

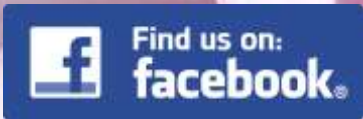


# The Sanibel LIGHT

Volume 53 Issue 4

April 2023

**Let's Connect**



## For Your Consideration

Hi...

By the time you receive this edition of "*The Light*", we will be about to enter or have already entered the only week that Christianity specifically identifies as "Holy" – the week which begins with Palm Sunday, and ends on Saturday, the day before Easter. Yes, Holy Week, contrary to the popular assumption, does not *include* Easter.

Why is that? Why isn't the ultimate celebration in Christianity, the commemoration of Jesus' resurrection – the symbol of the triumph of God's ways of life over the world's frequently competing ways of death – not considered part of that most sacred week?

Perhaps, in part, it is because Easter is, at least in a spiritual sense, a *product* of Holy Week. Or more specifically, the *result* of the spiritual process that Holy Week exemplifies.

During Holy Week, we are presented with a summary of the foundations of the life Jesus lived and called us to live, an earthly life that leads to *eternal life* – life in union with God and God's ways. *Resurrection life*, if you will. During Holy Week, Jesus engaged in ultimate spiritual integrity in his refusal to save himself from pain and suffering by renouncing the mission that God had given him; ultimate moral courage in resisting the powers that attempted to elevate themselves above God; ultimate inclusion of and compassion for those considered "least" in the eyes of the world; and ultimate grace in refusing to condemn anyone, even those who had a hand in his death.

It was, and is, that kind of "holy" integrity, moral courage, inclusion, compassion, and grace, which opens the door for God's power to raise good from evil; hope from despair; and life from death, to enter the world.

It is that kind of "Holy Life", embodied in that kind of "Holy Week", which opens the door to Easter – a life which leads to the rolling away of the stones from our spiritual tombs.

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

## Worship Notes

During the month of March, we continued our Lenten theme, “*Questioning Jesus*”, each Sunday exploring vital questions Jesus asks others in the Gospels. The one exception was Sunday, March 12, when we welcomed our good friend, Rabbi Stephen Fuchs of Bat Yam, as guest preacher while Mark was away. Rabbi Fuchs blessed us with an exploration of the story of Cain and Abel.

Also during March, we celebrated the Sacrament of Communion on Sunday, March 2, were blessed with two solos both written and performed by Steve Garrett on March 26, and throughout the month were capably and graciously led musically by Shirley Witte, Judy McBroom, and the SCUCC Choir during Dr. Albert's time of illness.

We will begin the month of April with the start of Holy Week on Palm Sunday, April 2, including the Sacrament of Communion and the distribution of palm branches.

Then, we will continue our Holy Week observance with an in-person and live-streamed Good Friday “**modified Tenebrae**” service – the reading of the Gospel passages describing the arrest, trial and crucifixion of Jesus by Mark, with meditative musical interludes and a brief Reflection from Mark included - at Noon, Friday, April 7 at Refuge Church. Following that, the Refuge sanctuary will be open from 1-3pm for silent reflection and meditation for all who wish.

\*Please note that due to a scheduling conflict, we learned only a few days ago that Refuge Church was not available for either an evening Maundy Thursday or evening Good Friday commemoration this year. In addition, taking into account Dr. Albert's recent health concerns, it was felt it would be best for this year to not ask her (or in the event of her continued absence), Shirley Witte, Judy McBroom and the Choir to have to prepare for something other than Palm Sunday and Easter. We will certainly return to a fuller commemoration of both of these when we are back in the SCUCC sanctuary next Holy Week.

Finally, on Sunday, April 9, we will celebrate the triumph of God's ways over the ways of death with an Easter Worship time at 10am at Refuge featuring spirit-lifting music and a Message from Mark.

But that's not all in April!

The Sunday after Easter, April 16, will feature our second “*Ask the Minister*” segment of the year. On that day, rather than a Message, Mark will field as many of your biblical, theological and spiritual questions as time allows.

So get those questions in now by emailing or texting them to Mark at [mark@sanibelucc.org](mailto:mark@sanibelucc.org) or 908-477-5426, or bring them with you that day.

Then, Sunday, April 23 we will join together for “*Creation Justice Sunday*”. In recognition of both Earth Day on April 22, and our designation as a “*Creation Justice*” congregation of the UCC, our Green Team will be helping to develop and lead that morning's Worship. More on that later in this edition of “*The Light*”.

Lastly, Sunday, April 30 has been designated “*Bring a Friend to Church Sunday*”. Research consistently shows that the greatest source of new members for churches – by far – is *current members*. Despite our circumstances these last few months, we continue to have much to offer as a spiritual home for others. Consider inviting someone to, as Jesus says to Andrew and an unnamed second person early in John's Gospel, “*Come and see.*”

# Biblical and Exploration Opportunities

## BIBLE STUDY IN APRIL

Bible Study with Mark will take place on Thursdays 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 facilitating 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!

We hope you will take the time to join in.

In April, we will meet on the following Thursdays:

April 6, 20 and 27

## OUR CURRENT SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION UNIT CONCLUDES IN APRIL

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

Tuesday: April 4 on Zoom

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 will explore 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.

## OUR NEXT UNIT BEGINS IN LATE APRIL

### ***“What’s the Least I Can Believe and Still Be Christian?”***

Tuesdays: April 25, May 2, 9, 23 (also May 30 if needed)

Based on the book of the same name by long-time minister and author Martin Thielen, this unit will explore the question of “what really matters most” when it comes to our beliefs about God, Jesus, the Bible and the Church. We will examine Thielen’s – and our – thoughts about what we most need, or may not need, to believe from our tradition, as well as any other theological, biblical and spiritual areas of interest and concern to participants.

As always, 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.



## Getting to Know Our Lay Leaders

You will notice that introductions to our lay leaders have begun to be included in The Light. This month we feature 2 women who have also made special efforts to keep our operations smooth and effective. Thank you to Kathy Monroe and Candy Atchison.

### Kathy Monroe – Chair of Deacons

I was born and raised in a suburban community of Charleston, West Virginia. My first experiences in employment were in banking, later evolving into fiscal management for nineteen years in higher education. My undergraduate degree is in Business Management with an emphasis in accounting.

I have always been active in my community and church, therefore listening as the Lord led me to make a career change in the late 90's to the field of aging. I possess a Master of Science degree in Gerontological Studies from Saint Joseph's University (Philadelphia, PA), a Theological Certification from Immaculata University and a level one ACPE Chaplaincy certification.

I have a son and daughter-in-law, three grandchildren and will be marrying again this month.

I have served my community as a scout leader, a social justice advocate leading an interfaith community MLK, Jr. commemorative event for a decade, GOTV organizations for local politics, etc. I was also a member and officer in various professional settings. Some of my most pleasurable moments have been within the church as a church school teacher and Superintendent, Community Vacation Bible School Director, a Youth leader for both American Baptist Churches and the Philadelphia Baptist Association. In addition I have been a Director of a Christian Church School in Tampa, Florida.

I semi-retired as an Executive Director from a county Area Agency on Aging in Pennsylvania in 2013 and fully retired in September 2020 from the Dubin Center in Fort Myers, FL as the Interim Executive Director after serving on their Advisory Board for seven years. Currently I serve on the Board of Directors for the Lighthouse (Visual Services) of SWFL, the Board of Trustees for the Dubin Center and a member of Zontas International/ Fort Myers chapter.

I was the Sunday School Director here at SCUCC from 2014 until hurricane Ian. I became a member of SCUCC in 2015. I have assisted with Journey Youth Group, SHINE Children's Group and supervised the Wednesday afternoon preschool bible program. I had the privilege of being the substitute Preschool Director during the Director's medical leave. I have also served on the strategic planning sub-committee, the health ministry team and the pastoral church committee. I am ecumenically involved with the Interfaith Outreach of Sanibel-Captiva and the food pantry program with Temple Bat Yam. I also chair the SCUCC deacon's board.

I love being in His service.

Kathy Y. Monroe

## Getting to Know Our Lay Leaders

### Candy Atchison – Chair of Mission and Benevolence

I was born in Michigan, and after graduating from Western Michigan University with a major in Mathematics and minors in Psychology and Accounting, I started a career with the Federal Government. In 1974 I transferred to Ft Myers as an agent with the Internal Revenue Service. Over the years I worked out of the West Palm Beach and Ft. Lauderdale offices, except for five years in the 80s when we lived in Connecticut. I retired in 2002 after 34 years of service.

We've owned timeshares on Sanibel since 1979 and it has been our vacation paradise. In 2020, we came full circle and moved back to Ft Myers and live in Shell Point. I am an active member of P.E.O. and an AARP Tax-Aide volunteer. In my free time, I like to read, do puzzles, knit, crochet and play golf.

Our daughter, who is married to an Army officer, and our 14 year old grandson are now living in Connecticut, but will be moving to Kentucky this summer.

I grew up in the First Congregational Church in Kalamazoo where I started singing in the choir in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade and actively participated in the youth group. My church participation continued into my adult life. My husband, Jim, is a retired UCC pastor and over 42 years with his career on the National Staff of the UCC, Florida Conference staff, and as a local church pastor, I have been exposed to many aspects of the UCC. I served as chair of the Budget and Finance Committee and President of the Endowment Corporation for the Florida Conference UCC, and also served my last church as Treasurer and Moderator. It is a privilege to serve as chair of the Mission and Benevolence Committee in our church.

## Staffing News

It is with deep sadness but also endless appreciation that we announce the retirement of our Church Administrator, Sandy Simmons, effective April 30.

Sandy has served our spiritual community for over 13 years with an incredible amount of dedication, energy and commitment, especially demonstrated by her exceptional service in the immediate aftermath of and these last six months post-Ian. If any additional evidence was needed of all that, while Sandy is moving out of state to be closer to her son, she has agreed to continue to serve us remotely as we transition to a new Administrator in the midst of our continuing time of rebuilding.

Sandy will be present at our 10am Worship celebration on Sunday, April 30 so that we can recognize and thank her in person. We hope that you make every effort to come that day and join in her farewell.



## Interested in Joining SCUCC???

Despite our ongoing displacement, energy, enthusiasm and participation on Sundays remains high, including the regular presence of visitors. In that regard, if you are considering becoming a member of SCUCC, please let Rev. Mark know. After you and he discuss the expectations and, as to paraphrase an old commercial, "the perks of membership", you and he can schedule a Sunday that works best for you to become an official part of the SCUCC community.



## Hurricane Ian Recovery at SCUCC

It has been 6 months since Hurricane Ian reorganized our lives. Wow.

I am praying that you are settled, at peace, and safe, wherever you are. And I am hoping to see or otherwise connect with you all - if not this week, then as soon as we can all meet or talk in the same place.

We know that everyone is anxious to hear when we will be able to meet again in our Sanibel church home. There are several obstacles to that goal - all of which we are addressing as quickly as possible.

\* Elevator replacement is a long lead time activity, so several options are being pursued.

\* We had hoped to consider a ramp to address near term access, but it seems that a 240 ft long ramp is too difficult and not so appealing in many ways. Therefore, it is not an option.

\* Pews and chairs are in the repair shop. The pictures below show them being removed in Mid-March. We hope/plan to see them back in October.

\* Contractor bids are in process for all repairs including roof, rafters, floors, elevated pulpit area, walls, ceiling.... You get the picture. We may be able to get Fellowship Hall completed first, and look into chairs to open that area for both SCUCC and Bat Yam.

Some things that we hope to do to enhance our sanctuary with the rebuild include better wheelchair and walker access, a sound loop for hearing aids, an enlarged elevated chancel / stage, optimizing the audio/visual control room, and considering slight modification of pew configuration. Colors of carpet, cushions, and walls will also be reviewed. In fact, the cushion material will need to be ordered in the next couple of months.

Landscape clean-up of the grounds has made great progress, except for the very back woods, and I feel safe driving through the parking lot these days! There are still a couple of uprooted trees that tower over the neighboring homes.

We are very blessed to have a talented and dedicated group of "old guys" (forgive me) who have tirelessly managing the contractors, insurance companies, FEMA, visitors, and people with suggestions. They have also been diligent in reporting progress on many Sundays. Thank them when you see them.

Photos below show some of Barb Cecala's artwork which survived without damage. Also the labyrinth and parking area looking cleared.

Diana Day, SCUCC Moderator



## Healthy Happenings

### What Is the Mediterranean Diet?

While other diets are often quite specific, the Mediterranean diet is less structured. One of the biggest reasons the Mediterranean diet is so different from other weight-loss methods is that it is a lifestyle. Many traditional diets are limited and extreme, which makes them doable only for the short term. The Mediterranean diet is sustainable because it is flexible and doesn't require you to completely cut out any of your favorites. It doesn't focus on restrictions, counting calories or measuring portions. Instead, it emphasizes filling up on a wide variety of nutrient-dense foods and taking time to savor each bite. A lifestyle approach to healthy living doesn't have an end date, it becomes a habit and the way you prefer to eat.

The diet is rich in produce, whole grains and lean protein, supplying antioxidants and heart-healthy unsaturated fats (think olive oil rather than butter). Those following the Mediterranean diet enjoy plenty of fatty fish, especially salmon, alongside whole grain sides, lots of crisp vegetables and an abundance of supercharged legumes, nuts and seeds. Spices, rich in antioxidants, are used plentifully in this diet.

The Mediterranean lifestyle quickly rose to fame among doctors in 2013 after a team at the University of Barcelona studied more than 7,000 participants who drastically improved their heart health after adopting the diet. Scientific evidence of the diet's effectiveness has piled up since then. A study published in the medical journal, *The BMJ*, found that elderly individuals could improve their brain function and longevity by adopting the Mediterranean diet. Evidence suggests that this dietary routine can fight inflammation as we age, stopping the production of chemicals in the body that are known to contribute to cognitive decline. Plus, the diet may also prevent chronic diseases such as diabetes.

Gluten-free options such as brown rice, quinoa and many more can be substituted for some of the grains containing gluten in the recipes. If you are a vegetarian, recipes using chicken or beef can be substituted with vegan protein sources like tofu or tempeh. Beans and lentils are also great protein swaps. I have an extensive 400-page cookbook featuring 250 vegetarian recipes free of gluten, dairy, and refined sugar. All the recipes are consistent with the Mediterranean diet.

You might want to think about looking into this diet and discover how you could adopt it into your lifestyle. There's nothing to lose but weight and lots to gain like more energy and renewed health.

Below is a yummy, easy recipe you might want to try. It makes quite a bit so you could half it or do what I do; freeze some and give some away.

*(1 Corinthians 10:31) So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

Caring for you and your health,  
Linda Convertine, Parish Nurse

### Lentil Vegetable Stew

2 small onions  
2 carrots, chopped  
6 small potatoes, chopped  
1 16-ounce bag brown lentils (I only use 3/4 of a bag)  
1 15.5-ounce can diced tomatoes  
8 cups broth or water  
1-2 cups spinach, chopped

Combine all ingredients, except spinach and cook on low heat for 2 hours. (I sometimes use my crock pot and leave it on low for the day). Add the spinach about 5 minutes before the stew is done. Season to taste with salt and pepper. I use some of my fresh basil that I grow on my patio. I also love carrots so I add more of them. You can be creative with this stew and add or substitute vegetables. I use fewer lentils than the recipe calls for as I found that the lentils overpower the vegetables. I hope you enjoy the recipe.

## From the Green Team

### Two Areas of Opportunity for Environmental Activism - Solar Energy and Red Tide

We have an extraordinary opportunity at this time to carry out our commitment to stewardship of both our own resources and those of the planet by transforming our energy source and installing solar either on our roof top or elsewhere.

Many of us, including the church, are putting in new roofs. In addition to the 30% off total installation for solar offered by the Inflation Reduction Act, there is a new solar co-op starting in Lee and Collier counties which SCUCC has recently joined. This will give us a free evaluation of our situation, although there's no obligation for us to do anything by joining. The solar co-op will also vet vendors and negotiate further cost reductions from bulk purchasing and soft costs such as marketing. The deadline for joining is April 30; for more information see <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/co-ops/florida/southwest-florida-2023-solar-co-op/#events>.

Moreover, Solar United Neighbors has a guide that contains financing options in Florida: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/nuznvgabsqw5lig/PAYING%20FOR%20YOUR%20PANELS.pdf?dl=0>

Everyone is also invited to the Earth Day celebration and EV Show at the Tribby Art Center at Shell Point on Friday, April 21, from 9am-1pm. In addition to talking to owners of electric cars and golf carts, you can take test rides on electric bikes and trikes. Environmental organizations will be available to tell about their work. Plant-based small plates are being offered between 11 and 1. The gallery is exhibiting the spectacular nature photography of Sallie Rich, and Old Time Jam is playing music. Two Academy offerings are planned between 9:30-10:30 and 11:30-12:30. The latter is Bob Moore, co-chair of the Climate Reality Project of Lee County, talking about the value of solar energy.

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On another matter, we have recently suffered an additional outbreak of red tide, bringing intense respiratory irritation to humans as well as thousands of dead fish and other marine animals, which add to the toxic gasses.

**What can we do? To help reduce your contribution, you can plant native landscaping that doesn't require fertilizer and as much irrigation, clean up after pets, and make sure your septic tank is working properly. These are things every homeowner can control, but the scale of change we need to create is obviously much larger, and we can't do this alone.**

State and local officials must be convinced to make meaningful reforms in the ways stormwater and land-use is managed, monitored and enforced. The Red Tide and Blue-Green Algae Task Forces that the Governor initiated have published multiple recommendation papers, but very few (as little as 12%) of those recommendations have been implemented. There is a pair of bills worth supporting in this regard, SB 1538 & HB 423 Implementation of Recommendations of the Blue-Green Algae Task Force. Let's hope these can garner bipartisan support.

Absent other meaningful reforms, there is a current petition active to create a constitutional Right to Clean Water that would give individuals and organizations standing in court to create pressure for enforcement of the environmental protection laws we already have. To sign a petition to get this on the ballot, Florida voters can go to <https://www.floridarighttocleanwater.org>.

Lastly, in June, Calusa Waterkeeper will hold a workshop for volunteers to make vertical oyster gardens to put out in the estuary. Each oyster garden reef can filter millions of gallons of water per year, and they can be easily installed by hanging them underneath docks. Learn how you can get involved in this oyster reef project. For more detail, see <https://calusawaterkeeper.org/news/red-tide-what-can-we-do-225949>



## Bits & Bobs

The Sanibel Congregational UCC Shell Point Men's Club will meet on Tuesday, April 11th, at noon at the Palm Grill in the Woodlands Commons. Please make your reservations to Jim Atchison at [JimAtch@aol.com](mailto:JimAtch@aol.com) by April 7th.

The Shell Point Women's Luncheon will meet Friday April 14th. We will meet at The Palm Grill at 11:30 AM. Please contact Emily Kletzien at (239)432- 9185, for more information or to RSVP.

SCUCC Singles and Friends will be gathering for an Easter Buffet at the Palm Grill, at Shell Point. The time is 12 noon. The menu is extensive with choices you can imagine, as well as some surprises. The cost is \$42.00 plus tip. To confirm your reservation, email Eleanor at [eleheamiller@gmail.com](mailto:eleheamiller@gmail.com) or call or text at 860-318-1557. Or see me after church.

### Creation Justice Sunday, April 23, 2023

Our Green Team, along with Rev. Mark, are win the process of planning SCUCC's Worship time for April 23, with a theme of "Being a Creation Justice Congregation". After the service, the Green Team will present a short program about its history in the hope of attracting new members, and we will have the Right to Clean Water petitions available if Florida voters choose to sign.

For more information, please email [jeanchandler2@gmail.com](mailto:jeanchandler2@gmail.com)

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

Mark Boyea

[mark@sanibelucc.org](mailto:mark@sanibelucc.org)

Sandra Simmons

[sandy@sanibelucc.org](mailto:sandy@sanibelucc.org)

Jordan Jones

[office@sanibelucc.org](mailto:office@sanibelucc.org)

### 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](http://www.sanibelucc.org))

2. Automatic Payment Program (ACH) is available. To sign up email [sandy@sanibelucc.org](mailto: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](mailto:office@sanibelucc.org)

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