

# The Sanibel



SANIBEL  
CONGREGATIONAL  
**UNITED  
CHURCH  
CHRIST**

JANUARY 2024 VOLUME 56  
ISSUE 1



## IN THIS ISSUE

**We continue Worship in Fellowship Hall**

**Healthy Happenings**  
Goals for the New Year

**February Special Events**

**A Message from Our Moderator**

**Green Team**  
Can We Build Back Greener

News From Our  
Community.

*Seeking to love all people ... growing in faith  
...*

*working toward God's vision of justice, healing  
and joy.*

*Sanibel Congregational United Church of  
Christ*

## FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Hi...

At this time of year, it is common for TV networks, magazines, and news sources - both print and digital - to offer some kind of program or issue devoted to *The Year In Review*, offering their take on the best and worst of the year just passed. Sometimes though, they'll go *really* big, as CNN did back on New Year's Eve of 1999 when it ran a program called "*The 100 Most Influential People of the Millenium*", in case you missed it, they picked Johannes Gutenberg, inventor of the printing press, as #1). Or when a few years ago *Time* magazine published "*The Most Influential Photographs of All Time*".

Included in *Time's* selections were the first cell phone picture ever taken; a photo of Mamie Till-Mobley staring at the battered, lynched remains of her son, Emmett, a picture which revealed the horrors of racism to many Americans who did not realize it's scope and brutality at that time; and more recently, the widely seen photo of a three-year-old Syrian refugee's lifeless body washed up on the shore of the Turkish town of Bodrum.

Photos like that remind us that not only does "*every picture tells a story*", or that "*every picture is worth a thousand words (or more)*", but that pictures have the power to change lives, societies, nations, and the world. They have the power to move us to do and be better, to see what *is*, and from there, envision what *could be*...

While it is not an actual photograph, the end of each year offers us that exact kind of picture. At Christmas, God saw the world and humanity as it was – as it *is* – and sent Jesus to help us do and be better; to show us and teach us what God sees and believes we *could be*.

So now, Christmas has once again come and gone, and the start of a new year arrived, presenting us once more with the question: *What photograph would you like to see in your life's, our nation's, or the world's year-end review for 2024? What picture would you like to see at the end of the year of who you have become that you are not yet? What important issue in our community, nation or world would you like to see a picture of major progress having been made?*

Whatever it is, picture it and hold onto that picture. Brain research has demonstrated that to picture something in our "*mind's eye*" and hold it there day after day can be a powerful tool for helping us stay committed to working to make it happen. But in order to do that, we must first believe in the possibility of it coming to pass. We must believe in its possibility because without that hope dies. Without that cynicism wins – the cynicism that seems to increasingly infects every aspect of our lives in this time. And most of all, we must believe in its possibility because we are the people of a God who at Christmas and throughout the year reminds us how much God believes in *our* possibilities.

Picture that.

Blessings,  
Mark  
Rev. Dr. Mark Boyea  
Senior Minister

## WORSHIP NOTES

Throughout December, we commemorated the sacred season of Advent with our theme *“It’s Better To Light A Candle...”*.

Then, at 5pm on December 24, we celebrated Christmas Eve in Fellowship Hall after being unable to be here in 2022. It was an evening of carols, spirit-lifting music from Dr. Albert, the SCUCC Choir and several soloists, the reading of Luke’s Christmas story, and the Bringing of Light.

Enormous gratitude to all the singers, readers, Advent Candle lighters, Deacons, Fellowship Time leaders and servers, and staff for making this “return to Sanibel” Advent and Christmas a special one...

In January, we will celebrate the Sacrament of Communion as a spiritual community for the first time in 2024 on Sunday, January 7.

On Sunday, January 14, we will remember the life and work of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the vital place of justice and equality in our spiritual tradition.

Then, on Sunday, January 21, UCC Florida Conference Minister, Rev. John Vertigan, will be our guest during Worship. Rev. Vertigan will offer words of greeting at the end of the morning.

Finally. On Sunday, January 28, we will have our next *“Ask the Minister Sunday”*. On that day, instead of a Message, Mark will spend that part of Worship addressing as many of your theological, biblical and spiritual questions as time allows.

So get those questions in ahead of time by emailing Mark at [mark@sanibelucc.org](mailto:mark@sanibelucc.org) or texting him at 908-477-5426. Or just bring them with you that morning.



## **FEBRUARY SPECIAL EVENTS AT SCUCC!!!**

February is going to be quite a month at SCUCC!

First, on Sunday, February 4, we will celebrate our return to the Sanctuary for Worship in mid-January with a “*Homecoming Sunday*”! Plan to be here for the 10am Worship celebration as we will dedicate our renovated Sanctuary and then have a special Fellowship Time after.

On Wednesday, February 7 at 5pm, as part of our Homecoming festivities, the Green Team is sponsoring a joint potluck with Bat Yam. Read more about those details in the “*From the Green Team*” part of this edition of the *Light*.

On Wednesday, February 14, we begin the sacred season of Lent with an Ash Wednesday commemoration in the Sanctuary. The time for this has yet to be determined.

Then, on Sunday, February 18, we will celebrate Mark’s official Installation as SCUCC’s Senior Minister. This has been a long time coming, as Mark and our lay leaders agreed it should wait until our return to the SCUCC Sanctuary. UCC Associate Conference Minister Rev. Latrell Harrison will join us that morning to lead the formal Installation part of Worship, while Mark’s long-time friend and colleague, Rev. Nancy McHugh, Senior Minister of Dennis Union Church in Dennis, MA will be our guest Preacher. A special reception to mark this important occasion in SCUCC’s history will follow.

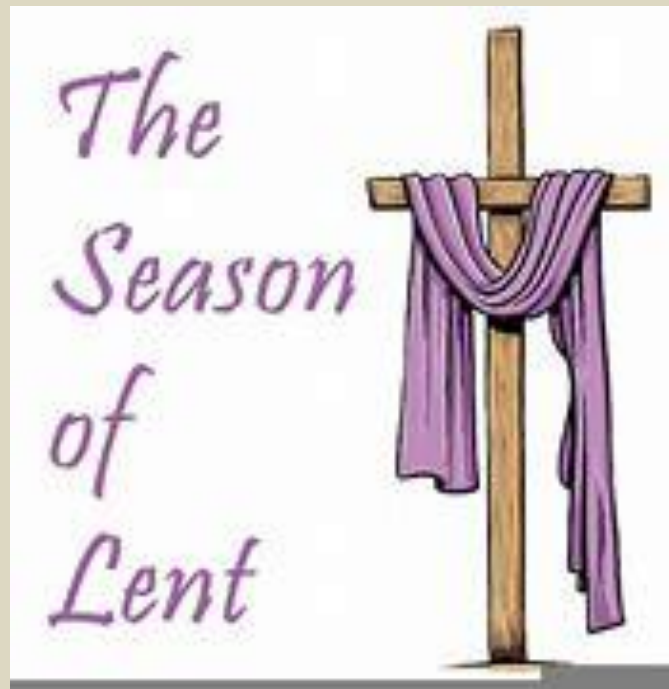
Finally, on the weekend of Friday, February 23 – Sunday, February 25, we will join with Bat Yam in this year’s “*Pulpit Exchange*”.

On Friday, February 23, Mark will preach at Bat Yam’s 6pm Shabbat celebration, while on Sunday, February 25, Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer will bless SCUCC with that morning’s Message.

But that’s not all for that Sunday!

After Worship, the Green Team will be hosting another event – a *Lunch and Learn* with Bat Yam involving a discussion of our hopes to install solar panels at SCUCC. As with the February 7 Green Team event, more on this in the “*From the Green Team*” section of this newsletter.





**LENT BEGINS WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14!**

Yes, we *did* just finish Advent and Christmas. But with Easter being on March 31 this year, the sacred season of Lent starts with an Ash Wednesday service in the Sanctuary on February 14. The time for this gathering will be determined soon.

**2024 LENTEN THEME – “THESE 40 DAYS”**

Noah and his family endure 40 days and nights of rain in the ark. The Israelites wander in the desert for 40 years. David and Solomon each reign as King of Israel for 40 years. Jesus spends 40 days and nights in the wilderness being tempted by the devil.

**The 40 days of Lent.**

The number 40 appears consistently throughout the Bible and the Christian tradition. It is one of those numbers, like 3 or 7, that holds both literal and symbolic meaning. Each Sunday morning during Lent, we will explore one of those passages in which the number 40 appears, focusing both on its meaning for the time and place it was written, and for the 40 days of our journey together through the season of Lent that leads to the celebration of Easter.

## SPIRITUAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

### SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION

**Our first Spiritual Exploration Unit for 2024 begins in January!**

***“Word and Deed: Ethical Living in the Book of James”***

**Tuesdays: January 16, 23, 30; February 6 (February 13 if necessary)  
7:00-8:15pm on Zoom only**

**It is considered the New Testament’s *“Manual for Ethical Christian Living”*.**

**During this unit, we will explore the book of James – closely examining the text, as well as James' sense of what it means to engage in what Buddhist’s call *“right action”* from a Christian perspective when it comes to our daily lives and the society we are part of.**

**As always, you will receive the information you need to join in on these sessions, as well as any advance reading you may be asked to do, on Monday afternoons.**

### BIBLE STUDY

#### **Bible Study Schedule and New Time**

**Bible Study will meet this week on Thursday, January 4 at 10:30am. Please note that Bible Study will take place from 10:30am-Noon from now on.**

**Each week, we explore the Scripture passage(s) being used in Worship that coming Sunday. These sessions are largely “guided discussion” in approach, focusing on your questions and insights from reading the text(s) 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 text speaks to us in our time and lives. In addition, they are great prep for getting more out of the Sunday messages!**



## HEALTHY HAPPENINGS

### **It's a New Year!**

**It's a new year and now's your chance to sit down and set some goals for 2024. The new year often feels like a fresh start and offers a great opportunity to change bad habits and establish new routines that will help you grow psychologically, emotionally, socially, physically, or intellectually. Of course, resolutions are much easier to make than to keep, and by the end of March, many of us have abandoned our resolve and settled back into our old patterns. Part of the problem may be that we do not know how to keep New Year's resolutions, despite our good intentions.**

**Some of the most common resolutions include: Losing weight, sticking to a healthier diet, exercising regularly, Making better financial choices, quitting smoking, and spending more time with family. Any of those sound familiar?**

**Even if resolutions don't always stick, that doesn't mean that resolutions aren't worth making. One survey conducted by YouGov found that people who planned to make New Year's resolutions were more optimistic about the future. So, what can you do to make it more likely that you will keep your next resolution? The following tips may help you beat the odds.**

**Choose a Specific Goal Every year, millions of adults resolve to "lose weight," "be more productive," or "get in shape" during the next year. Instead of selecting such an ambiguous goal, focus on something more concrete that you can realistically set your sights on. In other words, choose a very specific, achievable goal. For example, you might commit to losing 10 pounds, making daily to-do lists, or running a half-marathon. Be sure to make your goal realistic rather than drastic.**

**Limit Your Resolutions While you might have a long list of potential New Year's resolutions, you might want to pick just one and focus your energies on it rather than spreading yourself too thin among a number of different objectives.**

**Focus on One Goal at a Time Achieving even one small goal can boost your belief in yourself. For larger goals, consider breaking them into manageable chunks to work on one at a time. Taking on too much all at once can be daunting. It can be particularly difficult because establishing new behavioral patterns takes time and sustained effort. Focusing on one specific goal makes keeping a resolution much more achievable.**

**Put Time Into Planning Don't wait until the last minute to choose your goal. Picking wisely and putting in extensive planning are essential parts of achieving any goal.**

**Start With Small Steps Taking on too much too quickly is a common reason why so many New Year's resolutions fail. Starting an unsustainably restrictive diet, overdoing it at the gym, or radically altering your normal behavior are surefire ways to derail your plans. Instead, focus on taking tiny steps that will ultimately help you reach your larger goal.**

**Remember That Change Is a Process** Those unhealthy or undesired habits that you are trying to change probably took years to develop, so how can you expect to change them in just a matter of days, weeks, or months? Be patient with yourself. Understand that working toward your resolution is a process. Even if you make a misstep or two, you can restart and continue on your journey towards your goal.

**Get Support** The buddy system actually works. Having a solid support system can help you stay motivated and accountable. Camaraderie makes sticking to your resolution more fun, too. So, ideally, find a like-minded pal or loved one to join you in your goal.

**Keep a Resolution Journal** You can write about your successes and struggles. Write down the reasons why you are working toward your goal or goals so that you can refer to them during times when you feel uninspired and unmotivated. Think about what is causing you to falter (such as stress from work or home life). By sticking with it and working on your goal all year long, you can be one of the few able to say that you really did keep your New Year's resolution—and if you're writing down your progress and strategies, you'll have ready proof of your efforts if you're ever feeling like giving up.

When I am trying to change a behavior, I always go to the Lord in prayer and ask for His help. He promises to strengthen and help us. One of my favorite Scriptures to meditate on when I am struggling or have failed is: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3;22-23)

Happy New Year!  
Caring for you and your health,  
Linda Convertine, Parish Nurse





## A WORD FROM OUR MODERATOR

Greetings SCUCC Family. ❤️

We hope you have enjoyed the holidays, as we have, with family, friends, and memories. Worshiping with all of you, wherever we are and however we participate has been an undeniable joy! Celebrating the major milestones on the Sanibel Causeway is a relief, answered prayer, and lifeline to our community. 2023 certainly turned the corner from near-despair to growing optimism. Thank you all for being a part of this journey.

While the church campus construction is turning the page to important but less urgent projects, (such as lower level and landscape activities) there is still much to do, and the rebuild team still meets at least twice a week with contractors, architect, and insurance consultant.

The finance team has worked diligently to ensure we can fund each project, and still take care of our obligations, staff, and mission commitments. Our nominating committee has been pleased with the willingness of both old and new members to step up to support. There are still a few important opportunities if you would like to be more engaged. Give me a call!!

The Deacons and Hospitality Team have outdone themselves with smiles, treats, and thinking of Everything to keep us feeling welcomed and loved. The brand-new staff is up and running, “keeping the trains running on time”, and looking very nice.

I have been greatly blessed to part of Dr Boyea’s bible study and spiritual exploration sessions as often as possible- I encourage you to “drop-in” to these fun and thought-provoking zooms!

And I will not forget Stewardship - the pledge of funds to continue and grow our SCUCC activities and outreach is vital, and I dare say is still not where it needs to be, but we have faith that more of you will be offering your support.

There are many special dates in the near future, and I hope and pray you will be able to be with us for as many as possible. The Annual Meeting, on January 28th, is one of the first, and will be a great opportunity to review what is going on, future plans, and some new leaders coming onboard. Please plan to join us.

I pray that all of you feel the joy, peace, and love of our church Family, and look forward to being with you all in 2024.

Diana Day



## **THE GREEN TEAM**

### **Can We Build Back Greener?**

**SCUCC is a Creation Justice church based on our covenant in which we promise to “do all we can to protect as well the birds, animals and plants on this fragile barrier island” as well as to “serve and support each other.”**

**The Green Team is seeking to help the church carry out this promise by returning to our previous practices in some ways, such as recycling, and going beyond them in others, such as increasing our care in buying products like paper products. Although we will not be having our annual electronic recycling drop-off this year because we think most of what would usually be recycled was probably lost in hurricane Ian, we want to re-establish our normal recycling practice. Our office manager has ordered new recycling bins and will put signs on them indicating what is recyclable in Lee County. She has also ordered toilet paper, paper towels, and napkins that are made from 100% recycled paper and neither contain chemicals involved in fragrance nor have been bleached with chlorine.**

**We would like to minimize the use of plastic, especially single use, so rather than using bottled water, Jenny has also bought pitchers that filter our tap water. Moreover, we are in discussion with the Deacons about using our efficient dishwasher to wash dishes after meals and coffee hour if we can get volunteers willing to try this. Another topic for discussion with Deacons is whether we could have communion by intinction (dipping individual pieces of bread in a common cup) or buy glass communion cups rather than using single-use plastic communion cups, which are not recyclable in Lee Co.**

**We have started discussing with Trustees replanting native plants and maybe buying a small composter to turn food waste into compost for the plants. An even bigger discussion underway with the Trustees is whether/when we can raise the money to put solar panels on our roof. After the service on Sunday, February 25, at which the Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer from Bat Yam will preach, the Green Team plans to have a Lunch and Learn in the hope of giving both congregations a chance to hear about proposals and ask questions. We will also hear from church members who have had the personal experience of having rooftop solar panels. Please mark your calendars for this important discussion and watch for the sign-up sheets in Fellowship Hall indicating your preference for lunch food!**

**Another event the Green Team is sponsoring on Wednesday, February 7, at 5 pm is a joint potluck with Bat Yam in conjunction with our homecoming celebration on Sunday, February 4. Watch for the sign-up sheets for this vegetarian potluck to indicate what you will bring. We plan to have an icebreaker over drinks (BYO) and appetizers before dinner and hear an amusing conversation about human folly between a representative of God and Adam Everyman, played by Rev Mark and Rabbi Schnitzer, after dinner. Come for a fun evening of getting acquainted or reacquainted with members of both congregations and rededicate yourself to the care of God’s creation!**



## **NEW YEAR INVITATION**

**Two New Offerings at Sanibel United Church of Christ  
Fellowship Hall**

**Beginning January 10, 2024**

**Mindful Chair Yoga Wednesdays 10:00-10:45**

**Explore being fully present in Mind, Body, and Spirit with Mindful Chair Yoga. Grounding the practice in mindful breathing, we will move through seated warm-ups. We will use the support of the chair for standing and balancing postures. Class will end with a guided embodiment meditation.**

**Mindfulness Meditation Wednesdays 11:00-11:45**

**Using the teachings of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh and Plum Village we will explore the path, “Peace in Oneself and Peace on the Earth”. In our time together there will be a short reading from “Zen and the Art of Saving the Planet”, a 10 minute silent sitting meditation (with guidelines if you are new to sitting), a 5 minute walking meditation, followed by an optional sharing of your practice experience. We end with a dedication to the Teachings from all Traditions, our Communities, and the Earth.**

**Facilitator: Eleanor Miller. After retiring from Public Health Nursing, I became a Certified Kripalu Yoga Teacher. I have practiced and trained with many skilled Yoga Teachers. Yoga helps to open the energy channels of the body to allow the flow of life force.**

**I have practiced meditation with the Plum Village Tradition since 2016. I hold dual belongings, to the Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ and Zen Mindfulness Meditation in the Plum Village Tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh. I find the benefits of Yoga and meditation practice offers insights to living more peacefully and compassionately in these tumultuous times.**

**Please join me. Eleanor Miller**

**eleheamiller@gmail.com**



## **FELLOWSHIP TIME VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

If you would like to help prepare and serve refreshments for Fellowship Time after Worship on Sundays, please sign up on the sheet found on the table in the back of the Fellowship Hall. It is easy, and assistance will be available if needed. For more information, please contact Nancy Deffenbaugh at [njdedeffe@gmail.com](mailto:njdedeffe@gmail.com).



## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Church Office Hours**

The Church Office is now open Monday-Friday, from 9am-3pm.

Mark is normally on the campus Tuesday-Thursday pending pastoral visits or off-site meetings. Please feel free to just “drop by” or make an appointment directly with him by email: [mark@sanibelucc.org](mailto:mark@sanibelucc.org) or text/phone call: 908-477-5426.

Please note that the Church Office will be closed on Monday, January 1 and Tuesday, January 2 in celebration of New Year's.

### **Shell Point Men's Group January Luncheon**

The Sanibel Congregational UCC Shell Point Men's Group will have its next monthly luncheon meeting Tuesday, January 9 at noon at the Palm Grill in the Woodlands Common. Please make reservations with Candy Atchison at [JimAtch@aol.com](mailto:JimAtch@aol.com) or 561-714-4655.

### **Shell Point Women's Group January Luncheon**

The Sanibel Congregational UCC, Shell Point Women's Group will have its next monthly luncheon meeting Friday, January 12 at 11:30am at the Palm Grill in the Woodlands Common. Please make reservations with Emily Kletzien at [emily.kletzien@gmail.com](mailto:emily.kletzien@gmail.com)

### **Be An Artist**

Anyone interested in painting in any medium is welcome to join our Art Class beginning Tuesday January 9, from noon to 3:00pm in Fellowship Hall. Carol Good will be teaching a beginner's watercolor class at the same time for anyone who would like to learn. Please contact her at 618-201-6252 for more information.

### **INTERESTED IN JOINING SCUCC???**

If you are considering becoming a member of SCUCC, or would simply like to find out more about us, please let Rev. Mark know. After you and he discuss the expectations and, as the old commercial says, “the benefits of membership”, you and he can schedule a Sunday that works best for you to become an official part of the SCUCC community.

## **Like A Ride To Worship?**

If you would like a ride to Sunday Worship from Shell Point or Cypress Cove, please contact the Church Office at [office@sanibelucc.org](mailto:office@sanibelucc.org) by Noon on Thursdays.

## **FEBRUARY 2024 SANIBEL LIGHT DEADLINE**

Please note that the deadline for submissions to the January 2024 edition of the *Sanibel Light* is **Wednesday, January 24, 2024**.

Please send all submissions, as a Word document, to Tammy Flatley [tammy@sanibelucc.org](mailto:tammy@sanibelucc.org) and Jenny Chacon [jenny@sanibelucc.org](mailto:jenny@sanibelucc.org)

## **YOU'VE GOT PLANS: SANIBEL & CAPTIVA**

### **Mindful Chair Yoga and Meditation at SCUCC.**

**Starts January 10<sup>th</sup> in Fellowship Hall**

**Chair Yoga 10:00 AM -10:45AM**

**Meditation 11:00AM 11:45AM**

**Guided By SCUCC Member -Elenor Miller**

### **Sanibel Community House Arts and Crafts Fair**

**Fine art, jewelry, greeting cards, shell crafts, handmade decor, fun accessories, delicious baked goods, and more from artists and makers! The fair will be indoors at the Sanibel Community House on Sun, Jan 14, 9AM-2PM.**

### **Sanibel Public Library**

**Evening With the Author Ongoing Event**

**All Day 1/15 - 1/17**

### **BIG ARTS Sanibel**

**Anthony McGill, Clarinet, Susanna Phillips, Soprano, & Myra Huang, Piano  
Metropolitan Opera star and New York philharmonic clarinet and piano virtuosos  
will dazzle and delight us with their artistry. Phone: (239) 395-0900**

### **Sanibel Invitational Art Fest**

**Jan 26, 2-9PM**

### **Other Events**

**Ticket orders are now available for the 37<sup>th</sup> season of The Sanibel Music Festival.  
Concerts start March 5, 2024. Concert Information: (239) 344-702**

**Spring Training at Jet Blue Stadium with the [Boston Red Sox](#) Starts in March 2024  
Volunteering opportunities sign-up available starting January 2024. For ticket and other  
information: 239-226-4700**

## **BITS & BOBS**

### **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 [Jenny@sanibelucc.org](mailto:Jenny@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.**

**Mark Boyea**

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

**Jenny Chacon**

**[jenny@sanibelucc.org](mailto:jenny@sanibelucc.org)**

**Tammy Flatley**

**[tammy@sanibelucc.org](mailto:tammy@sanibelucc.org)**

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

### **Office Hours**

**Monday – Friday**

**9:00-3:00pm**

