



Volume 38, Issue 1

January 2016

## SENIOR PASTOR'S MESSAGE

**Port Orange  
United Church of Christ**  
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Dear Friends,

As we enter a New Year, there will be the inevitable myriad of resolutions and promises to take up something new and hopefully change our lives as a result. There will be plenty of ads for us to spend our money to help us accomplish those changes as well. While some of those promises to change might be quite noble and even beneficial, I'd like to suggest we avoid possibly setting ourselves up and propose letting something go instead. And there's no financial cost to it and the payoff is immeasurable. George Eliot was the pen name of English novelist Mary Anne Evans. She has a telling phrase in one of her books: *"It's but little good you do, watering last year's crop."* Think of a farmer who's survived a devastating year of drought. The fields are filled with dried-up, stunted stubble of last year's corn. If the farmer were to go out and irrigate that land, in hopes of making that which is dead grow again, it would be lunacy. Yet isn't that what many of us do in our lives? We are burdened with regrets, missed opportunities, perhaps even grievous errors. Farmers know it is better, by far, to write off last year's "crop" - to plow it under, to sow the furrows afresh for the season ahead. What about each of us? We need to let go of the past. Yes, remembering is an important part of our learning and identity but I'm referring to being captured emotionally and spiritually by it – either as a glorification or an indelible marker of failure. We simply cannot move forward as long as we are clinging to the past. We cannot change it. To hold on only robs us of what joy and abundance we can possibly hope to find in our tomorrows. There comes a time for letting go, for turning it over to the Lord, and for trusting in God's mercy and faithfulness to both forgive and bless us in spite of who we are and how last year's "crop" fared.

Time to move ahead in FAITH AND JOY!

*Pastor Bill*

**Senior Pastor:**  
Rev. Dr. Bill Wassner

**Assistant Pastor:**  
Beverly Schafer

**Pastor Emeritus:**  
Rev. Dr. Bill Ebbert

**Office Manager:**  
Kathy Shaffner

**Minister of Music:**  
Dr. Tom Naus

**Media Communications:**  
Bob Brewster

**Custodian:**  
Deb Viola

**Thrift Store Manager:**  
Bob Gaither

**Youth Leader:**  
Sher Buller

## OPERATIONS TEAM



The Operations Team met on December 14th and the following topics were discussed.

### Old Business

- 2016 Budget - Final review of the proposed budget in preparation for the Annual Meeting as well as review of the Endowment and Benevolent Fund Policy.
- No Parking Signs - Tracy Davis will install signs.

- Building Thermostats - Service 1st quote was accepted and thermostats have been ordered.
- Youth Room Renovation - Painting will be completed by youth over the Christmas vacation.
- Building Maintenance - Quotes will be obtained for cleaning and refinishing of Sanctuary floors.

### New Business

- Youth Fund & Retreats - Discussed upcoming youth fundraisers and participation in the Walk on Water ( January) and Peace River (March) Retreats, and National Youth Conference in Orlando in July.

The next Operations Meeting is scheduled for **Monday, January 11th at 6:30 PM.**

*Sher Buller, Chair of Operations*

## THE GIFT AND THRIFT STORE



December was a busy and profitable month for the Store. Our vast Christmas inventory, which was beautifully displayed by our talented volunteers, attracted customers old and new looking for that special gift. In fact, we exceeded our approved budget numbers for this year with sales totaling over \$23,000. We were also able to provide 23 bags of clothes to the homeless. Many thanks to the hardworking volunteers, our valued customers, and all who continue to donate items to the Store. We look forward to a great 2016! *Bob Gaither, Manager*

## Financial Update

Operational Budget as of 11/2015

	<b>ACTUAL</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>
	<u>Jan.-Nov. 2015</u>	<u>Jan.-Nov. 2015</u>
<b>Income</b>	\$149,280	\$148,555
<b>Expenses</b>	<u>\$143,251</u>	<u>\$147,773</u>
<b>Net</b>	\$ 6,029	\$ 782

We should finish the year in the black which is a blessing. Thank you to everyone for your continued support and wishing you a Happy New Year. *Respectfully Submitted by Susie Greiff, Treasurer*



**For 2016 are in the Jim Reed Room**

## TUESDAY ADULT STUDY GROUP



### Study Group

Our Terrific Tuesday Study Group will resume meeting on **January 12th at 6:30 PM**. We will begin by looking at sixteen current trends in churches across the country. All are welcome and if you intend to join us for dinner at 6:00 PM (\$3.00 @ person), please call the church office to make a reservation.

## TERRIFIC TUESDAYS



### Terrific Tuesdays

Terrific Tuesday Meetings continue to be well attended and the youth have completed renovation on the Youth Room and are enjoying their new meeting space. As always, special thanks to Sue Turner and Jackie Gaither for the delicious dinners each week. The group will be taking the holiday off and will resume meeting on **January 5th** with dinner at **6:00 PM** (\$3.00 @ person).



## DEACON & YOUTH NEWS



Our youth had a very busy December raising funds to attend the Youth Conference in Orlando in July. On Friday, December 5th they hosted a movie night which featured the film "God's Not Dead" and on Sunday, December 13th (along with the Deacons assistance) they cooked and served a terrific Pancake Breakfast. With Bob Brewster, Elijah & Tommy Buller, Tracy Davis,



Tyler Dotson, Janna & Trey Thompson manning the griddle, a variety of delicious pancakes and sausage were served by Bonnie Morisset, Sher, Aydan, Blake, & Elijah Buller, Skylar Davis, Tim Schafer and Van Thompson. To date, the youth have raised over \$400. Many thanks to all who supported the youth and keep your eyes open for future fundraisers in the new year!



## CHRISTMAS 2015



What a beautiful holiday season at POUCC! We began with the lighting of our first Advent Candle on November 30th and continued through Advent with extraordinary Worship Services that prepared us all for the Candlelight Christmas Eve Service to welcome the birth of our Savior.

On December 13th our Choir led by Dr. Tom presented our annual “*Lessons and Carols*” Program which was so moving. The hymns and carols were beautifully performed by the Choir, Saira Ramoutar flute accompanist, and thanks to Rev. Larry Deitch for serving as the Liturgist. We are so blessed to have such a talented group and are so grateful to Dr. Tom for his leadership and continued commitment to enhancing our Worship Services. We recently received a note from Mary Young expressing how the Service touched her heart in so many ways: “The anthems were beautifully done. The organ music was so spiritually uplifting, I had tears. Dr. Tom is a marvel!”



Our youth’s performance of “*A Song for Christmas,*” a play written by Pastor Bill, on December 20th was super. Thanks to Pastor Beverly, Sher Buller and the cast which included: *Aydan, Blake & Elijah Buller, Skylar Davis, Travis Dotson, Madison Hobson, Colten Pack, Rowan Schafer-Ramoutar and*



*Selena Wheeler* for their fine performances. All your hard work was evident and appreciated by all.



The Candlelight Christmas Eve Service was amazing. The Sanctuary was packed with 141 people. The music, message and spirit of everyone was a fitting celebration to mark the birth of Christ. Thanks to all who participated in making it a most memorable event.



On December 27th Pastor Beverly led us in a “*Special Year End Combined Worship Service.*” Thanks to Pastor Beverly for filling in for Pastor Bill so that he and Lisa could enjoy a weekend away.

## PORT ORANGE MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION



We had 78 members of area churches join us here for the November 24th POMA Annual Community Thanksgiving Service. We recently received a note from Harry Jennings of the Halifax Urban Ministries thanking us for the donation of 34 bags of food and \$279 received in the special offering and stating that “each month HUM, Port Orange provides food for an average of 320 adults and children. Your contribution will help feed these individuals and families and help them also to be able to stay in their homes and not become homeless.”



## MISSION NOTES



Our Angel Tree Project was a huge success! The tree was decorated with 83 angels listing the gender, ages and sizes of the children. Within a week, the angels disappeared and the wrapped gifts of warm clothing began to pile up under the tree. On December 14th, Pastor Bill's "sleigh" delivered the beautifully wrapped gifts, assorted



hair ribbons & bows, eight Matchbox sets, six bags of socks, and six backpacks to the school. School officials were overwhelmed by the generosity and most appreciative of our continued commitment to those in need.

Your generosity to the Mission Boxes has raised to date \$175.25 which benefits Sophie's Circle the local food pet pantry. Thanks for remembering all of God's creatures.



On Monday, December 7th, Jackie Gaither and Louise Eagan delivered 22 afghans and 12 bears to Boggy Creek Camp. Special thanks to Louise Eagan and all who donated their time and talent to this labor of love.

Thanks to Gail Besaw, Louise Eagan, and Peggy Wiggins who assisted in stuffing the 51 bags for the Palmetto House Residents. After Pastor Bill's blessing on December 20th, we delivered the bags along with additional bulk items.

The Mission Team thanks you for your continued generosity

*Jackie Gaither, Chair of the Missions Team*



### **THE CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING "LOVE SHINES THROUGH":**

This offering for Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been a way in which we, as members of the UCC enabled the Pension Boards' Ministerial Assistance aid individuals and families in need and say thank you for your service. **To date we have collected \$ 1,095.** Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

## YOUR FOOD BASKET DONATIONS

We continue to collect food items to help the hungry. **Communion Sundays are designated as "Fill the Food Basket" Sunday. Our next collection will take place on January 3rd.** Over 28 bags and nine boxes of food were collected last month for Grace Episcopal Food Pantry. Thanks to Jack Barrick and the Orange Park Fire Department for the food box donations. If we all bring a food donation, we will fill the basket each month. Please be generous and make sure all donations have NOT passed their expiration dates clearly marked on all cans, boxes, and containers.



## SECOND THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP DINNER



Every Second Thursday at 6:00 pm, POUCC has a wonderful Fellowship Dinner in the Jim Reed room.

*Make your plans to come to the next dinner Thursday, January 14th.  
It's a "Pot Luck."*

*Sign-up on Sanctuary Bulletin Board.*

## NOTES OF THANKS



A big **THANK YOU** to Jack Barrick, Ernie & Peggy Fodor, Jackie Gaither, Sandy Kransi, Joe, Janna, Trey & Van Thompson, and Mary Young for the beautiful job they did decorating the Sanctuary and Jim Reed Room for the holidays. Their time and effort was greatly appreciated by all who attended our Worship Services.

Lisa and I would like to express our deepest thanks and appreciation for the Christmas Cards, blessings, and gifts. We love you all! *Pastor Bill and Lisa*



We recently received a hand written note from the students at Spruce Creek Elementary School thanking us for our continued partnership and support throughout the year.

The Pregnancy Crisis Center sent a note of thanks for our recent donation of maternity clothes which they were running low on.

Maternity Clothing



## SPECIAL MENTIONS

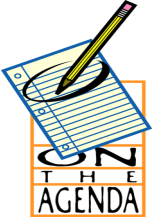


**CONGRATULATIONS:** To Kristin Marshall who completed the Space Coast Half Marathon on Sunday, November 29th. Great Job Kristin!

**WEDDING NEWS:** Congratulations and best wishes to Kaylei (Wierzbicki) and Sean Talverdi on their December 12th marriage.



## ANNUAL MEETING



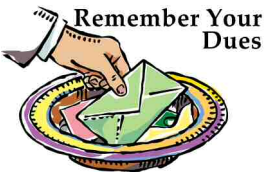
On *Sunday, January 24, 2015* we will have our Annual Meeting after a *Combined Service* beginning at *9:45 AM*. Topics to be presented are the 2016 Budget as well as nomination and election of officers for the year. A list of nominees are posted on the Sanctuary bulletin board. Mark your calendars and plan to attend this important meeting. Annual Reports are due by *Friday, January 8th and will be available on Sunday, January 17th for your review*. Please type your report in Microsoft Word for easy compilation and e-mail it to the Church Office ASAP.

# NEWS & Notes



We appreciate your faithful support and need to continue our common work and ministry. We are asking you to renew or increase your support as a part of “*New Love, New Mercy.*” To date, we have received 30 pledges totaling \$55,446. Pledge cards are available on the table in the rear of the Sanctuary and we ask that you return them either by mail or in the Sunday Offering on or before **January 17th**. May God continue to bless you, your family, and our church family!

The 2016 Edition will be available at the Annual Meeting. If you have any address or contact changes, please notify the Church Office as soon as possible.



Just a reminder, yearly Conference Dues are \$15 per participating member and the check should be made out to POUCC with Conference Dues in the memo line. **The total amount due is paid to the Conference up front each year by the Congregation and your contribution towards this reimburses the Church for that mandatory fee.**

**SPECIAL BOOK OFFER:** Kay Russell is offering a copy of her recently published book entitled “**Poems, Prayers, & Promises**” to any member of the congregation who makes a donation to the Church. For more information, you may contact Kay at bobkay1@aol.com.

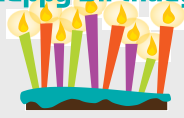


**FOR SALE:** : La-Z-Boy Lift Chair in very good condition available for \$500. If interested, contact Sandy Kransi 788-2392.

**SUNRISE COAST GOSPEL MUSIC FEST:** At Cracker Creek, 1795 Taylor Road on **January 22-23. Friday Concert: 6:30 PM, Saturday Concerts: 1:00 & 6:30 PM.** Suggested offering \$5.00 each day. Free Breakfast Saturday 8:00-9:30 AM. More information call 386-761-5482. All are welcome!



Happy Birthday!



PRAYER REQUESTS\*

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS\*

Table with names and dates for January Birthdays, including Margaret Procter (1/2), Blake Buller, Aydan Buller, Timothy Wierzbicki (1/3), Natalie Wheeler, Richard Devins, Jr. (1/4), Don Schweitzer (1/7), Lucas Chusko (1/8), Shirley Harper (1/9), Jack Hilgenberg (1/10), Tyler Dotson (1/12), Erika Wheeler (1/13), Ruth Sheldon (1/14), Dee Dardeen (1/15), Peter Marshall, Garrett Zinke (1/18), Roman Wierzbicki (1/19), Mary McDonald (1/20), Warren Feilbach (1/24), Kay Schweitzer (1/26), John Shaw (1/27), Luke Moss, Bob Russell (1/28), Kaitlyn Wheeler (1/29), and Rev. Dr. Raymond Hargrove (1/31).

Table with names and relationships for Prayer Requests, including Beverly Absher (Aunt of Kimberly Dotson), Audrey Besaw (Mother of Tom Besaw), Denise Brewster (Daughter-in-Law of the Brewsters), Clyde & Emily Bussard (Members of POUCC), Sandy Cicero (Family Member of the Gaithers), Karen Donahue (Member of the Kransi Family), Kim Dotson (Member of POUCC), Amy Dyer (Friend of the Fishers), Phyllis Heath (Wife of Rev. Steven Heath), Rev. Richard Hills (POMA Minister), Rev. Rebecca Hyvonen (In Loss of Father), Bob Jackson (Friend of the Fishers), Drew Knock (Member of POUCC), Delores Mann (Friend of Diane Kirlin), Jill McClure (Friend of the Deitch Family), Tom Reed (Brother-in-Law of Kathy Cratin), Krystal Smith (Friend of Diane Kirlin), Arthur Van Nostrand (Member of POUCC), Janna Thompson & Family (In Loss of her Uncle), and F/F of Robin Wesley (Friend of Keith Zinke).

In Care Facilities

Table with June Ferreri (Member of POUCC (Care Facility in PA)).

Special Needs

All of Our Military, First Responders & Their Families

Broader Concerns

- Victims of Terrorism Worldwide
Refugees Fleeing Tyranny
Pray for Peace in our World

\*Please contact the Church office (788-0920) with your prayer requests.

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES\*



Table with names and dates for January Anniversaries, including Larry & Carol Strickland (1/1/1986), Harold & Sandy Kransi (1/1/1982), Fred & Jeanette Campbell (1/5/1951), and Tracy & Milissa Davis (1/16/2000).

Note: \*Please contact the church office to update our records if we missed your special date or to add a Prayer Concern.



# POUCC January 2016

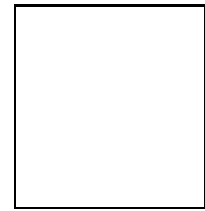
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 	2
3 Contemporary 8:45 am Sunday School 9:45 am Traditional 10:45 am	4 POMA 3:45 pm Compassionate Friends 7:00 pm	5 Terrific Tuesday 6:00 pm	6 POMA 4:00 pm CPT 6:00 pm Choir Practice 7:30 pm	7 POMA 3:45 pm Line Dancing 6:00 pm	8	9
10 Contemporary 8:45 am Sunday School 9:45 am Traditional 10:45 am	11 POMA 3:45 pm Operations Meeting 6:00 pm	12 Terrific Tuesday 6:00 pm Adult Group 6:30 PM	13 Palmetto House 5:30 pm CPT 6:00 pm Choir Practice 7:30 pm	14 POMA 3:45 pm Fellowship Dinner 6:00 pm	15	16
17 Contemporary 8:45 am Sunday School 9:45 am Traditional 10:45 am	18 Council Meeting 7:00 pm	19 Terrific Tuesday 6:00 pm Adult Group 6:30 PM	20 POMA 4:00 pm CPT 6:00 pm Choir Practice 7:30 pm	21 POMA 3:45 pm Line Dancing 6:00 pm	22	23
24 Combined Service 9:45 am Annual Meeting 11:00 am	25	26 Terrific Tuesday 6:00 pm Adult Group 6:30 PM	27 POMA 4:00 pm CPT 6:00 pm Choir Practice 7:30 pm	28 POMA 3:45 pm Line Dancing 6:00 pm	29	30

31 Contemporary  
8:45 am  
Sunday School  
9:45 am  
Traditional  
10:45 am

*Thrift Store Hours: M-F 9 am – 3 pm, Sat. 9:00-Noon  
Church Office Hours: M-F 9 am - 1 pm*

*Join us for Fellowship & Refreshments Each Sunday Between Services  
Fellowship for January: The Deacons Team*

**Port Orange**  
**United Church of Christ**  
651 Taylor Road  
Port Orange, FL 32127



**Church Staff**

**Senior Pastor:** Rev. Dr. Bill Wassner  
**Assistant Pastor:** Beverly Schafer  
**Pastor Emeritus:** Rev. Dr. C. William Ebbert  
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**Thrift Store Manager:** Bob Gaither  
**Youth Leader:** Sher Buller

**Office Hours**

9:00 AM—1:00 PM  
Monday—Friday

**Thrift Store Hours**

9:00 AM—3:00 PM  
Monday—Friday  
9:00—Noon  
Saturday

**Sunday Worship**

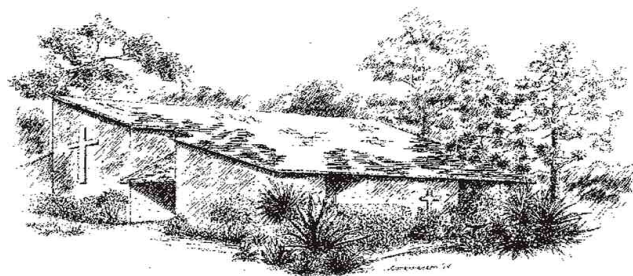
8:45 AM & 10:45 AM

**Sunday School**

9:45 AM

**Terrific Tuesday**

6:00 PM



*Phone (386) 788-0920*  
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