



336 South Halifax Drive  
 386-677-3581 • firstunited.org  
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APRIL 2023



So once again, the Easter Sunrise wasn't sunny.

The Saturday weather forecast said a 10-20% chance of rain and a slight breeze of 6-8mph on Sunday. Sunday morning brought 20mph winds, gusts up to 30, rain, drizzle, and really high tides. The low tide was at a high tide level. It wasn't good. We knew we weren't canceling the service but had to alter our plans. It was a good reminder that life doesn't always go according to plan.

Despite the challenging weather conditions - the wind and rain that seemed to be against us - the sun still rose, just as it does every day, just as it has done for millennia. It was a powerful reminder that God's faithfulness and promises remain unchanged even during storms.

This experience reminded me that sometimes in our lives, we may face



difficult circumstances that seem to obscure God's presence or make it hard for us to see His work. It wasn't what we had hoped, but we know we don't have to be stuck with "we had hoped"; we can connect to the living hope in Jesus.

We may encounter challenges, trials, and storms that threaten to overshadow our faith or dim our hope. Yet, just as the sun rises every morning, God is always at work, regardless of what we see or feel in the moment.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the ultimate example of God's unwavering faithfulness. Despite the dark days of Jesus' crucifixion and burial, God's plan of redemption was at work. On the third day, Jesus rose again, victorious over sin and death. It was a glorious reminder that God's promises never fail, and His power is beyond our comprehension.

Connecting to the living hope on the journey of faith means we must remember that God's work in our lives may not always be visible or obvious. Trusting that God works behind the scenes may require faith, even when we can't see it. Just like the sun rises even on cloudy, rainy, windy days, God's love, mercy, and grace are constantly at work in our lives, even amid challenges and difficulties.



Resurrection reminds us to look beyond the temporary circumstances and fix our eyes on the eternal promises of God, knowing that just as Jesus rose from the dead, He is also working in our lives, bringing about new life, restoration, and transformation.

Honestly, I kind of like the windy, rainy, high tide service where three hundred hardy folks showed up to celebrate. It wasn't what we had hoped, but there was hope. As we move past Easter, we still rejoice in the risen Christ and be encouraged by the truth that God is always at work, just like the rising sun, bringing light, hope, and new beginnings.

Grace and Peace,  
*Scott*



## The Living Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, April 5, 2023

Leonardo Da Vinci's painting of the "Last Supper" came to life for us on Maundy Thursday of Holy Week.

Actors portraying Jesus and the twelve disciples took their places around the table that evening, just as they appeared in that famous painting. Each disciple and Jesus spoke during the service, telling about their experiences during the three years Jesus was here on earth.

The drama was originally written by Ernest K. Emurian, and has been adapted over the years by various authors.

The presentation served as a reminder of our own stories,

history, strengths, and weaknesses, as even the apostles did.

The cast included Karl Yackel, Phil Cota, Jim Fox, Jim Murray, Braden Shoemaker, Jack Fisher, Clint Bagwell, Jim Fisher, Josh Lynch, Marc McGrath, Travis Houk, Dylan Reed, and Frank Johnston.

Music provided by Tammy Hegel, Linda Dares and Jo Traywick.

Set construction, makeup and wardrobe provided by Dennis Dunn, JoAnn Van Hoozen, Tammy Hegel, Lisa Fisher, Kris Smith, Holly VanHoose, Amy Armistead, and Frank Johnston.



### THE EIGHT DECADES CLUB

We are highlighting those wonderful seniors in our church that have reached that young age of 80 or over. Send them a card, or if you see them, wish them a Happy Birthday.

Apr 21—Lee Bullwinkel—8 Pine Valley Cir, Ormond Beach FL 32174-3821

Apr 25—Ray Garrow—47 Fairway Dr, Ormond Bach FL 32176-5419

May 1—Troy Brookshire—340 Chelsea Place Ave, Ormond Beach FL 32174

May 3—Jo Traywick—270 Melrose Ave, Ormond Beach FL 32174

May 4—Betty French—7 Pebble Beach Dr, Ormond Beach FL 32174

May 5—Gale Lemerand—810 Fentress Ct, Ste 130, Daytona Beach FL 32117-5118

May 9—Gayleen Snead—2900 N Atlantic Ave, Apt 202, Daytona Beach FL 32118

May 10—Pat Johnson—4 Water Oak Cir, Ormond Beach FL 32176

May 10—Jerry Traywick—270 Melrose Ave, Ormond Beach FL 32174

May 11—Judy Garrett—29 Old Canyon Ln, Ormond Beach FL 32174

May 11—Jan Snyder—225 Chippewa Cir, Ormond Beach FL 32174

May 16—Ron Campbell—2 Green Forest Dr, Ormond Beach FL 32174-5966

May 18—Ellen Detter—9 Katrinas Dr, Ormond Beach FL 32174-9111

May 18—Baerbel Pearson—529 Andrews Dr, Ormond Beach FL 32174

May 25—Barbara Vranik—29 Bay Pointe Dr, Ormond Beach FL 32174

May 26—Elizabeth Priestly—99 Riverview Dr, Ormond Beach FL 32174-7056

May 28—Bonnie Maguire—1204 Asheville Springs Cir, Asheville NC 28806

May 29—Gef Frick III—125 Oak Ln, Ormond Beach FL 32174-2633

May 29—Jim Rosser—

May 30—Lynellen Bueter—425 Wingspan Dr, Ormond Beach FL 32174-1038

If you know of a name that should be on the list, or if a correction is needed, please let Frank Johnston know at :

fjohnston@firstunited.org

## Easter Egg Hunt at First United Methodist Church—April 2, 2023



## Gathering Place Easter Egg Hunt at Westside Elementary—April 1, 2023



## Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others

by Barbara Brown Taylor

I found the book to be an intriguing exploration of the world's major religions and their interconnectedness, including Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity. Although it only touches the surface of these religions, it has opened my heart and mind to seek a deeper understanding.

Rather than providing intricate details about each religion, the book focuses on the experience of exploring other faiths and how this can enhance one's faith. The author emphasizes that every person has a unique experience, and learning about different religions can lead to new ways of enriching one's faith.

This book provides more about the experience of exploring other religions rather than the details about the religions. It also helps people see how varied their own religion is, even within one's denomination. Other religions are likewise varied, so any person you meet will have their own experience to open themselves to new ways of seeing that don't threaten our faith. It actually enhances one's faith.

As a Christian, I believe that all religions have something valuable to offer and that how one lives is more important than what one believes. The book is not traditional, and the author uses the teachings and practices of other religions to illustrate the concepts of faith, prayer, loving one's

neighbor, and God.

Although some readers may find the first few pages slow, the book contains notable quotes and provides a deeper understanding of spiritual beliefs. Stay with the book as it gets better. Her primary messages are that there is something to love about all religions and that how you live your life is more important than your beliefs. You will find that she tackles passages from scripture and expresses ideas that make you think all over again about stories you might have been puzzled by at times.

The author and I agree that her view of God is not entirely traditional. She uses the teachings and practices of the other major religious traditions to show what anyone can learn from them about faith, prayer, loving your neighbor, and God. She sometimes made me uncomfortable, but that is not necessarily bad as it made me think, and I learned from her.

I am a big fan of storytelling. It is rare to read a book about religion and meet an author who invites you along on a personal journey that takes you into stories in which she makes it possible to be present with curiosity, doubt, and humility. This is a theology that is accessible and invitational.

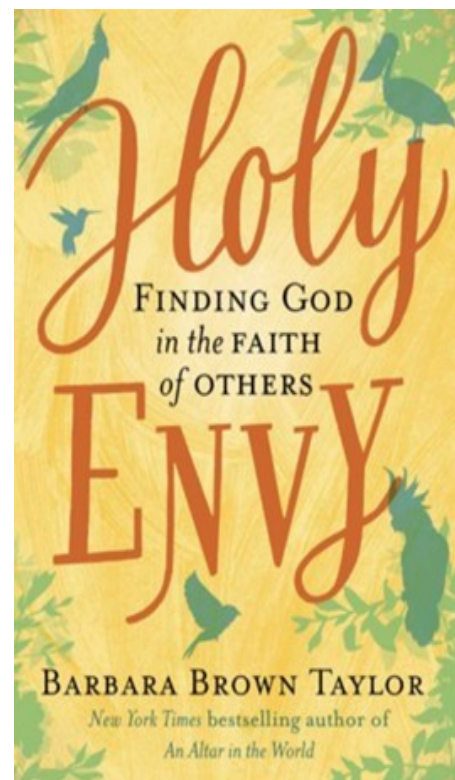
I enjoyed this book because it was full of love, empathy, and respect for people worldwide and the way they worship. I enjoyed the stories of her students and thought about how fortunate they were to be exposed to others of different religions. On the exciting field trips, they were welcomed

with love and respect and made meaningful relationships with people from different faiths.

She talked a lot about welcoming the stranger and about what could be learned about their cultures and beliefs. We live in a time when many fear those who are not like themselves. These people might benefit from reading this book.

Overall, this book is insightful and thought-provoking, encouraging readers to explore and appreciate other religions while deepening their understanding of their faith.

— *David Manning*



Scott Smith, Senior Pastor

First United Methodist Church  
336 S Halifax Drive  
Ormond Beach FL 32176

Phone 386/677-3581

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**We need your help** in providing suggestions for our newsletter. We will be publishing it each month and we need your help in writing articles and news stories. Contact Will McLaughlin, <willmcla@gmail.com>