“And the Winner Is…”



As this is being typed, it is Monday and the winner of the Presidential race is yet to be known. If you are reading this Wednesday morning, we still might not know who our next President will be.

In the weeks before Tuesday’s election, several of our churches were involved in educational and get-out-the-vote activities. There also were day-before election, election-day and post-election opportunities to pray and reflect. Here is some of what we learned took place or will be happening today, Wednesday, November 6.

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Christ Congregational Church/Miami will offer a post-election “Time of Sharing” via Zoom this evening from 7:30-8:30pm. Participants are being invited to share their thoughts and feelings about the election results with each other, and Pastor **Rev. Candy Thomas** will be moderating the conversation.

On October 13 following the 10am service, the **United Church of Gainesville** hosted a “Candidates’ Corner” in the Courtyard. All candidates running for office and on the ballot for the November 5 election were invited to set up a table to share information and answer questions. UCG’s Justice League understood this event to be an important way to support our democratic process and promote voter engagement.

The Sanctuary at **Venice UCC** was open from 4-6pm on Monday, November 4, for anyone who wished to seek calm, to meditate, to pray.



In St. Petersburg, **Lakewood UCC-Trinity UCC** scheduled a “Weekend of Action” on October 5-6 for members and friends of the church to get involved in canvassing in support of the VOTE YES ON 4 abortion resolution. There were opportunities with the phone bank, text bank and postcard stamping to be sent out. Training and materials were provided. The effort was co-sponsored by Progress Florida and the St. Pete League of Women Voters. On Sunday, November 3, members were encouraged to attend a “Souls to the Polls” event in downtown St. Pete and collectively walk with others in a ceremonial march to cast early votes. Yesterday evening from 6-7pm, members and friends were invited to join **Rev. Kim Wells** in walking the labyrinth, offering the opportunity to center one’s spirit and give over fears and anxiety to the labyrinth.

Evening Communion will be offered this evening from 7:30-8:30pm at **JupiterFIRST Church**. This is meant to be a time for unity, reflection, prayer and community fellowship, coming “together in faith to celebrate Christ’s love and God’s plan.”

On September 29 following both services, **Coral Gables Congregational UCC** -- drawing inspiration from the iconic “Souls to the Polls” movement -- collaborated with PACT (People Acting for Community Together) and Engage Florida (a non-partisan, civic engagement organization) -- to hold a “Souls to the Voting Rolls” event. In the midst of ongoing voter disenfranchisement efforts, this was an opportunity to confirm one’s voter registration status, update voter information, request to vote by mail and register to vote if you haven’t done so already.

On Tuesday evening, October 1, and Saturday morning, October 5, CGCUCC offered “Voting Our Values” sessions. These were opportunities to engage in a safe space community conversation about key issues while obtaining verifiable information on them.

Then at 6:30pm Monday evening, November 4, a pre-election prayer service was held in the Sanctuary and online. This gathering in the sacredness of the hours before election day was presented to give thanks, to ask for healing and to pray that God’s will be done. Tonight at 6:30pm on Zoom there will be a post-election “share and support” session.

During the opening of worship on October 13, congregants at the **United Church UCC-DoC/St. Augustine** participated in the “big send,” offering a blessing of the hundreds of letters “Vote Forward” members and friends wrote together. Vote Forward is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization that empowers grassroots volunteers to send handwritten letters encouraging fellow Americans to vote.

Offered as part of its “Sunday Gospel, Wednesday Faith” series, the **Community Church of Vero Beach** offered on Wednesday evening, October 30, “Living as a Christian in a Political World in Which We Disagree so Strongly.” Then it held an “election day voters’ vigil” in its Chapel on election day at five different times for prayer, for wisdom and for unity. There was Ioan and Taize music with scripture and reflective prayer, Communion and the opportunity to light a candle for reconciliation.

A post-election “reflection and prayer space” will be offered today from 10am-1pm in the Sanctuary of **Cocoa Beach Community Church** for those seeking solace, prayer or quiet contemplation.

Good Samaritan Church/Pinellas Park and **Community Congregational Church/New Port Richey** e-blasted election day prayers to their members.

The Sanctuary at **Sanibel Congregational UCC** was open from 9am-6pm on both Election Day and today for any and all who wish to have a quiet space to pray, meditate or just get away from things for as long as needed.

AMEN to that!