



The Happening

MAY 2023

Mission of the Month

Children's Ministry

The Children's Ministry of Sun City Center shares the Gospel to local children. Our mission provides access to safe, engaging, edifying Christian opportunities and environments; where children are invited to come together for discipleship, fellowship, meals, lessons, care, fun, community and more.

We are charged with the profound privilege of sharing His light and showing His love. Pictured are just a few ways Sun City Center United Methodist Church has cared for all God's children and stoked a genuine excitement for our Risen Lord. Your generosity and support are paramount to providing our mission work: programming, education, discipleship, outreach events and urgent support to our families with children. During May the Children's Ministry calls upon you to PRAY, to HOPE, to MINISTER and to PROVIDE as we endeavor to discern and fulfill God's will for His children.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Philippians 4:6

To find out more about programming or to minister with us, please email Jennifer@scumc.com.

Scripture of the Month

"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

Isaiah 43:18-19



New Members Class



We are excited to share that we will be having New Member Classes starting May 1st. The classes will run for 3 weeks from 6:00PM to 8:00PM in the Life Enrichment Center (LEC). The first class will have a Pastor Meet and Greet with Pastor Charlie Rentz and the staff of the United Methodist Church of Sun City Center. During this evening, Pastor Charlie will introduce everyone to the church staff and give some details about our church history and ministry.

On May 8th and May 15th, Pastor Richard Hasley will hold Membership informational sessions that will discuss what being a United Methodist is about. These meetings will cover our denominational history, theology, and areas of ministry.

If in-person meetings are not possible, on May 10th and May 17th, Pastor Josh Landen will host the Membership meetings via Zoom. He will cover the same information in those sessions as well.

Following these sessions, anyone who wishes to become a member will do so during our services on Sunday, May 28th, 2023, Pentecost Sunday. Each person will make their vows of membership during the service of their choice: 8:30AM, 9:45AM or 11:00AM.

Please call or stop by the church office and see Becky Layton about signing up for the classes. The church office phone is: 813-634-2539. You can also reach Becky at becky@sccumc.com.



TUESDAY, MAY 16TH

10:30AM

Beginning at 10:30AM there is an optional Round Table Discussion followed by a sit down luncheon at noon.

Guest Speaker: April Min

“Henry Mansfield Dillard: Tampa’s Forgotten African American Pioneer”

The cost is \$18.00 per person for the meal and the presentations. For reservations and meal choice, call Dianna at 864-607-1330. Make your check payable to SBGS, and mail it to South Bay Genealogical Society, PO Box 5202, Sun City Center, FL 33571

Your check must be received by May 4th.

Grants Awarded to SCCUMC

The Community Foundation of Tampa Bay has honored our church and our ministries with grant funding in the amount of \$20,000 to assist in vital needs for the community of Sun City Center and the South Shore area. This grant was awarded at the recommendation of the leadership of the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay. The United Methodist Church of Sun City Center will use the grant funds to assist with the following ministries:

- Mary Petro Program: to support client needs that are not covered by the Mary Petro Fund guidelines.
- Matthew 25 Ministry: which aids families in the Hispanic and local low-income communities with basic needs and other support services.
- The Center 4Life Learning: to support purchases of equipment and other programming needs.

Without the generous and overwhelming support of the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay, many of our local ministries would not be possible. We are so very grateful for their continued investment in our church and our community.



THE CHARI-TEA



A Children's Ministry Fundraiser



**SATURDAY
MAY 6TH
2:00PM**

Hear Ye, Hear Ye, by proclamation of the most high you are cordially invited to high tea. Join us this coronation day as we celebrate in an afternoon of elegance.

The menu will consist of standard offerings such as finger sandwiches scones and sweet treats. A prize will be awarded for the best hat. All proceeds will benefit the outreach missions of the children's ministry. Please email Jennifer Glancy for table sponsorship opportunities, donations and other inquiries at jennifer@sccumc.com

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE
CHURCH OFFICE, PAGES OF LIFE
BOOKSTORE, & OUR WEBSITE UNDER
EVENTS

WWW.SCCUMC.COM/EVENTS

\$25
per person

NATIONAL DAY of PRAYER BREAKFAST

With Special Guest Speaker



**THURSDAY, MAY 4TH
8:00AM**

The National Day of Prayer is an annual observance held on the first Thursday of May, inviting people to pray for our nation. It was created in 1952 by a joint resolution of the United States Congress and signed into law by President Harry S. Truman. The National Day of Prayer has great significance for us as a nation as it enables us to recall and to teach the way in which our founding fathers sought the wisdom of God when faced with critical decisions. It stands as a call for us to humbly come before God, seeking His guidance for our leaders and His grace upon us as a people.

\$10 Tickets

Space is Limited!

One Nation Under God

From the Ledger - Dana Wallace

In March, which completes the first quarter of the year, we received \$196,209 in income to offset \$300,893 in expenses. This leaves \$104,684 in expenses over income. Our budget anticipated \$240,870 in income or a shortfall to budget of \$44,661. Our expenses were \$300,893 versus the budget of \$240,828 or \$60,065 more than planned. This was partly attributable to the replacement of an aging and failed air conditioning unit for \$11,000 and the replacement of two exterior doors in Creason Hall, \$10,000 and timing issues as compared to the budget. Year to date we received \$571,288 versus anticipated receipts of \$722,069 or a shortfall to budget of \$151,321. Our expenses totaled \$741,455 versus anticipated expenses of \$722,484 or \$18,971 unfavorable to budget. We anticipated in our planning that we would break even for the year.

Obviously, we cannot continue to live off our finite savings to fund our missions and ministries in this community and beyond and if nothing changes, we will be starting at a \$600,00 shortfall and no savings. We have therefore established a Stewardship Committee to explore a variety of means and sources to increase the number of resources that we can receive to support our operations and programs in this fiscal year and on into our future. We would gladly accept your ideas and suggestions.

Blessings



'BREAKAWAY' with Breakaway - Renee Tisdale

The Story of Big Al and Our Big Al

In early February, five of us attended a conference which brought together faith-based, respite programs caring for those with dementia and their caregivers. At that conference we heard the story of Big Al who was a large and burly man with a surly attitude that matched his size. Big Al, who had received care for some time, found nearly every activity or event to be "STUPID." His participation was minimal. At the end of one activity Big Al was given a scarf. Rather than tossing the scarf away along with his usual comment of "STUPID," Al gently and quietly formed the scarf into a loose ball and placed the ball into the crook of one arm. Soon Big Al was quietly and tenderly rocking and soothing a "baby" in his arms.

At the end of the day, Big Al's son came to pick up his father and was told about what his father had done. Tears welled up in the son's eyes when he realized that he was the baby in Al's arms. The son explained that his mother had died shortly after he was born, and that Al had become both mother and father to his newly arrived son. Memories of loving and being loved persist, even though other memories fade away. Another take-away from this story was that as respite volunteers we often need to persist and expectantly wait for those good surprises to come our way.

Our Big Al is not persistently negative. His words are few and often jumbled. He loves action games such as balloon volleyball. Our Big Al, however, occasionally decides to leave Breakaway and becomes quite assertive and insistent, although never physical. At times we considered our Big Al too big for us to handle. And yet, we persisted trying new approaches and knowing the difficulties and disappointment that would be added to Big Al's wife and caregiver. Our persistence was paid in another way. Our Big Al and his respite volunteer, Ron, have developed a solid bond. Big Al seeks out Ron each time he arrives. They sit together, are usually engaged, and are rarely apart. When Big Al has the inclination to leave, Ron gently and expertly calms the waters. We often see this bonding between volunteer and friend, and we are reminded that love grows and persists even though memories may quickly fade.

Please consider joining us in our Breakaway ministry. You may just find another way to love and be loved.



Tot Spot - Sharon Bennyhoff

Hello, from your Happy Nursery Coordinator.

Well, spring has sprung, and we are learning all about it's unique, wonders that God has given this time of year, in Tot Spot.

Come join us and learn about migrating animals and weather patterns, robins and rain, and how to plant seeds and watch them grow.

We meet every Tuesday from 9:30AM – 11:00AM, in the Nursery at the United Methodist Church of Sun City Center.

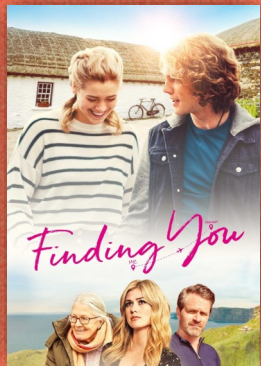
Classes end Tuesday May 23rd, when we have the summer off and start back in the fall. For more information on how to register, please contact me at sharon@scumc.com.

Hope to see you soon and look forward to serving you.



Friday Night at the Movies

FRIDAY, MAY 12TH AT 6:00PM



FINDING YOU

Violinist Finley Sinclair travels to an Irish coastal village to begin her semester studying abroad. At the bed-and-breakfast run by her host family, she encounters Beckett Rush, a handsome actor who's filming another installment of his medieval movie franchise. As romance sparks between the unlikely

pair, Beckett ignites a journey of discovery for Finley - transforming her heart, her music, and her outlook on life.

This is a free event for our church and community.
Light refreshments are available.



THURSDAY, MAY 18TH AT 8:00AM

Join us for Men's Breakfast led by Pastor Josh. Come be encouraged and challenged through God's word and enjoy a delicious meal together! This is a great opportunity for getting to know other men from your church family. We are always happy to welcome new faces and voices to this group!

This will be the last breakfast for the season, but will return in the fall.

This Month's Menu:

French Toast, Scrambled Eggs, Hickory Smoked Bacon, Sausage Links, Breakfast Potatoes, Assorted Muffins, & Fruit Salad

Cost is \$8.00. Sign up in the LEC Lobby



WEDNESDAY, MAY 24TH AT 10:00AM

Ladies, please join us for a bite to eat, fun, and fellowship in the Life Enrichment Center (LEC). We look forward to seeing you this month as The Pelican Players come to entertain us. Bring a friend with you to share in the fun!

This Month's Menu:

Salad Station With:
Waldorf Chicken Salad
Egg Salad
Fruit Salad
Green Leaf Lettuce
Croissants

Living In Faith Everyday, Ladies' Brunch is the fourth Wednesday of each month. Cost is \$10.00.
Sign up in the LEC Lobby.

*"Caregiving often
calls us to lean into
love we didn't know
was possible."*

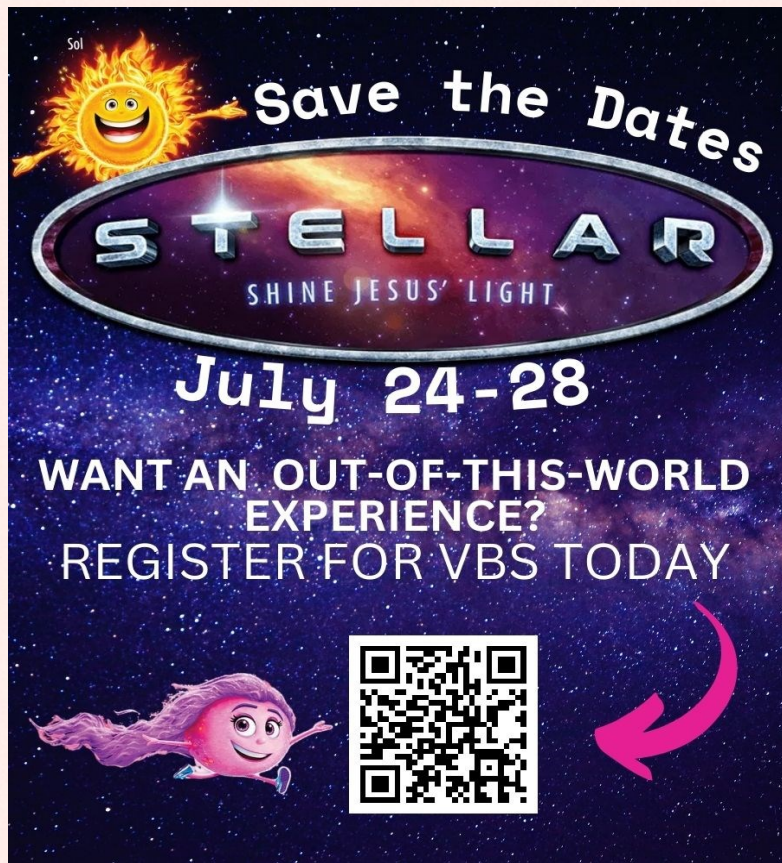
-Tia Walker

Caregivers Support Group

All are welcome. We are here to help. For questions please contact Sharon Carson at 706-897-9770



Every
Other
Tuesday
2pm




Save the Dates

STELLAR
SHINE JESUS' LIGHT

July 24-28

**WANT AN OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD EXPERIENCE?
REGISTER FOR VBS TODAY**



congregational **CARE**

Congregational Care NEEDS YOU!!

Have you ever wondered what congregational care is or what we do in this ministry? Plan on attending our monthly meeting. We meet on the fourth Thursday of every month at 2:00PM in room 19. Next meeting is:

Thursday, May 25th

We need folks (of all ages) to bring "sunshine" to some church members who can no longer attend church in person. Sound interesting?

There is such a great experience awaiting those who want to brighten one of our homebound church members' day.

If you have any questions or if you know someone who needs a visit, call Elaine Moore at 813-634-4550.

WORSHIP ARTS

-Jeff Jordan

Looking back at April, we certainly had a BIG month and one that was certainly full of the Spirit! ! It started off with what I believe to be one of the most beautiful and moving choral cantatas that the choir and handbells have ever shared [special thanks to Teodora and all of the excellent instrumentalists!]. And Holy Week continued to be especially powerful with Maundy Thursday's explanation and re-enactment of the *Last Supper* by the UTC Youth followed the next evening by Pastor Charlie's amazing *Service of the Shadows* [VERY special thanks to Carol Stewart for both of these Holy Week services!]. Easter Sunday... well, Easter Sunday was as joyous as it's ever been here. Thanks to all who made this such a memorable celebration, and that includes Chef Joe and Victoria who kept us all fed through the many hours on campus! There was another 'resurrection' this past month – the Visual Arts Team is back! If you have an interest in decorating, displaying, or delving into the fine arts with a group of like-minded folks, please let me know and I'll help you get involved in this fun and important ministry!

The month of May brings more than pretty flowers as you'll see from the many and varied ministry articles found in the rest of this newsletter. But one of the most significant and, perhaps, saddest events in May will be Kevin Goodenow's 'retirement' from being our nine-year *Thank God Its Variety* Concert Coordinator. Under his leadership and his vision for what it could become, Kevin has taken what started as a \$5-donation-at-the-door series of 10-15 performance opportunities for local groups to a pair of concert series that has brought tens of thousands of [often-unchurched] folks onto our campus, not to mention the fact that it has generated a great deal of money for continued church ministry. And the most important part of the equation is the fact that many, many people have come back to worship with us, to minister alongside us, and to learn to accept and walk with Jesus. Yes, our concert series has become one of our most important evangelistic ministries and that is true, in large part, due to the excellent work of one Kevin Goodenow. We'll miss you, brother. Thanks for all you've done for the Lord here at UMCSCC... *arrivederci!*

That's it for this month's article. I look forward to seeing YOU in worship!

VBS NEEDS YOU

to join the ranks of the "Sun City Center UMC Launch Team".

Our mission is to spread the message of Jesus.

TO INFINITY AND BEYOND!



A truly out of this world volunteer experience.
contact "Mission Control" to apply!
jennifer@sccumc.com



Vivacious Ministries

with Victoria Sorensen

Hello Everyone!

Welcome to the Merry, Merry Month of MAY! While we have not experienced so many April Showers, things are certainly in bloom and God's glory can be seen everywhere!

While our Snowbirds have flown North for the Summer, there is still so much happening on the campus. So, let me share just a few things from April that our Ministry Teams have been doing.

Our Mary Petro Ministry was quite busy last month helping those in the local communities of Kings Point and Sun City Center with food and their medical needs. A team from the Sertoma Speech and Hearing Foundation of Florida came to the campus to do free consultations and screening for several people, and half of these met with the Audiologist at the end of the month and were fitted for hearing aids. A "BIG" thank you to members of the Lion's Club who came to assist with this effort.

Welcome Back Visual Arts Team! Several of you answered my call in March to be a part of the Visual Arts Team, a part of the Worship, Media, and Arts Team under the direction of our very own Jeff Jordan. I want to say "Thank You" to the Visual Arts Team and all of you for your contributions to our beautiful Palm Cross and bringing our Resurrection Cross to life on Easter Sunday. It was a joy to see your faces as you stopped to place your flower on the Cross and then take pictures with family in front of the Cross. If you are interested in being part of this team, they meet on the 4th Thursday of the month in Room 11, and they hope to see you there!

Our Community Connection Ministry Team continues to be busy hosting our monthly Friday Night at the Movies, and last month we featured The Shack. We love seeing all of you and hope you will attend this month to see *Finding You* on May 12th. Be sure to mark your calendars. As our audience continues to grow, please remember, doors open at 5:30PM, so come and enjoy fresh popcorn, fellowship and a great movie night with us every month!

Our Spring Fling Fashion Show, presented by our Community Connection Ministry Team at the Women's Living in Faith Everyday (L.I.F.E.) Brunch was an enormous success! Thank you to everyone who attended and a "BIG" thank you to the ladies and gentlemen from our Community Connection Ministry Team who modeled clothes from the Nearly New Store. We hope to see you at our next brunch on May 24th when The Pelican Players will be joining us. Please make sure to bring a friend with you to share in the fun! Sign up is in the church office.

The Disaster Response Minister Team (DRT) "HIS Helpers" began April 1st and the DRT is looking to assist you and your neighbors. If you need assistance with things like changing light bulbs and AC filters, smoke alarm batteries, in addition to needing some light painting and light landscaping done, please sign up in the church office so the DRT can assist.

I look forward to seeing you around campus and on the Patio on Sunday mornings!

Much Love and Blessings to All!

Victoria



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED!**

If you are looking for an opportunity to get involved with one of our ministries, we currently have desperate needs in these ministry areas:

- Mary Petro**
- Breakaway**
- Believer Van Drivers**
- Parking Team**
- Les' Ladies and Gents**
- Kids Club**
- UTC**
- Vacation Bible School**
- Audio, Visual, & Lighting Team**

If you are interested in any of these opportunities to serve, I invite you to reach out to me so we can discuss how serving this church community can make a difference in someone's life.

Contact Victoria at victoria@scumc.com
COME, BELONG, GROW, SERVE!

Disaster Response Team (D.R.T.) - Ron Claeys

"HIS Helpers" has started. There are people in our congregation in need of assistance for things like changing light bulbs and AC filters, smoke alarm batteries, light painting, and light landscaping. A sign-up sheet for "HIS Helpers" assistance will be in the church office.

Local missions: In April, Earl Gall led a team of volunteers from the Church that cleaned up around the Church and also put down mulch. Thank you to all the volunteers.

The DRT meets on the second Wednesday of each month (September through May). The Disaster Response Team (DRT) of Sun City Center is a group of caring, friendly, talented Christian volunteers from our church and surrounding areas. The DRT also assists others within our local community and church with minor repairs and maintenance. We need people with many different skills on our team. Besides workers with tool skills, we always need cooks, organizers, administrators, and people to lend a caring presence.

If you are interested in becoming an active member of our DRT, please register on our DRT email database at:

<http://eepurl.com/gew3MD>

Center 4Life Learning



NEW COURSE OFFERED IN THE FALL

BEGINNING READING FOR ADULTS -

If you know an English speaking adult who grew up in the United States, but never learned to read, please tell him/her about this class. This will be a small, intimate class of 1 - 4 students. Adults who never learned to read, yet have functioned in society, actually have a vast knowledge base built through day-to-day living and working. This unique approach to learning to read uses that knowledge base to learn basic phonics. In addition, the student will learn the highest frequency words contained in any text. This small class will be taught by an educational specialist in reading, Janet Caruthers, EdS.

For more information, contact Sue Holter, Center 4Life Learning, 813-634-8607, center4life@sccumc.com.



**Life is an
Adventure,
Hop on the Bus!**

UPCOMING TRIPS

**Casserole, Early Bird Theater
Play and Buffet**

May 11th, 2023

**Scenic Boat Tour and Morse Museum of
American Art Guided Tour**

Winter Park

June 29th, 2023

**Tropical Evening Dinner Cruise on the Starlite
Calypso Breeze**

July 13th, 2023

**Ringling Museum & Lunch at
Der Dutchman**

September 14th, 2023

**Mount Dora Lakeside Inn
Buffet Lunch & Shopping**

Make your trip reservations on the Center 4Life Learning website at www.sccumc.com/4lifelifelearning,

Or visit us on campus!

Monday-Friday

8:30AM-12:30PM

813-634-8607

center4life@sccumc.com

**"Catch a Falling Star and
Put it in Your Pocket..."**

... Help Provide for V.B.S!"

You have likely seen "Falling Stars" in the Narthex and the LEC Lobby. Each star will have a cost of an item needed for VBS on the back of it. If you are able, please select a star (or two) and make a donation to the children's ministry. All monetary donations can be given to the church office.

Thank you for helping to make this year's
VBS

"Out of This World!"

UTC Youth Happenings

(Under the Cross) - *Bill Turner*

Hello UMCSCC family! Things are starting to wind down in our school/calendar year, but we have been quite busy throughout.

Be on the lookout for our next fundraiser, a spaghetti lunch, on May 31st, served to you by our UTC youth. Our youth will be selling tickets on the patio on Sunday mornings, April 30th, May 7th, May 14th, and May 21st. Tickets are \$15 each. You will have the option of purchasing a lunch-to-go from 10:30AM-11:30AM in the portico, just like our normal lunches-to-go. Your other option will be a dine-in style lunch served by some UTC members in the LEC starting at 12:00PM. All lunches will include spaghetti, garlic bread, and a garden salad. Drinks will also be available for all dine-in lunches. Please keep in mind that in order to receive a lunch, you MUST have previously purchased a ticket!!

This fundraiser will help in sending our young adults to Warren Willis summer camp in June. If you are interested in sponsoring one of our youth members to go to camp, please see me for more info.

While all of this talk about fundraisers, food, and summer camp is exciting, I also need to let you know that on Sunday, May 28th (Pentecost Sunday), our youth will be leading the 9:45AM Contemporary service. This will include welcoming everyone and leading all music and prayers. This is also the service where we will recognize our 7 graduating high school seniors as they begin their transition into the 'real world'. We hope to see as many of you there as possible.

We are at the point in our ministry where we are in dire need of van drivers and monitors. The time has come where we have added a 3rd route to ensure all of our children and youth are able to be present and fellowship with each other. It is almost impossible for all of our children and youth to make it here with drivers and monitors in very short supply. Please prayerfully consider becoming a van driver and/or monitor to ensure that our youth and children have a way to make it to church on Sunday and Monday for worship and fellowship. If you feel led to serve, please reach out to me via email at bturner@sccumc.com or by calling the church office at (813) 634-2539 x:1003.

Thank you all so much for your continued support of our youth program. We love you all.

Bill Turner - UTC Youth Director

Soul Café Returns!! Save the Dates!!



Our Soul Café Dinner and Bible Study will resume on Monday, June 5, 2023. Dinner will begin at 5:45PM. There will be various classes.

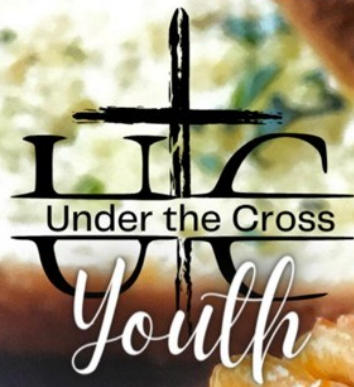
The 4:30PM Soul Café Bible study led by Pastor Debbie will be Bishop Tom Berlin's book, Courage, Jesus and the Call to Brave Faith. From the back cover, "Courage is the foundational virtue required for the Christian life. In this study, Bishop Berlin challenges us to unlock the courage that we already possess as Jesus' followers. By examining the life of Christ, we will begin to understand what true courage is and how God works in the lives of Jesus' followers as they exhibit a brave faith. Once we have eyes to see what Jesus is showing us, once we have ears to hear, we can begin to find the remarkable life Jesus offers us." Each session will include a 10 min. or so DVD presentation, followed by discussion. This study looks to be a good follow-up to Easter as we seek to live our lives as followers of the Risen Christ.

The Women's Bible Study will be led by Becky Layton and will meet at 6:30PM. We are revisiting a study by Liz Curtis Higgs, Slightly Bad Girls of the Bible. "Good Women Behaving Badly: A spiteful boss, a defiant employee, a manipulative mother, a desperate housewife, an envious sister...honey, we know these women. We've lived with them, worked with them, or caught a glimpse of them in our mirrors. Now let's look at their ancient counterparts in Scripture: Sarah mistreated her maidservant, Hagar despised her mistress, Rebekah manipulated her son, Leah claimed her sister's husband, and Rachel envied her fertile sister. They were far from evil, but hardly perfect. Mostly good, yet slightly bad. In other words, these matriarchal mamas look a lot like us. "A Slightly Bad Girl is simply this: a woman unwilling to fully submit to God. We love him, serve him, and worship him, yet we find it difficult to trust him completely, to accept his plan for our lives, to rest in his sovereignty."

The Couples Bible Study for Soul Café will be led by Pastor Richard Hasley, also at 6:30 pm. The study will cover the book of Daniel.

The Men's Bible Study is yet to be determined.

Join us for this summer respite of fellowship and study. Please sign up in the church office for dinner.



**Raise A Fork For A
Good Cause.**



SPAGHETTI LUNCH FUNDRAISER

Enjoy a spaghetti and garlic bread lunch served to you by our UTC Youth. All proceeds will go towards sending our Youth to Summer Camp.

LUNCH TICKETS: \$15.00
DINE IN OR TAKE OUT AVAILABLE

**WED
31
MAY**

**10:30AM
to
1:00PM**

1971 Haverford Ave.
Sun City Center, FL. 33573
813-634-2539
www.sccumc.com

See You at the Concert! - Kevin Goodenow

Now that our snowbird season is over, and many of our seasonal friends have travelled to their summer homes up north, we are winding down a little here on campus and getting ready for the slower pace of the summer life in the area. Fear not, though, I would argue that all on staff need a little break. We don't shut down like we used to. In the concert realm, what that means is instead of having 6-7 concerts in a month, we may have 2 or just 1 per month. So, for May we do indeed have a concert lined up. It is on Sunday, May 7th at 3:00PM. We are hosting a wonderful a cappella vocal group called "Chorus Angelorum". They will perform a choral concert titled, "A World of Spring". This is a group that has as its core mission bringing beautiful choral music to the greater Tampa Bay area, and they have been doing just that since 2001. They sing "first-rate" a cappella music, but it will cost you a measly \$5 to come enjoy their beautiful sounds. Let me encourage you to come enjoy what will be my last concert as the concert coordinator here at UMCSCC.

Yes, after almost 9 years at the helm, I have decided to retire from my position here. Not because I don't love it, I do. It's a "dream" job. Not because I don't like my co-workers, as I very much do...they're awesome. And not because I don't like the audiences we draw here, as I LOVE the audiences here. They are THE BEST!! No, none of those reasons. My wife Peg and I have made a very difficult, very exciting and quite frankly, a very scary decision to give up our home and life here to become full time residents of Italy. Yes, In July we plan to board a plane in Miami and fly to Rome, Italy with just a few suitcases. We are selling everything we own, or giving it away to friends, family, and charity prior to then in order to do this (that process is already underway, lol). Peg is at least 50% Italian and is well aware of her Italian roots. She had been to Italy decades ago, searching for birth or baptismal records, but unbeknownst to her at the time, in the wrong towns. Three years ago, armed with much more accurate information, we were able to meet one of her cousins in Italy. And since he had been the mayor of the town for 10 years, he was able to lead us right to her grandfather's baptismal info in the basement of a 500+ year old church. That changed everything. Peg felt "home" more than she ever had in her life. After visiting there in the two years since and spending quite a bit of time living in the town amongst the villagers, we made numerous friends and fell in love with this small village. Oddly enough, they have embraced us as well. We have thought and prayed about this for a long time and feel very "led" to move there. We're not quite sure what God has planned for us in Italy, but we know He is ordering our steps. A new Italian friend we have made in our neighborhood in Valencia Lakes feels this same thing very strongly.

As exciting as this all is for us, I can't say it's not bittersweet, as it is. I have loved this church, I have loved my fellow staff members, all our STARS & volunteers, the dozens, and dozens of performers I have met and made friends with, and of course all of you who attend the concerts. But it is all in good hands. The church has hired Larry Hirschak to succeed me as the concert coordinator, Yes, the same Larry you have been seeing for years in the choir and playing handbells. And...the same Larry you have been seeing recently playing the bell tree! I have no doubt Larry will lead our TGIV concert series to a higher level. It is still growing, and I am confident he will continue to grow the series and nurture it at least as well as I have, if not better.

So, with all that said, I will simply say it has been my honor and privilege to serve as your concert host. I thank Jeff Jordan and the SPRT committee who felt I was the right person to hire 9 years ago. I also thank all the staff members who over the years have moved mountains to help allow "the show to go on". I also thank Peg, as she has put up with my crazy hours and many "late night" phone conversations, texts, and emails I've had with the world-wide musical artists who have performed here over the past 9 years. Sometimes it was because that was their "available time", and sometimes it was due to time zone differences from around the world. Lastly, I thank all of you for being so attentive and gracious to me, and for putting up with all my corny jokes during the opening/welcome segment of the concerts. So, if you attend the May 7 concert, as always, I'll "See you at the Concert". And if not, well, ciao!



Saturday May 20th 3:30pm

\$10



Once Upon a Verdict

AN ORIGINAL PLAY IN FOUR CASES

WRITTEN BY YOUR DRAMA @ THE CENTER PLAYERS

For more tickets and information visit

www.sccumc.com

