



The Happening

AUGUST 2024

MISSION OF THE MONTH

Watoto

Watoto is a family made up of people from all over the world who are working together to ensure that the forgotten have a place to belong.

In 1984, during a time of civil war, our founders, Gary and Marilyn Skinner, planted a local church in Kampala, Uganda to speak hope and life to the nation. Since then, we've rescued over 5,000 orphaned and abandoned children, placing them in loving families. We've come alongside thousands of vulnerable women, equipping them with skills and empowering them to be the mothers and leaders God has called them to be. To help our hurting neighbors, we've extended our reach into South Sudan.

In over 39 years, the challenges facing Africa have changed, but our vision remains the same. We come alongside the most vulnerable in our society, embracing them with the love of Jesus as we work to give each woman, child, and baby a chance at a better future – a future full of promise.

We believe God's call for the global church is to care for the hurting and the vulnerable. We would like to thank everyone at Sun City Center United Methodist Church for standing with us and for your generous support over the years.

In the spirit of unity and love, let us continue to work together to bring lasting change. Let us be the hands and feet that carry out God's work, touching lives and building a brighter future for all. Thank you for being a vital part of Watoto's story—one of hope, love, and transformation. Together, we are stronger, and together, we can make a lasting impact.

Scripture of the Month

"For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus..."

Romans 3:20-24 (ESV)

Meet Our New Pastor!! *Rev. Travis Taylor*



Hello Sun City Center!

I can't tell you how excited I am to finally be here and serving alongside you! In July you were all so warm and made my family and me feel so welcome that we all feel blessed to be here and are looking forward to whatever August brings.

How God Led Me to Florida

I went through Candidacy in the Fall of 2017. If you don't know, candidacy is the process by which the United Methodist Church uses to discern someone's heart and aptitude for vocational ministry. It's the process Jeff Jordan began this past Spring and was approved to continue at our most recent Annual Conference.

For me, it was a really good experience. Even though I had been employed in some form of vocational church ministry since 2006, my licensing journey introduced me to our broader denomination and challenged me in fresh ways.

Not long after beginning this journey, one of my mentors, Jim, took me out to lunch. Jim was a second-generation Methodist pastor who, at 76 years old, had recently retired as an elder in the UMC. Over big slices of pizza we talked about the ups and downs of pastoral ministry and about all the positive and negative aspects of being connected to such a large denomination as the UMC. I'll never forget one of the most profound statements he shared with me that day. Almost sadly, he said, "Travis, I feel like I spent the bulk of my ministry beating myself bloody against doors that were closed to me. Maybe I should have just gone through the doors God *opened*..."

For me, Jim's words were such a profound piece of wisdom, and since then, they have influenced my life and pastoral decisions in so many ways. The constant realization that *God* is the Way Maker, not me, has since brought me peace and provided for me a spiritual safety-net that undergirds all my ministerial ambitions.

So in 2021, when Sarah and I became restless for something different and started praying for guidance and discernment for what God might be calling us to next, *my* prayer and promise to God was this: "Lord, I love You and I trust You. I'm going to knock on some new doors, and if those doors do not open, I promise I will not be bitter, nor will I beat myself bloody, pounding my fists against doors You have not opened. *But* if I knock and a door opens, then let that be *Your* sign to me that *You* are guiding my steps and give me the courage to walk through and go wherever that door leads."

And in May of 2022, God in His providence opened a door for us to relocate from Indiana to Florida and for me to accept a position as Assist. Pastor at Christ UMC in St. Pete. It was a big move for everyone, but we trusted God and He has been faithful through every step. And now, God has opened another door!

I am so excited for this chapter of ministry with all of you and cannot wait to discover what doors God will open for us this time!

From the Ledger - Bill Turner

Greetings church family!!

In June, we received \$139,017 in income to offset \$195,514 in expenses. This leaves us with **\$56,497** in expenses over income. Our income year-to-date is \$986,710 and our expenses year-to-date are \$1,199,982. This leaves us with **\$213,272** in expenses over income through June.

Our current mortgage balance is \$1,544,188 as of July 1st, 2024.

Kindly engage in prayerful consideration of your stewardship decisions and their implications for the future of our church. Each member holds a significant role in ensuring the financial stability of our church, and your involvement is crucial for our collective success. We need each and every single one of you during this time of transition in our church.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your stewardship, faithfulness, and loyalty to this church and any ministries that you are involved in.

Center 4Life Learning

Come Learn and Be Entertained



STILL TIME TO REGISTER FOR 2 SUMMER CLASS:

Fun with Logic

Friday Afternoons/1:00PM - 2:30PM
August 9th & 16th

Sign Language

Friday Mornings/10:30AM - 12:00PM
August 9th - September 13th

*Fall Semester begins October 7, 2024.
Registration begins the week of August 26.*

Center 4Life Learning's upcoming trips and tours!

Guided Tours of the Image Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts, Lunch at the Hangar, St. Petersburg

August 20, 2024



The Second-To-Last Chance Ladies League, Early Bird Dinner Theater, Buffet Lunch & Show

October 3, 2024

On Golden Pond, Manatee Performing Arts Center, Bradenton
November 13, 2024



Snook Haven, Myakka River Tour, Venice

January 15, 2025

Steel Magnolias, Manatee Performing Arts Center, Bradenton
January 29, 2025



Make Memories! Enjoying trips and classes together are great gifts for birthdays and special occasions.

Register for Classes and Trips Today!

Contact the Center 4Life Learning office at 813-634-8607, email at center4life@sccumc.com, or visit our website at www.sccumc.com/4lifelearning

'Breakaway' with Breakaway -Renee Tisdale

We've been busy these past weeks at Breakaway, busy; but in such a good way! Our sale of items made by the group on the patio was a huge success. Thanks to your generosity we raised nearly \$500.00. These funds go towards supplies, new projects, and scholarships.



We are so happy to welcome Pastors Cynthia and Travis to our Breakaway family, and they seem to fit right in since there was no hesitation in playing volleyball on their first visit!

We were able to celebrate Pastor Debbie's birthday the same day we had an amazing BBQ and potluck lunch. It seems most of our BBQ's fall on Wednesdays, so to be fair to our Monday volunteers we'll be having another BBQ and Potluck on Monday, July 29, our theme is Christmas in July!



We were able to assist in a small way with the decorations for VBS by making a few Octopi out of bubble wrap! They are now dangling from the ceiling in Creason hall! Our latest craft has been making and stringing bright paper flowers for all the doors.



Once a month we're so fortunate to have Teri lead us in Yoga. This month she introduced exercise bands to the routine, and it was a huge hit! There doesn't seem to be anything that the amazing volunteers of Breakaway won't try and because they try, then our friends are encouraged to do the same!



Our morning activities change daily, but our afternoons are reserved for volleyball and dancing! Don't worry, we have dessert in between to sustain us! Greg Rabelo has been a blessing to Breakaway by coming at least monthly to perform for us.

Vivacious Ministries with Victoria Sorensen

**“August is a month of possibilities, a reminder that every day holds the potential for greatness.”
-Unknown**

Welcome to August!

Well July certainly was a busy month here on the campus. It was a month filled with all the wonderful things. We welcomed our new pastors to our church family, our youth enjoyed summer camp and came back energized, the Vacation Bible School was full of joy and adventure, our Boost Your Communications class has continued to be a blessing to everyone participating. The 2nd Annual Community Back-to-School supply drive has been amazing and the event will be even better!

I would like to take a moment and thank all of the volunteers who made July a wonderful month helping with Vacation Bible School and the 2nd Annual Community Back-to-School supply drive and event. Without all of you, we could not have had great events for the children and students in our local area.

The Ladies' Brunch is scheduled for July 31st, please remember to help support our new outreach ministry Inspira Tampa Bay by bringing items such as coloring books, crayons, reading books and board games for ages K-2nd grade. As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, Inspira is making a huge difference in our community by providing services to children, youth and young adults, and their families, and the items you donated will help them keep doing the things to help grow these special people.

I am currently looking for individuals who would love to help me greet on Sunday mornings for all of our worship services. If you are interested in greeting people on Sunday morning before each of our services, please let me know. It is a great way to meet new people and people you don't know in the church and share a smile and some love on Sunday morning.

While things may seem to be slowing down this month, there are still things going on at the church campus. Here are a few reminders:

Friday Night at the Movies is August 9th and we are having an Ice Cream Social. Please come and join us at 5pm before the movie. Our movie is "Let There Be Light."

We have volunteer opportunities available, so if you are interested in finding your place on the campus, please email me at victoria@scumc.com.

We are looking for team members for Our Methodists on the Move Alzheimer's Walk team. The Alzheimer's Walk for a Cure is on Saturday, October 19th. To register for the walk, you can register at [2024 Walk to End Alzheimer's - South Shore, FL | Walk to End Alzheimer's](#). Additionally, Billy "Elvis" Lindsay will be doing a benefit concert supporting the Alzheimer's Association on October 11th so come and enjoy this wonderful performance supporting a great cause,

As always, I look forward to seeing you on the patio on Sunday mornings!
Blessings, Victoria

Honoring Mrs. Victoria Sorensen: A Pillar of Our Community

On July 23, 2024, Gannon University's Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology program celebrated earning its fully accredited status. To commemorate this significant milestone, we invited individuals who were instrumental in the accreditation process, including clinical supervisors, advisory board members, and key community stakeholders. Among these invitees was Mrs. Victoria Sorensen. Her unwavering support of our students, program, and university has deeply touched our hearts. To express our gratitude for her dedication and commitment to connecting community members, Victoria was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation.

Victoria is a devoted leader and a tireless advocate for those in need. She is also a cherished member of our growing Gannon family. She selflessly gives of herself, nurturing, mentoring, and guiding those around her. Her dedication is invaluable to our community, and we are deeply appreciative of her contributions.

I would also like to recognize the United Methodist Church of Sun City Center and its members for opening their doors and hearts to us. We are fortunate to be part of this exceptional community and look forward to continuing to build a long-lasting partnership.

Victoria, you deserve to be celebrated for all your hard work. We are grateful and blessed to have you in our lives.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Dr. Lenhardt



'Happenings' with Children and Youth

July seemed tailor-made for our children and youth, bringing so much joy and excitement throughout the month. In addition to our regular programs, our young ones had a blast at a fantastic VBS this year. A big thank you goes out to Rees Kirkorian and Debe Allen for their tireless efforts in creating a successful underwater adventure for our children. Another round of gratitude to ALL the volunteers, whether working behind the scenes or in the spotlight; your dedication is essential for the program's success. The children who participated this year were truly touched by the love of Jesus. Their smiles and laughter were infectious, a testament to the impact of the VBS on their hearts and minds. Please consider being a part of VBS next year. You will not regret the experience!

Our children will soon be heading back to school. Let's keep the kids and teachers in our thoughts and prayers for the upcoming year. Together, let's pray that the children approach the new school year with excitement and curiosity. May the dedication and passion of our teachers in nurturing young minds play a crucial role in shaping their future.

As we prepare for the new school year, it's also important to ensure that everyone is equipped with the tools they need to succeed. That's why we are hosting our 2nd annual Community Back to School Fair. Victoria Sorensen, Director of Ministries, has reached out to the community to partner with your church to help 13 local schools. Children and families will receive school supplies, dental care, school physicals, haircuts, and much more! Here's to a successful and inspiring school year ahead!

Thank you once again to everyone who contributed to making this July unforgettable. Your kindness, generosity, and commitment to our children and youth are the building blocks of a strong, loving community. Let us continue to work together, creating an environment where every child feels valued, supported, and loved. Here's to many more joyful and impactful moments ahead!



SCUBA VBS 2024

Thank you Pat Jones for all the wonderful pictures!



TOT SPOT

Tuesday @ 9:30AM - 11AM

Enter a welcoming environment where toddlers, aged 18-36 months, engage in music, movement, and imaginative play. Sessions help toddlers develop motor skills, language, and social interactions. Parents connect with others while children enjoy singing, creative activities, and play at Tot Spot.

Story Time



STORY TIME

Thursday @ 10AM - 11AM

Storytime is a weekly story hour for families with children aged 4-6yrs. It is designed to meet preliteracy, literacy and social emotional needs. This program offers an interactive story hour and a chance to meet your neighbors.

REGISTRATION OPEN

SCAN ME



Space is limited, so registration is mandatory. Registering does not guarantee enrollment; you will receive a confirmation once registered. For inquiries or further details, please reach out to kidmin@sccumc.com.

Friday Night at the Movies
Presents:

Bring a Friend,
Make a Friend,
Everything is Better
with Sprinkles

ICE
Cream

Social
PARTY

FRIDAY
AUGUST 9TH
5:00PM

In the LEC Lobby



Friday Night at the Movies

FRIDAY, AUGUST 9TH AT 6:00PM

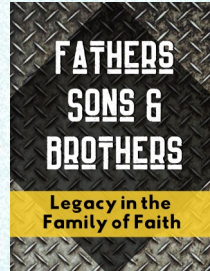


LET THERE BE LIGHT - World-famous lifelong atheist Dr. Sol Harkens (Kevin Sorbo) delights in debating and defeating Christians but is emotionally empty. Isolated from Katy (Sam Sorbo), the wife he divorced following the harrowing loss of their first son, and a lousy part-time dad to their two younger boys, his self-destruction culminates in a car crash that leaves him clinically dead for four minutes. The four-word message from that experience challenges his convictions, sending him into a panicked tailspin. Reluctantly leaning on his family's forgiveness, love and faith, Sol struggles to find meaning and purpose in the words "Let There Be Light."

This is a free event for our community and church.
Light refreshments are available.
Doors open at 5:30PM.



THURSDAY, AUGUST 15 AT 8:00AM



Please plan on joining us for our first Men's Breakfast of the Fall. It'll be a good time with good guys, so don't be afraid to bring a buddy with you. This is a great opportunity to make new friends and meet some new brothers. This month Pastor Travis will be bringing the first of a two-part message series titled: *Fathers, Sons, and Brothers*, and examining how we might live into our roles as each. Don't Miss It!

This Month's Menu:

Scrambled Eggs, Thick Cut Peppered Bacon, Pork Sausage Links, Breakfast Potatoes, & Buttermilk Pancakes

Men's Breakfast is the 3rd Thursday each month.
Cost is \$10.00. Sign up by Aug. 11th.



WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28 AT 10:00AM

Time to remember going to the State Fairs and County Fairs – eating Fair food, riding the rides, petting the animals, seeing the homemakers exhibits – the canned goods, pies, cakes, crafts, the list goes on, but I'll bet everyone has been to a fair and might even have a great story to share!

This Month's Menu:

Pulled Pork Sliders, Potato Chips, Coleslaw, & Strawberry Shortcakes

Ladies' Brunch is the 4th Wednesday of the month. Cost is \$10.00.
Sign up in the office by Sunday, Aug. 25

Health Ministry Event:



Dr. Hamed El-Jabali from Dental Experts

**Thursday, August 15th
10:00 AM**

Sign Up in the Church Office



Dr. El-Jabali has a passion for dentistry and is focused on comprehensive, patient-centered dental care. His practice thrives on the principles of empathy, innovative technology, and a personalized approach to dental care. We invite you to come meet Dr. El-Jabali and learn more about his passion for dentistry and oral care.

WORSHIP ARTS - Jeff Jordan

Enjoying a cooler (74 degree!) morning and yes, it'll get hotter than heck by 2PM or so, but I sure love Florida, our fair city (SCC) and most of all, our church family!

We church folks reckon the year in a few ways: the calendar year, the liturgical year (Advent to Advent), and here in Florida the seasonal year. June marks the end of our seasonal year, and July is the month that the worship arts folks take a short breather before the new 'season' commences.

Looking back over the last month, June was a time of planning for the coming season. Maria, Nancy, Teo and I have much of the music planned for the Fall season. Personally, I spent much of the month (about 100 hours) working on my schooling to become a Licensed Local Pastor, and I'm happy to say that it's done! It was through the Candler School of Theology at Emory University. I learned lots and lots about the Methodist Church and the role(s) of the pastor therein working through the following ten modules: United Methodist Tradition, Pastoral Care, Preaching, Worship, the Sacraments, Spiritual Formation, Leadership and Administration (a tough one), Education, Missions, and Evangelism. After I'm appointed, I'll continue to take a few seminary classes each year in something called a Course of Study. I want to thank all of you who have supported me in this new venture, and please know that I am NOT leaving the music ministry here, just taking on a new role or roles as assigned. I'm VERY excited about this as I know the Lord has been leading me in this direction for some time!

During July, I was able to take a couple of weeks off – going up to the north GA mountains for one and down to my favorite place in the world, Anna Maria Island, for the other. And, of course, we got to enjoy a week of sheer joy with the kids, young and old, at SCUBA Vacation Bible School!

I'm looking forward to greeting and working with our new pastoral staff and what God has in store for this amazing and loving church. May He continue to bless our continued kingdom-building!

Finally, and once again, I love this church and this family of faith. Thank you for your never-ending love and encouragement!

Soli Deo Gloria

Thank God It's Variety -Larry Hirchak

The Thank God It's Variety concert series schedule for the Fall, Winter and Spring has been completed. We have an exceptional variety of artists and groups booked. They include several tribute artists bringing back the music of many favorite performers from the past, family gospel groups, country music, bluegrass, jazz, choral and orchestral seasonal concerts and comedy. We will also continue with the Rasmussen Artist Series of chamber music with concerts in August, September, and October.

A special Sunday evening concert will take place on August 11, 2024 at 7:00PM. This concert is entitled "Hot Summer Cool Jazz" and will be performed by the nationally acclaimed singer, songwriter, saxophonist and flutist Stacey Knights and smooth jazz trumpeter and vocalist Chuck Weirich. With the exceptional artistry of these two accomplished musicians and singers, you really won't want to miss this performance of mesmerizing and exciting smooth jazz!!

On Sunday, August 18, 2024, the next concert in our Rasmussen Artist Series features the awesome soprano voice of Vanessa Rodriguez accompanied on piano by the Venice Chorale Conductor and Director Brent Douglas. Vanessa, who was born and raised in Queens, NY, attended Fiorello H. Laguardia High School for the Performing Arts in Manhattan, a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education at the University of South Florida and a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of Michigan. She has been the featured singer in numerous opera, theater and performing arts productions in the Tampa Bay area, Orlando and South Florida. Plan to attend this extraordinary performance by these two outstanding musical talents!

Please pick up a copy of the TGIV trifold for other upcoming concerts and events in the months ahead. Your continued support of this outreach ministry is much appreciated!

Larry Hirchak, TGIV Concert Series Coordinator