

# *The* Happening

March 2026



## **Mission of the Month**

### *Abundant Life*

At Abundant Life, our heart is to walk alongside women facing unplanned pregnancies with compassion, encouragement, and practical support. We believe no mother should feel alone during such an important and often overwhelming season of life. Through support groups, mentoring relationships, and hands-on assistance, we create a safe and welcoming space where women can find hope, confidence, and the resources they need to choose life and move forward with strength.

We serve single mothers throughout the Greater SouthShore and Tampa Bay community, offering care both during and after pregnancy. Our programs go beyond meeting immediate needs—we strive to build lasting community. From hosting baby showers and mama meetups to providing essential baby items and connecting families with local churches and friendships, our goal is to help women feel supported, seen, and empowered as they step into motherhood.

We are deeply grateful to be chosen as your Mission of the Month. Your partnership reminds us that we are not serving alone, but together as the body of Christ. Your prayers, encouragement, and generosity speak volumes to the women we serve and communicate that their lives—and the lives of their children—matter greatly.

The funds you share with us will directly impact local families by helping us provide supplies, host gatherings, and expand programs that reach more moms in need. Thank you for standing with us and helping us continue our mission of offering hope, help, and abundant life to every mother and child who walks through our doors.

## Pastor's Corner - Travis Taylor

*"He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else"* - Benjamin Franklin

A few weeks ago, I had a really good conversation with a new friend on the topic of divine appointments. She had recently stumbled upon images from an East African famine that occurred in 1993, and one image in particular of a distraught and emaciated African child of 5 or 6 years old being eyed by a hungry vulture. My friend was horrified by the image but even more horrified by the story behind the photo.

The image was captured by a photojournalist named Kevin Carter who would go on to win a Pulitzer Prize for the photo later that year. But when he was asked later in a phone interview what *he* had done to help the poor child he had taken the time to photograph, he responded that he didn't know what happened to the child because, "...he was in a hurry and had a plane to catch."

After a brief moment of silence, the interviewer then commented that he then believed there were actually "*two vultures that day... and one had a camera.*"

One of the most important lessons I've learned in church ministry is that love is often an inconvenient choice. People lead messy lives; they often call at inconvenient times and often disrupt our well-intentioned plans for the day. And yet, I also believe such inconveniences could be considered to be *divine interruptions*.

Not that we should always just allow our time to be dictated by others; Christ Himself certainly had a full agenda and prioritized His time. But before casually making excuses for why we can't deviate from our own plans, maybe we should also consider God's timing and the high cost of love. Consider that we may just be the answer to someone else's prayers and that God may just be placing us exactly where we need to be to accomplish His will in this particular situation.

I don't know what you've set aside in your heart to give up for Lent, but with God's help, I'm hoping to stop making excuses. For these 40 days, I'm striving to better see life's inconveniences as God's divine appointments and blessed opportunities.

## Celebrating Our Success in Kettle Collections

Our church has been proudly ringing the bell for the Salvation Army for over 21 years, consistently leading in kettle collections across Hillsborough County. On December 11, 2024, we achieved a remarkable milestone by breaking the record for the highest amount collected in a single day, totaling \$1,501.96! The Salvation Army was thrilled and this year, sent a six-piece brass band to perform Christmas songs at Publix for an hour, during which we gathered \$942.75.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your kind, friendly support and talents at our kettle. Thanks to your generous time and compassion for those in need, we have once again claimed the title of the number one kettle in Hillsborough County.

A special thank you goes to Gene Valcke for stepping up to help set up the kettle and ringing until our other volunteers arrived. I also want to express my appreciation to my husband, Dave, for taking down the kettle when I was unable.

God bless everyone who dressed up, rang jingle bells, and spread Christmas cheer. We had "Mrs. Claus," a lady tap dancing, and her 93-year-old father joyfully saying, "Ho-ho-ho, Merry Christmas." Many of you brought your dogs, showing how much we all cared, and it truly made a difference.

In total, we had 87 ringers:

- 52 rang once
- 10 rang twice
- 3 rang three times
- 3 rang four times
- 1 ringer rang six times!

Thank you!! Karen Ransbury, Salvation Army Coordinator



### Join Our Team of Drivers

The United Methodist Church of Sun City Center is deeply committed to the Meals on Wheels program. Throughout the month of April, we will be delivering meals to those who have signed up for the service in Kings Point and Sun City Center. Meal packages can be picked up at South Bay Hospital between 3:00pm and 3:15pm, and will be delivered to designated locations according to a route slip. Each route takes approximately one hour to complete. Deliveries are made seven days a week, and two sets of drivers are required from Monday to Friday, while one set is needed on the weekends. Seven backup drivers for both KP and SCC are needed. These drivers are only called in if someone is unable to complete their shift.

If you're interested in becoming a driver, please contact Karen Ransbury at 440-781-0887 or visit her in person for more information.

# Becoming a Debt-Free Church

## Each Gift Spreads the Light.

On Sunday, February 15, we officially kicked off the campaign toward **Becoming a Debt-Free Church**. It was an amazing Sunday as Linda Whitt and Rea Cantwell, campaign co-chairs, shared with us the history and vision behind this campaign. Our church mortgage is from the construction loan secured for the building of the Life Enrichment Center almost 15 years ago. With just over \$1M remaining on the loan, we feel the time is right to pay it off!

Due to the generosity of leadership pledges made in advance of the campaign's kickoff, of the \$1M needed to pay down the remaining principal, **\$501,000** has already been pledged. This is amazing!

We invite you to plan to attend one of the **Zero Debt ~ Mission Max** information and visioning sessions in March (see below for details) and to mark your calendars now for **Pledge Sunday on April 12**.

The guiding scripture verse for this campaign is: **"Owe no one anything, except the love for one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law."**  
*Romans 13:8, RSV*

Our campaign prayer team will be providing prayers throughout the coming weeks and this is the initial prayer. We invite you to pray it with us as we begin this campaign.

*We ask, Lord, as a community of faith, that you search our hearts and help us empty ourselves of all that comes between you and us. Then Lord, fill us all with your vision for ministry here in the faith community we share with you. Keep us mindful of our race, a race of limited earthly time, a gift you give us, as opportunities arise that have eternal meaning.*

## ZERO DEBT ~ MAX MISSION

Debt-Free Campaign Info & Future Visioning for Mission

Please plan to attend this hour of learning, conversation and dreaming. Sweet treats will be provided as well as a gift basket giveaway!

CHILDREN & YOUTH

WORSHIP ARTS & MUSIC

MISSIONS & OUTREACH

- Sunday, March 8 | 3PM
- Tuesday, March 10 | 2PM
- Thursday, March 19 | 10AM

All Sessions in the LEC.



Online session available Sunday, March 15th at 2PM. Scan the QR code to register.

Becoming a Debt-Free Church  
Each Gift Spreads the Light.



## Center 4Life Learning's upcoming trips and tours!

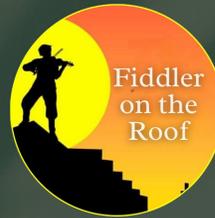


Columbia Restaurant and Ybor City Bus Tour

March 10, 2026

Rays vs. Cubs, Tropicana Field, Section 124

April 7, 2026



Fiddler on the Roof Musical  
Asolo Repertory Theatre

May 13, 2026

Becky's New Car  
Early Bird Dinner Theater

May 28, 2026



Rays vs. Yankees, Tropicana Field, Section 124

July 9, 2026

## Reservations Fill Up Fast – Register Today!

Contact the Center 4Life Learning office at 813-634-8607

email at [center4life@sccumc.com](mailto:center4life@sccumc.com), or visit our website at [lovethelight.org/4lifelifelearning](http://lovethelight.org/4lifelifelearning)

## SPRING FORWARD

Into Brighter Days and Longer Evenings

DON'T FORGET TO SET YOUR CLOCKS AHEAD 1 HOUR

Sunday, March 8, 2026

## Vivacious Ministries -with Victoria

*"God's blessings are all around us, but we must have eyes to see them." – Unknown*

Isn't it funny how you can read something and it just touches your heart? This quote encourages us to recognize and appreciate the everyday blessings from God. Over the past few months, I've heard from many of you expressing how life has felt a bit overwhelming lately given all that's happening in our world.

When I read this quote, it made me pause and realize how essential it is for each of us to reflect on the goodness in our lives. A thankful heart is essential to recognize God's gifts, no matter how small, and focus on the blessings only He can provide so we can nurture our faith and be inspired to share God's goodness with others.

As a church filled with wonderful volunteers, I want you to know we continue to make a difference in the lives of those in our community, renewing people's faith in humanity in a world that is filled with chaos. Your dedication and willingness to share your gifts and talents and especially your time, is a testament to your commitment to help your friends and neighbors, and a feeling of being loved.

I am so grateful to work alongside each of you in ministry and mission work and watch the transformation of those we serve in our community.

Together, we continue to make an impact on the lives of those in our community by letting our Light Change Everything!

Blessings to each of you during this month of renewal.

Victoria

NEW THREE-WEEK STUDY

**On Sundays**  
**March 1, 8 & 15**  
4:00 - 5:15 PM  
in the LEC

*Spiritual Gifts*



Join Senior Pastor Cynthia Weems and her husband  
**Rev. Dr. Mark Holland** for this new series.

Come discover your Spiritual Gifts as we reflect on scripture and these questions: *What are we good at? What do we enjoy? What does the world need?*

\*No Sign Up or Study Material Required

### SUMMER CAMP FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES

**March 8th: Baked Potato Sale**  
Following all 3 services, baked potatoes with all the fixings will be available TO-GO for \$10 each.

**Bag & Jewelry Sale**  
The Pages of Life Bookstore is now accepting donations of gently used handbags and jewelry. Be sure to mark your calendar for the sale taking place on April 17 and 18, from 9AM to 1PM.

*Warren Willis*  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH & CONFERENCE CENTER

## TWO UPCOMING MISSION TRIPS

**DAY OF HOPE**  
**MARCH 19, 2026**  
**Enterprise, FL**  
Sign Up on the Patio Today!  
For more information contact  
Paulette Miller at  
paulettec3@gmail.com

**WORK DAY**  
**MARCH 26, 2026**  
**Palmetto, FL**  
Information Session on March 5<sup>th</sup>  
at 2 PM in the LEC.  
For more information contact  
Sylvia Pomrenke at  
sylviapomrenke@hotmail.com

## Update from VRT

We extend a huge thank you to the volunteers who constructed the new collection bins for recycling metals. One side is designated for aluminum cans only, while the other is for scrap metal. Please refrain from disposing of tires, paint, hazardous waste, or trash in these bins.

The Volunteer Response Team (VRT) will be quite active over the next few weeks! Mark your calendars for the following volunteer opportunities:

- March 17th at 9:00 a.m.: Volunteers are needed to power wash the chairs from the LEC.
- March 20th at 8:30 a.m.: Volunteers are needed for campus cleanup.
- March 26th at 8:00 a.m.: Volunteers are needed to paint two outside walls and perform a deep clean of the interior of the Anchor House, February's Mission of the Month.

**Our next meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2026, in Room 19 from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.**

**Meetings occur on the third Wednesday of each month.**

We are a group of caring Christian volunteers dedicated to community projects, His Helpers, church maintenance, disaster response, and recycling. The VRT of Sun City Center is always seeking individuals with diverse skills to join our team. In addition to those with tools, we welcome organizers, administrators, maintenance personnel, and those who can offer a caring Christian presence. If you are interested in becoming an active member of our VRT, please consider attending our monthly meeting or signing up for our VRT email database at [<http://eepurl.com/gew3MD>] (<http://eepurl.com/gew3MD>).

## 'Break Away' with Breakaway - Renee Tisdale

**Help Wanted! Seeking people who are looking to serve God, their fellow man and themselves!**



Breakaway is a ministry of love bringing purpose and joy to people living with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia while their caregivers get a short but much-needed break from their duties and responsibilities. We meet on Monday and Wednesday from 10-2, and are in serious need of volunteers for Wednesdays! As a volunteer you have the flexibility to choose when you'd like to serve. Currently, many of our volunteers are enjoying well-deserved travels. This is great for them but a bummer for us.



We currently have 15 registered participants (friends), and until now have been blessed with enough volunteers to serve our friends in a one-on-one capacity ensuring no one feels neglected. Additionally we have an equal number of people on the waiting list eager to join. We are struggling a bit right now with support on Wednesdays to meet the needs of our existing friends let alone bring in anyone new, but your involvement could truly make a difference! If you have been looking for a place to serve, please consider us! This is such a rewarding experience for everyone involved. It almost seems wrong to have such a good time while serving God and



our friends, but that's exactly what happens! Not to mention the wonderful relationships formed with our friends and fellow volunteers!

If serving in a regular volunteer capacity isn't for you, please consider sharing your talents or experiences with us! We end each day with music, so we're always looking for musicians to donate their time. Maybe you're a storyteller, artist or a crafter that would like to lead an activity? We also need to feed ourselves each Wednesday. Do you like to cook? Please check out the Breakaway Respite Ministry page on Facebook to see what a typical day looks like, or feel free to stop by while we're in session. We're located in Creason Hall. Experience is not needed - only a loving heart.



-Jeff Jordan

This is a time to both look back and to thank God for how our church has grown and blossomed in so many beautiful ways. It's also a time to look forward and to once again thank God for the exciting plan he has for our family of faith. I think back to about fifteen years ago. I'd been serving here for just a few years. Pastor Warren Langer had been here a few years prior to that. He pushed and pushed until the SPRT allowed him to finally call a FULL TIME Minister of Music to serve here. I was so very grateful to be the person given that opportunity as my mom had just passed and dad lived just down the road 'a piece' in Bradenton. That meant I would be able to visit him more frequently [he went to be with the Lord in 2018].

Back to 2011... our church family was growing quite rapidly, and it soon became clear that our facilities could not handle that growth. Adding another building for ministry seemed like the only solution. There was a hitch, however. If we were to build another structure on this [small] 5-acre piece of land, we would lose something like 80 parking places... there'd be no place to park on a Sunday morning or any other time we had a larger event. The solution? Re-purpose the required-by-law retaining pond by covering it... with a PRAKING LOT. I'd never heard of anything so wild. But it's true. When we park in front of our building, we are parking on top of a large pond! I've shared this bit of trivia because that was a relatively expensive project that was necessary before we could even begin thinking about a new building. Well, that project went smoothly, but it did put the church in substantial debt before any plans were drawn for a new building. Before the parking lot was even completed, we ventured into planning the new building and finally contracting the Tampa-based commercial construction company DeLotto & Sons to oversee it. When procuring the loan from the UMC Foundation, we rolled the remainder of the parking lot project into that loan.

The process of working with the contractor and subs was in turn exciting, frustrating, exhilarating, confusing... you get the idea! Don Quast was the excellent leader from our church that served as the liaison to DeLotto, Mike Whitt was his 'right hand man', Carol Stewart and Eleanor Crosby Rees were our 'decorators', and for some reason they all let me 'tag along' to meetings and, since one of the purposes of the new building would be for our growing contemporary service, offer my 'two cents'.

Needless to say, it was a VERY exciting time at the UMCSCC [formerly the SCCUMC, by the way]. And I bring back this little bit of history because I feel just as excited RIGHT NOW as together we bring to a close this chapter of the LEC by finally becoming a debt-free church again. Bless each and every one of you that has made this possible. We've opened the door for God to do marvelous things through our amazing church and church family.

Wishing all of you a blessed and powerfully transformative Lenten Journey!

Soli Deo Gloria

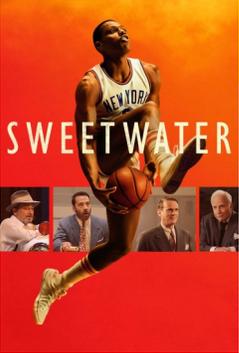


**THURSDAY, MARCH 19 | 8:00AM**

Please plan to join this month's Men's Breakfast. It'll be a good time with good guys, so don't be afraid to bring a buddy with you. Whether you're a regular attendee or a first-timer, this event promises a warm welcome and lots of laughter. So mark your calendars, and don't miss out on this chance to connect and recharge. We can't wait to see you there!

Men's Breakfast is the third Thursday of each month. Cost is \$10.00. Please sign up by March 15.

**MOVIE MATINEE**



**SATURDAY, MARCH 21 | 1:00PM**

Inspired by true events, the story follows Nat "Sweetwater" Clifton, the first Black player to sign an NBA contract. Amidst segregation, Knicks coach Joe Lapchick and executive Ned Irish recognize Sweetwater's

unique athletic talent, challenging conventions and breaking barriers that transformed basketball.

This is a free event for our community and church. Donations are gladly accepted for light refreshments. Doors open at 5:30PM



**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25 | 10:00AM**

Faith and begorrah! We've cajoled a leprechaun into joining us this month to share some Irish humor and lead us in singing our favorite Irish songs! The meal will be a choice of prosciutto and grilled chicken sandwich or grilled vegetarian sandwich. Sides are broccoli slaw and chocolate chip cookie.

The cost for this meal is \$15.00. Sign up in the church office by March 22.

**Celebrate the Easter Season With Us**

29  
MAR  
THRU  
02  
APR

**CHALK MURAL FOR EASTER**  
From Mar. 29 thru Apr. 2 an original chalk mural will come to life beneath our patio. Watch the progress throughout the week. The final masterpiece will be finished by Apr. 2.

29  
MAR

**Palm Sunday**  
| 8:30 & 11AM  
Easter Cantata during our Traditional Services.  
Saturday Cantata: Apr. 28 at 4:00PM

2  
APR

**Maundy Thursday**  
| 7:00PM

3  
APR

**Good Friday**  
| 7:00PM

*Easter Worship*

6:45AM - Sunrise  
8:30AM & 11:00AM - Traditional  
9:45AM - Contemporary

*Save The Date*



**SUNDAY, APRIL 26**

WE WILL CELEBRATE THE ARMY OF VOLUNTEERS THAT MAKE IT ALL HAPPEN HERE AT SCCUMC. PLEASE PLAN ON JOINING US AT YOUR SERVICE OF CHOICE TO ENJOY OUR GRATEFUL THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO AS THE HANDS AND FEET OF CHRIST. YOU ARE PART OF THE LIGHT THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING!

# Thank God It's Variety -Larry Hirschak

The Winter Season is quickly passing by and the "snowbirds" will soon be heading back north! We want to make sure you get enough entertainment to hold you over until next year so we have eight concerts scheduled for the month of March!! And for those here year-round, the entertainment never ends!

This month's concerts start on Friday, March 6 at 7:00PM with Keith Allyn, (Branson's Neil Diamond) who was just here in January and his wife Diana Lynn (Branson's Karen Carpenter) for their popular show **Duet**. She's a little bit country, he's a little bit rock and roll, and together they perform favorite duets from the '50s to today, including hits from Donny & Marie, Neil Diamond & Barbra Streisand, Sonny & Cher, the Everly Brothers, and more. Their energetic 90-minute production also features guest appearances from their talented son with Roy Orbison and Elvis tributes, plus comedian Debi Diamond. It's a fun, one-of-a-kind show you won't want to miss!

On Friday, March 13 at 7:00PM, we are bringing three of the top Christian and Gospel music artists in the country to our church for the first time! **Jim and Melissa Brady and Michael Booth** have all grown up in musical families and started singing at a very young age! They have received Dove awards, Grammy nominations and Singing News Fan Awards! Michael and Jim still sing a number of dates with the Booth Brothers that have been and still are a fan favorite!! I can guarantee that you won't be disappointed in their performances! You will truly be blessed!

Then on Sunday, March 15 at 3:00PM, Texas based group **Invoke** brings a fresh and unique sound. Described as "...not anything but everything: Classical, Folk, Bluegrass, Americana and a sound yet-to-be-termed seamlessly merged into a perfect one" (David Srebnik, SiriusXM Classical Producer). Invoke strives to successfully dodge even the most valiant attempts at genre classification by encompassing traditions from across America, including bluegrass, Appalachian fiddle tunes, jazz, and minimalism. Fueled by their passion for storytelling, Invoke weaves all of these styles together to form a unique contemporary repertoire. Winners of the Concert Artists Guild Victor Elmaleh Competition, they offer a creative and genre-defying musical experience unlike anything else in our series.

**The Flashback Four** will be appearing on our stage on Friday, March 20 at 7:00PM. They are four dynamic lead singers who have wowed audiences at Las Vegas, Walt Disney World, and New York City, and countless cruise ships. Their show is an exciting mix of world class vocals and interactive comedy featuring the rock-n-roll harmonies of the 60's, 70's and 80's. They will be singing the hits of Frankie Valli, The Beach Boys, Bee Gees, Billy Joel and more in a high energy crowd pleasing show.

On Sunday, March 22 at 3:00PM **The Florida Brass** returns to fill the sanctuary with the powerful sounds of brass and percussion. Their program, "Pops to Patriots," features fun favorites like movie themes and classic hits along with patriotic selections in honor of our nation's 250th anniversary.

On Monday, March 23 at 7:00PM and again on Thursday March 26<sup>th</sup> at 3:00PM, the **Sun City Men's Chorus** will be presenting their spring concert, *PIRATES, SAILORS & LOVERS-Mariners' Tales* under the direction of Jeff Jordan! Since 1964, the chorus has entertained the Sun City Center community with the powerful and unique sound of tenor and bass voices. This performance features timeless masterpieces such as "Pirates of Penzance" and "There is Nothin' Like a Dame," balanced with contemporary classics like "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald."

Finally, on Friday, March 27 at 7:00PM, a group new to our series, **The Boxers**, will be performing a tribute to Simon and Garfunkel. Brothers Todd and Greg Pitts have been playing and singing these timeless tunes together since they were kids growing up in the 60's and 70's. For years they've traveled the country sharing the Simon & Garfunkel concert experience with thrilled audiences nationwide. With full band, the sound and harmonies are second to none, bringing songs like "The Boxer," "Homeward Bound," and "The Sound of Silence" to life in note perfect renditions that take audiences back to their earliest memories of this legendary duo.

The Boxers also pay tribute to the solo career of Paul Simon, with classic tunes like "Kodachrome" and "Me & Julio," adding to the experience. Last but not least, these harmonizing brothers deliver a mini set of Everly Brothers hits like "Wake Up, Little Susie" and "All I Have To Do Is Dream," paying tribute to the duo that inspired the young Simon & Garfunkel. As one producer put it, "Most Simon & Garfunkel tributes fall short of Art Garfunkel's vocal greatness, but Todd really nails the tone and power of this epic performer."

Come join us as we celebrate the music and poetry of Simon & Garfunkel with The Boxers!!

So that wraps it up for the month!! There is something for everyone this month and you will want to come to as many as your schedule permits!!

And again, I would like to thank you for your great support of this very special and successful outreach ministry!! Remember "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!!" Ps.150:6

Larry Hirschak,

Thank God It's Variety Concert Coordinator