

J A N U A R Y 2 0 1 8

The Open Door



Faith United Church of Christ
1650 Pinehurst Rd. Dunedin, FL 34698
727-799-4602 – www.faithucc.org

LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE

Please welcome longtime Faith UCC Member Molly Hancock to the Leadership Team! Molly will be taking on the role of Congregational Life Leader, linking the many core teams and groups and other ministries to the Leadership Team and helping them with any issues, requests or guidance they might be seeking. She will also help dream the future of our church.

Welcome Molly!

2018 LEADERSHIP

Ivan Liss
Moderator

LizBeth Cone
Visioning & Planning Leader

Ron Hughes
Financial Development Leader

Molly Hancock
Congregational Life Leader

Rev. Mike MacMillan
Pastor

Wendy Brand
Clerk

Fran Mitchell
Financial Secretary

Dear Faith UCC Friends,

As we journey into 2018, and bid farewell to the year that was, I wish you all a blessed and happy and healthy New Year.

As the calendar turns from 2017 to 2018, I know something people begin thinking about are resolutions. As I like to say, 'every year we make them - and every year we break them!' Some are big resolutions. For example, the other day I heard an interview on NPR with the Author Ann Patchett, who last year gave up shopping for the entire year! Other than for her basic needs, there was no shopping. Wow. Other resolutions are smaller – exercising more, cutting down on this or that or any other number of things. In any sense, each year we hope that we can make some changes that will lead us to feel a little more whole. Resolutions are a good thing. And I wish you the best with yours!

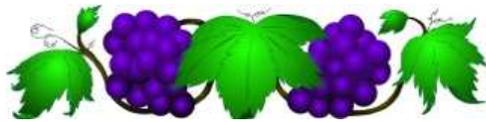
The other night, at Theology on Tap (*at which I broke my New Year's resolution to give up beer!*), I challenged the group to think about some 'spiritual resolutions' that they could take up as we journey into this new year. I think so often when we think of resolutions, we only think of the physical or practical. All too often we neglect the 'spiritual' dimension of our lives in terms of how we plan to cultivate the mystery of God that 'we live and move share our being within.' How can we tap into that experience in a new way this year? How can we commune with this mystery of God more intentionally this year? How can we experience the amazing presence of the 'divine mystery' that we are enveloped within in a more profound way this year? Spiritual resolutions can help us here. They can include more time spent in stillness, meditation or prayer. They can be more time spent enacting love into the world in terms of justice work. They can be more time spent serving others. They can be more time reading books or listening to podcasts with a spiritual emphasis. They can be anything that leads you to the experience of Holy that is always unfolding within you and around you in richer ways. So I invite you to make at least one spiritual resolution this year. And at the end of the year, like Ann Patchett and her no shopping, I think you will find yourself transformed in ways you didn't imagine. *Peace, Pastor Mike*

FREE DUNEDIN MLK UNITY BREAKFAST

Celebrate the works and life of Martin Luther King Jr. with a FREE Unity Breakfast on **Saturday, January 13th at 8:30am**. The breakfast is presented by Dunedin Parks and Recreation and is partnered with Shiloh Baptist Church (*Pastor Cliff Bell*). Come enjoy the breakfast and hear from speakers at the MLK Jr. Recreation Center, 550 Lara, Lane in Dunedin, from 8:30am-10:30am. There will be a Unity March to follow at 10:30am to Pioneer Park for live entertainment. Join your friends from Faith UCC for this Dunedin interfaith program with our neighbors! No reservations required.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO MAKE A PLEDGE!

We have officially entered the New Year and the preliminary budget has been presented at December's Congregational Meeting, but you can still make a pledge to support the church in 2018! Pledging is so important to us as a church as it helps the Finance Team put together the budget for the coming year to funding particular ministries and staff salaries, as well as projecting the covering of ongoing bills and expenses. Knowing what the church can expect to receive in giving for the calendar year is extremely helpful in this vital process. Please, if you have not already done so, make a pledge for 2018! Thank you!



ANNUAL WINTER WINE TASTING EVENT!

Thursday, January 18th
6:30pm – 8:00pm.

Selected wines from different wine regions will be provided for your tasting followed by commentary from our in-house 'Sommelier,' Pastor Mike.

Those attending are asked to bring an hors d'oeuvre (*suggestions: cheese/crackers; dips/chips; meatballs; sausages; veggies; fruit, nuts; pretzels; veggie pizza; salsa/chips; deviled eggs; or any kind of finger food of your liking*). Donations to offset the cost of the wines will be appreciated.

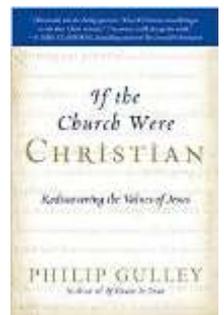
Please sign up for this event ASAP so we may have an idea of numbers for both seating and how many bottles of each type of wine to purchase. If you do not prefer wine, come for the food and socializing! Non-alcoholic beverages will be provided. There is a sign up sheet is on the table in the back of the sanctuary for your convenience.

THANK YOU BETH ANN VOM EIGEN!

A special 'Thank You' to Beth Ann vom Eigen for her leadership as Congregational Life Leader on the Leadership Team for the 2017 year. Beth Ann was instrumental in helping to shape and define the important role of being the liaison between our many core teams/groups and ministries and the Leadership Team as we journeyed into our new structure. We thank her for her love of this church and its ministries and look forward to both her and Carl's return from Austin, TX in the near future, where they are caring for family. In the meantime, let us hold the vom Eigen family in our hearts and prayers, that a deep sense of peace might grip them all in this time. Peace be with you friends...

THURSDAY SPIRITUAL STUDY GROUP

The Thursday Spiritual Study Group is gearing up after a break for Christmas and New Year's. The group will begin a new book called "If the Church Were Christian: Rediscovering the Values of Jesus," by Quaker Minister Philip Gulley. This book asks the question of what the church might look like if it truly refocused itself on the values and priorities of Jesus. It is sure to challenge us to begin to discern what we are called to as a church. The Spiritual Study Group meets Thursday's, from 10:30am to Noon. Contact Pastor Mike to secure a book or go ahead and order it online. All are welcome, whether you can come each week or only so often!



FACEBOOK AND TWITTER!

Don't forget to check us out on Facebook and Twitter! Visit often for Faith UCC updates, UCC National/Conference news, spiritual articles and more! Visiting these sites is as easy as going to our website (www.faithucc.org). Links are right there on the homepage for easy access!



FAITH STITCHERS REPORT & GRACE HOUSE UPDATE

The Grace House Christmas Party was a big success. Thanks to all of you who helped bring joy to so many homeless children. In all, gift-filled stockings were given to 49 children. Almost half of them were delighted to be presented with their stocking by Santa (*Pastor Mike*). The rest had their stockings distributed to them by the staff at Grace House. The looks on their faces told it all – sheer delight!

In mid-January, we will begin stitching stockings for the 2018 party. The machines are currently being cleaned and tuned, as we take a short break. Once we have 60 stockings done, we will turn our attention to sewing dresses for the children in Haiti. If you are interested in helping in that endeavor, bring us any cotton or cotton/poly shirts or blouses that you no longer want (worn collar and/or cuffs no problem, as we will use the main body as material for the dresses) OR donate some suitable fabric.

New members are always welcome. So, if you enjoy sewing, come join us. We meet every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month from 10:00am to 3:00pm – but, we are flexible. Come when you can – leave when you have to. We meet at Peg’s Studio, and break around noon to eat our bag lunches. Contact Peg LeFebvre, if interested (727-580-0324). Here are some photos to enjoy!



WORSHIP LEADERSHIP FOR JANUARY

Readers

- January 7th – Priscilla Morrison
- January 14th - Peg LeFebvre
- January 21st – Fran Mitchell
- January 28th – Bill Bingham

Greeters

- January 7th – Gary Hart, Marge & Don Miller
- January 14th - Kathy Doucette, Linda & Ron Royer
- January 21st – Pam & Chuck Stiers, *Needed*
- January 28th – Pam & Chuck Stiers, *Needed*

LIFE IS LIFE***Make Compassion Your Personal Goal – By LizBeth Cone***

A new year, much like a new day, gives us a place to begin again. Last year was exciting, challenging, and interesting for most of us. I'm going to work on making 2018 a kinder, gentler and more compassionate time for myself. I hope you will consider it as well.

Life can bring us great joy. It can also create situations that unsettle us. Much of this we cannot control. We can learn to respond differently both to difficult times and to ourselves when we struggle to cope.

Having a compassionate focus is one coping method during tough times. When things are hard, it is easy for us to lose our perspective, feel inadequate, become self-critical, and feel much worse. I'd like to look at how we can help ourselves by developing self-kindness and self-compassion.

Our brains are set up with a number of emotion systems that give us different feelings. For simplicity, let's call them Threat System, Drive System and Soothing System.

Threat system: The three basic threat emotions are anxiety, anger, and disgust. These emotions are designed to keep us safe.

Drive system: Your body is likely to feel full of energy! This is the system that drives us to eat and drink, do well and achieve, or fall in love. It rewards us with feelings of joy, happiness, excitement, and pleasure. Sometimes it works too well, and we lose control. Binge eating or exercising, frequently checking texts, or compulsive shopping are signs of control issues.

Soothing system: This system helps us feel calm, contented, safe, and peaceful. This system activates when someone is kind to us, when we are held by someone we love, or when someone smiles at us.

With the three systems in mind, we can focus on moving to our soothing system by the kindness of our own voice, face, thoughts and behavior. The goal is to strengthen the soothing system by strengthening our use of the five main attributes of compassion:

Kindness—Warmth—Acceptance—Wisdom—Strength of Character

Our brains are hard-wired to be close to people and to seek help and soothing when distressed. It is the soothing system that can most effectively calm our distress. The compassion attributes help us accept and understand ourselves as we are, but help us move forward, develop, and change through creative decisions and solutions.

An exercise:

We might not be able to change the outside threat, but we can try to change the threat from the inside. Imagine having two voices telling you about a situation. The first is a critical, humiliating, angry voice. It might seem horrible or scary. It might make you feel angry, anxious or beaten down.

Now imagine the second voice as a kind, warm, wise, strong, and accepting. What facial expression do you reflect when this voice is engaged? What does it sound like when it talks to you? Which voice will best help you come to a positive solution or decision?

Christopher Germer, in his book *The Mindful Way to Self-Compassion*, likened developing self-compassion to planting a tulip bulb; you clear the weeds and put in compost to really prepare the ground. You plant the bulb and then you imagine growing it with warmth, kindness, wisdom and strength, and acceptance. Nothing seems to happen, and you don't feel you are getting anywhere, but perhaps without you realizing it, the green shoot is growing up through the soil. One day you are surprised to see the green shoot appear out of the soil and you realize that all your effort has paid off. You can select the voice speaking to you. You can select the face looking at you in the mirror. Make 2018 more peaceful and loving for yourself by selecting compassion and love for yourself.

United Faiths Walk of Peace

DUNEDIN, FLORIDA

SPONSORS

Taoist Tai Chi Society

Masjid Al Salaam

Root Healing Zen

St. Mark Lutheran Church

Interfaith Tampa Bay

St. Francis of Assisi

Open Door Church

Faith UCC Dunedin

Congregation Beth Shalom

The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd

First United Methodist Church of Dunedin

First Presbyterian Church of Dunedin

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Community

Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church Oldsmar

Dunedin, Clearwater, & Pinellas Baha'i Communities

Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater

City of Dunedin Parks and Recreation

We invite EVERYONE
to walk, talk, connect,
and strive for peace
among all people
in the nation and the world.

Gather at John R. Lawrence Pioneer Park

400 Main Street, Dunedin, FL

to walk together about 2 miles through Dunedin
stopping at several venues

for reflections from a variety of faith leaders on Peace

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4

#UFWalkOfPeace

2PM

facebook

For more information, contact the Rev. Becky Robbins-Penniman • 727-733-4125 • RevSBRP@gmail.com

Ongoing Events @ Faith UCC

Worship @ Faith

Sundays – 10:30am (*Communion is on the first Sunday of each month*)

Centering & Communion Service

Tuesday – 9:30am

'Life is Life' Group

2nd & 4th Tuesday's – 7:00pm

'Faithfully Aging' Group

4th Wednesday's – Noon

Books & Meditation Group

Wednesday's – 5:00pm

Choir Rehearsal

Wednesdays – 6:30pm

Faith Stitches (*At Peg LeFebvre's Studio*)

1st & 3rd Wednesday's - 10:00am

Theology on Tap

1st Thursday's – 6:30pm (*Offsite*)

Spiritual Study

Thursdays – 10:30am

PFLAG

4th Thursday's – 7:00pm

12 Steps For Everyone

Fridays – 10:00am

HEP Food Service

3rd Tuesday's – 11:45am @ HEP

4th Friday's – 4:15pm - @ HEP

Faith United Church of Christ Mission Statement

The Mission of Faith United Church of Christ is to be a progressive spiritual voice rooted in the mystery of God. Through intentionally inclusive fellowship, challenging spiritual education and lively advocacy around issues of justice, we seek to inspire spiritual journeys as we follow the Jesus way of love and peace in the world.



Remember to follow us on Facebook and Twitter – search FaithUCCDunedin

Faith United Church of Christ

1650 Pinehurst Rd.
Dunedin, FL 34698