

Tidings of Hope



HOPE *United Church of Christ* *September 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 Reverends Reflection

As we move into the busy season of autumn, I wanted to pause and reflect on the gifts of the summer. Traditionally, summer is a time of rest, relaxation and vacation. While some of our committees took a break from regularly scheduled meetings, our worship services took a vacation from the lectionary calendar. We explored the 4 elements of Earth, Air, Water and Fire. As promised, here are some images that may not have been captured on Zoom. I am also including some prayers and meditations to feed your soul. May the gifts from the summer and the gifts from the elements remind you of our connection to creation, God and each other.

Earth as the Original Cathedral by *Christine Valters Paintner*

May you find sanctuary among trees and stones, and feel Earth preparing a place for you to sit and breathe and be. Let the long limbs of branches form a canopy above your head, let the hills open up a place for you to soar. May the stones form an altar and see how the sun makes everything shimmer and glisten so that everything shines forth from within. Let the tender vine climbing the trunk show you what it is to reach to the sky, let all the living creatures that gather, winged and four-footed ones, offer a new companionship.

All around you, see yourself as part of this glorious cathedral, the lake and holy wells are the fonts of baptism, the river rushes carrying gifts down from the mountains, the oaks and sycamore create a sacred circle, the face of the Creator incarnate and immanent illuminated with each gaze.

Feel the veil between heaven and earth slip away until you know this sanctuary of soil and sunlight, listen to the sky whisper her secrets on the wind, lifted by wings and song.





Pouring Out our Grief

Blessing of Fire

Spirit of Fire, You revealed yourself through the burning bush and the fiery courage of Pentecost.

Fiery Spirit, Source of all creative power, kindle your Holy Spark within me, breathe into me your Sacred Passion, fill me with your Flame until I have become fire, offering warmth and light to the world.



Spirit of Refining Fire, help me to release what no longer serves me to make room for your light to fill me.

Blessing of fire be upon me. May the light of God illuminate me and may the flame of love burn brightly in me. May I discover each day anew my own hidden fire and enter it fully.



Air—That which sustains us

Capital Campaign Update

At the beginning of August 2021, we reached the 2-year mark in our capital campaign. In July 2019, our church began a capital campaign called “Raise the Roof,” to replace monies borrowed from our investment fund. Back in July 2018 we voted to borrow money to replace the roof damaged by Hurricane Irma. We decided to “borrow” \$90,000 to replace the roof, purchase an electronic sign for the front of the church, and replace damaged gutters. We agreed at the 2018 meeting that we would replace what we borrowed by holding a capital campaign, to begin the next year. So we began the campaign in mid-2019 and we took in pledges for a 3-year period. Total pledges were \$85,995.00. We officially began getting contributions from the pledges in August 2019. Since then we have also received contributions from individuals who did not pledge.

To update you on the campaign at the 2-year mark, we have repaid \$50,000 and have received an additional \$7,800 towards the next \$10,000 payment. We still have 1 year to go on our campaign pledges and are making great strides toward reaching our goal. If you made a pledge to the capital campaign back in July 2019, remember that you still have 1 year left to complete your pledge. If you never made a pledge to the campaign, it is never too late. We invite anyone who did not pledge in 2019 to join us in repaying/replacing the funds used for repairing and updating the church facility.

Please let the church office know if you are interested in joining our capital campaign with a pledge for the remaining year, if you want to make a non-pledge contribution, or if you have any questions.

Announcing a September Capital Campaign Match

An anonymous donor has agreed to give up to a total of \$1,000 to match any donations to the Capital Campaign during the month of September.

So, for instance, if you give \$25, the anonymous donor will give an additional \$25 to the Capital Campaign; if you give \$100, the donor will give \$100, too. This is only for the month of September, and it is only for the first \$1,000 received, so the earlier you respond, the more likely your donation will be doubled. Let’s raise enough to reach the next \$10,000 repayment deposit.



Stewardship

Hope's Stewardship Committee is diligently working hard on our upcoming Pledge Campaign for 2022. Stay tuned for more coming your way soon. In the meantime, we wanted to share the following Daily Devotional from UCC's God is Still Speaking website.

Nobody Likes a Grumpy Giver by [Kaji Douša](#)

Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.
Deuteronomy 15:10 (NRSV)

Your pastor probably doesn't think they're so good at raising money.

Your pastor probably is expected to raise a whole lot of money.

Your pastor is likely to be terrified of raising money.

“Inspiring generosity” and “unleashing giving potential” sound lovely. And they are. Our spirits leap when we are generous and pastors love a leaping spirit, I think. Well, I do, anyway.

Leaping spirit gifts are a joy.

The tough ones are the gifts that land with a thud.

Picture the gift with a rope attached to it. *Bam!* The gift is given but can always be tugged away. If pastor preaches on that forbidden topic. If the musician doesn't play Ol' Rugged Cross every month. Or if the pastor *doesn't* preach on that required topic or if the musician plays the Ole' Rugged Cross one more time...

A checklist of requirements that accompanies giving becomes a cord around the heart, making it hard for a spirit to leap as we tether our giving to our expectations.

But gifts to the church are not for the pastor. They are for God.

My recommendation? Align with a community and then make your peace with it. Gifts aren't made to decisions, they are made to the place you have decided God is at work.

This brings cheer. If your gift makes you grumpy – are you in the right place?

Prayer

May my spirit leap as I think about your generosity, O God.
May my gifts do the same. Amen.

Moderator's Moment

The calendar and our stores would like us to believe it is Fall. Marketing would like us to believe Halloween is just around the corner and that those Halloween decorations we bought last year MUST be replaced by newer and better decorations. What we haven't been able to do physically (meeting with our friends, dining out, gathering in our church, having our potlucks), we should do by spending lots of money decorating our homes. While poking around Home Goods in Raleigh, NC recently I saw thousands of Halloween pillows, trolls, witches, serving dishes, glasses, wall hangings, blankets – all begging to be purchased. I thought of the dollars that could quickly add up if I was to purchase all those cute things. Yes, I wanted them, envisioned that pillow on my couch, the coffee mug used during Coffee Chat time, and the witches to scare any Trick or Treaters – oh, wait a minute the Trick or Treat was on me. We are again in the midst of a Covid Delta crisis here in FL. Trick or Treaters won't be coming to my door and the thought of having a party with lots of friends – well that could be life threatening. Hmmm, so I'm going to save my many dollars that I would have spent, use my last year's "adorable" decorations I purchased, and instead, give those saved dollars to Hope United Church of Christ. I think my church could use the money in such a better way, instead of my household being decorated in the latest spook deco's.

Stewardship Thoughts

This is the time in the life of our church when there are lots of things happening. We will begin with the Stewardship Campaign whereby the Stewardship Committee will be asking us all to consider what we can give to the church in the financial sense. We know the past nearly two years have occupied our minds with crisis, fear, uncertainty and have been very difficult for all of us. Thank goodness we have had our church family to depend on. Our church has helped so many people in so many ways. We have paid electric bills, we have given food, we have bonded together in love and prayer. Our church continued to give to all of us and to our community while cutting every church committees' budgets to ZERO.

It is now the time of year when we begin to think of how WE can HELP our CHURCH. What can we give financially to keep our church alive and doing well? We need to think about paying the church electric bills, paying our pastor, paying for the beautiful building improvements that are needed, paying for our staff who make our worship services "sing" and keep our office working.

Please, prayerfully consider if you can pledge just a little more this year. A little bit more from all of us will help Hope United Church of Christ journey through 2022 just a little bit easier. In gratitude for what Hope United Church of Christ does for each of us and for our community, I'm going to add a little bit to my pledge. Can you join me, please?

Nominating Committee Thoughts

Want to be involved? Here are our church committees and what they do in a few words. If you think you might have found something that interest you, contact me at mellgoff@aol.com . I'll be happy to speak with you further about any questions you may have about our committees.

Deacons – all things having to do with worship services, communions, altar decorations.

Trustees – all things to do with building/facility maintenance, financial oversight of spending

Pastoral Relations – Caring for Pastor Karen, caring for relationships between Pastor and Congregation

Growth & Development – all things to do with growing our congregation and visibility within our local community, special events, welcoming new guests and new members.

Christian Ed – all things to do with providing Christian education to our young and old congregation.

Justice & Witness – promoting ideals of justice for all and a witness of God's love.

Stewardship – Creating a budget for each church year.

Members-at-Large – Liaison between congregation and church Council. Training for further leadership positions.

Treasurer – Manages and controls the yearly budget of the church.

Clerk – Creates minutes of all church Council meetings

Assistant Moderator – Assists the Moderator and attends 2-3 Committee meetings per month

Moderator – Lay leader of the church, moderates all Council meetings.



HOPE Book Club Reading List 2021—2022

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| September | <u>Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents</u> - Isabel Wilkerson |
| October | <u>The Kindest Lie</u> - Nancy Johnson |
| November | <u>The Henna Artist</u> - Alka Joshi |
| January | <u>Leave the World Behind</u> - Alam Rumaan |
| February | <u>Stepping Forward: A Positive, Practical Path to Transform Our Communities And Our Lives</u> - Richard Harwood |
| March | <u>The Undocumented Americans: A Homecoming</u> Karla C. Villacencio |
| April | <u>One Night Two Souls Went Walking</u> - Ellen Cooney |
| May | <u>You'll Never Believe What Happened to Lacey: Crazy Stories About Racism</u> - Amber Ruffin and Lacey Lamar |

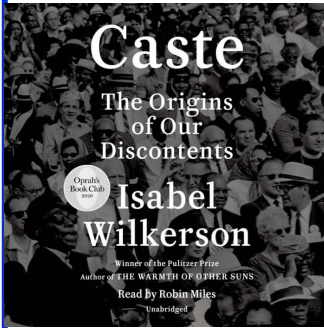


THANK
YOU

Dear Hope Church Family,

Thank you so much for all the donations to my new classroom. Each and every supply will be used by the students to get our year off to a great start. I'm so blessed to have such a thoughtful community in my life. Thank you again,
Courtney Bourque

Book Club September 2021



The first meeting for Hope UCC's Book Club this year will feature, Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson.

The Pulitzer Prize–winning, bestselling author of The Warmth of Other Suns examines the unspoken caste system that has shaped America and shows how our lives today are still defined by a hierarchy of human divisions.

Beyond race, class, or other factors, there is a powerful caste system that influences people's lives and behavior and the nation's fate. Linking the caste systems of America, India, and Nazi Germany, Wilkerson explores eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, including divine will, bloodlines, stigma, and more. Using riveting stories about people—including Martin Luther King, Jr., baseball's Satchel Paige, a single father and his toddler son, Wilkerson herself, and many others—she shows the ways that the insidious undertow of caste is experienced every day. She documents how the Nazis studied the racial systems in America to plan their out-cast of the Jews; she discusses why the cruel logic of caste requires that there be a bottom rung for those in the middle to measure themselves against; she writes about the surprising health costs of caste, in depression and life expectancy, and the effects of this hierarchy on our culture and politics. Finally, she points forward to ways America can move beyond the artificial and destructive separations of human divisions, toward hope in our common humanity.

We hope you will read Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents and join our discussion on Tuesday, September 28th at 1:30 on zoom.

The Book Club zoom meeting ID #: 84568682100.

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 From the Growth and Development Committee

Space Coast Pride Festival

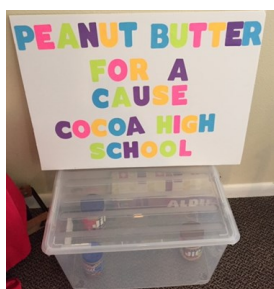
Although the directors of the annual Space Coast Pride parade and vendors' venues postponed the September 25th events due to the Covid 19 pandemic, our gift baskets for the free raffles are still on display in the church narthex, and we are receiving some very nice items for the movie, books, pet, beach, and spa baskets. We have also received monetary donations.

Currently, we are exploring ways to honor the LGBTQ community with these gift baskets and monetary donations considering the postponed Pride events. Stay tuned for an update.



Wheelbarrow Ministry

The August wheelbarrow ministry and food drive through drop off for the Central Brevard continue to bring blessings to our community. We received 174 non-perishable food items including several jars of peanut butter and paper products. We also received \$110.00 in monetary donations and checks for the CBSC. We also received items to donate to their thrift store. Please continue bringing non-perishable food items (no glass containers please) each Sunday to place in the wheelbarrow in the church narthex. The next drive through food collection will be held Saturday, September 11 from 9-11 am. Please encourage neighbors and friends to participate because this is a community event where everyone benefits by being a blessing to others.



Peanut Butter for the Cocoa High School Fresh Market

Please continue bringing peanut butter for the Cocoa High School Fresh Market. School is back in session, and this mission is important for helping the students and families of Cocoa High School who need a little extra support.

Sharing Our Best (cont'd)

Ladies' Lunch Postponed

Your Growth and Development Committee made the decision to postpone our September Ladies Luncheon until we can safely gather again. Please stay tuned for updates.



Thank you for honoring our “Three Great Loves: Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, Love of Creation.”
Together, we make a difference.



**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
FELLOWSHIP OF CENTRAL BREVARD**
(Chapel in the Woods)

(321)632-0992

Mailing
P.O. Box 237164
Cocoa, FL 32923-7164

Location
1261 N. Range Road
Cocoa, Florida

August 19, 2021

Hope United Church of Christ
2555 S. Fiske Blvd.
Rockledge, FL 32955

Dear Partners in Feeding Our Kids:

This is to gratefully acknowledge your community's recent donation of \$170 for the Cocoa High School Fresh Market. Your donation is helping us feed the hundreds of students who come to school hungry at Cocoa High.

We are so grateful for your generosity, and your sharing this commitment to our kids.

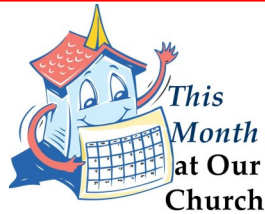
All donations to the Cocoa High School Fresh Market are tax-deductible. Please retain this letter for your tax records.

May you be blessed as you are blessing so many others!

Best regards,

Sara Ann

Sara Ann Conkling
Social Justice Chair



- 9/5 - Communion Worship
- 9/12 - Worship
- 9/19 - Worship
- 9/26 - Worship

Worship services will be held in the sanctuary and on Zoom at 10:00 am.
Zoom Mtg. ID. for Sunday Services
874-1336-0966

Drive Through Food Drop-Off
for Central Brevard Sharing Center
September 11 from 9-11 a.m.

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. 425 599 559

Theology on Tap

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



- 9/1 - Margie Wilson's Birthday
- 9/2 - Elaine Flynn's Birthday
- 9/9 - Carlos Pinheiro & Kari Scheirer's Anniversary
- 9/10 - Carlos Pinheiro's Birthday
- 9/11 - Mark & Julie Johnson's Anniversary
- 9/13 - Polly Gardiner's Birthday
- 9/16 - Terrell Elam's Birthday
- 9/19 - Yolanda Apodaca-Rogers' Birthday
- 9/19 - Dyanne Edds' Birthday
- 9/24 - Brian Scott's Birthday
- 9/25 - Paul Capaldo's Birthday
- 9/26 - Annette Almaguer's Birthday
- 9/27 - Giles Norrington's Birthday
- 9/28 - Sherilyn Woods' Birthday

Hope UCC Ministry for the Sharing Center



In August, we collected 174 food items and \$110 in cash for the Central Brevard Sharing Center.

There will be another drive through food drop-off on September 11th from 9 am to 11 am.