



The Sanibel LIGHT

Volume 52 Issue 3

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Let's Connect



For Your Consideration

Hi...

A minister invited their favorite seminary professor to offer a presentation to the congregation on the life of Jesus. The professor spoke about several of the significant events in Jesus' life, including his baptism at the Jordan River.

The professor proposed that Jesus' baptism served as a revelation of God's presence in him. But after a little back and forth between the professor and some members of the congregation on that point, another member - a longtime one who rarely spoke but who everyone recognized as a person of deep faith - said this:

"I see something else."

Intrigued, the professor asked, "So what do you see?"

"The story says that the heavens were opened, and the spirit of God came down", the member said. "Is that right?"

"Yes", the professor said.

"Then what I see", the member continued, "is that God's spirit was let loose in the world. And that is a dangerous thing."...

That member was so right. It is a dangerous thing for the spirit of God to be let loose in the world.

It's dangerous because that Spirit, as it did Jesus, also sends us out into the wilderness to face the constant temptation to let our lives and the world be ruled by personal gain, misuse of power and privilege, and self centeredness. It's dangerous because that Spirit constantly prods us to question and challenge the accepted ways of culture and nation. It's dangerous because that Spirit calls us into relationship with friend, neighbor and enemy, leaving us constantly vulnerable to disappointment and discouragement; to headache and heartache.

But oh, the reward... Emotional and spiritual strength, wisdom and courage. Freedom of heart, mind and soul. Spiritual integrity - completeness; wholeness.

The sacred season of Lent that we continue moving through together this month is a call to once again follow Jesus on the road from baptism, to wilderness, to cross. And it is also a call for us to let God's "dangerous" Spirit loose in the world all along the way. Like He did.

Lenten Blessings,
Mark
Rev. Dr. Mark Boyea
Senior Minister

Worship Notes

We began the month of February on Sunday the 5th by sharing in the Sacrament of Communion and the debut of a new feature:

“Ask the Minister Sunday”

On that day, rather than delivering his usual Message, Mark spent this part of Worship answering as many of your biblical, theological and spiritual questions as time permitted. The questions and discussion were lively, challenging and insightful.

“Ask the Minister Sunday” will return on Sunday, April 16

Then, on Wednesday, February 22, we entered the sacred season of Lent with a contemplative Ash Wednesday time of Scripture, readings, prayer, music from Dr. Albert, a Reflection from Mark, and the distribution of ashes at Refuge Church. If you missed it, the recording is available on our YouTube Channel.

Following that official beginning to the season, the First Sunday of Lent, February 26, marked the start of our Lenten theme, “*Questioning Jesus*” (More on that later in this edition of the *Light*).

In March, we begin the month by sharing in the Sacrament of Communion on Sunday, the 5th.

We will also continue with our Lenten theme on the 5th, 19th and 26th. On March 12, we will step away from that theme for one Sunday, as with Mark away, Temple Bat Yam Rabbi Stephen Fuchs will offer the morning's Message based on the story of Cain and Abel. This will be a way for us to continue our close relationship with that spiritual community during our time of continued separation.

Holy Week at SCUCC

Our Holy Week schedule is still being determined in conjunction with Refuge Church's schedule and needs.

Tentatively, we anticipate the following:

Maundy Thursday, April 6: Worship with Last Supper Commemoration and Choir at 7pm

Good Friday, April 7: Time of Meditation, Prayer and Reflection at Noon

Easter Sunday, April 9: Worship Celebration at 10am

Again, this is a *tentative* schedule. As soon as it is finalized you will receive that information.

Education and Exploration Opportunities

BIBLE STUDY IN MARCH

Bible Study with Mark will take place on Thursdays, March 2, 23 and 30 at 11am, on Zoom only for now.

Each week, we explore the Scripture passage(s) being used in Worship that coming Sunday. These sessions will be largely “guided discussion” in approach, focusing on your questions and insights from reading the texts ahead of time, with Mark guiding and adding relevant context and detail as needed or wanted.

This approach allows for participants to engage with the Bible creatively, and with an eye toward how the texts speak to us in our time and lives. In addition, they are great prep for getting more out of the Sunday Messages!

OUR CURRENT SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION UNIT CONTINUES IN MARCH

“Wait! What?! : Finding Meaning For Today In Jesus’ Parables

Tuesdays: March 21 and 28; April 4

In Luke’s Gospel, Jesus tells the disciples that he speaks to the people in parables “so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand”

You’ve got that right, Jesus.

During this five-week unit in the season of Lent, we are exploring several of the complex, counterintuitive, provocative, and just plain confusing parables – spiritual stories - Jesus tells in the Gospels, with an emphasis on engaging with each others’ own, and likely varied, interpretations, as well as how the parables might speak to us or be reframed for our time.

You will receive reminders and details regarding dates and times for participating in all our offerings from the Church Office on the day before each gathering.

Worship Theme for Lent in 2023

Our theme for the sacred season of Lent this year is "*Questioning Jesus*" - the "*Questioning*" in the title both verb and adjective.

It has been calculated by various biblical scholars that throughout the Gospels Jesus asks about three hundred questions, while directly answering only a handful. It is one of the reasons why Jesus' disciples call him "Rabbi", a Hebrew word which basically means "Teacher". And the core of teaching in that time and place, as well as Jesus' Jewish tradition, was to ask questions.

In keeping with that tradition, on most of the Sundays in Lent this year, we will engage with some of Jesus' most important questions, and consider how they still can and do matter for us in our time.

Meet the Moderators

Diana Day- 2023 SCUCC Moderator

Sanibel has been at least my part-time home since 1974, when I left my hometown of East Lansing, Michigan, and enrolled at the University of Florida, with Sanibel as my in-state address! After I graduated in Aerospace engineering, I worked in jet engine design, project management, and senior management with Aerospace companies in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida; Walled Lake, Michigan; and Erie, Pennsylvania. While we were in Michigan, I earned an MBA from the University of Michigan. I also enjoyed being an adjunct professor of project management and an active leader in the international project management institute (PMI).

We maintained our long-time ties with Sanibel, with various properties and our current home in Victoria Cove, and my parents had a home here from 1972 until they passed away recently.

My husband, G. Steven Day, our daughter, Jessica and I made this our primary home in 2012, and Jessica attended school locally. We also have 2 married daughters, Jennifer and Julia, and 2 grandsons. I have been blessed to support our Presbyterian church in Erie as a Deacon, Elder and a Trustee. I am also on the SanCap Cares committee, a support organization for the Golisano Children's Hospital, in addition to working with Youth and Missions at our church. I am honored to be this year's Moderator, to follow in some amazing footsteps, and to help us rebuild.

Neal Halleran – Associate Moderator

I was born in Chicago but basically grew up in Cary, Illinois, a small town 40 miles northwest of the city. I graduated from Western Illinois University with a BA and later earned my MBA from Loyola University of Chicago. My career was in banking, beginning with Continental Bank, a large commercial bank in Chicago. I later moved to several smaller institutions, retiring from Superior Federal Bank as President. After retiring in 2002 I did consulting work until retiring full time in 2006.

Sherry and I married in 1966 and have two children and six grandchildren. Our kids still live in the Chicago area but the grandkids are scattered across the country either working or finishing college or medical school.

We have been vacationing on Sanibel since 1992 and bought our first property in 1999. After selling our Wheaton, Illinois home 4 years ago we have been full time Florida residents. We recently sold our Sanibel condo and now live in Shell Point.

Sherry and I have both been active in local civic and charitable organizations throughout our lives. I served on numerous boards involved with community housing, health care, a food bank, and various civic organizations. In addition, I was head of our parish council (when I was a Catholic), and a member of the local Presbyterian church finance committee. I have served on the SCUCC Endowment Committee for the past eight years and headed the Pastoral Search Committee that has brought Mark to our congregation. I was elected Associate Moderator at our most recent annual meeting.

Buildings & Grounds Update

It's already March, and the Sanibel Season has been a bit different this year - mostly construction vehicles and disaster cleanup trucks! With restaurant openings and a smaller but welcoming farmers' market we are feeling more at home each week. And things look better every day, including at SCUCC. Kathy Monroe provided the photos below of the Memorial Garden from a few days ago. All of the memorial plaques are in good shape. The future of the gazebo will need to be addressed.

As we reported in our latest Ian Update Email, the office area is now functional, with AC, internet, and bathroom facilities. It is still, being determined how suitable it is for our staff to return there on at least a partial basis.

We ask that if you have not done so already, please contact the Office to update your location, even if it is temporary, including email and phone numbers.



Mission and Benevolence News

On March 19th, an offering will be received for One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), one of the UCC's four special mission offerings. This offering helps provide clean water, food, medicine, shelter, healthcare and education for people in crisis. It also supports domestic and international disaster relief ministries. About 95% of all funds received are used directly to support mission programming.

Special Offering envelopes will be in the bulletin on March 19th, or you may mail your donation directly to the church and earmark it for OGHS. Please give generously as we share some of our many blessings with others.

In addition, for those who are attending in-person worship at Refuge Church, you may have noticed shelves along the wall in the fellowship area. The sign above them says, "Share What You Can, Take What You Need." This is part of Refuge's ministry, but we can participate by noticing if the shelves look bare and bringing in a few items to replenish them. They have been very generous in allowing us this space to worship and also hold meetings, so one way we can express our gratitude is by helping support this ministry of theirs.

Healthy Happenings

Immune Defense, Part II

In Part II of Immune Defense, I would like to address diet. A poor quality diet can impact the proper functioning of our immune system by suppressing the production of and hampering the activity of some immune cells and antibodies. The remedy for this is easy and delicious: a well-rounded diet that is rich in immune supporting nutrients. **Using whole, unprocessed foods rather than supplements ensures you're getting a full package of nutrients in the balance that nature intended.**

Here is a quick roundup of a few key nutrients that research suggests can help the immune system flourish when they are supplied by a well-rounded diet. Knowing the foods that best supply these nutrients will help you on your way to optimal immune support.

Vitamin C plays a major role in our immune system. The body can't produce this nutrient and thus it must be obtained from food. This powerful antioxidant helps quench free radicals (highly reactive compounds that can damage cells and lower their defenses against infection). It can also help regenerate other antioxidant nutrients, further helping to quell inflammatory processes. Foods rich in Vitamin C include citrus fruits, peppers, kiwi fruit, and cruciferous vegetables like broccoli and cabbage. Many fruits and vegetables contain Vitamin C.

Vitamin D also promotes anti-inflammatory activity and is involved in the production of antibodies. Preliminary studies suggest Vitamin D might also help protect against some auto immune diseases, since low levels are associated with a higher risk of illnesses such multiple sclerosis as diabetes. Our bodies produce Vitamin D when we expose our skin to sunlight, but it's tough to get enough that way if you use sunscreen and live in a northern climate. **I strongly suggest that a Vitamin D level be drawn with your labs during your yearly physical exam. It's challenging to get enough of the vitamin from foods alone, so you may need to take a supplement.** You'll find Vitamin D in fatty fish, liver, and egg yolks and in fortified foods, including dairy products and plant-based dairy foods, cereals and juices.

Vitamin A (retinol) and plant-based provitamin A compounds called carotenoids have strong anti-oxidant activity that keeps the immune system functioning smoothly; both help support the growth and activity of immune cells. Adequate Vitamin A also helps maintain a healthy skin barrier - a key part of your immune defenses. **While animal products like liver, fish oils and egg yolks are good sources of Vitamin A, it's a good idea to focus more on carotenoid-rich fruits and vegetables, which your body can convert as needed to Vitamin A with no risk of getting too much.** Good sources are leafy green vegetables, as well as orange and red fruits and vegetables such as peppers, tomatoes, carrots, apples and cantaloupe.

Probiotic and prebiotic foods also have anti-inflammatory actions and they fortify the immune defenses of the microbiome - the complex system of microorganisms that populate our GI tract. Probiotic foods contain beneficial bacteria that help strengthen the lining of the GI tract while producing compounds that protect it from pathogenic organisms. Also important are prebiotic foods, rich in the materials those beneficial organisms feed on: fiber and compounds called oligosaccharides. The probiotic bacteria in the GI tract break down those prebiotic products turning them into fatty acids that boost the activity of certain immune cells. Probiotic bacteria are found in fermented foods such as yogurt, kefir, kombucha, kimchi, miso and sauerkraut. Prebiotic rich foods include fiber-rich fruits, vegetables and beans, particularly onions, leeks, asparagus and bananas.

It is clear that a well-nourished body is a strong defense against disease. In fact, "immune support" has always been within our reach and much depends on what we choose to put on our plates.

Caring for you and your health,
Linda Convertine
Parish Nurse

"Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body." Proverbs 16:24

Growing Resilience – One Yard at a Time

By Bridget Washburn

Sprucing up the landscaping of a wind and water-damaged yard may seem daunting, especially if you've lost old trees or plants of sentimental significance. But starting from scratch does provide an opportunity to reinvent the landscape, making it more resilient to Florida's occasionally stormy climate.

Choose Native Plants

Native plants are those that occur naturally in a region, ecosystem, or habitat, without human introduction, meaning that plants native to Southwest Florida support Florida's birds, insects, and animals with which they have developed symbiotic relationships over thousands of years. While a single backyard of native plants may seem trivial, small efforts add up to create patches of habitat that can sustain a biodiverse, more resilient ecosystem.

Choosing native plants also saves time and money. Native plants have adapted to Florida's fluctuating rainy and dry seasons, and many have deeper root systems designed to withstand storms, making it less likely that you'll have to replant. The University of Florida reports that sand live oaks are the most resistant to blowing over or incurring wind damage, followed by Southern magnolia, live oak, crape myrtle, bald cypress, and sabal palm. Whether landscaping on the coast or within a few miles of it, consider using salt-tolerant native plants. As seen with Hurricane Ian, surge-related saltwater can reach several miles inland, so selecting at least moderately salt-tolerant plants increases the likelihood of surviving future hurricanes. Beach sunflower, gaillardia, and seaside goldenrod are all colorful, flowering, AND wind- and salt-tolerant. A variety of attractive native grasses includes salt meadow cordgrass, muhly grass, Fakahatchee grass, and sea oats.

[The Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation has published a Guide to Replanting after Hurricanes, including which plants fared well during Ian.

https://issuu.com/sccf3/docs/sccf_replanting_guide-final]

In addition to the SCCF Native Plant Nursery, there are two others in the area:

All-Native at 300 Center St., in FT. Myers, 239-939-9663,

Hickory Hammock Native Plant Nursery in Buckingham, FL., 239-292-4462.]

Restrict the use of chemical fungicides and pesticides.

In the Fiscal Year 2015 – 2016, fertilizer companies reported distributing over 1.9 million tons of fertilizer in Florida, which can impact the health of waterways and contribute to climate change. Unabsorbed nitrogen is broken down by soil microbes and released as nitrous oxide, a powerful greenhouse gas that pound for pound is 300 times more potent than carbon dioxide."

Instead of chemicals, use organic regenerative methods, which we will detail in a forthcoming issue.

<https://growingclimatesolutions.org/climate-resilience-food-in-your-own-backyard/>

Bits & Bobs

MARK AWAY IN MARCH

Please note that Mark will be away on a long ago planned trip with Cindy from March 6-14. While he will be reachable, his response time may be delayed.
Please be patient.

The Shell Point Men's Club of SCUCC will meet on Tuesday, March 14th at noon at the Palm Grill. Our special program guest will be Dr. Mackenzie Albert, our church Music Director. In addition to our getting better acquainted, she will reflect on her responsibilities and share some of her visions for our church music program.

The Shell Point Women's Luncheon will meet Friday March 10th. We will again meet at The Crystal Restaurant at noon. Please contact Emily Kletzien at (239)432-9185, for more information or to RSVP.

Remember that Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 12,
so please make a note to set your clocks one hour ahead on Saturday night, March 11.



The Church Staff is working from home. Please use their email addresses to reach them:

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[Church Campus Access](#)

Currently, the campus is open only to authorized personnel and commercial vendors. For the safety of all, please do not walk, ride or drive on the church campus.

Giving is Easy:

1. PayPal link is available from the church's homepage (www.sanibelucc.org)
2. Automatic Payment Program (ACH) is available. To sign up email sandy@sanibelucc.org to receive the authorization form.
3. Checks payable to SCUCC can be mailed to:
Sanibel Congregational UCC 2050 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel FL 33957.

*Our mail is currently being held & picked up at the Sanibel Post Office.

Need a ride to Worship Celebrations? If you would like a ride from Shell Point or Cypress Cove, please contact the office by emailing:

office@sanibelucc.org

In order to get on the list. We must receive your reservation by noon on Thursdays.