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### Hebrew Heroines

This summer, for our message series, I am looking at “Hebrew Heroines.” The Old Testament gets a bad rep saying women were not valued and honored. While true, women were seen as less than others in ancient society. In the Bible, women play a crucial role in the movement of God.

We will be talking about Sarah, Rachel, and Leah as wives of influential men in the Bible. Further, we will look at the influence of the midwives on events. Other women include Miriam, the General Deborah, the assassin Jael; Hannah, the faithful; and we will end with Esther, the queen.

As we honor these Hebrew heroines, let us remember that their stories transcend time and continue to resonate with us. They teach us valuable lessons about faith, resilience, justice, and the power of individual action to shape history. May we draw strength and inspiration from their lives as we navigate our journeys of faith and service.

This series will start Father’s Day. That seems like a good day to celebrate the power of women in our faith! The stories of our Hebrew Heroines are our stories. In them, we encounter countless individuals who, through their unwavering strength and courage, have left an indelible mark on our shared history.

In this series, we will discover the stories of the Hebrew Heroines transcend time and continue to resonate with us. They teach us valuable lessons about faith, resilience, justice, and the power of individual action to shape history. I am looking forward to sharing this with you this summer.

Grace and Peace,  
Scott

Memorial Day serves as a dedicated occasion to honor and remember the courageous soldiers who selflessly sacrificed their lives to safeguard our homeland and preserve our cherished freedom. Throughout history, our nation has called upon the younger generation to embrace the immense responsibility of defending liberty domestically and abroad. The magnitude of their sacrifices remains beyond complete comprehension or adequate repayment.

Reflecting upon the profound contributions made by these remarkable individuals, it becomes apparent that they have relinquished a great deal for our benefit.

At the very least, they have dedicated years of their lives, sacrificing precious moments with their families to serve a country they hold dear. They have forfeited the opportunity to establish stable roots, frequently uprooting themselves and relocating from one military base to another every few years.

Many of them have endured physical disabilities that persist throughout their lives, having lost the use of one or more limbs. Countless others have suffered mental trauma,

rendering them incapable of managing day-to-day existence. Tragically, thousands upon thousands have made the ultimate sacrifice—their lives—so that we may continue to thrive in a secure and liberated nation.

Attempting to fathom the depth of their past and ongoing experiences, we are reminded that their dedication stems from an unwavering love for our country and the freedoms

we often take for granted. We can never truly grasp the extent of their struggles nor adequately repay them and their families for the countless sacrifices they have made on our behalf. Mere words of gratitude seem inadequate in the face of their immense courage.

As we contemplate their selflessness, let us also remember the timeless words spoken in [John 15:12-13](#): *“My command is*

*this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”*

May we embody this spirit of love and honor on Memorial Day and every day, paying homage to those who have exhibited the utmost love for their nation and fellow citizens.



## Here's a way to help others in their time of need. . .

Are you interested in helping a ministry that reaches out with love to others?

Then, the Mary & Martha Ministry is a way for you to do just that. Everyone enjoys a meal they do not have to cook, and this ministry provides a deliciously prepared meal delivered to them when they are incapacitated. The meal can be home-cooked, delivered by a restaurant, or ordered from the website this ministry uses: "Take Them A Meal."

### What we do:

–We reach out to those in need and serve them as Mary and Martha served the Lord.

–We provide meals on a short-term basis to persons/families following hospitalizations, surgeries, childbirth, and a death in the family. Basically, any need they may have.

–The ministry is open to anyone who wishes to provide these meals – for one day or many days. There is no commitment; just serve when you can.

–To sign up: we use an easy web-based program – "Take Them A Meal." You will then be on a list and will receive an

email when there is a need for meals. After you commit to helping someone, you will receive a reminder when it's your turn to get a meal to them.

For more information (or if you need meals prepared), contact Ruth Kelly (386/265-5188 or [ruth.kelly76@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.kelly76@gmail.com)). Or contact Nancy Kleinsmith (386/299-6444) or Frank Johnston (386/677-3581 or [fjohnston@firstunited.org](mailto:fjohnston@firstunited.org))



If you have LOVE in your heart, you always have something to give.

LOVE cures people – both the ones who give it and the ones who receive it. — Karl Augustus Menninger (1893-1990)

LOVE is . . . The gift of oneself. — Jean Anouilh (1910-1987)

LOVE is like the five loaves and two fishes. It doesn't start to multiply until you give it away.



### 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.

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

Jun 1—Gloria Stroud—10 Bishop Blvd. Apt 110, Holly Hill FL 32117

Jun 2—Ed VanHoose, Jr—1525 Harmony Ave, Ormond Beach FL 32174-2934

Jun 7—Sarah Murphy—211 Carib Dr, Ormond Beach FL 32176-6604

Jun 13—Becky Hayes—1155 Ocean Shore Blvd, Apt 305, Ormond Beach FL 32176-3747

Jun 14—Jim Sloane—630 Lake Winnemissett Dr, Deland FL 32724

Jun 15—Lyn Leitschuh—500 Seminary Dr, # 108, Monroe OH 45050

Jun 18—Lawrence Steedley—2900 Ocean Shore Blvd, apt 103, Ormond Beach FL 32176-2374

Jun 21—Laverne Cox—508 Crooked Stick Dr, Daytona Beach FL 32114-7119

Jun 26—Barbara deVignier—8 Pine Valley Cir, Ormond Beach FL 32174-3821

Jun 29—Bill Turner—3324 Bailey Ann Dr, Ormond Beach FL 32174L

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](mailto:fjohnston@firstunited.org)

## The Gathering Place is Growing

Described by Pastor Amy as a “tenacious new faith community,” The Gathering Place has made significant strides in the past two years, experiencing growth in attendance and finding a new place of worship.

Initially, the church called Westside Elementary School its home. Although they have since moved on, the school continues to benefit from various service projects, including the Reading Aloud program. Volunteers participate in one-on-one sessions with struggling students, helping them improve their reading skills. The Easter Egg Hunt, held at the school, drew a great crowd of 415 attendees.



Nearly a year ago, The Gathering Place relocated to The Foundry on Fentress Avenue in Daytona Beach. This elegant facility serves as a workspace for individuals and small businesses during the week. On Sunday mornings, a transformation takes place as dedicated volunteers rearrange tables and chairs into a worship space. Moreover, pastor Amy enjoys the convenience of an office in this building, complete with access to a conference room for meetings.

Many often ask Amy, “When will you start building your church?” In response, she explains that the plan is to build the church community first, which will dictate the type of building required. Amy attributes the increased church attendance to the introduction of new activities, such as Pilate classes that combine beginner-level exercises with



faith-based meditation. Additionally, participants can engage in Kayaks & Communion, where they embark on kayak journeys or ride in a pontoon boat after attending a worship service at the Tomoka Outpost. Another engaging activity offered is Creative Journaling, which encourages individuals to use a simple journal to enhance and maintain their mental well-being.

Recent sermons at The Gathering Place have shed light on the struggles associated with mental health, addressing topics such as grief, trauma, depression, addiction, stress, and anxiety. Amy has discovered that nearly everyone either experiences these challenges themselves or knows someone who does.

To better plan for the future, The Gathering Place Launch Team sent questionnaires to residents living near the proposed new church location on Williamson Avenue. The results revealed that these residents often felt bored due to limited recreational options. Furthermore, their above-average income levels, reflected in higher rents and home prices, hinted at the potential for meaningful community involvement.

Thanks to a grant from the Florida Conference for operational costs, The Gathering Place may finally be able to fill the vacant position of a full-time Worship Leader/Ministry Coordinator, which has been a long-standing aspiration for the church.

Volunteers play a crucial role in The

Gathering Place, particularly in providing children’s Sunday School classes twice a month. Ruth Kelly, a dedicated volunteer, excels in organizing these lessons. If more volunteers step forward, it would be possible to hold classes every Sunday.

Amy acknowledges that some individuals from First United may feel conflicted about attending The Gathering Place. However, she urges them to remember that The Gathering Place is like their two-year-old child, needing support from those in the “mother” church. She invites them to witness the progress and growth of their “child.”



Your contribution would be invaluable even if you can only volunteer once every 2-3 months. Opportunities exist to help with setup, music, coordinating volunteers, or lending a hand with the children. For further details, please get in touch with Amy at [aarmistead@firstunited.org](mailto:aarmistead@firstunited.org).



## Planning is Underway for Improvements to our Halifax Campus

Property surveys are being done of our existing facility. Design and architectural firms have been engaged to assist us in this planning phase.

Doug Wigley, chair of the Project Team, said the carryover effects of the Pandemic on supplies and construction have slowed down their efforts to get further along in this project, but it is moving now.

Initial thoughts are to build a two-story building attached to the south side of the sanctuary. The building would house a day-care facility, classrooms, offices, kitchen and a multi-purpose room. An elevator would assist in moving between floors.

The present office area, classroom building would be razed to provide parking along with the property on Fluhart Street.

Input from church members will be invited as soon as the initial planning is developed.



## Pastor Scott calls a special meeting to review status on General Conference Issues

In response to inquiries from several members regarding the direction of the General Conference of the United Methodist Church, Pastor Scott organized a special meeting on Monday evening, May 22nd, to address the matter. The focal point of discussion was the issue of LGBTQ inclusion, and Scott provided a detailed account of the Church's actions on this topic throughout the years.

This particular issue has been a source of concern within the United Methodist Church for an extended period and was originally slated for discussion at the 2020 General Conference. Unfortunately, due to the global pandemic, numerous delegates from around the world were unable to attend, resulting in its postponement. The General Conference has now been rescheduled for 2024.

During the course of this delay and rescheduling of the General Conference, several churches within the Florida Conference have chosen to disaffiliate and

have formed a new entity known as the Global Methodist Church. Scott's home church in Williston, Florida, is one among those that have made this decision.

Interestingly, a new development has emerged, as some members from the churches that have departed from the United Methodist Church did not agree with this choice. Instead of continuing to attend their former church, they are now opting to watch the streaming services of other churches, which are now referred to as "lighthouse" churches. Our church is recognized as one of these "lighthouse" churches.

Scott pointed out that the media has exhibited bias in reporting many of these disaffiliations, cautioning us to be discerning when reading such stories as they may not be entirely accurate.

It is important to note that our church remains fully committed to remaining a member of the United Methodist Church.

## Youth Activities This Summer

June 3—9 Youth Mission Trip to Ft. Myers Beach

June 19—23 Kid's Adventure Week

July 9—14 Brevard Mission Trip

Contact [cbookwater@firstunited.org](mailto:cbookwater@firstunited.org) for more information or to volunteer for these activities.

Scott Smith, Senior Pastor

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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](mailto:willmcla@gmail.com)>