

January 30, 2024



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*Love God. Love People. Make Disciples of Jesus Christ.*

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## Weekly News

(Be sure to scroll all the way down.)

## The Wright Stuff



### We Are Growing

*So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in numbers daily. (Acts 16:5)*

First United Methodist Church attendance in person in 2023 was up 17% over 2022. Our average grew from 175 to 204. Online worship remained about the same—199 compared to 201.

Among our 46 new members in 2023, 3 professed their faith in

Christ for the first time, 18 reaffirmed their faith in Christ, 18 transferred their membership from other UMC churches, and 7 from non-UMC churches.

Why are we growing? People give three reasons: 1. Our people are friendly and welcoming. 2. Our music is wonderful and inspiring. 3. The sermons are great. (When they're talking with the pastor, mentioning the sermon is only polite.)

I am grateful the Spirit of God is strengthening our faith in Christ and bringing more of us together.

Dr. Sam

## Harp Concert ~ Sunday, February 4, at 6 P.M.



### **Giuseppina Ciarla, Harp**

Sunday, February 4, at 6 p.m.

Enjoy an evening of voice and harp by candlelight. Principal harpist of the Sarasota Opera since 2002, Italian-born Giuseppina Ciarla is a classical musician and a groundbreaking crossover performer combining her artistry of voice and harp in an eclectic mélange ranging from jazz to sophisticated pop. Her authentic approach is rooted in classical training with vision to see new possibilities for popular classical as well as original compositions. Complimentary admission.

Presented by FUMC's Music Fine Arts.

## Mission Fair February 11 ~ After Both Services

First United Methodist Church

# Mission Fair



February 11

9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Brunch/Lunch

Fellowship Hall

*Refreshments by Joy*

A chance to discover the many missions and ministries which are part of First UMC. Get to know what we do and how you can get involved!

## Immediate Need



**VOLUNTEER TO TEACH ELEMENTARY SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**10:45 a.m. to Noon**

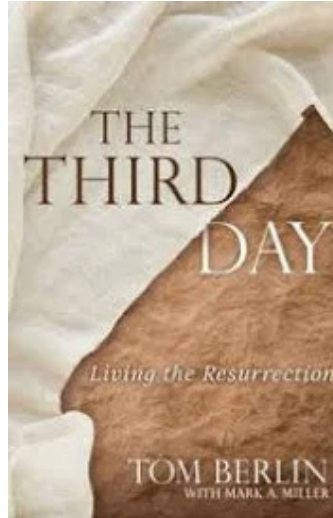
Contact Yvonne Wright ([yvonne.wright@comcast.net](mailto:yvonne.wright@comcast.net); 941-900-8232).

## Lenten Study Groups

**Both groups studying the same book:**

*The Third Day: Living the Resurrection* by Tom Berlin

In this Lenten study, Rev. Tom Berlin ( Bishop for the Florida Conference of the UMC) uses his gifts of storytelling and understanding the Scriptures to connect the reader to the experiences of several individuals around Jesus in his final days, focusing on new life and redemption rather than loss. Join Peter, Mary Magdalene, and Thomas as they feel the despair of losing Jesus and the surprise and joy that awaits them in the resurrection. This study traces events around these characters, along with Paul and the disciples at Emmaus, and how the resurrection transforms their lives.



## **Faith Café**

**Sundays, February 18 - March 24 ~ 9:40 a.m.**

**Room 104 and Zoom**

Contact Ann Day ([annietd@hotmail.com](mailto:annietd@hotmail.com); 941-704-8424)

## **Women's Spiritual Growth Group**

**Tuesdays, February 20-March 26 ~ 2:30 p.m.**

**Room 104 and Zoom**

Contact Susan Quigley ([susanq1@verizon.net](mailto:susanq1@verizon.net)).

## **Christian Fellowship – Study Group**

**Sundays at 9:30 a.m. – Room 105 and Zoom**

**February Lessons – *Faithful Prayer***

prayer as the strong thread for believers, shaping lives in decisive ways.

Contact – Leah Pittard ([rockpitt38@gmail.com](mailto:rockpitt38@gmail.com); 941-586-0185)

## **Hearing Loop for Services**



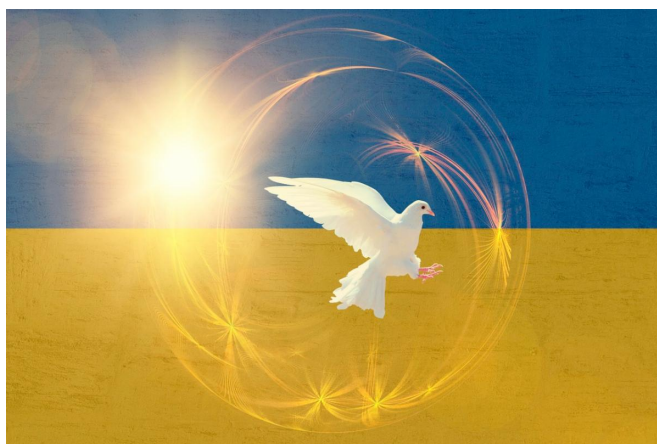


FUMC has a Hearing Loop in the Chapel and Sanctuary. Switch your hearing device to “T” (telephone) to connect to the loop. If needed, there are battery packs and ear buds at the Welcome Desk.

## Mission Moments

*Over the next weeks we will list some of our missions and ministries and give you an insight into what your generosity, and our mission volunteers, do at First United Methodist Church of Sarasota. Learn more about our missions at the Mission Fair, Sunday, February 11, after each service.*

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### Ukrainian Gathering and Support Group

This mission is coordinated by [Nicerfl.org](http://Nicerfl.org), and serves as a safe space for Ukrainian refugees and immigrants to meet, socialize, perfect their English speaking skills, and learn about living in the United States and, specifically, the greater Sarasota region. First UMC provide the space and has several volunteers tutoring and offering support. In addition, the church has raised funds for supplies and relief efforts in Ukraine and has hosted a Ukrainian Celebration and held an anniversary Prayer Service.

Visit [nicerfl.org](http://nicerfl.org)

For information on the gatherings: [info@nicerfl.org](mailto:info@nicerfl.org).

## In Memoriam

Memorial Service

**Jack Donaghy**

**February 17 at 1 p.m.**  
**Chapel – First United Methodist Church**

First United Methodist Church | 104 S. Pineapple Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236

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