

# The Happening

NOVEMBER 2024

## Mission of the Month

### Miracle Ministries (Our Sister Church in India)

Greetings from Miracle Ministries!

At the very outset I would like to thank you so much for having selected us as 2023 Sun City Center United Methodist Church Mission of the Month for November.

Let me give you a brief introduction of the Ministries. Miracle Ministries is a multifaceted organization with its headquarters in Kadali, on the southeast coast of India. Below are our Ministries that you help support.



**Miracle Church:** Miracle Ministries runs a Miracle Church which has 300 congregation in attendance.

**Miracle Children's Home:** 42% of our population falls below the poverty line making \$1.25 a day! 6000 children under the age of 6 die of hunger and malnutrition. The Miracle Children's home was started in 2001 to be a beacon of hope to children who are being deprived of their childhood. Currently we are catering to the needs of 20 children.



**Dorca's Sewing Institute:** Miracle Ministries is serving the women through Dorca's sewing school.

**Living Waters:** Partnered with Global Water Consortium, Miracle Ministries is providing good drinking water to the community.

**PNG Institute:** Miracle Ministries is providing computer education to the young people through the PNG computer Institute.

**Church Construction:** Miracle Ministries is involved in church construction. So far we have constructed four churches with the help of Sun City Center UMC.



## Scripture of the Month

"O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own. I know, my God, that you search the heart and take pleasure in uprightness; in the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things, and now I have seen your people who are present here offering freely and joyously to you. O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our ancestors, keep forever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of your people, and direct their hearts toward you."

1 Chronicles 29



# South Bay Genealogy

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19**  
**10:30 AM**

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

**Guest Speaker: Peggy Jude**

**“What’s in The Name? Using Surnames in Genealogical Research”**

The cost is \$18.00 per person for the meal and the presentations. For reservations and meal choice contact Vicki at 360-608-1647. 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 November 7th.***

## Updates from VRT

The name has been changed from DRT! We are now the Volunteer Response Team (VRT). We are a group of caring, Christian volunteers that help with community projects, His Helpers, church maintenance, disaster response and recycling.

Our VRT has been extremely busy the past month with back to back hurricanes. Many members have volunteered many hours in disaster response. We cleared storm debris from the Church; mucked out flooded buildings, loaned generators, removed drywall and removed the outside portico at Ruskin Methodist Church; tarped roofs; put up shutters; and repaired doors.

NOTE: Meeting times are the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the Month. It is in room 19 at 2:45 to 4:00 p.m. Next meeting will be November 20. There will be Equipment Maintenance Manager Training after the November meeting.

The Volunteer Response Team (VRT) of Sun City Center is always looking for people with many different skills to join our team. Besides workers with tool skills, we always need cooks, organizers, administrators, and people to lend a caring Christian presence. If you are interested in becoming an active member of our VRT, please consider attending our monthly meeting and register on our VRT email database at <http://eepurl.com/gew3MD>

## Meet Faniel!



Hello, Sun City Center UMC! My name is Faniel Pradel, and I am so glad that I get to be your new Director of Next Gen Ministries! Working with Youth, Young Adults, and Young Families is an important part of establishing growth in the church, and I'm thrilled to lead the charge. My wife (Maggie) and I have lived in Ruskin for a few years and are new to the area. We will have been married for 3 years on October 24<sup>th</sup>. Maggie works as a speech pathologist assistant with the Hillsborough County Schools and is passionate about her work. I'm originally from South Florida (Miami) but have lived in the greater Tampa/St. Pete area since 2015. I've worked at several churches since then, including Anona UMC of Largo, Allendale UMC and Pasadena Community Church of St. Petersburg. During those years I have worked directly with students and young adults. A lot of my experience with students and young adults came with my time as a counselor at the Warren W. Willis summer camp, in Leesburg as well as my time with The FSU/TCC Wesley Foundation and FIU Wesley foundation. I'm excited to bring my expertise in both of those age groups as well as my passion to help cultivate and build up leaders, to this church. I'm looking forward to meeting you all and getting started on working with a great group of Students.

*The Staff Parish, Finance and Administrative Council teams recently approved use of reserve funds to cover the position of Director of Next Gen Ministries for the term of 1 year. It is a part-time position that will relate to our ministries with youth, young adults and reaching young families in our community. This area of ministry is a high priority for our church yet we do not currently have funds available in our general budget. We are hoping this one year investment will guide our way into a longer term commitment in this area.*





# A Word From Our Pastor - Dr. Cynthia Weems

Dear Friends,

During the last eight weeks Pastor Travis and I held over fifteen "Visits & Visions" meetings with small groups totaling more than 300 individuals. We have two more remaining before October ends. A special word of thanks to Lori Elder and Bill Fleck of our Staff Parish team who helped to coordinate these important times of fellowship and conversation. We were able to hear your stories and learn more about what you love about this church. We also asked you these two questions for reflection, "What are your hopes and dreams for our church?" and "Is there something we aren't doing that you'd like to see us do?" Many of you have asked for a report of what we learned. Here is a pretty comprehensive list of everything that was shared more than once.

## **Worship:**

Greater depth in our practice of Holy Communion

Passing the peace during worship

Missing the presence of the Hispanic ministry

A desire to see more people in in-person worship

## **Young people:**

Growth in the youth & children's ministry program

Intergenerational ministries and activities (game night!)

An emphasis on ministries with young families

Mentorship opportunities

## **Administration:**

Greater transparency in church finances

Improved church website with more information

A campaign to pay off the LEC mortgage

## **Ministries:**

Recruiting new volunteers & more effective follow-up with volunteers

Annual Ministry Fair

Bible study for new Bible readers

More effective communication of volunteer opportunities

Increased small groups and a path to discipleship

## **Outreach:**

Short term mission projects

Reaching out to homes in new developments

Increased diversity to reflect our community

Thank you for spending this time with us and it is never too late to share your input with us. We are here for conversation anytime!

In Christ's love,  
Pastor Cynthia

## Stewardship Corner

Have you ever thought about the IMPACT of your giving at The United Methodist Church of Sun City Center? It is in the act of giving, without the expectation of anything in return, that we find joy. Sometimes we might think of giving as what God wants FROM us, when really giving is what He wants FOR us.

We are taught that God wants us to be cheerful givers of our Time, Talents and Treasures. I think of our Mission Churches in India and Cuba, the food pantry, our Missions of the Month, United Methodist Residing Hope Children's Home and any number of times that we give freely of dollars, water, food, visitation and many other ways that we give in the community and beyond. With the recent hurricanes, we have been affected ourselves and still find that we want to reach out and help our neighbors. Those things have a huge IMPACT!!

How do you see people within your church serving God as good stewards through giving? In the choir or praise band, the parking team, at the coffee bar, disaster relief, decorating, arranging concerts and events? Preaching or serving on staff? Perhaps you've greeted and welcomed people or taken the collection. Maybe you served on a committee or visited someone's home or prayed with or for our church. These are all great examples of being a good servant and a good steward. I like to think that makes God smile. All these things make an IMPACT.

In November, we traditionally focus on Stewardship and ways that we all have the opportunity to serve. It will be an exciting time as we enter Thanksgiving, Advent and the Christmas season.

### **COME CELEBRATE STEWARDSHIP SUNDAYS:**

**Nov. 10th: *Inspiration Sunday***

**Nov. 17th: *Gratitude Sunday***

**Nov. 24th: *Consecration Sunday***

In the Spirit of Stewardship, I look forward to worshipping with you around these themes in the month of November. Mike Schoonover, Stewardship team chair



# Center 4Life Learning

Come Learn and Be Entertained  
2024 Fall Semester In Session

Registration open for the following classes:

- Aging with Grace & Vitality Through Holistic Methods
- Android Smartphones & Tablets
- Befriending the Ending: Advance Care Planning
- Cut The Cord
- Film History 1929-1961
- Investment, Estate, and Tax Planning
- Starlink Presentation
- Streaming Movies, TV and Music

## Trips and Tours



**A Christmas Carol and Pre-Show  
Dinner, Ruth Eckerd Hall**  
*December 23, 2024*

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



**The Sound of Music, Manatee  
Performing Arts Center**  
*March 12, 2025*

**My Fair Lady, Suncoast Broadway  
Dinner Theater, Hudson**

*May 8, 2025*



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

### Register for Classes and Trips Today!

Trip flyers are available on the Center 4Life Learning website, in the church Sanctuary lobby and in the Center 4Life Learning office.

Contact the Center 4Life Learning office at 813-634-8607, email at [center4life@sccumc.com](mailto:center4life@sccumc.com), or visit our website at [www.sccumc/4lifelearning](http://www.sccumc/4lifelearning)

## Friday Night at the Movies

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH AT 6:00 PM



**Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo:**  
During World War II, Lt. Col. James H. Doolittle (Spencer Tracy) leads the U.S. Air Force in a bombing mission over Japan. Doolittle and his men stage a successful attack on Tokyo, but most pilots run out of fuel while returning from the raid. Many are forced to land on Japanese soil, but Capt. Ted Lawson

(Van Johnson), who has a pregnant wife at home, crash-lands in the sea off the coast of China. Stranded, Lawson must heroically endure a series of harrowing challenges to make it back home.

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



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21ST AT 8:00 AM

Join us for Men's Breakfast led by Pastor Travis. 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 Month's Menu:

**Buttermilk Pancakes, Scrambled Eggs, Hickory Smoked Bacon, Pork Sausage Links, Breakfast Potatoes, Fruit Salad**

Men's Breakfast is the third Thursday of each month. Cost is \$10.00. Sign up in the office by Nov. 17th



# Vivacious Ministries with Victoria Sorensen

*"The month of November makes me feel that life is passing more quickly. In an effort to slow it down, I try to fill the hours more meaningfully." — Henry Rollins*

Welcome to November!

As the leaves turn into beautiful oranges, reds, and yellows, we here in Sunny Florida, experienced Hurricane's Helene, and Milton in the month of October. We continue to pray for those who lost everything and those who are helping to clean up the remanence of these devastating storms.

I am so grateful for our Volunteer Response Team and their continuing efforts to help not only you in our congregation but those in our surrounding communities. They have been and continue to be such a blessing to those who need assistance.

As a church, we have been able to bless so many in our community by providing food and hygiene items to help them during this time of need. Our pantry is just now getting filled with new items everyday thanks to you who continue to donate to help others in need of food. We received two exceptionally large contributions over the past weeks which have helped fill our shelves up again so more food can go out into our community. A "BIG Thank You" to Mary Klopp who keeps our shelves looking great in our Food Pantry and to Joanie Franz, Nicole Huard, and others who take food to those who can not come to the church.



I would also like to take a moment to thank the congregation for providing water to help serve our community through the Red Cross. It takes a village to get things to where they need to be, and I would like to thank everyone who donated the water and the special team who came together to deliver it. A "BIG Thank You" to the following individuals Butch Clark, Rae Cantwell, Jim McCracken, George Frasca, Gayle Turner, Karen Ransbury and her daughter Barb, Earl Gall, and Emad and Jane Wahba. Without all of you, we could not have helped those

in need in Wimauma.

Our Annual Walk to End Alzheimer's was a "BIG" success this year, and I would like to thank all of you who donated to our Methodists on the Move Team and those who donated at our Friday Night at the Movies. Your contributions, in addition to community and sponsors contributions, we raised \$95,000.00 this year to help find a cure. Thank you for your contributions and taking the time to Walk for a Cure to stomp out Alzheimer's!



As we move into this month, and into the holiday season, we continue to be busy with things on our campus. Here is what is coming up this month on the church campus:

November 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm is our final Friday Night at the Movies for this year. Doors open at 5:30 so come join us.

Monday, November 25<sup>th</sup> through Wednesday, November 27<sup>th</sup> we will be decorating the church for Christmas, and I will announce the time during the Sunday morning announcements. If you are interested in helping with this, please let me know by sending me an email at [victoria@sccumc.com](mailto:victoria@sccumc.com)

Thursday, November 28<sup>th</sup> following our Thanksgiving Service, we will once again have our Community Thanksgiving Dinner in the Life Enrichment Center (LEC). This meal is open to the community, and we will offer tickets for "Dine In" and "Take Out" meals. Tickets will be available starting November 12<sup>th</sup>. In addition to serving in our church we will once again send meals out to our homeless community. While there is no cost for the meal, donations will be accepted at the door. If you are interested in helping us with this event, please let me know by sending me an email.

Saturday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 9am – 2pm, join us on the campus for the Annual Timely Treasure Arts and Crafts event. Bring you Christmas shopping list, because I have heard there are going to be some wonderful things in the Life Enrichment Center (LEC) again this year.

As we move toward Christmas, there are ways you can help us make Christmas Merry and Bright for people in our community. We will be collecting board games for children of all ages in addition to other items for their age groups and we will collect items for our seniors living in the assisted living facilities who do not have family in our area. We will be collecting items such as socks, lotions, combs, brushes, books, and mugs with lids. So, be on the lookout for more information in the upcoming weeks as to how you can help, or just reach out to me for additional information.

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

Blessings, Victoria



As I sit at my desk to write an article for the upcoming newsletter, I've noticed that this is the first day that really looks and feels like we're in a new season. The air is crisp, it's a bit overcast, and it seems to be getting dark lots earlier than it did just a few weeks ago! I think we all love the change, don't we? AND, more importantly, I believe it's a new season here at UMCSCC with our 'mostly new' pastoral staff as well as the addition of another great staff member this past month – welcome, Next-Gen Director, Faniel (aka, Fanny)! Just like Autumn, there's a 'freshness' and vitality in and among our church family, and it is very compelling. I'm so very optimistic about what God has in store for us in the coming months and years! God is so, so very good!!

The month of October was, as usual, a whirlwind of activity, and the two storms only added to the joyous confusion! As Pastor Cynthia related in her message after Hurricane Milton, there were so many positive things, 'holy moments' perhaps, that resulted from our weathering these two powerful storms. Many of us got to know 'wave-at-only' neighbors much better. Many of us got to help, even come to the rescue of our relatives, friends and neighbors.

Our church family pulled together to help, support and pray for one another. It's true – God's presence and power is most felt in the 'midst of a storm', and I thank God for the opportunity to grow closer to Him in our walk with His Son!

November brings many more exciting worship, discipleship, fellowship and entertainment events and activities. One very special worship opportunity will be on Thanksgiving morning at 10AM with a community meal to follow. Last years' Thanksgiving service/meal was very powerful, and I expect the same will be true in '24! And please don't forget to check out the many and varied [*Thank God Its Variety*] concert programs that Larry has so skillfully planned! Teo and I will be performing the rescheduled Two-piano/Four-hand piano recital on Sunday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 3PM. We'd sure like to have you join us that afternoon!

And while these are not specifically "Worship Arts" events, I invite you to explore one or more of small group studies offered here at UMCSCC. There are small group offerings most days of the week including Sunday mornings! A church family our size will only continue to thrive and grow spiritually if we come together to love, nurture and encourage one another in smaller, more intimate settings. Wouldn't it be great to be a church OF small groups rather than one that HAS small groups?

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*

# BIG RED BUS

## Blood Drive

Sunday, November 24th

9:00AM - 12:00PM



All Donors Receive:

- **Wellness Checkup** including blood pressure, pulse, temperature, iron count, and cholesterol screening



Appointments are encouraged, please visit [oneblood.org/donate-now](https://oneblood.org/donate-now) and use sponsor code 15721

**oneblood**   
Share your power.



*Come Shop For*

- Handmade Crafts
- Original Artwork
- One of a Kind Gifts
- Holiday Decorations

*Bake Sale!!*

**75+  
Vendors  
to Shop**

# Arts & Crafts Fair

**Saturday  
Nov. 30th  
2024  
9am - 2pm**

*Avoid  
crowded  
malls and  
support local  
artists!*



**Presented by:  
TIMELY  
TREASURES**

United Methodist Church  
Sun City Center  
1971 Haverford Ave  
Sun City Center FL. 33573  
[www.sccumc.com](http://www.sccumc.com)



*Join us for Our*

COMMUNITY

THANKS  
GIVING

*Service + Meal*

November 28th  
10:00AM

Following the service you are invited to join us for a Thanksgiving meal.

Meals are available for dine in or take out. FREE tickets for the meal are available in the church office starting November 12th. A ticket will be required for the meal and are dispersed on a first come first served basis.