

FAITHFUL FOLLOWER

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

| 941-746-8890

| faithchurchucc.com



A WORD FROM PASTOR JOE...

This article appeared in the Sunshine connection in 2022

Why A Season of Creation?

The Season of Creation is a time to explore themes on God as Creator in our Sunday worship. Our liturgical seasons focus on incarnation of the Christ, his ministry, redemption and the sanctification of the church by the Spirit. But generally, the lectionary cycle spends a minimal amount time on creation.

While the focus of liturgical seasons has been useful, they run the danger of partitioning Creation, Redemption, and Salvation in the minds of our congregants. It is perhaps a healthier approach to comprehend the act of creation as one act of divine gracious love with the intention of the flow of Creation through Incarnation towards Salvation. Such a theological/biblical shift of perspective, however, places in relief the grace dimensions of Creation, Incarnation, and Salvation.

It recovers Creation not only as an event in the past but also an on-going creative process guided by the Spirit and moving towards an intended conclusion of salvation. It places the creation as an original blessing. For too long, western Protestant and Catholic theologies have started from original sin rather than original grace. They concentrate on the negative, human sinfulness, rather than the grace of God. Beginning with grace rather than sin is healthier for our spiritual formation and progress in Christian discipleship. Celtic and Orthodox Christians have preserved such a theological context of the priority of God's

grace, and only in the 20th century did such a perspective take root in Protestant and Catholic theologies.

The Season of Creation turns our liturgical attention to God's relationship with all creation and with our relationship with creation. Through worship, we renew and restore a crucial relationship with God's creation at time of climate urgency. Our Environmental Justice Minister, Rev. Brooks Berndt, has authored a short book *Cathedral on Fire*, arguing that there is a Kairos urgency and opportunity to equip our churches for climate. He and the Environmental Justice Council have promoted the Creation Justice Movement to start the process of transforming our church to meet the escalating climate change impacting our world.ⁱ One of the initial steps is "greening our worship and theology," and the celebration of the Season of Creation in the right direction.

At this step, we need to use our worship to ask serious questions: "How can your congregation intentionally reflect upon God in relationship to caring for creation? How can it bring theological understandings of creation care and justice into its' services of worship?" Such worship re-orient us to the natural world, and this aims at a fundamental shift of orientation that can be carried forward at least one season in each of the liturgical seasons of the year. The goal is ecological conversion: a radical change of consciousness. Feminist theologian Elizabeth Johnson writes, "Ecological conversion means falling in love with the Earth as inherently valuable. Living community in which we participate and bending every effort to be creatively faithful to its well-being and cherish it with unconditional love." (Ask the Beasts)

Our ecological conversion starts with our worship and learning to pray with nature and discover the Spirit's presence. This is meant to give us a foretaste of creation redeemed and reconciled. It intends to foster creation-centered practices, educational programs, networking with the National Environmental Justice Council, and your own Conference Environmental Justice Team, and local environmental organizations such as the Sierra Club or 350, org, and so on:

September 1ST - *A World Day of Prayer for Creation*

Also, First Sunday of the Season of Creation (2024)

September 8th - Second Sunday of the season of Creation; "*Take Your Share*"

September 15th - Third Sunday Season of Creation; "*Clean Up After Yourself*"

September 22nd - Fourth Sunday of Season of Creation;

“Keep the house in Repair for the Future”

September 29th - Fifth Sunday of Creation; **“What a Beautiful World!”**

October 6th - We celebrate the **Feast of St Francis**...weather permitting outdoor service including a blessing of the animals.



NEW DISCUSSION GROUP ON SUNDAY MORNINGS





Rev. Dr. Bob Shore-Goss will lead a 5 WEEK discussion group of the following book for the five Sundays of the Season of Creation, starting September 1st, the Day of Prayer for Creation. For anyone needing large print, we will make an enlarged copy for each week.

9:45 AM -10:15 AM on the five Sundays of September.

Cathedral On Fire: Church Handbook for the Climate Crisis.

Rev. Dr. Brooks Berndt, UCC Environmental Justice Minister

The urgency of the climate crisis requires that we act as if our cathedrals and churches are on fire. Indeed, God's creation can be seen as one grand cathedral on fire with burning forests and rising temperatures. Amid the dire situation Brooks Berndt focuses our attention on the unique and vitally needed gifts that churches can offer. He writes with poetic passion but also with an eye toward the practical as every chapter ends with suggested, field-tested actions. The book is the ultimate guide to informing and inspiring church members to act.

Copies of \$6 per book. Sign-up in the Narthex.



PASTOR JOE TO ATTEND ONA GATHERING

Pastor Joe will be representing Faith UCC at the ONA Gathering in Cincinnati the last week of September 18-22. ONA is the Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ. They will come together under the theme "Resistance and Persistence: Hope Reigns". Topics and themes covered include Community Organizing and Advocacy, Self-Care/Self Love and Healing, Worship and Spiritual Practices, Pushing Back Against White Nationalism, and more!

While gone Rev. John Eley, (317)445-7222, is available as well as Rev. Dr. Bob Shore-Goss (818)731-8348, for any emergencies. Pastor Joe will be accessible via text and phone as well.



Back to School for Faith Preschool.....



The teachers and I are preparing for the upcoming school year, and we are kicking off the year with a 'Meet and Greet' for both classes. The Three's class will have theirs on Wednesday, August 28th, from 9:00 - 10:00 am, and the VPK class has theirs on

Thursday, August 29th, from 9:30 - 10:30 am. This event will allow the children, parents, and teachers to meet and get to know each other before preschool starts. Preschool begins on Tuesday, September 3, 2024. We're all looking forward to another wonderful year!"



Wendi McKeithen
Faith Preschool Director



PRAY FOR OUR TEACHERS

by Rev. John S. Eley

When I was a kid, just a few years back in Ohio, school never began until after Labor Day and it ended first week in June. The summer break went on for, what seemed to a kid to be eternity. I looked forward to going back to school, seeing friends again I had not seen all summer, getting some new clothes, and new school supplies. The classroom always smelled so fresh and clean, almost as if it were brand new. Mrs. Fisher, whose husband had a gladiolus farm, had beautiful bouquets of glad's in our 6th grade classroom.

When I was Chaplain at the Franklin United Methodist Community in Indiana, together along with the activity departments, we planned a "Back to School" theme for the month of September. The first week we delved into Elementary school, week two we went to Jr. High, week three was back to High School and week 4 we graduated to college week.

We visited some of the local schools, had lunch in the cafeteria, and sat in on a college class on Astronomy. Residents were amazed at how much the educational system had changed since they were in school, some of them having been teachers. With the advent of computers, we were enthralled with how children learn today, as opposed to the books we studied and carried that had a log inside the front cover with the name of everyone who had used that book in the past. Now days, (I'm sounding like an old person here) kids carry chrome books and laptops and have access to more information than we ever dreamed of having. It's all on the internet, no longer in the "World Book", or "Compton's" encyclopedia. If you're too young to know what that is, just Google it. I'm sure it will be there amid zillions of other tidbits of information.

Even though the way we learn has evolved, one thing that remains constant and unchanged is the relationship between the teacher and student. How many times have you heard a successful person tell the story of how influential a particular teacher was in that person's life that truly made a difference, and in some cases changed the course of history? How very important those relationships are in motivating, encouraging, and teaching good values and morality. Teacher's need our support and prayers as they begin a new school year, and they build those relationships and mentor our young people today. As the Church we can be that support and vigilant always in prayer for those teachers and students as they work together to build a better tomorrow.

SCRIPTURE READERS NEEDED

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:

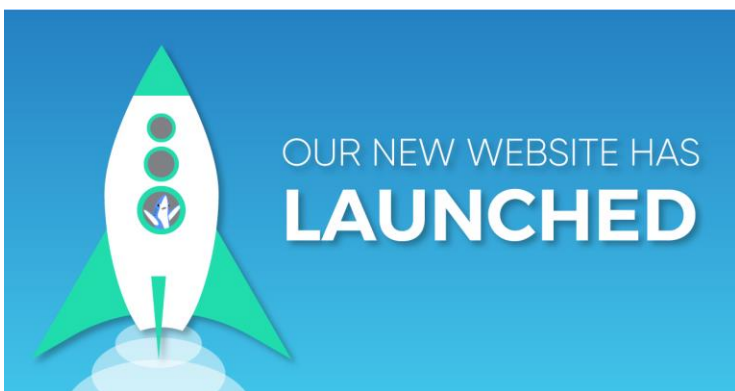
faithchurchucc@verizon.net

Scripture Readers still Needed for:

September 1, 8, 15, 22, 29,



CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE



Pastor Joe has been working hard to give our website a facelift and getting it up to date. Get online and check it out. It's looking good. We can still use pictures of church events, happenings, and people that can be used on our website to keep it changing, renewed and updated. So if you take such pictures please email them to the church email at: faithchurchucc@verizon.net



Spirit & Spirituality



Will be September 11 - 6:00 p.m. at

Beef O'Brady's

1795 Lakewood Ranch Blvd. Bradenton

Join us for some good food, drink & conversation
SEE YOU THERE !



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

BABY NEEDS !

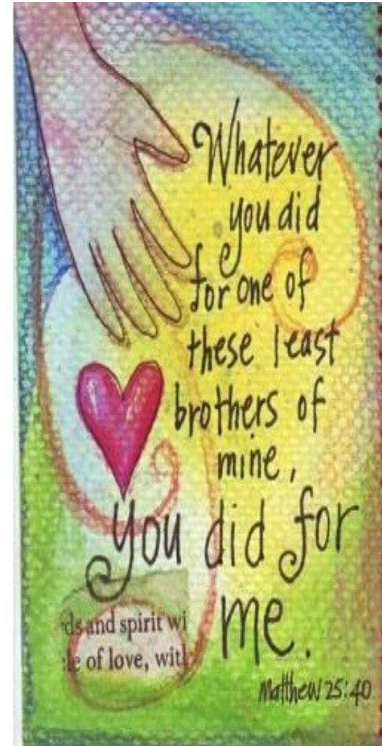
The Manatee County Food Bank is assembling emergency baby baskets with critical care items for infants and toddlers in need. With your help, they will be successful in helping many families. Here is a list of needed items You can drop off your donations in the big yellow bucket in the Narthex.




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



9/20 Anita Porter

9/29 Bob Cox



SEPTEMBER FOOD BANK.....JUICES

Our Food Bank collection for September is Juices. So, pick up an extra pack of juice boxes, cans or bottles and bring it to worship on Sunday

PICK UP - We will be happy to come to your home and pick up your items! (call Babs at 941-747-9643).

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.

You can also send donations direct through this link:

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



Nacotics 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.

PRAYER REQUESTS



If you have a prayer request, please let us know. You may fill out a prayer request form and place it in the offering plate on Sunday, or you may contact a prayer team member, send an email at: faithchurchucc@verison.net , or call the church office at 941-746-8890. Pastor Joe and the Prayer Team want to join with you in praying for your needs.

Please join the Faith Care and Prayer Team in praying for the following:

- Richard Nutting – Recovering from surgery and expects it to be a lengthy recovery. Pray too for his wife, Earleen.
- Richard Dilts – Recovering from hip surgery.
- Joan Sheehan & Marge Kirchner are both In rehab at:
Westminster Rehab
320 15th St., Court West
Bradenton
941-747-1881
Joan - Room 315B / Marge – Room #320A


Joan continues to recover from recent surgery and battling macular degeneration and chronic pain.

- Marge Kirchner – Is in for rehab.
- Pat Landry

**Please join the Care and Prayer Team
in praying for the following local and global concerns:**


- People of India
- Men & women serving in the armed services.


- Our brothers & sisters in conflicts in Ukraine, Israel & Palestine
www.globalministries.org




Manatee County
Habitat for Humanity®

Viviana's Home Dedication

 **THURSDAY
12 SEPTEMBER**

 **4:30 PM**

**1092 32nd Ave E,
Bradenton, Florida
34208**



*Faith UCC has a long history of supporting our local Habitat for Humanity with our donations of time and money.
We have been invited to attend their most recent build with the following invitation:*

***We'd love to have you and members of your congregation join us for our 2024
Faith Build House Dedication!***

SEPTEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 10:30am Service- Communion 2:30pm BAC	2	3	4 7pm BAC service	5 2:00-4:00 Inlets HOA-Mtg Rm. 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in SS Rm. 7:30pm NA- MP Rm.	6 7-9pm Prayer Mtg BAC	7 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
8 10:30am Service 2:30pm BAC	9 Braden River Lakes HOA 5:30pm	10	11 Spirits and Spirituality 6pm – Beef O’ Brady’s LWR 7pm BAC service	12 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom 7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	13 7-9pm Prayer Mtg BAC	14 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
15 10:30am Service 2:30pm BAC	16 6:45pm Council Meeting	17	18 7pm BAC service	19 Riverpointe HOA 6pm 6:30pm-8:15pm NarAnon- in Sunday School Classroom 7:30pm NA- in multipurpose room	20 FOLLOWER DEADLINE 7-9pm Prayer Mtg BAC	21 10:15am NA- in multipurpose room
22 10:30am Service 2:30pm BAC	23 Inlets HOA 6:15pm	24	25 7pm BAC service	26	27 7-9pm Prayer Mtg BAC	28
29 10:30am Service 2:30pm BAC	30		HAPPY BIRTHDAY 9/20 – Anita Porter 9/29 – Bob Cox			
