

FAITHFUL follower¹

FAITH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

OPEN & AFFIRMING



February 2017

The Faithful Follower is published monthly by Faith United Church of Christ.

Editor: Faith Quici and Donna Rusch created our feature page 6 of this issue

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2017 PER CAPITA

Per Capita is an obligation we owe yearly to the conference. The cost is \$14.50 per member. Our goal is to be 100% paid this year. Thank you for your prompt attention to this conference responsibility.

From Your Moderator

I would like to thank all of you who elected me to the position of Moderator for 2015 and 2016. It has been my pleasure to serve you and to work with Pastor Brian and Pastor Judy Bagley-Bonner, the council members and anyone who volunteered in any way, whether it was to take part in a worship service or volunteer for an activity.

The members and visitors at Faith Church are my extended family, and as long as I am able, I will be here to help you when necessary.

My prayers are with you!
Love, Marge Hooie



Women's Outing, Flower Festival

Faith Women's annual brunch and flower/musical outing will be Saturday, February 25. We will brunch at the Honey Tree Café, located at 8315 Lockwood Ridge Road, Sarasota at 11am. Then we'll proceed to the Church of the Nativity, located at 5900 North Lockwood Ridge Road, Sarasota. At the annual flower show and musical, we will view beautiful floral arrangements and listen to wonderful

music. The theme for this year's festival is "Faith, Hope and Love." The music is provided by the Church of the Nativity musicians and guests. It promises to be an event to delight the senses! Sign up on the bulletin board if you would like to attend. Please direct all questions to Sheryl Overheid-Smith, 941-776-5589.

ONECO FLORIST /// 941.756.1556

When ordering flowers through the church, please sign up on the Flower Chart. Flowers orders are \$25. You are encouraged to take your flowers home with you after service; but if you leave them, they will be taken to a shut-in. **If you want to purchase flowers on your own, Oneco Florist is offering Church members \$5 off their first arrangement. Just mention this article.**

SOCIAL ACTION & MISSIONS

In **February**, we are collecting **Peanut Butter** for the food bank.

Changing hand\$

As outgoing Financial Secretary I have a couple requests to make to you that would make the job easier for Donna Blakey, who will be the new Financial Secretary.

1. Please throw away your old envelopes and use those assigned for 2017, everything is done by your assigned number. No names are used.
2. It is not necessary to write more than one check or cash amount. The way the computer program works is by your number (no names), so if you give more than one envelope, we have to add them before putting them in the computer. Donations are put into the computer and deposited when they are received, so if you have missed a week, it is posted when received not for the week missed. The envelopes have plenty of room to write what the



donation is for. As an example...you are making a donation for Operating, Neighbors in Need, Building Fund, and Flowers.....just write one check and write on the envelope how the check should be divided, and we will do the rest.

3. Fifth Sunday, Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter envelopes are in the back of your envelope packets.

These suggestions will make Donna's job so much easier. Thanks for your help.

Stepping Up

Richard and I are excited about serving as your moderators for the coming year. Richard is serving as Deputy Moderator, but he and I will be working closely together. We want to share one of Bradenton's best kept secrets with the community, and hopefully increase membership.

We have a wonderful group of Council members this year; people have stepped up to fill all of the positions but one, Christian Education. If you are interested in serving on the Council and have an interest in Christian Education please let Richard or me know. If you have ideas or suggestions, please don't hesitate to speak to any Council member.

Richard and Judy



Judy Wetter

Richard Diltz



THANK YOU!

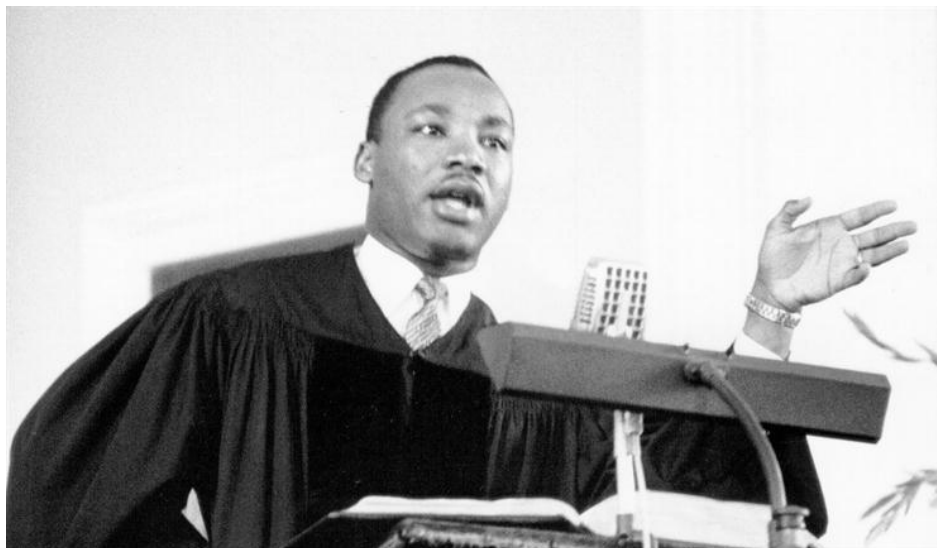
We were so touched and blessed by the congregation's Christmas gift to us. Your kindness and loving support make it a great joy to be your Pastors. The money will be used to help us prepare for future travels. Thank you and Blessings,

Brian and Judy



Levels of Love

Excerpt of a Sermon Delivered at Ebenezer Baptist Church
Atlanta, GA 16 September 1962



(W)hen we rise to agape, to Christian love... It becomes the love of God operating in the human heart. The greatness of it is that you love every man, not for your sake but for his sake. And you love every man because God loves him. And so it becomes all inclusive. The person may be ugly, or the person may be beautiful. The person may be tall, or the person may be short. The person may be light, or the person may be dark. The person may be rich, or the person may be poor. The person may be up and in; the person may be down and out. The person may be white; the person may be black. The person may be Jew; the person may be Gentile. The person may be Catholic; the person may be Protestant. In other words, you come to the point of loving every man and it becomes an all-inclusive love. It is the love of God operating in the human heart. And it comes to the point that you even love the enemy. Christian love does something that no other love can do. It says that you love every man. You hate the deed that he does if

he's your enemy and he's evil, but you love the person who does the evil deed....

Love is the greatest force in all the world. And this is why Jesus was great. He realized it in his life, and he took this force and split history into A.D. and B.C. so that all history has to sing about him and talk about him because he made love the center of his life. And what does the cross mean? It means that God's love shines before us through that cross in all of its dimensions. And so "when I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, I count my richest gains but loss and pour contempt on all my pride. Were the whole realm of nature mine that were a present far too small. Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my all, and my all." This is our legacy. This is what we have. And may we go on with a love in our hearts that will change us and change the lives of those who surround us. And we will make this old world a new world. And God's kingdom will be a reality.

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

If you are interested in signing up to be a greeter, usher or scripture reader, please contact our Worship Team Leader, Richard Dilts, or simply sign up on the bulletin board. You can sign up as one-time help or on a part time basis. Or you can get regularly involved in our Sunday morning worship activities. It's easy and we have so much fun helping out.

JOIN US

WEEKEND SCHEDULE

February 5, 2017

Flowers: Council
Greeters: Council
Scripture: Marge Hooie
Ushers: Council
Nursery: Amy Testa
Sunday school: Hatti Damianos

February 12, 2017

Flowers: Available
Greeters: Available
Scripture: Erika Garbrecht
Ushers: Available
Nursery: Babs Brownell
Sunday school: Hatti Damianos

February 19, 2017

Flowers: Flowers (Janis B-day)
Greeters: Available
Scripture: Joan Sheehan
Ushers: Available
Nursery: Linda Anderson
Sunday school: Hatti Damianos

February 26, 2017

Flowers: Bob & Jean Cox
Greeters: Available
Scripture: Jean Cox
Ushers: Available
Nursery: Marge Hooie
Sunday school: Hatti Damianos

Rev. Brian and Judy Bagley-Bonner

Why I Am A Feminist

by Rev. Brian Bagley-Bonner

Definition of FEMINISM

1: the theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes

Throughout history, our male dominated society has used the Scriptures to justify inequality between men and women, but if we take the cultural lens of that assumption off as we read scripture, we see instead a strong argument for equality. In Genesis there are two stories of Creation. The first is very clear in showing the equality of men and women:

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; So God created humankind ...in the image of God... male and female.

The second creation account says, *"Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner" (after Eve was created) the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken."*

Though the man was created first, the reason for the creation of woman is because the man needs a partner. Notice it does not say "assistant" or

"subordinate" or "someone to cook and do the dishes."

Adam's song of joy declares, "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." He is ecstatic that now there is someone who is equal to him, someone like him, and someone who can be a full

partner. It is only later on, when God hands out punishment for the sin committed, that God says the man will rule over the woman, but clearly that is not God's original design.

In the New Testament, Jesus is very clear in his valuing of women in his having woman disciples and in his quite radical willingness to talk with women who approach him (even Samaritans). Even Paul, who in some letters suggests he does not always see women as equals, writes in Galatians; *for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.*

These strands of scripture, though often de-emphasized or re-interpreted, make clear that gender has never been a hierarchical proposition for God. In fact, I believe God made us to be partnered to show us that we need one another. It is impossible to obey God's first commandment: keep the species going, without one another. As the old saying goes, "It takes two to tango," and to create a next generation of humans to love and serve God. Is it possible that this partnership at the very beginning of creation was meant to teach us something as a species? Was God trying to show us that the path of partnership is the pathway to peace and justice and love? Whenever we build hierarchies: men are better than women, gays are better than straights (who are both better than transgender folk), blacks are better than whites, Christians

are better than Jews who are better than Muslims who are better than Hindus who are..... We thwart God's plan to unify us, to make us partners. Our strong drive to be better than, to place ourselves above others, is the very essence of the sin of pride (which some say is the "original" sin).

The only way all will ever be truly free is if all; those of all religions (and no-religion), those of all nations, rich and poor, able-bodied and differently-abled, old and young, and yes, men and women are respected and valued as marvelous and equal children of God.

Whenever anyone is diminished, we are all diminished.

Whenever the oppressed are lifted up, we all take one step closer to the Peaceable Realm of God.

Jesus preached in favor of the poor, not because the poor are somehow better, but because the world, in defiance of God's commands, ignores and diminishes them. And Jesus knew that when you diminish any of God's children, God gets very angry and demands justice. So for me today, though some use the word "feminist" as a term of ridicule, it is important for me as a follower of Jesus Christ to declare that I believe and will advocate for political, economic and social equality for women and for all. I am now, and will always be, a Christian Feminist.

May God speed the Day of Equality for All,

Mark Your Calendars

Church Women United

10am, FRI. FEB. 3

See Marge Hooie or sign up on the bulletin board. This meeting is to celebrate human rights and will be held at Pathways Christian Fellowship, 329 6th Ave. W., Bradenton.

Men's BREAKFAST

9am SAT. FEB. 4

Norma Rae's in Palmetto. Sign up on the bulletin board.

Women's BREAKFAST

9am FRI. FEB. 4

We are meeting at Sage Biscuit, at their new location, 1401 Manatee Ave. W. Please sign up on the bulletin board.

CHILI COOK-OFF

After service,

SUN. FEB. 12

Put your money

DINNER AND DESSERT

6pm, FRI. FEB. 17

Thank you to Lowell and Floy Peterson for hosting our February Dinner and Dessert. We will meet at the new Culver's on SR. 64 E.

(4714 SR 64 E, Bradenton 34208).

Please sign up on the bulletin board.

WOMEN'S OUTING

6pm, FRI. FEB. 25

Sign up on the bulletin board.

CROP WALK

2pm, SUN. FEB. 26

See Marge Hooie for more info.

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER

5:30pm, TUES. FEB. 28

Sign up on the bulletin board.

CHURCH HAPPENINGS 5

History Sunday/Remembering the Gerlachs

On January 29, we will celebrate the history of Faith UCC. We will recognize long time members, hear about the history of our congregation and remember Gerry and Doris Gerlach (the first preacher and organist of the church). The Gerlach family will be present, and after the service we will move to our memorial Garden for a service of scattering ashes. Following that we will continue to share memories at our **potluck brunch!**

Book Study: Putting Away Childish Things by Marcus Borg

In this novel theologian Marcus Borg introduces us to Kate—a popular religion professor at a liberal arts college who thinks her life is right on track. She loves her job, is happy with her personal and spiritual life, and her guilty pleasure consists of sneaking into the local pub for an occasional pint of Guinness. Life is good. In the classroom, students ask for her views on Jesus, the Bible, and homosexuality, controversial topics that Kate candidly addresses until outraged parents start campaigning for the school to get rid of her. Through it all, Kate also faces unresolved issues from her past, including a romance gone wrong. This book tells a great story, while teaching progressive theology in a user friendly way.

There will be two groups: **Sundays at 9:00 A.M. Feb 5-March 12** and **Tuesdays 6:30 P.M Feb 7-March 14.** Please sign up for one or the other time, on the board at church, or call the church office. Questions can be addressed to Judy or Brian, as they will be co-leading this study.

February 12 is Chili Cook-Off

A fund raising event and longtime tradition is back! Join us and put your best to the test. We will have a **Battle of the Chefs** Sunday after service. Contestants will need to make a full crock pot to serve as samples and meals. **Please sign up on the Bulletin Board if you think you have the right stuff!!** Bread and drinks will be provided. Please contact Carol Knight or Sheryl Overhedit Smith if you have questions or want to help out

Shrove (Fat) Tuesday Pancake Supper February 28

Jack Williams' famous buttermilk pancake recipe has been recovered, which means that before Lent we will have our traditional pancake supper at the church. **The Mardi Gras celebration will start at 5:30pm** (Book Study will start at 7:00 that night). Pete Groth will be back at the griddle along with help from the Coxes and the Crowells. Sausages and juice will also be served. Donations will be requested.

Please sign up! You can contact Janis Groth or Sheryl Overheidt Smith if you have questions or want to help.

Faith Chat Room

Share your family photos, stories and comments with us: faithchurchucc@verizon.net

Funny Business

HOW TO MAKE ICE CAKES

2 cups of water

Add 3 tps of refrigerated water

Slowly blend in 1 tablespoon of warm seltzer water. Stir again. Pour mixture into a cup cake tin. Place in freezer. Garnish as needed.



WANTED

PHOTOS: To post on CHAT ROOM page of your family, pets, travels, etc.

WRITTEN WORKS: favorite poems, stories, jokes; write a review of a book, movie, restaurant, or Brian's sermons.

INQUIRY: present an idea of gathering for an 'outside' event, e.g., movie, play, bowling, flea market, eating & drinking (maybe swimming?) at Richard's, etc.

The Follower is available to all Faith members to let their voices be heard, regardless if it a concern or a photo (allowing for grammatical edits). Join in! Email or send.

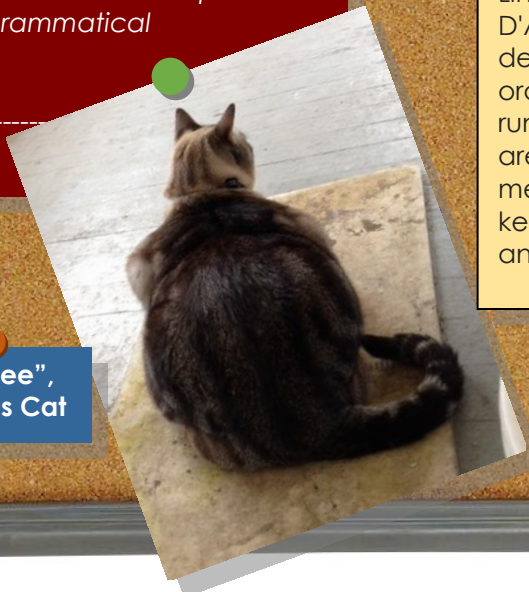
QUOTES

"Life is something to do when you can't sleep."

"Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising every time you fall."
Confucius

THANK YOU to each

member of the 2016 Faith Church Council: Marge Hooie, Judy & Denny Wetter, Robin Wentz, Babs Brownell, Linda Anderson, Richard Diltz, Debra D'Angelo, and Faith Quici. You have devoted much time and effort in order to keep Faith Church up and running like a fine tuned engine. We are grateful to all our Church Council members (past and present) for keeping Faith functioning, growing, and reaching for new heights.



"Buddee",
Donna's Cat

A Bouquet of Flowers

Floy Peterson

Sometimes we have a day, or several days, when we feel out of sync with our normal lives. It may be from sadness, or seemingly for no reason. This is a time when I gather a "bouquet of flowers" each day. If I had a garden, just working in it would cheer me up.

What I'm talking about is a metaphoric or imaginary bouquet of unique flowers, which are hand-picked and make up the sights and sounds of small pockets of joy which float around us each day. It's taking the time to notice and focus on these small bits of happiness that help lift up our spirits.

My first flower may be the wonderful sun coming in the window, or fluffy clouds or the bubbles which sail away when I use the dish soap. Maybe it's a good day to write a note to a friend for kindness given.

When taking a walk, you may see a little dog scamper by on its owner's leash, or you may notice some wildflowers have escaped a mower. These sights and sounds have been adding flowers to your bouquet all day, and God's love is the vase you put them in. God has given us a lot of nature and little happenings to enjoy in each day if we just look for them.

FAITH PRESCHOOL

Wendi Steinbach, Director

The children were excited to come back to preschool after the winter break. On January 25th the students in the MWF and VPK classes went on a field trip to Dakin Dairy Farm. They went on a hayride and learned about farm animals.

Registration for the 2017/2018 will begin in February. If you know of anyone looking for a quality, part-time preschool, please have them call me at 746-7895 or email me at faithpreschool1@verizon.net to schedule a tour. Thank you!



Thank You!

Dear People of Faith;

A heartfelt thanks to all of you for a generous Christmas monetary gift. You are truly blessings to me, and I really appreciate each one of you very much.

Love,
Faith Quici

Children's Ministry

If you have a heart for children, then consider joining the Children's Ministry Team. We need help in the nursery and Sunday school. Please contact Babs Brownell if you would like more information

Call: 941.747.9643

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Faith United Church of Christ /// January 9, 2017

Present: Marge Hooie, Richard Dilts, Deb D'Angelo, Faith Quici, Barbara Brownell, Judy and Denny Wetter, Pastors Brian and Jude, Linda Anderson.

Meeting called to order by Marge Hooie at 7:04 and the opening prayer was given by Pastor Jude. A motion to approve the minutes from the December meeting was given by Judy Wetter and 2nd by Deb D'Angelo.

Financial Secretary's Report: Judy Wetter reported a deposit of \$16,402.97 was deposited to the operating account at Bank of America, building for the future at the Bank of the Ozarks deposit was \$165.00 for a total deposit of \$16,567.97 for the month of December.

Treasurer's Report: Barbara Brownell motioned to return a minimum of \$4,000.00 to the building for the future account if Arlene is comfortable with this. Motion was second by Richard Dilts and approved with a unanimous vote.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Brian reports the Faith Care Team is restarting. On January 29th we will celebrate church history, spread the ashes of the Gerlach's with a brunch potluck after. The chili cook-off will be in February, March 1st is Ash Wednesday and Easter April 16th.

April 30th the pastors will be out of town. Pastor Jude reports the winter/spring study groups are filling up. A daytime women's support group will be starting and then possibly a mixed gender evening group.

Secretary's Report: Faith reported 2 security cameras have been purchased. The pre-school wants to wait until summer for the floors to be done. Our cleaning company will do the carpets now and then the floors later if we choose.

Old Business: By-laws committee will meet to finish the by-laws. Annual reports are due tonight. Sheriffs security meeting – there will be an audit from crime prevention services. One suggestion is to have plans for potential problems, like fire evacuation plan, communication plan from the pulpit to the congregation, etc.

New Business: Special events scheduled are potluck Jan. 29th, Chili cook-off Feb. 12th, and pancake supper Feb. 28th. We need to have volunteers to come in and answer phones if faith is out. A motion was made by Barbara Brownell to give Faith and the pastors a raise and was second by Deb D'Angelo. The motion was carried unanimously.

Department and Committee Reports:

Building and Grounds report: Denny reported that the next meeting will be January 10th. He also submitted a report documenting all the work their team has accomplished this past year which can be found elsewhere in the follower. PRC: the next meeting will be January 18th. Carol Knight will be taking M.R. Lembright's place. Community Outreach: Deb has place ads in the papers for the "Putting Away Childish Things" book study. SAM: A unity march in Sarasota over the Ringling Bridge is this month. Worship Team: February 5th communion will be intinction with Judy W. and Richard assisting the pastors and Marge will read scripture. Un-decorating the church will be January 10th. Richard will be out on January 22. In his absence Denny, Babs, Scott and Donna Blakely will do the offering.

Closing prayer was given by Pastor Brian.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03.

Respectfully submitted by, Linda Anderson.

THE CROP WALK

Sunday, February 26 at 2pm. Everyone is invited to join us and we have options for different fitness levels. We are meeting at the Palmetto First United Methodist Church. If you are interested in walking with us, please sign up with Marge Hooie so you can get started on your sponsorship.

**ENDING
HUNGER
ONE STEP
AT A TIME
CROP HUNGER WALK**

Your Staff

Pastors

Rev. Brian and
Rev. Judy
Bagley-Bonner

Cell:
941-718-3132



(with Janie)

PASTORS' OFFICE HOURS

Monday 10 am - 1 pm
Tuesday 9am - noon
Wednesday 8:30 am - *noon
Thursday 8:30 am - 9:30 am

Other times by appointment
**3rd Thursday at UCC meetings*



Office Hours
MONDAY-FRIDAY
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
746-8890
Fax 746-0670

Secretary

Faith Quici

Faith UCC Email:

faithchurchucc@verizon.net

Faith Website:

faithchurchucc.com

Prayer Team

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



Janis Groth
941.779.6988

Marge Hooie
941. 447.4193

Helen Nutting
941. 747.2734

Sheryl Overheid-Smith
941.776.5589
(winter)
269.673.6676
(summer)

Donna Rusch
301.825.9611

Joan Sheehan
941.748.2498

Members of the Prayer Team want to keep the prayer list current.
Please advise us when you would like a name removed from the list.

SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST

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

2017 Church Council

Moderator: Judy Wetter

Faith Care Team: Marge Hooie

Deputy Moderator: Richard Dilts

Community Outreach: Deb D'Angelo

Secretary: Robin Wentz

Church Events & Fellowship: Sheryl Overheid Smith

Financial Secretary: Donna Blakey

SAM: Babs Brownell

Treasurer: Marge Critelli

Building & Grounds: Denny Wetter

Worship Team: Richard Dilts

Christian Ed: OPEN



Just search for: **"Faith United Church of Christ, Bradenton ,FL"**



www.faithchurchucc.com

February 2017

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
THE CROP WALK Sunday, February 26 at 2pm. 			1 7:00pm BAC	2 7pm Choir 7:15pm NA 7:15pm Nar-Anon	3 Church Women United Meeting 7:15pm NA 7:30pm BAC	4 Preschool Playground work day 9am Men's Breakfast- Norma Rae's 9am Women's Breakfast- Sage Biscuit 10am NA & Nar-Anon
	5 9am Book Study 10:30am Service <u>Communion</u> 1:30pm BAC NA 7:15pm	6	8 7:00pm BAC	9 7pm Choir 7:15pm NA 7:15pm Nar-Anon	10 7:15pm NA 7:30pm BAC	11 10am NA & Nar-Anon
	12 9am Book Study 10:30am Service <u>Chili Cook Off</u> 1:30pm BAC NA 7:15pm	13 7pm Church Council Mtg 7pm BR HOA	14 6:30pm Book Study <u>Valentine's Day</u> Building and Grounds Work Day 4pm	15 7:00pm BAC	16 6pm Music Committee Meeting 7pm Choir 7:15pm NA 7:15pm Nar-Anon	17 6pm Dinner and Dessert Culvers/Petersons 7:15pm NA 7:30pm BAC <u>Follower Reminder</u>
	19 9am Book Study 10:30am Service 1:30pm BAC NA 7:15pm	20 Follower Deadline 7pm INT HOA	21 6:30pm Book Study 11:30am Prayer Mtg	22 7:00pm BAC	23 7pm Choir 7:15pm NA 7:15pm Nar-Anon	24 7:15pm NA 7:30pm BAC
25 11am Women's Outing Flower Show and Brunch at the Honey Tree Cafe 10am NA & Nar-Anon	26 9am Book Study 10:30am Service <u>2pm Crop Walk</u> 1:30pm BAC NA 7:15pm	27	28 5:30pm Pancake Supper 7pm Book Study	1 MARCH 1 Ash Wednesday service – time TBA 7:00pm BAC	BAC: Bradenton Apostolic Church Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Nar- Anon, NA hotline at 941.257.5055. (HOA's) Home Owner Associations	

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

2/5 M.R. Lembright
 2/8 Gayle Covey & Richard Nutting
 2/9 Ina Bingham
 2/10 Ray Crowell
 2/14 Judy Bagley-Bonner
 2/17 Gerda Marcus
 2/20 Janis Groth

SOCIAL ACTION & MISSIONS

In **February**, we are collecting **Peanut Butter** for the food bank.



FAITHFUL FOLLOWER

Faith United Church of Christ

4850 SR 64E

Bradenton, FL 34208-5527

The Vision of Faith United Church of Christ

- In our worship, we are an inclusive community, a family of faith, which through prayer, song, the sacraments and liturgy seeks to feel closer to God, to praise God, to give thanks to God, and to seek forgiveness from God in order to grow in discipleship.
- In our Christian Education, we seek to develop a community of people with a mature Christian faith; meaning a faith which leads us to care for others, that opens our hearts to service, an evolving faith that is the product of critical thinking and questioning. Our education is for all ages and is conducted in places inside the church and out.
- In our missions, we seek to share the excitement of our Christian faith without judging others. In our missions, we seek to take our faith and beliefs from the inside out, and know that our missions require that we must also bring the outside in. We take Christ's admonition—to go forth and share the good news—as our own, which we strive to do in word and deed both locally and globally.

Visit Faith's website at www.faithchurchucc.com