



**HOPE**  
**United Church of Christ**  
**December 2021**



*Tidings of Hope* published monthly by: **Hope United Church of Christ**  
2555 S. Fiske Blvd, Rockledge FL 32955-3901

(321) 636-0250 † [www.hopeucc.com](http://www.hopeucc.com) † [hopeuccfl@att.net](mailto:hopeuccfl@att.net) † [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)

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

## The Reverends Reflection



*Away in a Manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.*

As I write this newsletter article, I am still surrounded by images of bright colored fall leaves, harvest and thanks-giving. I am still waiting for cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie. I have not yet made the shift that my neighbors have towards twinkle lights and Christmas trees, but I know that Advent is right around the corner. I used to complain about stores decorating for Christmas before Thanksgiving but this year I saw Christmas displays before Halloween! Maybe it's because last year we were not able to gather in person due to the pandemic. This year we are eager to celebrate together, and it can't come soon enough!

Advent is the liturgical season when the church gets ready for Christmas. The word *advent* comes from the Latin word for *arrival*. We are preparing for the arrival of Jesus. I looked up some synonyms for the word advent and one of them is, *incoming*. Isn't that what people shouted during WW II when there was a threat of bombs dropping from the sky? We are about to be bombarded with Christmas glitter and jingle bells!

## The Reverends Reflection (continued)

We anticipate the light of the Holy being born in the dark world. That's the real reason for all the Christmas lights. I realize that retailers would like us to believe the lights are all about the mall, but lights shining in the darkness should remind us of the light of Christ not the light of capitalism.

Christmas is more than glitter and jingle bells—especially for the church. We prepare our lives and our hearts for the incarnation of God with us. God is about to be born among us! How do we get ready for that?! Christmas preparations for most of us include decorating, baking and shopping. Perhaps instead of stressing out over our to-do lists, we can remember that everything we do is because Jesus is about to be born. We decorate to bring in the light of Christ. We feed the hungry and bring joy with baking. We shop for gifts to express love and generosity. All of that holiday frenzy can be a way to make room for God-with-us.

This year our theme for Advent and Christmas is, “The Inn; Housing the Holy.” Jesus was born in a manger, a stable because there was no room at the Inn. How do we make room for the Holy?

The sanctuary will be transformed into a stable, a barn...a place where Jesus can be born. The physical space can be a metaphor for making room for the Holy in our lives and in the world. During worship we will reflect on hospitality, generosity, justice, and love.

So, hang the lights, wrap the gifts and open your heart.  
Get ready for Christmas!  
Merry Merry!



## Moderator's Moment

Oh my gosh!! What a busy time this is for Hope United Church of Christ. If you haven't noticed, it seems we are all going every which way. However, we are always focused on the message that the work we do is serving God in the manner we have been taught by the Scriptures. We love serving God, our neighbors and our church.

We had the Christmas Village Sale on November 6<sup>th</sup>. That is followed on December 18<sup>th</sup> by an Extravagant Christmas/and More Bizarre. We will be offering Christmas items, Christmas Bake Sale, On-Line Sales and our famous Corn Chowder and hamburger/hotdog/chicken lunches to go. I hope everyone of you will plan on attending this event. It is going to be as big as our yearly Yard Sales.

Advent is upon us, so Hanging of Greens is happening. The Deacons and others are being so creative in decorating our Sanctuary so that it is pleasing to our Zoom congregation, as well as our in-person worship service. I've heard a bit about it and I know it is going to be festive and meaningful during this Christmas Season.

The Budget, Nominating and Stewardship Committees have been meeting with great frequency during the past two months and will continue into January 2022.

The **Stewardship Committee** reminds us all of our covenant with Hope UCC when we became members and how we pledged to attend regularly the services of Hope UCC; to give all possible encouragement and support to its Pastor; to give systematically for its support and benevolence and to share in its organized work and to seek diligently the spiritual welfare of Hope.

When our monetary pledges have been brought forth to the church, the **Budget Committee** begins their work of creating a balanced budget to operate Hope. Operations include salaries of the three employees of our church, electric/water/insurance/groundskeeping/air conditioning maintenance/new bathrooms in the Narthex and a newly refurbished Choir Room, just a few of the expenses.

**Nominating Committee** is meeting and suggesting/seeking church members who would be willing to serve on one of our 13 committees. It's a big job asking people to serve. And it's a big commitment to serve on a committee but it is very rewarding to know you are serving to bring the

## Moderator's Moment (continued)

love of God to others. Please, I know that there are a few vacancies available – just say yes, be proactive and take a leap of faith to serve. I'd love to have you be a part of these Committees. You will find the incredible love of Christ in your heart as you serve.

And with all this going on, our Pastor Karen is BUSY too. This is the busiest time of the year for her. She continues to bless us with beautiful sermons that speak to us each week. Having new people attending worship nearly every week is a testament to her outgoing/creative messages on the Love of God and how we can serve our communities. Thank you to Rev. Karen.

As I'm writing this, and thinking of all the happenings at Hope, I suddenly realize this will be the December Tidings so.....

*I wish all of you a very blessed Christmas!*

Melanie

## Angel Tree

### Welcome our 2021 Angel Tree



She is a beauty and full of silver stars just waiting to be chosen. Kinda like adopting a puppy – but we are adopting a STAR. Each star has a gift idea on the back of the star. Gifts range in prices from a “little” to a “lot.” Please feel free to choose one or more stars to gift to the church. When you choose a star, please place the star and your donation in an envelope. AND very important, include your name on the envelope.

Send or give the envelope to the church office. We can keep a record of stars that are shining from your donations and make sure your donation is used for exactly what you desired. If you cannot get to the church and wish to choose a STAR, just let someone at that church know and we'll make sure you get a star.

Questions?? Call, text or email me. I'm here to help you.  
Melanie, Your Moderator

## Sharing Our Best

### From the Growth and Development Committee

Hope UCC Growth and Development Committee thanks all who participated in our October Trick or Treat Drive Through event October 30. Thank you to Mary Miceli and Cyndi Leonard for purchasing and decorating the bags, and to Sally Rood, Mary Miceli, Jeannie Roberts, Betty Capaldo, Tonia Patterson, Jean Hawkes, and Mark and Julie Johnson for preparing the bags.

Thank you to all who donated candies and treats, and to all who attended the event to hand out the treats: Rev. Karen Curtis-Weakley, Denise King, Kari Scheirer, Gaius and Jonah Garcia, Julie Becker and Diana Short with their four-legged friend Odelia, Angie and Edward Hamilton, Tonia Patterson, and Julie Johnson.

We prepared 97 treat bags and handed out 85. Left over bags are available in the narthex for anyone who wants them.



On November 6, several volunteers including Tonia Patterson, Susan Vincent, Denise King, Imelda Valdez, Janice Warrington, Rev. Karen Curtis-Weakley, Paul Capaldo, Julie Becker, Diana Short, Julie and Mark Johnson, Angie and Edward Hamilton, and Kari Scheirer supported the Christmas village and cook out sale. We made \$547.98 from the sale which will support our general fund.

On that date, Betty Capaldo organized the blood drive in front of the church. Thirteen people donated blood and 8 of those donors came from our community.

During the November 13 food drive and Cocoa Fresh Market collection, 20 church members dropped off 244 items and \$170.00 for the Central Brevard Sharing Center and 20 jars of peanut butter, two packages of feminine hygiene products, and \$40.00 for the Cocoa High School Fresh Market. The next food drive will be Saturday, December 11 from 9-11 in front of the church.



Our Christmas take-out food sale is being expanded to a Christmas Bazaar! Place Saturday, December 18 on your calendars. The event will be held from 9-1 and feature New England corn chowder, a bake sale including treats for your four legged canine friends, and a hamburger/hotdog/grilled chicken lunch sale.

While you wait for your take-out orders, you can shop for Christmas decorations, gifts, furniture, household items, and many other treasures.



## **Church World Service (CWS) Blanket Sunday** **and Christmas Poinsettias**

On Sunday, December 5, your deacons will present a mission moment featuring Church World Service (CWS) blanket Sunday.

Each year, our congregation is invited to purchase poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas and/ or CWS blankets in honor or in memory of a loved one.

A sign- up sheet is available in the narthex for ordering one or both at the cost of \$15.00 per item, and checks can be made to Hope United Church of Christ with poinsettia and/or CWS blanket written on the memo line, or donations can be made online: [cwsblankets.org/donate](https://cwsblankets.org/donate). CWS donation envelopes are also available in the narthex.

The deacons are ordering 10 poinsettias, so it's a first come/first served basis; however, you can order as many blankets as you wish.

Congregations around the world host CWS Blanket offerings to live out a mission to serve God's people near and far.

Church World Services offers aid to people in crisis. 2020 was a challenging year, but congregations stepped up and provided 101,472 blankets, hygiene kits, clean-up buckets, and school kits to families impacted by the pandemic, hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, and other crises including homelessness and poverty.

Your gift provides a blanket and enables people to see God's love in their lives.



**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**



## **HOPE Book Club Reading List 2021 - 2022**

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
<i>December</i>	<i>Christmas Break</i>
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



### ***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>



## Grief Support & Recovery

*A Program for Healing and Embracing a  
Forever-Changed Life*

People say you have to 'let go and move on', but they don't tell you what you need to do to heal a broken heart.

The Grief Recovery® Program creates a safe space for participants to discover helpful actions leading to completion of the pain, isolation or loneliness attached to loss of *any* kind.

This 6-session program will be facilitated by a highly experienced professional Bereavement Counselor and provided free of charge. All are welcome, no matter one's loss or spiritual beliefs.

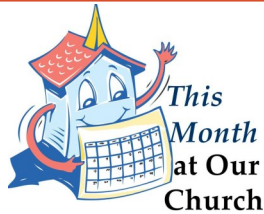
**Where:** Cocoa Beach Community Church/UCC  
126 S Atlantic Ave, Cocoa Beach, FL 32931

**When:** Every Wednesday, January 19 - Feb 23, 2022  
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

**This nationally-recognized program is provided at *no cost* and is open to anyone who has suffered a significant emotional loss, *either recent or long ago***

*Register early as space is limited*

To reserve a space, or for more information, email [CBCC.info@cfl.rr.com](mailto:CBCC.info@cfl.rr.com)  
or call 321-783-3961 M-F 9:00 - 2:00



- 12/05 - Communion Worship
- 12/12 - Worship
- 12/19 - Worship
- 12/24 - Christmas Eve Worship
- 12/26—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**



- 12/2 - Susan Vincent's Birthday
- 12/12 - Netta Elam's Birthday
- 12/14 - Melanie Goff & Karen Lehr's Anniversary
- 12/16 - Carolyn Hinman's Birthday
- 12/17 - Rebecca Carroll's Birthday
- 12/18 - Dottie Gingrich's Birthday
- 12/19 - Gerry Adams' Birthday
- 12/25—Lori Lindow's Birthday



**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

**Hope UCC Ministry  
for the Sharing Center**

In November, we collected 244 food items and \$170 in cash for the Central Brevard Sharing Center.

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

