



Tidings of Hope



HOPE *United Church of Christ* *September 2022*

Tidings of Hope published monthly by: **Hope United Church of Christ**
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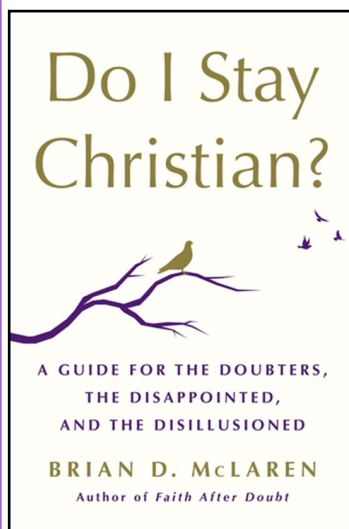
Submissions for publication may be sent to the Church Office at the above addresses, either electronically or by paper.

The Reverend's Reflection

Christianity has been in the news lately. From Jesus flags at the January 6th insurrection, criticisms of student loan forgiveness in the name of Christianity, Supreme Court decisions and anti-gay rhetoric; Christianity is in the headlines. These contentious and inflammatory news stories have caused me to question what it means to be a Christian today. When I hear white supremacists and Christian Nationalists spew hate and lies in the name of Christianity, I want to run as far away as I can from those voices. If being Christian means asserting power over others through violence and supremacy, I don't want anything to do with that religion. If being Christian today means asserting my beliefs and condemning all other points of view, then I am not THAT kind of Christian.

Following Christ means loving one another and proclaiming the Kingdom of God. Christians should be working toward a Beloved Community where everyone is treated with equity, love, and peace. There is no place for hate or intolerance.

Many thoughtful Christians are asking questions about what it means to be Christian in the world today. That's why Brian McLaren's new book, *Do I Stay Christian?* is so timely.



In the book, McLaren shares his experiences from conversations with thousands of people expressing their doubts and fears about their religious identity. McLaren encourages us to shift our focus from, “What does it mean to be Christian?” to what it means to be **human** and how do we express our humanity through our religion. If you have questions about Christianity, the future of the church and religion and how we *be the church* in this divisive world today, this is the book for you.

Join us as we explore these questions through Brian McLaren's book, *Do I Stay Christian?* in **Theology on Tap** on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 on Zoom.

Theology on Tap — Wednesdays 6:30 on Zoom #321 636 0250

The Moderator's Moment

Grace Christian School, a religious school in Valrico, Florida says it will “only refer to students by their sex assigned at birth,” they will ignore any preferred pronouns. Also, students who identify as gay, transgender or gender nonconforming will be asked to leave the school immediately. This is a school located on the west coast of Florida - my home state! Grace Christian is a school educating K-12 children, under the guise of a CHRISTIAN school.

A young gay man recently graduating from Grace Christian School reported that this policy was well known to LGBTQ youth and their families, requiring the children to keep their LGBTQ identity a secret. Teens could not even trust their closest “friends” because of the fear their “friends” would turn them in to school authorities. School leaders encourage students that have knowledge of an LGBTQ youth to turn that youth into authorities in order to be expelled immediately. During chapel hour on school days, administrators were often heard to “preach” anti-LGBT messages, ending in “if you’re gay, you’re going to hell.”

These blatant examples are actions happening in this very time we are living in now - not 50, 100 years ago. These are examples of why so many LGBTQ citizens are so angry at and distrustful of today’s churches. Churches are indoctrinating children and parents of LGBTQ children to “get out”, you’re not welcome here, you are “bad,” you are an abomination.

Recently Tonia and I attended the Open And Affirming (ONA) Coalition of the United Church of Christ’s 50th Anniversary celebration via a live webinar. Each night for three nights we listened to 2 hours of celebration of ONA churches and the works they have done. We met and heard about the journey of UCCs first gay minister in 1970s. We listened to pastor after pastor talk about how UCC’s ONA Coalition had changed his/her lives, honored their gifts, and how they had moved from being a frightened LGBTQ person, sometimes contemplating suicide, to a whole being within the leadership of UCC. We were both impressed with stories about how an ONA church, like Hope UCC is a soft-landing place for LGBTQ youth and adults and for parents of LGBTQ people. We heard over and over the term of ONA churches being safe places for LGBTQ people. Those statements rang true for me.

The Moderator's Moment (continued)

Hope UCC is a safe place for me. I am welcomed here and encouraged to become the whole person God intends for me to be. I am safe here. If you have never felt demoralized, threatened, hurt, isolated, suicidal, you may not even know the importance of a safe place but most of us LGBTQ people know and have experienced one or more of these feelings, intensely. We have felt the worst of the worst, at some point in our lives and it is a blessing from God and from the congregation of Hope UCC to provide a safe space for us. A place where we can talk about our families and friends, a place where we can celebrate our lives openly, a place where we feel loved by our peers. Most importantly we can worship and serve God and know that God loves us, as all people are loved.

Let us live out the honor of Hope UCC being an official ONA-designated church by continuing to be that safe place within Brevard County for the LGBTQ community. We are one of very few Christian churches in Brevard that can truly extent an extravagant welcome to all.

Melanie Goff, Moderator



Growth & Development Committee Sharing Our Best

We are gearing up for an active fall season, so mark your calendars. The August food drive yielded 285 items and \$20.00 for the Central Brevard Sharing Center. Costs of food and gas are creating challenges for our community, so please consider shopping BOGOs and putting some extra pennies in the piggy bank to share with others at our next drive on Saturday, September 10 from 9-11 in front of the church. Do not forget the peanut butter for the Cocoa High Fresh Market Justice and Witness ministry.

The blood drive is the following Saturday, September 17, from 9-1, when the Big Red Bus will be In front of the church.



Thank you all for donating to the school supply collection and to the Animal Shelter. Our students, teachers, and furry friends are grateful for this outreach.

Halloween is around the corner, and Growth and Development is collecting wrapped Halloween candies (please no exploding candies) through October. We will have our Halloween candy Trick or Treat drive through Saturday, October 26 from 5-7. We need volunteers to decorate the trick or treat bags, fill the bags, and pass them to our trick or treaters. Come join the fun. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex on the greeter's table. A bin for the candy is also in the narthex.

In case you were wondering, our fall bazaar is Saturday, November 12, and we need helpers to price items, set up, clean up, donate baked items for the bake sale and supplies for the hamburger/hotdog lunches. We will also need volunteers to cashier and help prepare the meals. Of course, New England Corn Chowder is on the menu...thank you, Betty! See the sign-up sheet in the narthex on the greeter's table, and contact Julie Johnson if you have questions.

God is good all the time...All the time, God is good!



“From Bread and Cup to Faith and Giving” Sharing Our Abundance

Stewardship is busy preparing for the upcoming Pledge drive. The theme for this year is:

“From Bread and Cup to Faith and Giving”

We have decided to kick off the campaign with breads of various ethnicities. On October 9th, we are planning to have a variety of home-made breads from various members of our Congregation available to share and feast on following the service. There will be cards attached with some fun facts about each bread provided. Could be a pop quiz during the enjoyment, who knows. So we are asking for individuals or families to step up and help make this a reality. It could be a fun family activity to bake with the kids and talk about the history, geography, or special memory of the person that used to make the bread you grew up with. It could become a new tradition and bake a bread from your different ethnic backgrounds. Or, is there a favorite bread, biscuit, or muffin, you have trouble finding? Try making it and share how it went.

For those interested, please contact:

Cyndi Leonard 216-789-1598 or cyn.leonard@yahoo.com or
Denise Cotton dennycctn326@yahoo.com



Hope UCC Hosting a Blood Drive

September 17, 2022

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. in the church parking lot

The Growth & Development Committee has set a blood drive date with the OneBlood organization in Rockledge. Everyone who is eligible is urged to participate! There will even be a “thank you” gift for those donating blood!!

Some basic guidelines to donate: You must be 16 yrs old (with parental permission) or older; you must weigh at least 110 lbs. There are a few instances where a person may not donate and you can find those on the website: oneblood.org

There is no cost to the church but we are asked to have at least 10 donors committed to donate prior to the blood drive.

You can register at oneblood.org/donate or contact BettyCapaldo (email:bcapaldo31@gmail.com) to sign up for a time slot.

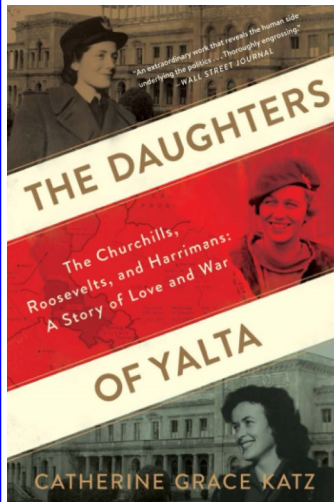
Thank you!

Hurricane Season

Hurricane season is here. The Helping Hands group and the Care Team are asking if you might need help in some way due to an approaching hurricane. Do you need transportation to a safe place? Do you need help preparing your residence - closing shutters, placing sandbags, etc? If you anticipate needing help, we would like you to register with the church so that we can be ready to help. Please call the church office at (321) 636-0250 and tell the office what kind of help you might need or contact any member of the Helping Hands group or the Care Team.

Contact Julie Becker for Helping Hands at (631) 512-1034 or Jean Hawkes for Care Team at (321) 243-5287.

Book Club September 2022



In September, the Hope Book Club will read and discuss The Daughters of Yalta, The Churchills, Roosevelts and Harrimans: A Story of Love and War by Catherine Grace Katz. Catherine Grace Katz's Daughters of Yalta is a revelation. It's a story of World War II, the origins of the Cold War, a key moment in diplomatic history, but above all a coming-of-age tale about three fascinating women in an extraordinary time. This non-fiction story of the three intelligent and glamorous young women who accompanied their famous fathers to the Yalta Conference in February 1945, and of the conference's fateful reverberations in the waning days of World War II has finally been researched and written.

Tensions during the Yalta Conference in February 1945 threatened to tear apart the wartime alliance among Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin just as victory was close at hand. Catherine Grace Katz uncovers the dramatic story of the three young women who were chosen by their fathers to travel with them to Yalta, each bound by fierce family loyalty, political savvy, and intertwined romances that powerfully colored these crucial days.

Kathleen Harriman was a champion skier, war correspondent, and daughter of U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union Averell Harriman.

Sarah Churchill, an actress-turned-RAF officer, was devoted to her brilliant father, who depended on her astute political mind.

Roosevelt's only daughter, Anna, chosen instead of her mother Eleanor to accompany the president to Yalta, arrived there as keeper of her father's most damaging secrets, including his serious health problems.

Situated in the political maelstrom that marked the transition to a post-war world, The Daughters of Yalta is a remarkable story of fathers and daughters whose relationships were tested and strengthened by the history they witnessed and the future they crafted together.

Please join us on Tuesday, September 27th at 1:30 pm. as we discuss The Daughters of Yalta. The zoom Meeting ID: 845 6868 2100.

HOPE Book Club Reading List 2022 - 2023

September	<u><i>The Daughters of Yalta: the Churchills, Roosevelts and Harrimans</i></u> - Catherine Grace Katz
October	<u>The Ministry for the Future</u> - Kim Stanley Robinson
November	<u>Fox and I: An Uncommon Friendship</u> - Catherine Raven
January	<u>All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack, A Black Family Keepsake</u> - Tiya Miles
February	<u>The Genius of Women: From Overlooked to Changing The World</u> - Janice Kaplan
March	<u>Joan Is Okay</u> - Weike Wang
April	<u>The Taking of Jemima Boone</u> - Matthew Pearl
May	<u>Taste: My Life Through Food</u> - Stanley Tucci





- 9/4 - Communion Worship
- 9/11 - Sunday Worship
- 9/18 - Sunday Worship
- 9/25 - Sunday Worship

Zoom Mtg. ID. for Sunday Services
321 636 0250

Drive Through Food Drop-Off
for Central Brevard Sharing Center
September 10th from 9 am to 11 am.

Ongoing Events at Hope

Happy Seekers

Fridays at 10:00 am
Zoom Mtg. No. 875 1767 3994

Coffee Hour

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



- 9/1 - Margie Wilson's Birthday
- 9/2 - Elaine Flynn's Birthday
- 9/9 - Carlos Pinheiro's Birthday
- 9/11 - Julie & Mark Johnson's Anniversary
- 9/13 - Polly Gardiner's Birthday
- 9/16 - Terrell Elam's Birthday
- 9/19 - Yolanda Apodaca-Rogers' 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 285 items and \$20 in cash for the Central Brevard Sharing Center. There will be another drive through food drop-off on September 10th from 9 am to 11 am.

