



# *HOPE United Church of Christ*

## *January 2021*

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*Submissions for publication may be sent to the Church Office at the above addresses, either electronically or by paper.*



## The Reverend's Reflection

Happy New Year and Merry Epiphany! The word epiphany means a flash of insight, a showing or revelation. Epiphany is also the church holiday when we celebrate the revelation of the wisemen who followed the star that led them to Jesus. For the last two years the congregation started a tradition of picking a Star Word or a Star Gift on Epiphany Sunday.

What Are Star Words? The use of star words, also called “star gifts,” is a prayer practice connected to Epiphany and the new year that has been growing in popularity in Protestant churches for nearly a decade now. The idea is that a list of intention words, or guiding words, are written or printed on paper. Last year we passed around a basket full of stars for each person to pick one. This year we are mailing one to you. If you don't receive your star word, be sure to contact the office and we will resend it. I believe that the Holy Spirit has given you the perfect word as a guide and message for the new year. I encourage you to place your star word someplace where you will see it regularly throughout the year to allow consistent reflection on how God has moved through, around, or in connection to that word. What message is God revealing to you through this word?

Here are a few ideas of how to use your star word for daily prayer:

- Look up the definition of your word, even if it is a word you know well. You may even look into the etymology of the word and how its meaning has changed throughout history. If you drew a non-English word, do as much research as you can into the meaning of the word in its original culture.
- What does this word remind you of? Does it recall any memories or experiences? How might God be speaking to you through this word?
- See if you can find your word—or a synonym—in the Bible. What scripture passages can you find? How is the word used in these passages? Are there other scripture passages that remind you of your word?
- Write or speak aloud a prayer using your word. (This is a fun challenge for children using the star words.)

The Magi followed a star, which ultimately led them to Jesus. May your star word also lead you to Jesus and to feel closer to God. May 2021 be full of inspiration, blessings and love!

I wish you many blessings in the new year!

In H.O.P.E,

Rev. Karen Curtis-Weakley



## Hope UCC Hygiene Product Drive for Brevard Students

The Growth and Development Committee is once again sponsoring a Hygiene Product Drive for Brevard's low income and homeless students. The Brevard Supply Zone has been distributing hygiene kits to students from the 30 highest-poverty schools across Brevard. Their stock of hygiene products is quickly depleting and they are struggling to keep up with the demand.

If you are able to help with a donation, it will be most appreciated.

When: Donations may be placed in the marked bin in the narthex from January 11 – 23, 2021

**Or**

Drive through drop-off in the church's circle on Saturday January 23, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12 noon

What: Most needed supplies for boys and girls, ages 3-18:  
Deodorant                      Cleansing Wipes                      Shampoo  
Soap/Body wash              Toothbrushes                      Toothpaste  
Floss                      New Underwear                      Hairbrushes/combs  
Feminine Hygiene Products

Contact Betty Capaldo for further information.  
Thank you for considering this request!

## **Sharing our Best**

Thank you to all who participated in our out door bake sale, Christmas cottage sale, yard sale, and blood drive on December 12.

Collectively Hope UCC made over \$2,700.00 for our general fund, and the 9 pints of blood donated will save 27 lives.

Thank you, too, for the successful drop off food collection for the Central Brevard Sharing Center on December 19. Hope UCC collected 480 non perishable food items and over \$200.00 to donate to the CBSC.

These events involved both our church and our community, and we are blessed to be a blessing.

Happy New Year from your Church Growth and Development Committee!



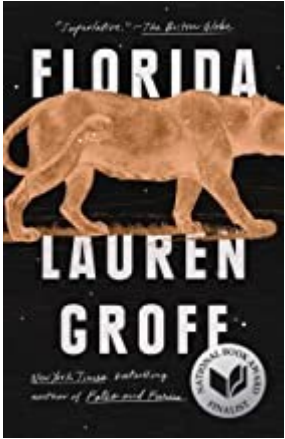
## **Children's Holiday Activity Packets**

The Christian Ed. Committee had put together activity packets for the families of our younger youth and their siblings. Within the packets were games, recipes, color sheets, the nativity story, and crafts. The packets were hand delivered or mailed during the first week of advent.

We hope that all of the children had a fun time with their families while working on these activities. Keep an eye/ear open to learn of other plans in the coming year.



## Book Club January 2021



Florida, by Lauren Groff, is Hope Book Club's selection for January. The book is a collection of 11 short stories linked by common themes and its characters' relationship to the state for which it is named. The collection conjures that familiar, everyday life dangles by a thin string.

Representative characters include two young girls abandoned on a fishing island, a student living out of her car, a traveler caught in a storm, a woman hunkering down during a hurricane, a man stuck on a canoe.

Groff uses language indigenous to "Florida." The lit windows of neighbors are "domestic aquariums." An oak's branches "are so heavy they grow toward the ground then touch and grow upward again; and thus, elbowing itself up," the tree "brings to mind a woman at the kitchen table, knuckling her chin."

If you would like to start 2021 with interesting reading that will expand your horizons, please explore the book, Florida, and join our virtual discussion on Tuesday, January 26th at 1:30 pm. Watch for the zoom invitation which will be posted in the church email the week before the meeting.



### HOPE Book Club Reading List 2021

January	<u><i>Florida (Short Stories) - Lauren Groff</i></u>
February	<u>Radical Compassion: learning to love yourself and the world with the practice of RAIN - Tara Branch</u>
March	<u>Mother Country - Irina Reyn</u>
April	<u>The Twenty-something Soul: understanding the religious and secular lives of American young adults</u> <i>Tim Clydesdale and Kathleen Garces-Foley</i>
May	<u>Just Mercy - Bryan Stevenson</u>



- 1/3 - Communion Worship  
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**
- 1/10 - Worship  
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**
- 1/17 - Worship  
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**
- 1/24 - Worship  
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**
- 1/31 - Worship  
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**

**Committees are meeting remotely throughout the month.**

**Happy Seekers**

Fridays at 10:00 am  
Zoom Meeting No. 916 6472 2064

**Coffee Hour**

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 am  
Zoom Mtg. No. 425 599 5598

**Theology on Tap**

Wednesdays at 6:00 pm  
Zoom Mtg. No. 815 9776 7294



- 1/1 - Ron & Abby Holmes' Anniversary  
1/6 - Charlie Pierron's Birthday  
1/17 - Roy Ordway's Birthday  
1/20 - Janet Fondriest's Birthday  
1/26 - Dave Cadmus' Birthday  
1/28 - Maggie Almaguer's Birthday

Hello,  
I wanted to send a thank you note for the items for my classroom from the beginning of the school year. The students use the sensory tools daily and I am happy to be able to have bought curriculum for social skills and life skills! I appreciate all the support the church provided to me in terms of cleaning products and school supplies to my "kids" in my classroom and for Adeline and Giaus at home!

Larney Garcia



***UCC Florida Conference  
and Celebrate Florida***

Please use these links for the United Church of Christ Florida Conference and the Conference "Celebrate Florida" Newsletter

UCC Florida Conference - <https://www.uccfla.org>

Celebrate Florida Newsletter - <http://www.uccfla.org/celebrateflorida>