



# *Tidings of Hope*



## *HOPE* *United Church of Christ* *October 2022*

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*Submissions for publication may be sent to the Church Office at the above addresses, either electronically or by paper.*

## The Reverend's Reflection

There once was a bird who lived in a tree. The bird was named Faithful. From the time she was a tiny hatchling, her parents used to sing a song every morning. The song was called "Home," but Faithful thought Home was the name of her tree.

Even after her siblings fledged and flew away, Faithful never ventured far from the nest. It was all she had ever known through the spring and summer of her life. To her, it was Home.

Fall came. The leaves changed from green to amber, rust, pumpkin, and scarlet. "Home has never been more beautiful!" Faithful thought. "I'm so glad I stayed."

One day, gusty winds blew, and a hard, cold rain fell. One by one, the leaves flew off the tree. After the storm, Faithful became worried. "Home has never been so ugly," she said.

She looked up and saw other birds flying. She wondered if she should join them. Would it be safe? Would her tree survive without her? Would she survive without the tree? What would her parents think, after providing such a beautiful nest in this tree called Home?

To stay or to leave...it felt like the biggest choice she would ever make.

One morning, one of her brothers, Adventure, flew in and perched on a branch beside her. "I've been looking everywhere for you," he said. "It's time to migrate."

"I don't know what to do," Faithful said. "I don't know if I should stay Home or leave."

Adventure cocked his head. Faithful, I think you're confused," he tweeted. "Home isn't the name of your tree. Home is the name of your song. Wherever you sing your song, that is your home."

For many of us, Christianity is the name of the tree in which we were raised, or it is the tree in which we sought refuge later in life. But the season has changed. The tree has changed. We have changed. The longer we stay, the more disappointed, disillusioned, frustrated, and even trapped we feel.

## The Reverend's Reflection (continued)

Perhaps we need to discover the Christian faith wasn't meant to be our tree. It was meant to be our song. Wherever we sing with love, joy, peace, and patience, wherever we sing with kindness, gentleness, generosity, and justice, there we manifest what being human means to us. Our song is our gift to the world.

Trees grow. Trees change through the seasons. They mature, decline, and die. Then new trees grow where the old trees once cast their shadows. What matters most isn't the staying faithful to the tree but staying faithful to the song, our song, the song only we can sing.  
(From Do I Stay Christian by Brian McLaren)

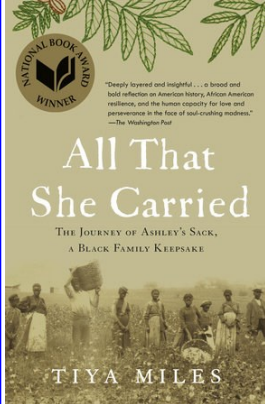
As I write these words, Hurricane Ian is sending wind and rain and blowing the leaves from the trees. Images on the news show fallen trees blocking roads, crushing cars, and destroying homes. The trees and the landscape will look different after the storm.

The church has weathered many storms through the ages. From the persecution of Christians in the early church through the Crusades, Colonialism, racism and sexism, the church has survived. While I am currently *literally* in the middle of a storm, I realize the church and Christianity is turbulent too. There are churches that spew hate from the pulpit and teach homophobia, racism, and anti-immigration sentiments. Do we follow the one who said, "Love one another as I have loved you." Or do we only hear the voices of violence, and anti-progressive rhetoric in the name of Jesus?

We follow in the way of love. Jesus lifted up the poor, the sick, the stranger, the immigrant, the marginalized. Jesus sang of healing, justice and love.

As we shelter ourselves from the storms that assail us, may we never lose the sound of our song. Your song is such a gift to the world, Hope United Church of Christ. No matter what the future brings...keep singing your song of hope, peace, joy, and love.

## Book Club October 2022



In October, the Hope Book Club will read and discuss “All That She Carried,” written by Dr. Tiya Miles.

This book is a National Book Award winner and a New York Times bestseller and was named one of the best books of 2021 by the Washington Post, Time Magazine, NPR, and Publisher’s Weekly. Miles is a professor of history in African American, Indigenous, and Women’s Studies at Harvard University. Miles was first inspired to investigate the remarkable artifact known as Ashley’s Sack when traveling to Savannah, Georgia, to participate in a conference. When colleague Ben Goggins informed her of a textile bearing connections to enslaved women from the Charleston Lowcountry area, Miles was fascinated by its origins. She applied for a public history grant to facilitate her research process and began tracing the sack’s origins and the women central to its story, beginning with an enslaved woman who packed a precious inventory of survival items for her nine-year-old child who was to be sold away from her. All That She Carried is the story of three women, Rose, who packed the sack, Ashley, who received it from her mother, and Ruth, Ashley’s granddaughter, who embroidered the tale of her great-grandmother’s love on the sack in 1921. It is an exploration of the history of American slavery as it pertains specifically to the experiences of women and girls. This book, contains extensive discussion of the trafficking and enslavement of human beings, racism, bigotry, and violence against enslaved people, including sexual assault and abuse of young women and girls, and delves into the traumatic experiences pervasive across the experiences of enslaved people in the 18th and 19th centuries and the racism and abuses suffered by Black people throughout American history.

“All That She Carried” is a challenging book to read but contains historical facts that are eye-opening.

We invite you to join our discussion on Tuesday, October 18th at 1:30. The zoom meeting number is 845 6868 2100.

## Sharing Our Best in October 2022

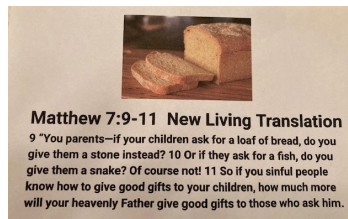
Our food drive on Saturday, September 10 yielded 386 items and \$40.00 for the Central Brevard Sharing Center. The next food drive is Saturday, October 8 from 9-11 in front of the church.

We also received several jars of peanut butter and a \$20.00 donation for the Cocoa High Fresh Market Justice and Witness ministry.

The blood drive on the following Saturday, September 17, blessed our community with 7 donations of blood which will save 21 lives! Four came from our congregation and 3 from the community. The next drive is Saturday, November 12 from 9-1 in the front circle of the church.

Please remember that Growth and Development is collecting wrapped Halloween candies (please no exploding candies) through October. We will have our Halloween candy Trick or Treat drive through Saturday, October 29 from 5-7. We need volunteers to decorate the trick or treat bags, fill the bags, and pass them to our trick or treaters. Come join the fun. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex on the greeter's table. A bin for the candy is also in the narthex. We will be filling the treat bags at 3:00 in the church social hall on Friday, October 28.

Remember that our fall bazaar is Saturday, November 12. We are accepting items to sell at the bazaar (please, no clothing). We still need helpers to price items, set up, clean up, donate baked items for the bake sale and supplies for the hamburger/hotdog lunches. We will also need volunteers to cashier and help prepare the meals. Of course, New England Corn Chowder is on the menu...thank you, Betty! See the sign-up sheet in the narthex, and contact Julie Johnson and Karen Lehr if you have questions.



The next ladies lunch is Saturday, October 22 at noon at Baci on Barnes Blvd. It's a great way to get to know one another. The ladies of Hope UCC had a great time at the September 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, celebrating with a fall theme. Thank you, Jean, for the beautiful favors and to Susan for the door prize.

God is good all the time...All the time, God is good!





## In Remembrance of Me

based on Mark 6:30-44

**Rev. Phiwa Langeni** (they/them/theirs)

*Ambassador for Innovation & Engagement*

*Center for Analytics, Research & Development, and Data (CARDD), UCC*

**W**henever we celebrate communion, we share tidbits about the last meal Jesus had with his friends. After breaking the bread and pouring the cup, Jesus tells his friends to eat and drink “in remembrance of me.” And that’s what we do whenever we share in that sacred meal these 2,000+ years later.

My remembrances have typically included the post-supper betrayal and drawn-out drama leading to Jesus’ death as well as the resurrection and joyous reunion with his friends. Recently, I’ve come to recognize a tiny-yet-crucial logical error that being on this side of history facilitated. My recollections include happenings that hadn’t yet occurred when Jesus invited his friends to remember.

It’s more likely that Jesus wanted them to remember moments like they had with the crowd of 5,000+ people. As Jesus generously gave of himself to fill their spiritual hunger, their physical hunger kicked in. Understandably, the disciples could only see scarcity with their few resources against this large logistical nightmare.



Jesus, however, saw abundance. He chose generosity fueled by innovative thinking and actions. He invited them to consider what was already available and reconfigure their structure to make the miraculous (re)distribution of food possible so that everyone could eat satisfyingly and have leftovers. That's what the disciples would've remembered.

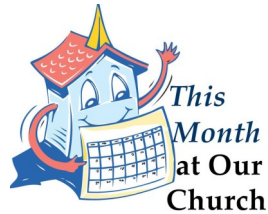
Anytime we approach the sacred meal, let Jesus' generosity also flood our remembrances of him so that our very lives might also be transformed and inspired to innovate our thinking and actions. Indeed, there is enough and so much more for all of us!

**CONSIDER YOUR PLEDGE AS A PERCENT OF YOUR MONTHLY INCOME.**

Annual Income	Monthly Income	2%	3%	4%	5%	10%
20,000	1,667	33	50	67	83	167
25,000	2,083	42	63	83	104	208
30,000	2,500	50	75	100	125	250
35,000	2,917	58	88	117	146	292
40,000	3,333	67	100	133	167	333
45,000	3,750	75	113	150	188	375
50,000	4,167	83	125	167	208	417
60,000	5,000	100	150	200	250	500
75,000	6,250	125	188	250	313	625
100,000	8,333	167	250	333	417	833
125,000	10,417	208	313	417	521	1042
150,000	12,500	250	375	500	625	1250
200,000	16,667	333	500	667	833	1667

On average, Americans give 2% of their income to charity. Giving even 1% more of annual income to charity would be transformative for our congregation and other organizations doing good in our community.

From **BREAD** and **CUP** to **FAITH** and **GIVING**    



- 10/2 - Communion Worship
- 10/9 - Sunday Worship
- 10/16 - Sunday Worship
- 10/23 - Sunday Worship
- 10/30 - Sunday Worship

Zoom Mtg. ID. for Sunday Services  
**321 636 0250**

**Drive Through Food Drop-Off**  
for Central Brevard Sharing Center  
October 8th from 9 am to 11 am.

### **Ongoing Events at Hope**

#### **Happy Seekers**

Fridays at 10:00 am

Zoom Mtg. No. 875 1767 3994

#### **Coffee Hour**

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 am

Zoom Mtg. No. 425 599 5598

#### **Theology on Tap**

Wednesdays at 6:30 pm

Discussing the book  
“Do I Stay Christian”

by Brian McClaren

Zoom Mtg. No. 321 636 0250



- 10/3 - Yolanda Apodaca & Kelly  
Rogers' Anniversary
- 10/4 - Amanda Smith's Birthday
- 10/5 - Bob Munchbach's Birthday
- 10/8 - Declan Holmes' Birthday
- 10/12 - Norman & Netta Elam's  
Anniversary
- 10/18 - Isaiah Elam's Birthday
- 10/20 - Jamie Lees' Birthday
- 10/23 - Della Jensen's Birthday
- 10/29 - Sharon Keefe's Birthday
- 10/29 - Giaus Garcia's Birthday

### **Hope UCC Ministry for the Sharing Center**

In September we collected 386 items  
and \$20 in cash for the Central Bre-  
vard Sharing Center.

There will be another drive through  
food drop-off on October 8th from 9  
am to 11 am.



Florida  
Conference



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Fall greetings, Florida UCC members and friends:

Here is the [link to the October/November issue of Celebrate Florida.](#)

*(control, click on the link above)*