The Sanibel





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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...

On the evening of April 22, I was honored to both attend and participate in Bat Yam's Passover Seder in our Fellowship Hall. It was an evening of ritual, prayer, singing, dancing, eating – lots of good eating! – and...nuance...

Throughout the evening, whether in prayer, song, commentary from Rabbi Schnitzer, or a couple of particular conversations I had with other attendees, I was struck by the nuance – the subtlety – exhibited. The nuance of it all in relation to the significantly different circumstances surrounding *this* seder, it coming in the midst of the continuing war between Israel and Hamas, the ongoing protests in cities and on college campuses, and the rise in both anti-Semitic and, but to a lesser degree, anti-Palestinian rhetoric and action.

And the nuance captured in the poem I was asked to read that evening...

A Plague Poem was written by Rabbi Margaret Frisch Klein, and is rooted in this story from the Talmud which is a commentary on a vital part of the Passover story in Exodus:

"The Egyptians were drowning in the sea. At the same time, the angels wanted to sing before God, and the Lord God said to them, "My creations are drowning, and you are singing before Me?"

The poem reads:

My creatures are drowning Why are you singing? A drop of wine A drop of blood Not just 10 for the plagues Too many drops to count this year Maybe every year A drop of wine A drop of blood A tunnel is a narrow place A very narrow place We weep for each life lost Child, woman, man Every Gazan, every Israeli Every soldier Every non-combatant Every victim from any country Every person Each created in the image of the Divine A drop of wine A drop of blood We weep for each victim Each victim of terror Each victim of sexual assault Each victim of displacement Each victim of brutality Each victim of promises made And promises shattered Each victim searching for water And searching for food And searching for safety *Searching for school* And searching for healing Each victim of fear We pray that soon All will be out of the tunnels Out of the narrow places *God admonished the angels* "My creatures are drowning and you rejoice?" A drop of wine A drop of blood Too many drops this year We cannot sing this year Next year may all be free Out of the narrow places

For me, the poem demonstrates a wise and necessary grasp of the nuance; the subtlety; the complexity of all that is currently happening in Israel and Gaza, as well as in our nation and around the world in response to it. A nuance that seems to be so glaringly missing from so many opinions and attitudes toward it all. An inability on the part of so many to speak and behave with a nuanced understanding which recognizes that two things can be true at the same time. For example:

that the Palestinian people have concerns which deserve to be respected and addressed, but that **nothing**, **nothing** justifies, or is to be respected or celebrated, when it comes to the actions of Hamas on October 7, nor its stated intention to eliminate not just the state of Israel but all Jews. That baseline desire on Hamas's part must never be minimized or disregarded;

that while anti-Semitism continues to be an unacceptable moral, ethical and spiritual stain on humanity, to be critical of the policies and decisions of Israel's political leaders now – or at any time – is not automatically anti-Semitic. If that were true, data indicates that many Jews both in and outside of Israel are anti-Semitic, which is, of course, a ridiculous suggestion. It seems little different than saying it is "anti-American" to disagree with the policies and decisions of *our* nation's leaders. But of course, as we know, proclaiming loudly and vehemently that those who disagree with you are the enemy has become a common rhetorical tactic for leaders and their supporters to engage in throughout the world;

that while the freedom to speak for or against any aspect, person or group involved must be protected, freedom rightly understood morally, ethically and spiritually – not to mention in the understanding of our and other democratic countries' constitutions – is not and was never meant to be *license* – permission to say and do whatever we want. It does not give us the right to speak in a way which encourages or provokes - let alone explicitly *calls* for – violence against any individual or group of people based upon their religious or ethnic identity;

and most of all, the nuance Rabbi Klein's poem forces us to face: that the person or group we disagree with, are angry at, perhaps hate, or are even at war with, is also created by God.

And that is one thing which, in God's eyes, no nuance is needed or wanted.

Mark Rev. Dr. Mark Boyea Senior Minister



WORSHIP NOTES

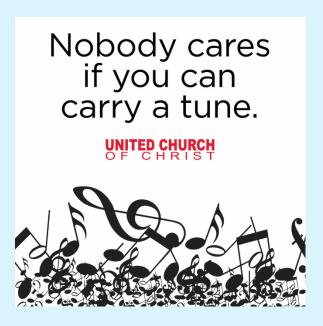
In April, we celebrated the Sacrament of Communion and our latest "Ask the Minister" day on Sunday, April 7. During Worship that morning, instead of a Message, Mark spent that time answering several of your biblical, theological, spiritual and personal questions The segment was once again enthusiastically received.

Then later that same day, we hosted this year's *Interfaith Shared Scholars Program* at 3pm in the Sanctuary. This year's gathering featured a panel discussion involving five Sanibel/Captiva clergy regarding experiences and learnings in the immediate aftermath of and 18 months since Hurricane Ian.

Then, on Sunday, April 21, we commemorated *Earth Day/Creation Justice Sunday* with a 10am Worship time themed around our call to care for the Creation God has blessed us with, especially as members of a designated *Creation Justice* congregation of the UCC.

In May, we will be blessed with a Message from our friend Pastor Brian Culbertson of our "home away from home," Refuge Church in Fort Myers, on Sunday, May 5, as Mark will be away presiding over a wedding in North Carolina. Kathy Carter will serve as our Worship Leader that day, and Shirley Witte as Musical Leader with Mackenzie also being away that Sunday.

Then, on Sunday, May 12, we will celebrate the Sacrament of Communion as a spiritual community in honor of all the mothers, grandmothers, and all women who have served as mother figures to us.



GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Bible Study Schedule

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!

In May, Bible Study will meet on the following Thursdays: May 9, 23 and 30

You will receive the information you need to join in on these sessions, as well as the passages you need to read in advance, on Wednesday afternoons.

SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION

"Blessed Are Who???: The Beatitudes Then and Now"

Tuesdays: May 7, 21 and 28

7:00-8:15pm on Zoom

The "Beatitudes" are among the most influential spiritual teachings in human history. They have appeared in and influenced literature, politics, and moral and ethical philosophy.

In this five-week unit, we are exploring the Beatitudes as they are presented to us by both Matthew's and Luke's Gospels, how they would have been understood in Jesus' time and the time those gospels were written, and how they might speak to us in this time.



A NOTE FROM THE MODERATOR

It's that time of the year again: Hurricane Season.

The season officially starts June 1st and continues through November. And, unfortunately, forecasters are predicting 2024 to be one of the most active on record. Accuweather.com meteorologists forecast 20-25 named storms across the Atlantic basin, including 8-12 hurricanes this season. Hurricane Ian in 2022 taught us all a lesson, so we need to be prepared for what's possible.

SCUCC has a Hurricane Preparedness Manual for the Church that outlines a plan of action to prepare our campus and buildings in the event of a significant weather event. This plan is currently in the process of being updated and Carl Smigiel will be the Response Coordinator, assisted by Eric Pfeifer.

If you haven't already done so, now is the time for you to personally prepare. There are numerous resources and guides available to help you in the process including:

www.cdc.gov

www.ready.gov

www.accuweather.com

In the event of a significant weather event the Church website, https://www.sanibelucc.org will have current information regarding whether or not Worship will be held, as well whether or not, and when, the Church Office will be open.

In the meantime, be prepared and enjoy the good weather!

Neal Halleran, Moderator



HEALTHY HAPPENINGS

Nutritional Immune Defense

The immune system is your body's network of organs, tissues and cells that work together to keep you healthy by fighting off harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi. It acts as a barrier between your body and the things that make you sick. Your immune system can become compromised by dietary, environmental and lifestyle insults. A compromised immune system can lead to frequent illness, such as the common cold and flu, as well as more serious infections and diseases, including cancer.

In this article, I would like to address diet as a factor in immune defense. 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 autoimmune diseases, since low levels are associated with a higher risk of multiple sclerosis, diabetes and other autoimmune-related disorders. Some studies on levels of vitamin D show a direct link to T-cell production, which is an important part of your body's defense mechanism. 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/or 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, orange and red fruits and vegetables, such as peppers, tomatoes, carrots, apples and cantaloupe.

<u>Vitamin E</u> Vitamin E is a powerful antioxidant known to reduce the risk of inflammation-related diseases, protect your body from cell damage, and fight oxidative stress that can lead to illness. Vitamin E is found in many nuts, seeds, vegetables, and oils. Sunflower seeds are full of Vitamin E, containing 82% of the daily value in just one quarter cup.

Zinc is an essential nutrient for everyone. It is also a powerful antioxidant known to support the immune system. Meat, shellfish and dairy are good sources of zinc. Some plant-based sources include the avacado, hemp seeds, green peas, lima beans, lentils and the whole grain kamut.

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. As it turns out, some of the best immune supporters are found in the produce aisle, so stock up and enjoy good food while boosting your health.

Caring for you and your health, Linda Convertine Parish Nurse

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. (Proverbs 4:23 NRSV)



FROM THE GREEN TEAM

How To Go Green in Your Kitchen-Part 1

Planning, shopping, cooking and cleaning feel like never-ending tasks as we work to secure three meals a day, seven days a week for our households. We're constantly in our kitchens, and this has forced many of us to become that much more aware of the environmental impact of our meals.

Here are 10 easy ways to help your kitchen become more environmentally mindful. You can start small and easy with those that work best for your circumstances. It's all worth our while!

- 1. When boiling water in a pot, put a lid on it. It helps retain the heat in the water making it come to a boil faster.
- 2. When it comes to cleaning messes or draining foods, try using flour-sack dishtowels or Swedish dishcloths rather than paper towels. While trees for paper pulp can be replanted, it takes 10 years for a tree to regrow. Flour-sack towels specifically set aside for cleaning and mopping are far more ecofriendly. Swedish dishcloths made from 70% cellulose and 30% cotton are reusable and fully biodegradable/compostable (available from Amazon and others). These long-lasting dishcloths absorb 20 times their weight in water, dry faster than sponges, and can be dishwasher or machine washed. One Swedish dishcloth can do the work of 50 to 100 rolls of paper towels! https://www.tasteofhome.com/article/swedish-dishcloths/

Bamboo paper towels are also reusable and biodegrade more quickly than traditional paper towels.

- 3. Parchment paper is great for simplifying cleanup and keeping foods from sticking, but it, along with aluminum foil, can also be reused. As long as it's not ripped or extremely soiled, simply wipe it down (or even throw it in the dishwasher in the case of aluminum foil), fold it up and save it for another use. Looking for a more durable option? Silicone baking mats make cleanup a breeze.
- 4. Instead of plastic wrap for covering containers of food try either containers with glass lids or go for the reusable bee's wax coated fabric sheets (available on Amazon).
- 5. Make reusable shopping bags a habit and ditch plastic bags. When shopping most fruits and vegetables can be placed in a reusable cotton mesh bag and taken to the checkout area as you will be washing them once you get them home anyway. After checking out, your groceries can be gathered in reusable cloth bags for transportation to your home and into your kitchen.
- 6. Tired of tossing plastic zip-top bags in the trash? Just hand wash and dry thoroughly and they can live to see another day. However, you shouldn't reuse plastic bags that contained raw meat, seafood or eggs. For a modest investment, silicone food storage bags are extremely durable (available on Amazon).

- 7. We are all tired of washing dishes, even with the help of an automatic dishwasher but when it comes to the environment, pulling out those dishes, utensils, and cloth napkins from the cabinet (even for picnics and BBQ's) can't be beat compared to one-time-use paper plates, napkins, and plastic silverware.
- 8. Save the water you use rinsing rice, dried legumes and produce. It can be used for watering your plants, indoors and out.
- 9. Run the dishwasher only when full and use the economy/short cycle whenever feasible.
- 10. When cooking a small amount, use smaller counter-top appliances that use less energy and give off less heat, saving electricity and air conditioning costs.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/food/interactive/2021/green-kitchen-eco-friendly-tips/



FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A Sneak Peek at The Next Phase of Ian Recovery



The next phase of recovery is in process, and includes many items, large and small, to continue restoration and improve our campus.

Members and friends have reached out to support some of these - and suggested other improvements that are being reviewed and planned. Your input and support are welcome in helping identify, and ultimately fund/ support these identified efforts. Some are already in process or completed!

Projects (** Priority)

- Lower-Level Restrooms **
- Nurses Office
- Entrance Landscape and New Sign **
- · Memorial Garden Upgrade Design (path, benches, plantings, plaque-stones)
- · Office Area Repair and Update
- Solar Power and LED Lighting
- · Lower-Level reimagining and design
- · Parking Lot Lighting **
- Overall Landscape Plan and Implementation in phases (some sections already sponsored)

Labyrinth Garden

Parking islands

Fountain

- Kitchen upgrades
- Piano (already sponsored!)

We anticipate a total approaching One Million Dollars to finish these efforts, some supported through FEMA.

Be on the lookout for these great improvements.

Diana Day will be happy to review/discuss any of the projects and answer your questions.

PARTICIPATION AT SCUCC

Be An Artist

Anyone interested in painting in any medium is welcome to join our Art Class on Tuesdays 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.



A Request from the Mission & Benevolence Committee

Thank you for your continuing support of the Gladiolus Food Pantry. The food box in the narthex runneth over! They are now short canned corn and canned peas, when possible, please include these with your other items. A can for cash has also been added to the food box if you so desire to make cash contributions.

Donations can be placed in the collection chest inside the entrance to the Sanctuary.





Bat Yam celebrates Passover Seder April 22, 2024











Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer Bat Yam Temple of the Islands

Dearest Friends,

Some of the most moving and conspicuous parts of the Passover Seder have a surprising common denominator -- the repetition of the number four. There are four cups of wine, four sons, and four questions. We also have four names for the Passover (Pesach) Holiday.

The word Pesach is derived from the ancient Hebrew word "Posach", which means to "skip over" or "pass over". It commemorates the tenth plague when the Plague of the Death of the Firstborn "passed over" the homes of the Israelites in Egypt. Pesach signifies the end of oppression and slavery under an Egyptian Pharaoh some 3000 years ago. The Pesach festival is also known by these names, some of which predate the Exodus from Egypt.

Chag Ha-Pesach

Chag ha-Pesach or "Festival of the Pesach." This festival was celebrated by the Jews even before the events of Exodus to welcome the arrival of the spring season. A "paschal" or "Pesach" lamb was sacrificed to God as token of gratitude for the renewal of springtime.

Chag Ha-Matzot

Chag Ha-Matzot, the "Festival of Unleavened Bread" (Matzah). According to the book of Exodus, the Israelites departed so hastily from Egypt that they could not wait for bread to rise. So, to observe the festive occasion, no leavened bread or baked goods are eaten during the festival.

Chag Ha-Cheirut

Chag Ha-Cheirut, known as the "Festival of Freedom." This name for the festival reminds us of the journey of the Israelites from slavery, and by extension all of humanity, attaining freedom and redemption from all forms of oppression.

Chag Ha-Aviv

Chag ha-Aviv is the Spring Festival, which marks the beginning of the new planting season. The word Aviv can be translated as a kernel of grain that has reached full size. The festival marks the barley harvest and the simultaneous planting of summer wheat.



All of us realize there is so much need for building efforts after Ian; our Church is among one of the hardest hit. The greater world around us shouldn't be forgotten or put on the back burner. Our Church has supported Habitat for Humanity, Lee & Hendry counties for years. Our congregation even built two houses, financially and physically.

Donna Aldrich and I have formed a team to try and raise funds for the 2024 Women Build. There are two houses, North Ft. Myers and Cape Coral, presently under construction. Donna has built houses for over 30 years. We were co-chairs of two Women Build Houses in Harlem Heights. Between the two of us, there are over 45 years of building for Habitat.

There were 52 female-headed households partnered in 2023-2024. Help us help a Mother and her children attain the dream of home ownership. With the stability and safety their homes provide, the future will be better and brighter. Let us together give the thrill, excitement and blessing to a deserving and qualified Habitat for Humanity homeowner.

Checks may be written to Habitat for Humanity, Lee & Hendry Counties, 12751 New Brittany Blvd, #100, Ft. Myers, FL 33907; please put DedeDonna on the memo line.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with me at 239-691-8260 or dmdar66@gmail.com.

Thank you so much for your support, Dede D'Arcy



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church Office Hours

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

Please note, the office is closed on Monday, May 27, in observance of Memorial Day.

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 or text/phone call: 908-477-5426.

Fellowship Time Volunteers Wanted

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 Fellowship Hall. It is easy, and assistance will be available if needed. Donations of light fare and/or help with serving or cleanup will be greatly appreciated. Join us this Sunday, May 5th after service for some special treats and find out how easy it is to participate in this weekly fun event.

Shell Point Men's Group May Luncheon

The Sanibel Congregational UCC Shell Point Men's Group will have its next monthly luncheon meeting on Tuesday, May 14 at noon at the Palm Grill in the Woodlands Common. Please make reservations with Candy Atchison at JimAtch@aol.com or 561-714-4655.

Shell Point Women's Group May Luncheon

The Sanibel Congregational UCC, Shell Point Women's Group will have its next monthly luncheon meeting on Friday, May 10 at 11:30am at the Palm Grill in the Woodlands Common. Please make reservations with Emily Kletzien at emily.kletzien@gmail.com.

Dinners for 6, 7 or 8

One of our most loved offerings are the social gatherings known as "Dinner for 6, 7 or 8". If you would like to participate, please send your names, email addresses and phone numbers to Shirley Akins at akinsteach@gmail.com.

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.

<u>Like A Ride To Worship?</u>

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

JUNE 2024 SANIBEL LIGHT DEADLINE

Please note that the deadline for submissions to the June 2024 edition of the Sanibel Light is Friday, May 24, 2024.

Please send all submissions, as a Word document, to Tammy Flatley tammy@sanibelucc.org AND Jenny Chacon jenny@sanibelucc.org

YOU'VE GOT PLANS: SANIBEL & CAPTIVA

FROM THE SANIBEL COMMUNITY HOUSE

Shell Crafters – The Originals

Observe the original Sanibel Island Artists at work from 10am-1pm. A shell crafting class starts at 10am, the class is free, just pay for supplies which usually are between \$5-10.

Other beautiful items are available for purchase. All sales benefit the operations of the non-profit historical Community House. Your support is greatly appreciated!

TIME: 10:00AM - 1:00PM

RECURS: Mondays

LOCATION: 2173 Periwinkle Way Sanibel, FL 33957 United States

ADMISSION: Free Admission

BITS & BOBS

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, please send a request by email to 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

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Office Hours

Monday – Friday

9:00-3:00pm

