



# *The Grapevine*



## *... to do Justice*

**Reverend Edward Dunn**

United Presbyterian Church was officially recognized as a member of STREAM (Stronger Together Reaching Equity Across Manatee) at its gathering last December. This organization has a focus on social justice issues and the response of people of faith based in part on Nehemiah 5:1-13. Nehemiah and his contemporary Ezra, were appointed by the Persian ruler to bring the Jewish exiles back to Jerusalem. Ezra, a prophet, focused his efforts on the rebuilding of the Temple, while Nehemiah's work concentrated on the rebuilding of the walls of the city. One was a prophet and the other a public servant.

STREAM attempts to bridge both arenas in its work. We cannot be concerned solely with spiritual welfare but must also address physical and societal welfare issues too. It is good to pray for those in need; but prayers must be accompanied by actions that aid those in need.

There have been three primary areas of concern adopted by this organization: mental health issues of youth; the housing that is affordable for lower income individuals and families; and pre-arrest diversion programs for those who face harsh penalties for minor crimes. Each of these areas of concern are overwhelming so participants in STREAM are encouraged to focus on one area.

I was able to attend a virtual meeting with a deputy superintendent of the Manatee County Schools in mid-January concerning the area of mental health of children and youth. I am encouraged by the efforts of the Administration to address these topics but it is abundantly evident that there are more needs than resources to meet them. Yet we are called to persevere in our efforts to work on solutions and ways to meet the needs. I have lots to learn about this topic and was grateful to hear the wisdom and experiences of many people who have served as teachers, school counselors and social workers. Prayers are needed and necessary; actions are vital to our work in this area.

I hope to have additional opportunities to learn and to work with others at STREAM on ways to influence policies and support decisions by our School Board and State leaders to address the crisis we face not only in our schools but throughout our greater community.

If you are interested in being part of our church's team of STREAM'ers please let me know. The next Nehemiah Action event is scheduled for Monday, March 31.

**Blessings,  
Edward**



The Renewal Team is currently looking for volunteers to support the preparation and enhancement of our worship services and Bible classes. Additionally, assistance is needed for fellowship activities within our congregation. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact one of the following team members:

Gail Dickerson, Nancy Shimandle, Marilyn Gillette, or Jan Jarrell.

We appreciate your willingness to serve and look forward to working together!



## Scottish Sunday Luncheon

February. 16th after service

(Shepherd's pie, salad, rolls, and shortbread.)

Asking for a \$5.00 donation to purchase food for the Blessing box

Sign up sheet in the Narthex or call church office 941-792-3141

## Dec/Jan Session Highlights

- Reactivated the former memberships of Michael and Kathleen Craig into United and approved the transfers of Dick and Daphne Ann Haynes to Peace Presbyterian and Burt Tupper to First Church-Sylva, NC.
- Approved an updated Manual of Administrative Operations for United Presbyterian.
- Set Sunday, February 23rd as the date for the Annual Meeting of the church and for the Corporation.
- Approved the purchase of an Apple Mini-Mac computer and monitor to replace outdated equipment and facilitate sound mixing and streaming of worship services.
- Approved transition to a new website for United Presbyterian ([upchurchbradenton.org](http://upchurchbradenton.org)).
- Approved the operating budget for 2025.
- Elected Ron Dickerson to a two-year Term on the Church Nominating Committee in the Class of 2026.
- Approved the church's Annual Statistical Report for submission to Presbytery.
- Approved the Presbytery's new Antiracism Policy for adoption by United and incorporation into the Employee Handbook.
- Endorsed the creation of a small group to explore additional ways to meet the goal of reducing our carbon footprint 25% by mid-2026. All interested members are invited to participate in this study under the leadership of Ron Dickerson.
- Noted that our facility usage by outside organizations is down to three tenants. Anyone with ideas about how to publicize the availability of our office space rental is invited to contact Ron Dickerson.
- In accordance with church Bylaws, elected Roy Williams as Clerk and Sherri Kramer as Treasurer for 2025.



# A United Winter Photo Gallery





# A United Winter Photo Gallery





# February Outreach Update

December and January was a busy time of fun and events that helped share the love of the season with many people. The new year brings us more opportunities to reach out to others in our community and world:

## **December & January Outreach Highlights:**

- You shopped for and filled 20 bags of food for our 12 Days of Christmas collection to benefit families in need at Our Daily Bread's Loaves & Fishes food pantry.
- \$1,105 was collected for Presbyterian Mission Agency's Christmas Joy Offering.
- You brightened the lives of the residents of Brookdale Palma Sola by hosting a Christmas Caroling, Cookies and Cocoa event there this holiday season.
- You donated \$1,000 each to Habitat for Humanity and Our Daily Bread to help with hurricane recovery expenses.
- From the proceeds of our Cookie Exchange, you were able to help purchase and wrap over 300 pairs of socks that were gifted to clients of Our Daily Bread on Christmas Eve.
- You hosted a Candy Cane Carnival event for neighborhood children and families providing games, crafts, food, and fun during the Christmas season.
- Folks volunteered every Friday at Our Daily Bread.
- Proceeds of the Dreyer Trust blessed many families with the gift of assistance, helping with the costs of healthcare, utilities and rent for a total of \$47,909 this year.
- You assembled 4300 packages of okra seeds to support agricultural programs all over the world through Hope Seeds.
- You donated MANY egg cartons to help Mision Peniel distribute eggs to families they serve in their local community.

## **February Outreach Opportunities:**

- Let's make it a SOUPER month! **Our DOES It (Done On Every Sunday)** project for February will be collecting ready-to-heat soups for Our Daily Bread. Any variety of canned, boxed, or jarred soups will help feed those in need during our cooler months. Drop your donations in the bins in the Narthex or bring them to the church office by Sunday, February 24th.
- Please join members of the Outreach Team for a Valentine's Day gathering at Brookdale Palma Sola on Tuesday, February 11th from 2-3 pm. As part of our Older Adult Ministry we will visit, make Valentine's Day cards, and share snacks with the residents there.



# February Outreach Opportunities

## Ongoing Opportunities:

- Servers for Our Daily Bread on Fridays are always needed. Contact Dorothy Simes if you would like to volunteer.
- We continue to collect non-perishable food items in the cart in the Narthex to donate to Our Daily Bread of Bradenton. They are always in need of shelf stable items to stock the Loaves & Fishes food pantry.
- Please keep in mind our Blessing Box by the east parking lot. The Blessing Box serves as a mini food pantry for our local neighborhood, and you are welcome to add to it or take from it as needed.
- Contributions of loose change, soft money, and checks for FELT (Feeding Empty Little Tummies) are always welcome. To donate, use the envelopes in the pews or mail a check to the church office with "FELT" in the memo line.
- Join your church family in Fellowship Hall after worship each week to make PB & J sandwiches to share with the clients of Our Daily Bread. Thank you to all who have been bringing in supplies, making sandwiches, and helping SPREAD the love of Christ to your neighbors in need!
- The Holy Strollers walking group meets every Friday at 9 am at the north entrance of Robinson Preserve. You are invited to gather for exercise, conversation, and a short devotional in the great outdoors.

## February Outreach Offering

Our **Outreach Offering for February** will go to **Our Daily Bread of Bradenton** to support free meals and a food pantry for those in need. Our Daily Bread staff and regular volunteers (that's us on Fridays!) serve hearty meals seven days a week from 10-11:30 am. At Our Daily Bread's self-serve food pantry, clients can shop free once a month for fresh produce and other food items of their choice.

**You may donate to Our Daily Bread of Bradenton:**

- during the worship service, in your offering envelope,
- by mailing a check to the church office with "ODB" in the memo line, or
- Palma Sola members may also contribute through [online giving](#)



# Our Earth Care Library Books...

will be available in the Narthex to check out during the month of February. Read a book... restore hope, be inspired, learn methods, and be able to share your knowledge with family and friends.

**Another Kingdom: Departing the Consumer Culture**, by Peter Block, Walter Brueggemann, and John McKnight, 2016. Our belief in competition, scarcity, and acquisition are producing too many casualties. We need to depart a kingdom that creates isolation, polarized debate, and an exhausted planet. We need a new way that depends upon a neighborly covenant—an agreement that we together will better raise our children, be healthy, be connected, be safe, and provide livelihoods. *Recommended in a Presbyterians for Earth Care webinar.*

**Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard**, by Douglas W. Tallamy, 2019. Tallamy outlines his vision for a grassroots approach to conservation. Nature's Best Hope shows how homeowners everywhere can turn their yards into conservation corridors that provide wildlife habitats. It's practical, effective, and easy—you will walk away with specific suggestions you can incorporate into your own yard.

**Our Earth, Our Species, Our Selves. How to Thrive While Creating a Sustainable World**, by Ellen Moyer, 2017. This book shows how with determination and action, we can implement solutions rather than sit on the sidelines suffering harmful impacts. We can have better health, a cleaner environment, a stable climate, healthy ecosystems, sustainable use of resources, and less need for damage control if we adopt a high-tech and high-nature way of life.

**Rooted & Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis**, edited by Leah Schade and Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, 2019. This book is for everyone who worries about the climate crisis and seeks spiritual practices and perspectives to renew their capacity for compassionate, purposeful, and joyful action. Essays by twenty-one faith leaders, scientists, community organizers, theologians, and grassroots climate activists offer wisdom. *Recommended in a Presbyterians for Earth Care webinar.*

**Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World**, by Katharine Hayhoe 2022. Called "one of the nation's most effective communicators on climate change" by The New York Times, evangelical Christian Katharine Hayhoe negotiates distrust of data, indifference to imminent threats, and resistance to proposed solutions with ease. She argues that when it comes to changing hearts and minds, facts are only one part of the equation. We need to find shared values in order to connect our unique identities to collective action. *Recommended in Christian Century magazine.*



# Earth Care Library Books Cont...

**The Future of Earth, A radical Vision for What's Possible in the Age of Warming, by Eric Holthaus, 2020 Harper One.** This book shows readers how to reverse the short- and long-term effects of climate change over the next three decades. Hopeful and prophetic, it invites us to imagine how we can do this in our own lifetime and encourages us to enter a deeper relationship with the earth as conscientious stewards and re-affirm our commitment to one another.

*We're Forming a Team to Further  
Reduce Our Carbon Footprint*



This year we begin new efforts to reduce our carbon footprint. In the last 2 years, the replacement of three old HVAC systems with new high-efficiency models has resulted in energy savings of 10%.

Our goal is to reduce our carbon footprint another 15% by mid 2026 to meet the PC(USA) General Assembly 2022 resolution calling on all its organizations and congregations to reduce their carbon footprint 25% in 4 years.

A team of four is being formed to review Energy Star and Faith Power and Light online workbooks, designed to help churches lower their carbon footprint, and make recommendations for how to use them. These resources assist in identifying what actions to take and tracking the results of those actions. This team effort is expected to span one to two months.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Ron Dickerson or Liz Brackmann.

To learn how you can reduce your own personal carbon footprint,  
check out:

[CoolClimate Carbon Footprint Calculator.](#)

# Volunteers Weeders Needed

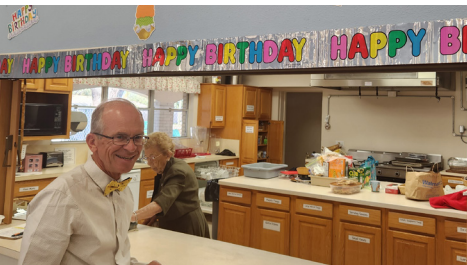


We usually have a fall and spring Member's Work Day where we pull weeds, prune and put down mulch in the front garden area.

We are asking for volunteers to help now to pull the worst of the weeds we have. Come when you can and do as much as you care to do. The trash can outside the maintenance room will be there for your use and Scott has brooms and garden tools available.

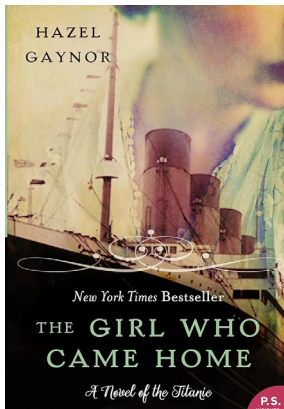
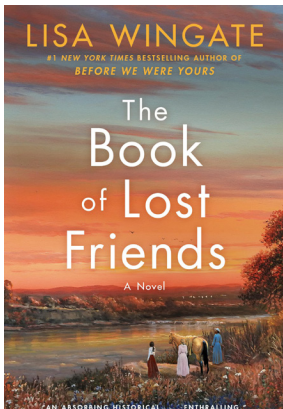
**Our Spring Member's Work Day:  
Saturday, April 5th | 8:00 AM.**

## *A United Birthday Celebration*





## Palma Sola Book Club



**FEB 10 | 1 - 2:30PM MAR 10 | 1 - 2:30PM**

Join in any second Monday at 12pm in the Media Center & Zoom for fun conversation.

**2025 READING LIST WILL BE  
UPDATED NEXT MONTH**

For more information, call Vicki Schooley at (941) 518-2315.

## Men's Group



### MEN'S GROUP

You're invited to attend the Morning Men's Group. Get to know the men you see in church. Share your story. Enjoy fellowship.

**MEETINGS START AT 8:30A**

**FEB 6** - Fellowship and breakfast | Poppi's Place restaurant

**FEB 20** - Fellowship & a discussion about Christian Living | Fellowship Hall

Please contact Rich Wachunis  
[rwachunis@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:rwachunis@tampabay.rr.com)



- Ash Wednesday Service is March 5th 12:45pm and open house 5:45 to 7 pm in parlor
- Between Sunday Bible Study  
"The Lord's Prayer"  
every Wednesday at 10:30am  
starting March 5th to April 9th
- Lenten Luncheons  
(soup, salad, bread, cookie and fellowship)  
every Wednesday at 11:30am  
starting March 5th to April 9th
- Palm Sunday is April 13th at 10 am
- Maundy Thursday is April 17th dinner at 6pm Service to follow
- Sunrise Easter Service is April 20th at the Botanical Gardens 7am
- Sunday Easter Service is April 20th in Sanctuary at 10am

*Mark Your Calendars for the Lenten Season*

# February Birthdays & Anniversaries


**FEB 8** | William Ball, Jane Mittel

**FEB 10** | Gregg Pead

**FEB 18** | Linda Progar

**FEB 24** | Janesse Fritzmeier

**FEB 25** | Martha Johnson



## PRAYER GROUP

2nd & 4th Tuesday 11a | Room 14



### CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSALS

WEDNESDAYS AT 7P IN THE SANCTUARY

### BELL CHOIR REHEARSALS

WEDNESDAYS AT 6P IN THE SANCTUARY



### HOLY STROLLERS WALKING GROUP

JOIN US ON A WEEKLY STROLL  
TO GET SOME FRESH AIR  
EVERY FRIDAY AT 9AM

ROBINSON PRESERVE  
(NORTH ENTRANCE)

- United Presbyterian Church | February 2025 Newsletter -

6510 3rd Ave W.  
Bradenton, FL 34209  
941-792-3141

NEW WEBSITE URL COMING SOON



# February

2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2 Present Word 8:45a <b>SCOUT SUNDAY</b> Worship Service w/ Communion 10a   Fellowship	3	4 <i>Outreach / 3p</i>	5  <b>Bell Choir   6p</b> <b>Chancel Choir   7p</b>	6 <b>MEN'S GROUP</b> <b>8:30a   Poppi's</b> <div>Investment Committee Mtg 1:30p</div> <i>Renewal 6p</i>	7 <b>HOLY STROLLERS   9a</b> Our Daily Bread 9:30a	8
9 Present Word 8:45a Worship Service 10a   Ordination of Elders & Deacons   Fellowship @ 11	10 <i>Palma Sola Book Club / 1p</i>	11 <b>PRAYER GROUP   11a</b> Valentine Cards & Candy @ Brookdale   2p	12  <b>Bell Choir   6p</b> <b>Chancel Choir   7p</b>	13 <div>Finance - 3:30P</div>	14 <b>VALENTINE'S DAY</b> <b>HOLY STROLLERS   9a</b> Our Daily Bread 9:30a	15
16 Present Word 8:45a Kirkin of The Tartans Service 10a   Luncheon @ 11a	17 <b>PRESIDENT'S DAY</b> <b>UPC SESSION</b>   1p	18	19  <b>Bell Choir   6p</b> <b>Chancel Choir   7p</b>	20 <b>MEN'S GROUP</b> <b>8:30a</b>	21 <b>HOLY STROLLERS   9a</b> Our Daily Bread 9:30a	22
23 Present Word 8:45a Worship Service 10a   Fellowship <b>ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING   11a</b>	24	25 <b>PRAYER GROUP   11a</b>	26  <b>Bell Choir   6p</b> <b>Chancel Choir   7p</b>	27	28 <b>HOLY STROLLERS   9a</b> Our Daily Bread 9:30a	

**Church Office Hours Monday - Thursday | 9am - 4pm**

View the online church [Calendar](#) for latest information about Sunday worship services, Bible study, outreach and other events. Livestreamed and recorded worship services may be viewed at [Online Worship](#).