

# The Happening

JULY 2025

## Mission of the Month

### Unity - Young Adult Ministry



Unity was formed in our church in May 2023, following the graduation of a group of UTC Youth from high school. Many of these young individuals had been active members of the UTC youth group, but upon graduation, we recognized that they could no longer participate in that setting. With the approval from our Administrative Council, a new ministry was born. As close friends for nearly a decade, we wanted to ensure they maintained their bond and fellowship. Unity provides them the opportunity to stay connected and comfortably begin their new journey as young adults.



Unity remains dedicated to our church and has been actively involved in various activities such as helping with UTC Youth, behind the coffee bar on Sunday mornings and fundraising during church events like FALLtoberfest. Our gatherings range from events, including Bible studies, birthday celebrations, Sunday lunches after church, and Friendsgiving. We strive to balance spiritual enrichment with social connection, ensuring that everyone feels included and part of our extended family. Our goal is to create a community for young adults within our church where we can all grow in faith and support each other through life's challenges. Unity has become a safe haven for young adults to share their struggles and triumphs, and we are grateful for the opportunity to continue our spiritual journey with them. We welcome new members who are searching

for a place to belong and grow with us.

We are grateful to our church and the Missions Team for selecting us as July's Mission of the Month. With your generous support we will be able to expand our reach and impact, and help more young adults find a place where they feel accepted and supported. Our mission is to create a space where everyone feels heard, valued, and loved. With the funds from this Mission of the Month, we will be able to organize more events and provide resources for our members. We are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead of us and look forward to continuing our journey with Unity. Thank you for your support and belief in our mission. Together, we can create a more inclusive and supportive community for young adults within our church.

## Reflection On My First Month

- Zoe Lawless



Being here with you, this beautiful congregation, has already brought me so much joy. I have had the opportunity to sit with several staff members and laypersons, learning about this church and the community. I have been able to take part in visiting those in the hospital, connecting with those who had prayer requests, spending time both at the Lagoon and at game night with the youth, shadowing Pastor Cynthia and Pastor Travis in various meetings and activities, taking part in Sunday morning services through prayer and Communion, and much more.

It is inspiring to witness your authentic vibrancy and to hear how God has been at work in your hearts and lives. I greatly admire your willingness and deep eagerness to step in, serve, model Christ, and allow God to use you in His ministry to this world.

I want to encourage you: To lay down your life and take up your cross to follow Christ is an expensive choice, but He is well worth the cost. Follow Christ. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you and counsel you. Join Jesus in ministry to the glory of the Father, our Creator.

## Welcome New Members

Please welcome those who joined our church family this past Sunday! When you see them, give a warm welcome and take the time to get to know them. It is always a blessing to receive new members into our church family!

Elaine Nevin  
Carol & Rick Selby  
Scott Cowden  
Marcia Francis  
Mark Sutcliffe  
Rosemary Leist  
Marilyn Leist  
Laura Ann Simpson  
Roseann & Gary Wessel  
Dianne Ingoldsby  
Ann Marie Hall  
Diane & Jimmy Purcell  
Charles & Sandy Jordan  
Rev. Terry & Rev. Bonnie Cary  
Stan & Carolyn McClelland  
Cathy Moxley



## GriefShare Begins In August

Healing From Loss is a Journey: *Everyone Experiences Grief Differently*

A new Grief Share session will begin on Wednesday, August 27th, from 6:30 PM –8:00 PM in room 19. This 13-week grief support group will be led by Pastor Debbie Marion, Minister of Pastoral Care, and focuses on important grief topics associated with the death of a loved one.

Weekly videos feature nationally respected grief experts and real-life stories of people, followed by a group discussion where confidentiality is key to this program.

Many grieving people find they are only beginning the work of healing while friends or family members have returned to their daily life routines. Too often people tend to repress their grief and allow fear of what others may think keeping them from what could be helping them. Your bereavement experience may be recent, or not so recent. The hope is that you will find encouragement, comfort, and help in grieving the death of a spouse, child, sibling, other family members, or a friend. No matter what the cause of your loved one's death, this is an opportunity to be around people who understand what you are feeling. You will learn how to recognize the symptoms of being stuck in your grief and that you do not need to stay there. You will learn valuable information about dealing with the changes in your life and renewing your hope for the future. I hope you will consider being part of this valuable ministry.

To register for this group, please go online to [griefshare.org/findagroup](http://griefshare.org/findagroup) and search for our church's group. You will also find additional information and resources there.

**Saturday Movie Matinee  
Presents:**

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

**ICE  
Cream**

**Social  
PARTY**

**SATURDAY  
JULY 5th  
11:30AM**

**In the LEC Lobby**



**SATURDAY, JULY 5TH AT 1:00 PM**



**FAITH OF ANGELS:** tells the true story of ten-year-old Joshua Dennis, who gets lost in an abandoned mine in 1989. After a five-day search, he is found, and his survival is considered a miracle. The movie focuses on the rescue effort, particularly the role of John Skinner, who, despite initial

resistance, uses his knowledge of the mine and a divine prompting to navigate the perilous tunnels and find Joshua.

This is a free event for our community and church.  
Doors open at 12:30PM .



**THURSDAY, JULY 17TH AT 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. This is a great opportunity to make new friends and meet some new brothers.

Men's Breakfast is the third Thursday of each month.  
Cost is \$10.00. Please sign up by July 13th.

## **LADIES' BRUNCH**

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 30TH AT 10AM**

It's Picnic Time! We will celebrate summer with a picnic. Remember the days of red and white checkered table covers, lemonade, iced tea, and bar-b-que? Come and join us on July 30<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am in the LEC. Our menu will be from our local BubbaQues to include pulled pork, macaroni and cheese, baked beans, coleslaw and Texas toast. We will have cookies for dessert, and provide lemonade, iced tea, and water.

The cost for our picnic is \$15.00 per person and you must make your paid reservation by Sunday, July 27, as we are limiting seating to 100 women.

**Our special guest speaker will be Sarah Taylor, the wife of Pastor Travis.**

**This will be an event you won't want to miss, so stop by the church office anytime between now and July 27 and reserve your place at the table!**

# 'Break Away' with Breakaway

- Renee Tisdale

I've mentioned it before, and I'll shout it from the rooftops: we have a blast at Breakaway, no matter what we're up to! This month has been a whirlwind of giggles and delight, with happiness spreading across campus through gift distributions and welcoming staff during our meetings.

## Highlights of Our Month:

- **Wine Cork Flowers:** Our fabulous volunteers turned wine corks into stunning flowers, which our friends joyfully painted. Those not whisked away to new homes were shared with our staff, adding a splash of color everywhere.
- **Tattoos and Tacos:** Our second Tattoos and Tacos event was so epic it stretched over two days! While only one day was taco-filled, it was a fiesta for everyone—friends, volunteers, staff, and even our caregivers! Tattoos were all the rage; some flaunted them for days, while others loved how easily they disappeared.
- **Baking Adventure:** We dove into baking for the first time! Each of our friends made two loaves of bread in a bag, and they were both fun to make and delicious. We're eagerly awaiting our next baking escapade!
- **Boat-Themed Day:** We set sail on a nautical adventure! We built pool noodle sailboats and raced them against each other, worked our brains over some boat related puzzles, and many folks enjoyed coloring boat pictures.

## Community Involvement:

We're always on the lookout for projects that let us lend a hand to others. Recently, we've been busy prepping meal kits for the Mary Petro Ministry and whipping up peanut butter and jelly lunches for the Meet Me in the Streets Ministry in Ruskin. These lunches, were provided in bags decorated by our friends and were a hit! If you'd like to donate to this worthy cause, please let me know—I have a list of ingredients needed.

## Music and Entertainment:

Because so many of our friends can still sing and dance regardless of their lever of Alzheimer's or dementia, our afternoons are usually dedicated to music, and we have been so blessed to have so many truly talented musicians come to entertain us. If you are a musician and are interested in performing please contact me at 813-634-2539 ext. 1011

## Exciting News Ahead:

Coming soon we'll be opening our very own Breakaway storefront! It will be in the LEC lobby, and you'll be able to purchase the many items that our friends living with Alzheimer's and dementia create!

# WORSHIP ARTS

Well, here we are, about halfway through our sometimes-grueling summer months and everything's 'humming' right along. July is the month that many of our staffers take one or more vacations and that's true of Lisa and me as well. We've planned a trip to Pueblo CO to visit with Lisa's folks and to visit some of the sights in that area like Pikes Peak and the Garden of the Gods! I can't wait as I've never been to that part of the country before, and her parents genuinely are lots of fun! Another week in July we'll be heading down to spend a few days at our favorite beach on the so-called "Suncoast" of FL, Anna Maria Island! Yes, it'll be hotter than a 'stolen tamale' on the island AND the water won't do much to cool us off that time of the year, but we still love the vibe of this beach community that retains much of 'old Florida'!

Looking back to last month, I'd like to thank all the folks that came out to hear the recital that Teo and I performed on June 22<sup>nd</sup> as well as those who supported our annual patriotic cantata on the last weekend of the month. Playing with Teo is one of the joys of being in ministry together. She is such a fine musician and we're very lucky to have her on our staff!

As you probably have gathered, the Chancel Choir and handbell ensembles are off for the month of July, so you'll be enjoying a variety of special music in worship this month. Teo is also spending the month back in Romania with her family, so there won't be much music coming from our fine hybrid organ. Thanks to everyone who is pitching in musically and to our church family for extending an extra measure of grace during this period! Choir and Bells will be back in August, and the community vocal ensembles (Men's and Women's Choruses) will be back 'in business' come September. If you are interested in participating in any of our church or community ensembles, or you play an instrument and would like to share your talents with your church family, PLEASE call, text, or email me in the next several weeks. I look forward to hearing from you!!!

Jeff Jordan

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Wishing all my church family and friends a safe and blessed rest of the summer!

*Soli Deo Gloria*

Jeff



# Center 4Life Learning *Come Learn and Be Entertained*

## 2025 Summer Classes

### Beginners Conversational Spanish Level II

*Instructor: Hud Richard*

Mondays, 7/7-8/11 | 8:30AM - 10:00AM

### Beginners Conversational Spanish Level III

*Instructor: Andrea Ellena*

Fridays, 7/11-8/15 | 8:30AM - 10:00AM

### Fun With Late '50's-Early 60's Rock N' Roll

*Instructor: Rob Silverman*

2 Wednesday & 2 Fridays, 7/23, 7/25, 7/30, & 8/1  
1:00PM - 2:30PM

### Sign Language

*Instructor: Bonnie DeVagno*

Mondays, 7/21-8/25 | 10:30AM - 12:00PM

### Cut the Cord and Stream

*Instructor: Phil Sorrentino*

Wednesday, August 13 | 10:00AM-11:30AM

*For class descriptions and instructors' bios, visit our website or Center office.*

Center 4Life Learning's  
upcoming trips and tours!



Holly Dolly, Musical Comedy  
Manatee Performing Arts Center

October 23, 2025

On the Farce Day of Christmas,  
Lunch and Comedy - Early Bird  
Dinner Theater

November 20, 2025



SunKicks, Lunch and Christmas Show  
Suncoast Broadway Dinner Theater

December 18, 2025

**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 [www.sccumc.com/4lifelearning](http://www.sccumc.com/4lifelearning)



# UTC Youth Summer Vibes



“May the month ahead be filled with an abundance of magnificent miracles, blissful blessings, and splendid surprises. Welcome, July!” – Unknown

Can you believe we're already in the seventh month of the year? Time flies! I hope your summer is going well and that you're enjoying those warm days and refreshing afternoon showers!

As we step into this new month, let's take a moment to reflect on some highlights from June.

**Successful Blood Drive:** Our blood drive with OneBlood on June 2nd was a great success! Thank you to everyone who participated; OneBlood collected 16 units of blood, which will help 48 patients. Don't forget to join us for our next blood drive on Sunday, August 3rd, from 8 AM to 1 PM.

**Boost Your Communications Social Group:** We are grateful for the students from Gannon University and their professor, Dr. Rita Lenhardt, who have been busy with our second Boost Your Communications Social Group. This group met for two sessions in June and will have two more in July before the participants graduate. Similar to last year's class, they are learning effective communication skills and techniques to help them with their cognitive abilities.

**Mission of the Month:** June's Mission of the Month focused on our Sister Cuba Church. On Sunday, June 8th, we enjoyed a wonderful afternoon hearing from Rick Norwood, our Sister Cuba Mission representative, about his trip to Cuba and the amazing work God is doing there. Along with Lynn Bordelon, he shared their experiences and what is required for a mission trip to Cuba. We had a fantastic turnout, and several donations were made to support our sister church. Thanks to a private donation and a contribution from the Friendship Circle, we are excited to provide two solar-powered generators for our sister church. We appreciate everyone's generosity and ongoing support for this mission.

**3rd Annual Back-to-School Event:** You may have noticed flyers around our church about our upcoming 3rd Annual Back-to-School event scheduled for Saturday, July 26th, from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM in the Life Enrichment Center (L.E.C.). We're once again supporting local students from thirteen schools as they prepare for the 2025-2026 school year, and we need your assistance. Here's how you can help:

- Bring new school supplies and drop them off at the church by July 13th in one of the bins located on the church campus.
- Shop Amazon to order new school supplies and have them delivered directly to the church. Contact the church for a link to our Amazon Wish List.
- Or, you can make a financial contribution by writing a check to SCCUMC and noting "Back-to-School" in the memo line. Thank you in advance for supporting this vital local mission for the children and youth in our community.

### Exciting Grant Announcement



In case you missed our post on Facebook, I have some exciting news to share! The Community Foundation of Tampa Bay has selected our church to receive a grant for our “Bare Necessities for All” Ministry project. We were awarded \$10,000.00 to assist underserved and vulnerable populations, such as low-income seniors, veterans, and school-age children and youth, by providing healthy food, clothing, and hygiene products. These funds will help deliver essential daily necessities to individuals and families facing challenges in Apollo Beach, Gibsonton, Riverview, Ruskin, Sun City Center, and Wimauma.

### Join Us for a Movie Matinee!

Instead of our traditional Friday Night at the Movies, join us in a Movie Matinee on Saturday, July 5th, at 1:00 PM in the Life Enrichment Center (L.E.C.). We will be showing “Faith of Angels,” a true story about the miraculous rescue of ten-year-old Joshua Dennis, who becomes lost in an abandoned mine in Utah. Oh, and don't forget—there will be an Ice Cream Social too (starts at 11:30 AM)! Bring a friend and join us for ice cream, toppings, and popcorn ready for you when you arrive. We can't wait to SEE YOU at the MOVIES!

In closing, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your help and volunteer work throughout our different ministries and missions. We could not do what we do in our community and beyond without your help and financial support. Thank you for answering God's call and to love each other fully.

Much love and many blessings to each of you!  
Victoria

# Missions Update: Residing Hope

In 1896, the Florida Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South made a resolution to establish a home for orphaned children in Florida. At the time, the Methodist churches of Florida were sending their orphaned children to the Methodist Orphan's Home in Macon, Georgia and providing funds to help support those children. At the 1899 Annual Conference, a committee was created to pursue the 1896 resolution (and, interestingly, to also consider how the church might help orphans in Cuba). In 1908, property was purchased in the town of Enterprise, FL overlooking Lake Monroe on the St. Johns River, and the Florida Methodist Children's Home was born. In 1909, to help ensure the success of the home, fifth Sundays were designated as "Orphanage Sundays" when special collections were made to support this important ministry.

Initially, the home served as an orphanage, admitting children between the ages of 2 and 14 who could remain there until the age of 18. The home also accepted children whose parents were still living but, for a variety of reasons, couldn't care for them. By the 1950s, more and more applications were being made for children in the latter category and, over time, the complexity of their needs greatly increased. Today, most of the children admitted have been in multiple foster situations where their foster families just weren't equipped to provide the level of care and attention these children need. As a result, the mission of the children's home has evolved significantly from just providing food, shelter and vocational training in a safe and nurturing space, to teaching basic social skills and providing counselling and intensive therapy for abused and extremely vulnerable children.



On May 22, six of us had the opportunity to visit the Children's Home to tour the facilities and speak with staff. We were so impressed with the incredible work being done to give hope to kids whose lives have left them feeling utterly hopeless. The children live in cottages with 6-8

children of their same age/gender and a house parent. Each child has a room and bathroom to him/herself. Part of their training is to learn to keep their individual spaces clean and to cooperate with others to keep the common spaces clean and tidy. They also have to learn things like: complying with directions; sitting at the table to eat with their housemates; accepting no for an answer; answering when spoken to; participating in conversation; etc.

The goal is for the children to be able to successfully be a part of a foster family and perhaps one day to be able to return to their own family. To reach this goal, each child has a list of the expected social behaviours and they're rewarded for consistently meeting those expectations. They not only earn special privileges, but also the respect and admiration of their peers. Additionally, the home has trained counsellors and therapists who can offer personalized and intensive therapy, as might be needed by each child. The facilities are amazing with: a beautiful chapel where the children can serve in the music ministry; an on-site school (for those who can't or don't want to attend the local public schools); a health clinic with nursing staff to administer medications; a beauty salon/barber shop where interested older children can also learn cosmetology; and a greenhouse and hydroponic garden where they can grow vegetables and then sell them at the local Farmer's Market. For fun and physical training, there's a high ropes course, an impressive climbing wall, a swimming pool, a gym, tennis courts and basketball courts.

Separate from the children, the Home offers independent living cottages for homeless young adults (aged 18-26) who need a stable place to stay while getting on their feet. These cottages have resident assistants, counsellors and therapists who all serve to support the residents as they learn to become independently functioning adults. There are scholarships available for those who wish to pursue their educations and transportation assistance for those who have jobs.

The Florida United Methodist Children's Home (now called Residing Hope) is an amazing ministry that gives children and young adults the hope of becoming healthy and contributing members of society. The staff are truly the hands and feet of Jesus to these extremely vulnerable individuals and we have the privilege of being able to support those hands and feet. The staff are so grateful for our financial contributions (Mission of the Month and 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday special offerings) that allow them to do this incredible work. Additionally, they've provided us with a list of practical contributions for both the children and the young adults (available in the office) including things such as bed linens, lip balm, gift cards, etc.

