



FAITHFUL FOLLOWER

FAITH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Rev. Fred Rhines, Interim Pastor

January 2011

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Save the Date for "Saving Faith"

We have been offered the opportunity to "speak our minds" about our church to listeners who can make a difference. **Wednesday, January 18,** is the day reserved for members of Faith Church to speak individually and confidentially about our church to ministers on the Florida Gulf Coast Church and Ministry Team.

This event is called a Situational Support Consultation. Each of us is invited to sign up for a private, twenty-minute discussion at the church with a minister who will take notes on our ideas and suggestions. These one-to-one conversations will be based on the same set of questions for each person. The results will be compiled in a confidential report. The conference team will identify problems and share what the team sees as strengths in our congregation. The desired outcome is for all involved to agree on a course of action that improves the vitality and growth of Faith Church.

This is an important opportunity that depends upon the participation of all members! A sign-up sheet titled "Saving Faith" is posted on the bulletin board in the narthex. If necessary, you may call the church office to make your appointment. Please contact Pete or Janis Groth at 779-6988 with questions or if you need a ride to your appointment.

Even if you don't feel that you have ideas to contribute, your opinion is valuable and much appreciated. No names will be used in the report, and all suggestions will be considered. Please sign up as soon as possible for a time convenient for you on January 18.

Make a Strike for Faith UCC



Please be a part of Faith UCC's 1st. Annual Bowling Fundraiser. The funds raised will be used to replenish the building fund reserve. In our efforts in "Saving Faith" lets all do what we can to bring the church together in this united effort and have a fun

filled afternoon.

More information in how you can support this activity will be announced during the January 1, 2012 worship Service as we kick off the New Year. For more information please call Fred Damianos at 747-3182.

Worship With Us

January 1, 2012

Message: The Rev. Fred Rhines & Rev. Dr. Jack Barnes
Flowers: Available
Greeter: Bob & Joan Schiller
Guest Book: Betsy Biro
Hospitality: Kaye McGregor & Marge Hooie
Scripture: Joan Sheehan
Usher: Jack & Mary Lou Williams

January 8, 2012

Message: The Rev. Fred Rhines
Flowers: Harry & Evelyn Anderson in loving memory of Morgan Redfield
Greeter: Bob & Joan Schiller
Guest Book: Betsy Biro
Hospitality: Jack & Mary Lou Williams
Scripture: Bruce Covey
Ushers: Barry Stipp & Gerda Marcus

January 15, 2012

Message: The Rev. Fred Rhines
Flowers: Available
Greeter: Janis Groth
Guest Book: Betsy Biro
Hospitality: Marge Hooie & Kaye McGregor
Scripture: Janis Groth
Ushers: Barry Stipp & Gerda Marcus

January 22, 2012

Message: The Rev. Dr. Jean Simpson
Flowers: Available
Greeters: Eleonore Sulloway
Guest Book: Betsy Biro
Hospitality: Harry & Evelyn Anderson
Scripture: Mark Sulloway
Ushers: Joan Schiller & Linda Anderson

January 22, 2012

Message: Youth Service
Flowers: Available
Greeters: Eleonore Sulloway
Guest Book: Betsy Biro
Hospitality: Available
Ushers: Joan Schiller & Linda Anderson

Sunday Volunteer Servers

If you are serving for the first time and have questions regarding your duties, please look on the bulletin board. Detailed duties for each assignment are printed for you, please take a copy if you wish. Thank you for volunteering.



YOUR
STAFF

Pastor

The Rev. Fred Rhines

Secretary

Judy Wetter

Office Hours 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

746-8890

Fax 746-0670

Faith UCC Email:

faithchurchucc@verizon.net

Faith Website:

faithchurchucc.com

The Follower

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Editor: Judy Wetter

Proof Reader: Betty McGowan

2011 Board of Governors

President, Mark Sulloway 350-3355
1st. Vice President, M.R. Lembright 776-9004
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Vice President, Janis Groth 779-6988
Secretary, Kaye McGregor 776-2796
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M.R. Lembright 776-9004
Department of Ministry,
Bruce Covey 741-8566
Kaye McGregor 776-2796
Stewardship, Mark Sulloway 350-3355
SAM, Barbara Brownell 747-9643

Faith UCC Food Bank

Next collection day
Sunday, December 4

From the Pastor's Desk.....

As this month of December and the year of 2011 close down, I am drawn to the immortal words of Charles Dickens —“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...” These seem to describe Faith United Church of Christ to a tee. Ending a year where we have cashed in our last CD and are living hand-to-mouth financially, we have work to do. Ending a year when we are organizing under a new, more fitting structure, yet cannot find someone to lead us as Council President and Moderator (as of this writing), we have work to do! Yet, I sense an almost fierce determination here to make it as a church and to thrive and it is under that banner that we will move forward!

We are looking to our Annual Meeting of Sunday, January 29, 2012 when the things of money and the things of people to lead us will come together. We prepare for them in the meantime. The month will begin on Sunday, New Years Day, January 1, we will commission Rev. Dr. Jack and Midge Barnes for their upcoming 3 – month missionary trip to Zimbabwe, Africa for Global ministries, a joint United Church of Christ and Christian Church, Disciples of Christ mission. Jack will preach that day and he and I will share the serving of Holy Communion. The following two Sundays we will explore what happened to Jesus following his birth.

On Sunday, January 22, the Rev. Dr. Jean Simpson, our Gulf Coast Regional Conference Minister of the Florida Conference UCC will be our preacher. On Sunday, January 29, the Youth and Young Adults will lead our worship. We also will hold a special New Year’s “time with our church” on Wednesday, January 18, 2012. This will include sharing ideas and feelings about Faith UCC with members of the Regional Church and Ministry Committee. They will act as a neutral barometer on where we stand as a church.

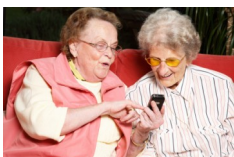
On Sunday afternoon, January 22 (2:30 PM to 4:30 PM) we will participate in our first Bowlathon at AMF Bowling Lanes on Cortez Road West. Organized by Fred Damianos as a fundraiser for our church, it should be a fun afternoon to share together. I’m looking forward to participating. Anyone not bowling is welcome to come as a Faith spectator...the more the merrier!

As most of you will receive this newsletter before Christmas, let me remind you again of our great traditional Christmas Eve Service of Lessons, Carols and Candles on Saturday at 7:00 PM. Also, our special Sunday Christmas morning service at 10:30 AM will celebrate Christ’s birthday as an informal come-as-you-are event. Come as you would go to your own living room Christmas tree (pajamas, sweatpants, t-shirts, etc.) We gather by our sanctuary tree for readings, carols, our own Christmas stories from memory and a gift exchange (Dollar Store-\$1 or \$2 in value.) Bring a gift to receive a gift (I’ll have some extras for visitors who may come.)

Norma Lee joins me in wishing you the love and peace of Christ in this holy season of new birth. We send you our heartfelt thanks for your thoughtful gifts of cards, emails, presents and mostly your love and support. May you and your families all be strengthened by Christ’s renewed presence in your lives and look forward to the New Year 2012 for more peace, prosperity and yes-determination!

With Christ’s Blessings,

Pastor Fred



**Start the Year off Right....
Invite a Friend to Church**



FAITH UCC
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
DECEMBER 14, 2011

Present: Mark Sulloway, Pastor Fred Rhines, Rev. Dr. Jean Simpson, Marge Hooie, Dick Sluss, Barbara Brownell, M.R. Lembright, Pete Groth, Janis Groth, Bruce Covey, Heather Reardon, Ina Bingham, Fred Damianos, Harry Anderson, Evelyn Anderson and Kaye McGregor.

The meeting was opened at 7:08 PM with a prayer by Pastor Fred.

The Minutes for the November meeting were approved.

Financial Secretary Report: Marge reported that collections for the Operating Fund for November 2011 had gone down by \$2780. So far in December the Operating Fund is down \$1772. For December \$902 is needed for the mortgage payment.

Treasurers Report: Board members reviewed income and expense reports for the past three years. The 2012 pledges were discussed.

Upcoming events include Random Acts of Kindness on December 16, Amplify Faith service at 6:30 PM. on December 17 and the Christmas Eve Service on December 24 at 7 PM.

Rev. Simpson made the board aware of programs available to assist our congregation at this time. On January 18 a Church of Ministry Committee will come and conduct confidential conversations with members to help find what we can do to save our church. This event will be called Saving Faith. These interviews and the feedback have helped other congregations in similar situations.

Pastor's Report: On the December 18 series on the lineage of Jesus will continue..The Christmas Eve service will feature the choir and a solo by Pete Groth. The Christmas morning service will be "come as you are casual". Bring an inexpensive, Dollar Store type gift to exchange. Pastor Fred will be out of town from December 25 to 28. The service on January 1 will have communion and a dedication service for Rev. Dr. Jack and Midge Barnes for their three month missionary trip to Africa. The message will be on resolutions. The annual meeting is scheduled for January 29 after the worship service.

Secretary's Report: Judy was not able to attend the meeting but she requested that there be a sign in sheet at the Amplify Faith service so we can contact visitors. Judy will be out of town on January 4 and 5 and the office will be closed.

Committee Reports

Ministry: Bruce said 22 Poinsettia plants will be delivered on December 21.

Christian Education: Ina reported that \$161 has been raised for babysitting while the parents did Christmas shopping. The potluck and cookie swap was attended by 17 members. The Young Adults will be performing Random Acts of Kindness in downtown Bradenton on December 16. The first Amplify Faith service will be December 17 at 6:00 PM offerings will be turned over to Marge Hooie. Proceeds from the snack bar, run by youth, will go back to youth programs. Upcoming events include Walk on the Water in January and the National Youth Event in Indiana in July.

Buildings and Grounds: An anonymous donation has been made to the church to clean the carpet in the sanctuary. Dick said he will make arrangements to have it done after the holidays.

SAM: Barb Brownell said the committee continues to collect for the food bank and for the Christmas Fund.

Congregational Involvement: M.R. said the committee continues to fill the positions on the Church Council.

Stewardship: Mark will announce the status of the pledges on Sunday.

Endowment: Fred will have another article in the Follower.

Old Business: Fred said plans are continuing for the Bowlathon Fundraiser on January 22.

New Business: Herb Nobles will play the organ on December 25 and January 1, while Kurt is out of town.

The meeting closed at 9:45 PM with a prayer by Pastor Fred.

The next regular meeting will be on Monday, January 9 at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Food Bank

Food Bank has been busy providing food to church families and local families in need. We are in need of canned fruit and meat products. Please cans only no glass, and be sure to check the expiration date. (We cannot give out expired food) We donate approximately 5-6 baskets a month. We are little but mighty! Bless you all.

Thanks to Eleonore Sulloway who is our Food Bank Elf!

Suggested items might include:

*Hearty soup, canned vegetables, fruit, cereal, paper products,
laundry products, hand soap, shampoo, etc.*



News & Notes.....

With Heartfelt Thanks

Joan & Bob Schiller: Thank you for the THOUGHTFUL Gift of a donation to Heifer International to honor the cast of 'Seasons Greetings.' What a generous thing to do.. May God Bless. [card acknowledging this gift is hanging in the Narthex for all cast members to see]

Faith Youth & Young Adults



Faith UCC Congregation: Thank you for all who continue to RALLY AROUND and SUPPORT us... Wishing each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!!

We are sorry to report the passing of Israel Rivera, father of Debra Rivera. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Rivera family.

Choir Practice is held on Wednesday at 7:00 PM. All are invited to participate.



Dinner and Dessert



Our Dinner and Dessert tradition continues in 2012. The Outback Steakhouse is our dinner destination on Friday, January 20, at 6:00 PM. Afterward, we will move on for dessert to the home of Pete and Janis Groth, which is conveniently located just four mile east of the restaurant. Everyone is invited to enjoy the fun and fellowship of this popular event. A sign-up sheet is located on the narthex bulletin board, where maps will also be available. Please don't forget to sign up, and feel free to call Pete or Janis (779-6988) if you need a ride or directions to their house.

Got Stuff?



Faith UCC is planning an all church Rummage Sale for March 2012,

so save all of your great treasures for this big event.

YOUNG ADULT GROUP

9 AM -10 AM Young Adult Sunday Class
Ages 19-30
Leader/Teacher Ina M. Bingham

Anyone between the above ages is more than welcome to attend.

Please contact Ina with any questions at:
ina8667@aol.com 941-725-1092

The classes are structured, have lesson plans and yet relaxed. Some may be offsite as we explore and grow.

Young Adult Class is still small, but very dedicated and determined.



Youth Doings.....

Cookie Swap & Potluck: December 10th at 5pm
'Thank you' to all of you who attended this event.
[17 total]

It was a night of *good food* and *fellowship*..
Need more of these and more often – wouldn't
you agree?



Christmas Sitting Service: Children from our
own Faith Pre-school attended.. A 'SPECIAL'
THANK YOU to Wendi Steinbach for helping to
get the word out.

Ina e-mailed a request for feedback from the par-
ents along with sending them some photos that
she took of the children. The feedback was posi-
tive and there is an interest in more childcare –
sitting events. The feedback will be posted on the
board in the Narthex and on our board in the back
hall.

Bridget Sessions – YOU were a blessing – and
so good with the children. Thank You!

Learned a lot – a lot to learn.



Seasons Beatings: What a delightfully funny
skit, with a good Christian Message regarding the
"Spirit of Christmas." Great job done by all!!!



'Random Acts of Kindness:' December 16th
Small gift bags, mini candy canes with the
'Legend of the Candy Cane' story and information
on Faith UCC were randomly handed out to peo-
ple in downtown Bradenton by Faith's own Santa
Helpers and Elves.



Monthly Seed: Personal Integrity- is what we are
in the dark. Our 'after hours' character.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**First Young Adult & Youth
Led Service for '2012'**

The Theme is "You Are—Beautiful "

YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS IT!!!

January 29, 2012

Church Women United



Church Women United of Manatee
will gather at Roser Memorial Com-
munity Church, 512 Pine Ave. ,
Anna Marie FL. on January 6,,
2012. It will be the annual Meeting
of Church Women United and election of offi-
cers will be held. Church Women United is an
ecumenical movement of Protestant, Roman
Catholic, Orthodox and other women and men
from Christian tradition. Please join us at 9:30
AM for coffee and fellowship and the ecumeni-
cal service will be at 10:00 AM. Everyone is
welcome.

Needed Now More Than Ever! Duffle Bags or Totes New or Slightly Used



As you know – so many youth &
young adults arrive at MCS with
all of their worldly goods in a gar-
bage bag. Some even arrive with
JUST the clothes on their backs.

FAITH UCC Young Adult & Youth Groups have
made it our mission to provide for as many as
possible, at least a - duffle bag!!
These go to MCS for their 'STREET OUT-
REACH' program for the young people who live
on the streets due to no fault of their own.
Please HELP us with this mission....

NO AMOUNT is too SMALL!! We are accept-
ing new or slightly used bags. We would love
to have a car load to deliver before Christmas.
Questions contact Ina Bingham at 725-1092 or
ina8667@aol.com.

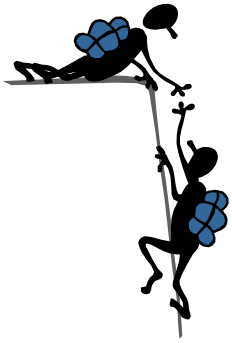
MAY GOD CONTINUE to BLESS!!



I would like to wish you all a
very Merry & Blessed
Christmas and a
Happy New Year.

Judy

WILL YOU HELP?



At Faith Church, there have always been people to help “pull”....to work at pulling together to make things happen!! That has been our tradition.

We have a critical need to pull together again to provide leadership for our church. If there are not enough people in leadership positions, there could be things that just won't happen next year at Faith Church. We certainly don't want that to happen. But...

The CHURCH COUNCIL for 2012 still needs people to volunteer to be vital members of the leadership team. We need persons to become Moderator, Deputy Moderator, Council Secretary, Chair of Stewardship, Chair of Endowment, Church Events and Fellowship Team Leader, Spiritual Life Team Leader, Community Outreach Programs and Events Team Leader.

You would not be working alone. The Church Council itself forms a team of people putting their heads and energies together to coordinate the activity of Faith Church. Those who have served in leadership positions have committed to provide on-going support and mentoring as the new Council members ask for it. We know that the members and friends of Faith Church will volunteer to assist the Council leaders in the work of Faith Church.

For more information, please contact M.R. Lembright, Barbara Brownell or Mark Sulloway.

We need the leadership positions on the Church Council to be filled if we are to fulfill the work of Faith

A note from Faith Preschool.....



Faith Preschool had their holiday program on Friday, December 16th. The children did a wonderful job performing for their families. After the program everyone enjoyed some refreshments.

We collected toys from all of the children from Faith Preschool to donate to Mothers Helping Mothers. The children were very excited about donating some of their toys for other children to play with. It was wonderful to see the joy in each child's face when they put their donation in the collection box.



We will be closed from December 19 - January 2 for winter break. Faith Preschool wishes everyone a *“Merry Christmas and Happy New Year”!*

Wendi Steinbach, Director

What makes Christmas happen?

What makes Christmas “happen” for you? Where does the joy of the season come alive in you? Is it in the carols? The celebrations? The candlelight services? The music of the Advent season? Perhaps you find it in the shopping and gift-giving. Maybe you see the love of the season in the sparkling eyes of a child or feel it in a loved one's hug.

Whatever it is, during this holiday season with all its frenzied festivities, stop and remember that night in the stable, those mingled smells of animals and hay, that pain and subsequent joy in the birth of one small child. Breathe deep and feel with Mary, with Joseph, the shepherds, the angels. Feel the birth of Jesus. What is it to experience such joy, such peace? Verbally express to someone close to you what the birth of Christ means to you at this point in your life. Be joyful! Experience God's love and peace.

—Anonymous

January 2012

SUNDAY	1	9:00 AM Young Adult S. S. 10:30 AM Service of Worship Communion/Food Bank
	4	Office Closed 7:00 PM Choir
	5	6:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous
	6	6:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous
SUNDAY	8	9:00 AM Young Adult S.S. 10:30 AM Service of Worship
	9	7:00 PM BOG
	11	7:00 PM Choir
	12	6:30 PM Narcotics Anonymous
	13	6:30 PM Narcotics Anonymous
	14	6:30 PM Amplify Faith
SUNDAY	15	9:00 AM Young Adult S.S. 10:30 AM Service of Worship Dept. of Ministry
	16	FOLLOWER deadline Annual Reports due 7:00 PM Braden River HOA
	18	Saving Faith 7:00 PM Choir
	19	6:30 PM Narcotics Anonymous
	20	FOLLOWER emailed 6:30 PM Narcotics Anonymous
SUNDAY	22	9:00 AM Young Adult S.S. 10:30 AM Service of Worship 2:30 PM Bowlathon
	23	7:00 PM Preschool Staff Mtg. 7:00 PM Inlets HOA
	24	7:00 PM Choir
	26	6:30 PM Narcotics Anonymous
	27	6:30 PM Narcotics Anonymous
	28	6:30 PM Amplify Faith
Sunday	29	9:00 AM Young Adult S.S. 10:30 AM Service of Worship Annual Meeting



January Birthdays

- 1/1 Marge Critelli
- 1/7 Rose Smith
- 1/8 Cindy Uher
- 1/9 Jerry Smith
- 1/16 Annie Carroll
- 1/18 Hatti Damianos
- 1/18 Harry Anderson

**“Jesus Didn’t Reject
People. Neither Do We.”**

PRAYER TEAM

If you or someone you know is in need of prayer call one of the following:

- Betsy Biro 798-8472**
- Janis Groth 779-6988**
- Marge Hooie 747-2734**
- Helen Nutting 792-3124**
- Joan Sheehan 748-2498**
- Evelyn Anderson 792-6991**
- Mary Lou Williams 723-3332**



Members of the Prayer Group are anxious to keep the prayer list current. Please advise us when you would like a name removed.

Please Contact the Church

If you, a member of your family, or someone you know is ill or hospitalized please let the office know, as soon as possible. A member of Faith Church would like to make a visit to bring God’s word of comfort. The church office telephone number is 746-8890 or email at faithchurchucc@verizon.net.