



# *Tidings of Hope*



## *HOPE United Church of Christ June 2021*



*Tidings of Hope* published monthly by: **Hope United Church of Christ**  
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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



“Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me!”

I don't know the origins of that playground taunt, but I do know that it's a lie. It is true that sticks and stones may cause physical harm, but words also cause damage. There may not be a need for stitches or a cast, but the wounds caused by words are deep and festering.

For example, since I was the shortest person in my class and my last name created a convenient pun, I was called “Weakling” and I was always picked last for the kickball team. I felt inadequate, insignificant, and rejected. “What if I'm never strong enough or tall enough or good enough?” I carry those scars to this day.

Words matter. Language matters. When we use the word *men* to mean *all people*, it discounts and excludes women. Women become invisible, insignificant and secondary. When we refer to God as masculine, we negate the feminine. If God is male, female becomes other, foreign and less than. In the United Church of Christ, we are committed to being inclusive and honoring all humanity. Reuben A. Sheares, II of the UCC Church Office of Life and Leadership says it this way:

Inclusive language is far more than an aesthetic matter of male and female imagery; it is a fundamental issue of social justice... It shows respect for all people. Scripture proclaims the world is created, redeemed, and sustained by the Word of God, and the church attests to the power of language and words, recognizing that words have the power to exploit and exclude as well as affirm and liberate.

In 1993 The United Church of Christ developed an Inclusive Language Covenant that could be used in local churches. If you would like to read about it, use this link:

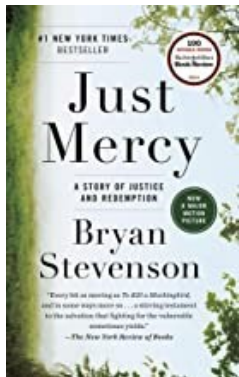
<https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/inclusive-language-covenant.pdf>

If you would like to see some examples of language that excludes and language that includes as well as some Inclusive Bible translations, click this link:

<https://www.ucc.org/inclusive-language-with-reference-to-the-people-of-god/>

The next time you wonder why the old familiar language of a hymn has been changed, remember that we are affirming God's creation of a just world. No longer is the generic use of masculine terms an acceptable practice. We are the body of Christ in all its diversity. Everyone gets picked for this kick-ball team!

## **Book Club - May 2021**



The May Book Club Meeting has been changed to June 15th. The Book Club will read and discuss *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*, by Bryan Stevenson. This is a true story written by the founder of Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama and it recounts his experiences as a lawyer working to assist those desperately in need.

In this book, Bryan Stevenson, world-renowned civil rights defense attorney, works to free a wrongly condemned death row prisoner. After graduating from Harvard, Bryan might have had his pick of lucrative jobs. Instead, he heads to Alabama to defend those wrongly condemned. One of his first, and most incendiary, cases is that of Walter McMillian who, in 1987, was sentenced to die for the murder of an 18-year-old girl, despite a preponderance of evidence proving his innocence.

In addition to reviewing this inspiring book, the Hope Book Club will discuss book selections for next year and choose monthly readings for meetings resuming in the fall.

We hope you will join us and help determine readings for next year. Our meeting will be on zoom, Meeting ID: 854 4236 5460, on Tuesday, June 15th at 1:30.





## **Pastoral Relations Committee**

### **Behavioral Covenant Overview**

One of the responsibilities of the Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) is to maintain and promote a healthy, harmonious relationship between the pastor and the congregation. We recognize how important it is for a congregation to have honest, direct communication with each other and with the pastor. The PRC reviewed a UCC resource called “A Sure Foundation” in which behavioral covenants for congregations were explored and discussed. We felt that having such a document for Hope UCC would be beneficial. We presented the Hope UCC Behavioral Covenant to the Church Council for review and received its approval. The Church Council saw the value in this document which highlights how we, as a congregation, name our values for interpersonal relationships, communications and conflict. By naming these values, we announce and support what we describe as behavioral norms for personal interactions, meetings, communication via email/social media, etc. A behavioral covenant’s strength comes from the congregation’s willingness to hold each other accountable to the covenant. If someone behaves contrary to the covenant, the church leadership is able to refer back to this document to reinforce desirable behavior and to mutually create a plan for reconciliation.

PRC and the Church Council recognize that in most instances congregants treat each other with respect and kindness. We have an expectation that all of us will observe the boundaries of appropriate behavior and look to resolve conflict with grace and fairness. It is the intent that the Hope UCC Behavioral Covenant will provide a tool for us to communicate with shared values and to help work through those times when a challenging decision needs to be made by promoting the values we hold for the common good of our church community.

The Hope UCC Behavioral Covenant will be shared through *The Tidings* newsletter, will be posted in the narthex and meeting rooms and will be made available to committee representatives on the Church Council.

## **HOPE UCC BEHAVIORAL COVENANT**

Be fully present, extending and presuming welcome to and from others.

Listen generously and suspend judgment about another's story. Hold stories with care and respect.

Keep confidentiality.

Author your own story and share your own gifts.

Wonder. Ponder. Welcome discomfort. Love the questions and be receptive to them.

Be mindful and respectful of time.

Practice hospitality and inclusion, especially when diverse cultures meet. Appreciate the many ways of hearing God together.

Believe that it is possible to emerge from our time together refreshed, surprised, and less burdened than when we came.



### ***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>

## Sharing Our Best

On May 15, the Justice and Witness Committee of Hope United Church of Christ hosted a spring fling picnic celebration and dedication of our newly planted oak tree in honor of the three great loves: love of neighbor, love of children, and love of creation.



Our chefs grilled hotdogs, hamburgers, and veggie burgers, and our sous chefs took orders and prepared the plates.



People of Hope enjoyed food, fellowship, and fun on a beautiful Saturday afternoon.

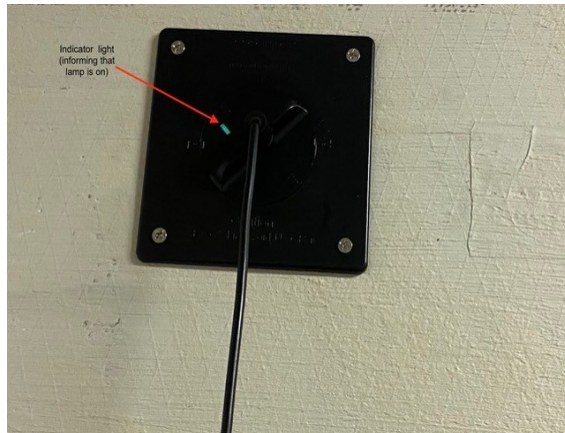


Our church family gathered outside as Rev. Karen Curtis-Weakley offered a prayer of dedication for our newly planted oak tree.



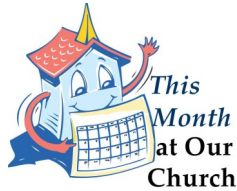
## Preparing The Church for July Re-Opening

**UVC lamps have been installed in all the AC units.  
The lamp kills 99% of all microorganisms floating in the air.**



## **Carpet Cleaning**





- 6/6 - Communion Worship  
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**
- 6/13 - Worship  
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**
- 6/20 - Worship  
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**
- 6/27 - Worship  
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**

**Drive Through Food Drop-Off**  
for Central Brevard Sharing Center  
June 9 & 12 - 9 am to 11 am

**Book Club**

June 15 - 1:30 pm  
Zoom Mtg. No. 854 4236 5460

**Ongoing Gatherings via Zoom**

**Happy Seekers**

Fridays at 10:00 am  
Zoom Mtg. No. 974 3773 0735

**Coffee Hour**

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 am  
Zoom Mtg. No. 321 636 0250  
(June 1 - 10)  
Zoom Mtg No. 425 599 559  
(June 15 - 30)

**Theology on Tap**

Wednesdays at 7:00 pm  
Zoom Mtg. No. 321 636 0250



- 6/4- Patti Champion's Birthday  
6/5 - Mark Johnson's Birthday  
6/5 - Diane Schnellhammer's  
    Birthday  
6/8 - Michael Elam's Birthday  
6/9 - Lizzett Ruiz's Birthday  
6/9 - Matt Brown's Birthday  
6/18 - Rev. William Flynn's  
    Birthday  
6/19 - Barbara Smith's Birthday  
6/20 - Bob & Pat Munchbach's  
    Anniversary  
6/20 - Kari Scheirer's Birthday  
6/25 - Karen Lehr's Birthday  
6/26 - Christian Cathcart's Birthday



**Hope UCC Ministry  
for the Sharing Center**

In May we collected 274 grocery items and food for the Sharing Center during our two days of drive through food drop-offs.

There will be another drive through food drop-off on June 9th & 12th from 9 am to 11 am