereal to children who will not be getting meals at school.

PICK UP - We will be happy to come to your 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:



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

Scripture still Needed for:
JUNE 16, 23, & 30

Readers Scheduled:
JUNE 2 – Pete Cohoon
JUNE 9 – Cheryl Thomas

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

6/6 – Judy Cramer
6/15 – Marge Kirchner




CRITICALLY NEEDED ITEMS

<input type="checkbox"/> CANNED VEGETABLES	<input type="checkbox"/> CANNED MEAT
<input type="checkbox"/> CANNED FRUITS	<input type="checkbox"/> 100% FRUIT JUICES
<input type="checkbox"/> MAC 'N' CHEESE	<input type="checkbox"/> BREAKFAST BARS
<input type="checkbox"/> PEANUT BUTTER	<input type="checkbox"/> OATMEAL
<input type="checkbox"/> JELLY	<input type="checkbox"/> POWDERED MILK
<input type="checkbox"/> BOXED RICE	<input type="checkbox"/> APPLESAUCE
<input type="checkbox"/> BOXED PASTA	<input type="checkbox"/> DRIED BEANS
<input type="checkbox"/> CANNED SOUPS	<input type="checkbox"/> TRAIL MIX

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

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

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



MAURADERS – JULY 13th - 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.