

May 21, 2024



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

Weekly News

(Be sure to scroll all the way down.)

The Wright Stuff



What have we accomplished?

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth... The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose... For we are God's servants, working together.

1 Corinthians 3:6-9

Looking back on eight years of pastoral ministry at First United Methodist Church, I ask myself, what have we accomplished? As senior pastor, I know that I accomplish very little. It's you, the congregation, who does the work. In terms of individual and congregational spiritual growth, accomplishment may be hard to measure. However, we can point to several things this congregation has accomplished in eight years. We have continued supporting local missions and added several more, including two additional sister churches in Cuba for three. We adopted our two successive classes of orphans in Zimbabwe through Zoe Empowers. We started Day4Hope which has helped prepare needy children for school for the past eight summers. We greatly improved and expanded our online presence and Zoom capabilities to reach more people. We celebrated 125 years of ministry in downtown Sarasota. We added GriefShare, led by Pastor Woody. Our music program has flourished under Michael's capable leadership for the past six years, reaching children and teens, as well as adults. Since 2020, we've been on an upward trend, adding 46 new members in 2023 and growing our in-person attendance by 17% while keeping our online audience of about 200 each Sunday. We did this and much more in spite of COVID-19, political divisions, and church disaffiliations from the UMC. I can't wait to hear what God will do with FUMC in the coming years. Blessings!

Dr. Sam

Congratulations to Our ECC Class of 2024!



17 Shining Stars graduated from Early Care Center last Friday. After opening remarks by ECC Director Candy Bell and a blessing by Dr. Sam, students received their diplomas and were then given their very own Bibles (provided by the Rebekah Circle) by Pastor Woody. With a short break to change out of their gowns, the children sang with the involvement of Lisa Lucas and Heather Rissler. Congratulations to the graduating students!

Infant Baptism at First United Methodist Church!



First UMC witnessed the baptism of Iris Ann Winston, daughter of Fallon Niesen Winston and Brian Winston and granddaughter of Chuck and Sandy Niesen. Blessings to the family and Iris!

All Were "REaDy" to Wish the Church a Happy Birthday!



As is tradition at First UMC, many wore red to celebrate Pentecost Sunday. Thank you to our Church Family Photographers! Email your Sunday photographs to office@firstsrq.com.

Special Church Conference Announcement

CHURCH CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

6:00 p.m. on May 29 in the Sanctuary

Our District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Debbie Allen has authorized and will preside at a Church Conference of First United Methodist Church, Sarasota, on Wednesday, May 29, at 6 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

The purpose of the church conference is to consider approving the sale of the green space along the west side of Mira Mar Court, which includes the ECC playground, to Seaward Development for \$7.5 million.

A new playground will be constructed using part of our Mira Mar parking lot. The lost parking spaces will be replaced by parking spaces in the new parking garage built by Seaward on Mira Mar Court.

All members of First UMC, Sarasota, are welcome and have a right to vote at this Church Conference.

Upcoming Sunday Events

June 2 – ONE SERVICE at 10 AM

Followed by RETIREMENT CELEBRATION and FAREWELL to Dr. Sam in Fellowship Hall

June 16 – Father's Day ~ ONE SERVICE at 10AM

Followed by FAREWELL to Pastor Woody

June 30 – ONE SERVICE at 11AM

Celebration of Freedom Followed by Patriotic Picnic in Fellowship Hall. **Wear patriotic colors!**

July 7 – 8:30 and 11 a.m.

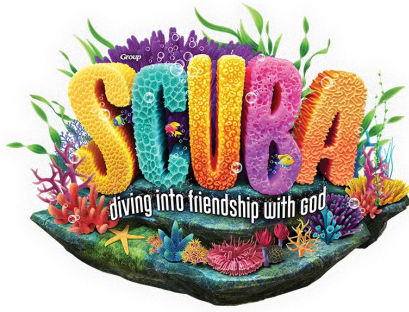
First UMC's New Minister's (Rev. Brett DeHart) First Sunday

Caritas Needs Volunteers

IMMEDIATE NEED FOR CARITAS OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

Can you serve Monday morning once a month (9-11 a.m.) at the office on Fruitville Rd.? One volunteer gets the information from each client. Another volunteer enters the information in the computer. There are usually 4-7 clients each Monday. Contact Coordinator Leah Pittard (941-586-0185; rockpitt38@gmail.com).

FUMC Vacation Bible School



FUMC's VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL NEEDS

Gently used beach towels and EMPTY 16 oz. water bottles WITH CAPS. Bins will be at Entrances on Sundays and in Office Lobby weekdays.

Can you help decorate any day(s) the week of June 10?

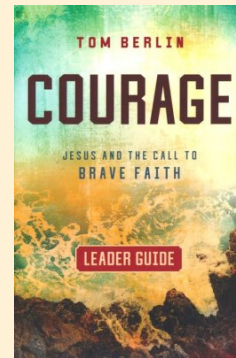
Contact **Donna Maynard**
(dmaynard@firstsrq.com;
941-539-8560).

Women's Spiritual Growth Group

WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH GROUP

Tuesdays - 2:30 p.m.
Room 104 and Zoom
6-Week Study Begins June 4

Courage by Bishop Tom Berlin.
Jesus and the Call to Brave Faith.
Leader **Susan Quigley**
(401-935-0260; susanq1@verizon.net)



Father's Day Photos



FATHER'S DAY PHOTOGRAPHS

Father's Day is Sunday, June 16. FUMC would like to feature you and your father in a slideshow with beautiful music in our June 16 worship services. Send your photo by Tuesday, June 11, to techcoordinator@firstsrq.com.

FUMC Honors Grads

FIRST UMC HONORS GRADUATES

We want to recognize and congratulate the graduates in your family in early June. Submit the grad's photograph and school/college/technical school by Friday, May 31, to **Donna Maynard** (dmaynard@firstsrq.com). Best wishes to all the graduates!



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