

The Treasure Chest

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

United Church of Christ
Fort Pierce

APRIL 2026



3601 Kirby Loop Rd

Fort Pierce, Florida 34981

(772) 465-2082

No matter who you are,
No matter where you are on life's journey,
You are welcome here!

Come Worship With Us ...
Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.
Coffee & Fellowship 11:30 a.m.

Pastor: Rev. Joel Reif



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
a just world for all

PASTOR'S REPORT

As we enter the month of April, we find ourselves walking the sacred path from the shadow of the cross into the light of the resurrection. This is the season that defines us as people of faith, a time when sorrow and hope meet, when endings give way to new beginnings, and when God reminds us that love is stronger than death. Holy Week invites us to slow down and pay attention. From the waving palms of celebration to the quiet heaviness of Maundy Thursday, from the stark grief of Good



Friday to the astonishing joy of Easter morning, we are given the opportunity to experience again the depth of God's love for us. These are not just events to remember; they are truths to live.

Christ meets us in every part of our lives—our celebrations, our struggles, our doubts, and our hopes. Easter proclaims that God is always at work bringing life out of what seems lifeless. We see this not only in the empty tomb, but also in the quiet transformations happening around us every day. Seeds push through the soil. Broken relationships begin to heal. Courage rises where fear once lived. The resurrection is not only something that happened; it is something that is happening. As a congregation, we are called to be witnesses to this resurrection life. That means living with compassion, extending grace, and choosing hope even when it is difficult. It means being a community where all are welcomed, where burdens are shared, and where love is made visible in practical ways. This month, I encourage you to look for signs of new life—in your own heart, in our church family, and in the world around you. Where is God inviting you to step forward in faith? Where might you offer kindness, forgiveness, or encouragement? Even small acts can become powerful expressions of resurrection hope.

Let us also continue to pray for one another. Life does not pause at Easter, and many among us carry heavy concerns. In the midst of joy, there are still challenges. Yet we hold fast to the promise that we do not face these things alone. The risen Christ walks with us, bringing peace, strength, and renewal. May this Easter season fill you with deep joy and steady hope. May you feel the presence of Christ in both the quiet and the celebration. And may we, together, be a people who reflect the light of resurrection in all we do.

See You in Church.

Rev. Joel Reif

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP



The St. Patrick's Day pot luck lunch was a great success. Patricia and Dorothy have prepared an Easter/Spring themed raffle basket for which tickets are being sold until Easter Sunday and the drawing will be that day. Patricia will be getting Easter lilies again this year as well.

The Lenten Offering concludes on Easter Sunday. Those offerings will be added to the other funds raised by the Fellowship Group during the year and used to provide for local missions right here in Ft. Pierce. We'll have a final report on amounts and organizations for the May newsletter. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to that offering!!

Below is information on our end of the year luncheon. Everyone is welcome – bring friends and spouses!

Annual End of the Year Fellowship Luncheon
Manatee Island Restaurant,
1640 Seaway Drive on Hutchinson Island
Tuesday, April 21, at 11:30
All are welcome!

There's a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

Our next regular meeting will be in September – wishing everyone a wonderful summer!

LET ME KNOW

Just a reminder to be sure to contact me **IMMEDIATELY** if someone is in the hospital, there has been a death, or in need of a call or visit from me. I would rather have 10 people contact me than miss someone.

Rev. Joel A. Reif

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 29, 2026

Attendance: Joel Reif, Pastor; Carol Sinotte, Moderator; Dickie Brooks, Clerk; Mary Keller, Treasurer; Dick Sinotte, Property; Doug MacWilliam, Deacons; Janis Gonzales, Music; Elaine Souza, Memorial; Rachel Spence, IT/Evangelism; Patricia Bryant, Fellowship; Judy Jones, Adult Religious Education; and Karen Eason, Member at Large.

Carol called the meeting to order. Dickie reminded that today's meeting's main agenda item would be accepting the slate from the nominating committee. No general reports were expected.

Joel opened the meeting with a prayer.

Clerk's Report – The minutes of the February 22, 2026, meeting were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report – The treasurer's report was accepted as submitted.

Nominations Report – A slate of officers and committee members for the church's April 1, 2026 to April 1, 2027 year was presented by Doug. It was unanimously accepted and will be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting on April 12, 2026.

Doug expressed his personal gratitude and the gratitude of all the church to Carol Sinotte for her years of service on the Council in various roles – and our appreciation for both Carol and Dick's daily commitment to the physical care and upkeep of the church and its property.

Dick asked to report on a septic system issue which was dealt with this week. The church's septic tank backed up and several bathrooms and the office were flooded just after worship last Sunday. Dick arranged for the tank to be pumped on Monday and Stanley Steamer to come out on Tuesday to sanitize all the affected areas. The tank was last pumped 3 years ago and the Council agreed unanimously to schedule an annual pump out to avoid further situations like this one.

The next Council Meeting will be May 17, 2026.

Carol adjourned the meeting and Joel offered the closing prayer.

Joel adjourned the meeting with prayer.

*Respectfully submitted,
Dickie Brooks*

COMMUNITY OUTREACH TARGETED DONATIONS

Our focus in April will be for pet food for both dogs and cats (cans or bags). These will be distributed to agencies that reach out to the homeless who have pets and to Dogs and Cats Forever in Fort Pierce, a non-profit organized in 1988 for the purpose of building and maintaining a shelter for homeless dogs and cats of the Treasure Coast.

PASTOR REIF'S OFFICE HOURS

Rev. Reif is usually in the office usually on Wednesdays. Please call before stopping by the church to make sure he's going to be there. His cell phone is **772-480-3245** if you need to reach him outside of office hours. His email is **jr7618@yahoo.com**.

REMINDER
PLEASE TURN OFF CELL PHONES DURING WORSHIP
THANK YOU!

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday April 12th we will have our annual congregational meeting. The meeting will take place immediately after worship. Please plan to attend this important meeting in the life of the church.



The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Hear and accept all reports
- Receive and act upon the proposed budget
- Elect officers and board members
- Receive, discuss, and act upon changes in the bylaws, if proposed, and

Conduct any other business which shall come appropriately before it.



IN OUR PRAYERS

Jennifer Gray, Doug MacWilliam, Bob Evans, Marv Lammers, Linda Garneau, Charlotte Fritz, Danny Fanning, Joyce Maybury, Scott Burgoyne, Karen Casavant, Justin Archambault, Patty Hills, Becky Miller, Mike and Jody, Donna Mariarski, Sandy Maybury, Ed Galpen, Ann Marie Colonnese, Sandy Martyn, Bob Therrien, Katie Rogers, Janis & John Gonzales, Ronald Powell, Patricia Allen, Chelsy Lawton, Jamie, Leone Bater, Bob Schwartfeger, Josh Lewis, Shirley Borella, Jim Boudreau, Karen Eason, Judy Jones, Grace Carboni, Anita Tuccilo, Michelle Neill, the family of Dick Keller, the family of Steve Murphy, Caden Sustar, the Holmes & Brutt families, Nancy's family, Hilary Vandersluis, Susan Asomaning, Kathy Fanning, Meredith Field, the family of Carolyn Rogers, Kim P., Susan, Sondra Burke

Please remember that if you want to add someone to the prayer list or make any changes you need to put that in writing either through an email to Rev. Reif at jr7618@yahoo.com or hand him a written note before worship. Thank you.



BIRTHDAYS

1st Roberta Saart
15th Samantha Jones
20th Jim Saart
23rd Ben Gray
27th Kim Sinotte

ANNIVERSARIES

1st Joshua & Elizabeth Silvestri
8th Jim & Charlotte Fritz
8th Heidi & Paul Sullivan

Excerpted from, “You Don’t Need More Storage Space” in the UCC Still Speaking Series

(Author Lillian Daniel is a nationally recognized writer and minister in the Michigan Conference of the UCC.)

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal." - Matthew 6:19

According to the Self Storage Association, there are 2.3 billion square feet of self-storage space in the U.S. Outside towns, on highways, those warehouses are ubiquitous. Storage pods get loaded up in people's driveways when they are trying to sell their houses. They have to hide all their junk to entice a buyer.

If you put your stuff in a storage facility, and you find that you can live without it, maybe you really can live without it. So here's a radical thought from Jesus: Don't store it in the first place. Because somewhere in the world, there is a person who really needs the thing that you are about to lock away in a box.

Sell it. Swap it. Share it. Give it away.

You don't need more storage. You need less stuff.

Prayer

Giving God, if I clear out my basement will you clear out my heart? I think I'm ready to have more by having less.

Website
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Email
churchoffice@firstcongrp.org

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Communion is served
the first Sunday of
each month, and all
are welcome!

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