



March Edition 2022

In the 1939 classic film, *The Wizard of Oz*, Judy Garland played Dorothy, Ray Bolger played Scarecrow, Bert Lahr played The Cowardly Lion, Jack Haley played The Tin Man, as together they travel to Emerald City down the famous yellow brick road collectively singing “We are off to see the Wizard, the wonderful Wizard of Oz...” At first glance, this Wizard seems to be awfully frightening and demanding with smoke and fire appearing every time he uttered a single word that it caused Dorothy and her pals to rattle in fear. However, at the very end, there is an incident which Dorothy’s dog, Toto, pulls back a cloth in a booth revealing to the crew the “man behind the curtain.” To their surprise, they find an ordinary man from Kansas who eventually ends up being kind and generous as he grants them all their wishes. For the record, all their wishes which they had all along in them.

This past week I had the great privilege to have a one on one exclusive interview with Fort Myers Christian Church’s “Wizard,” Lauryn Kay, our finest vocalist behind the screen most Sundays. Unlike the Wizard played by Frank Morgan, Lauryn is a strong, confident young lady, she doesn’t need any smoke or fire when she sings, because God has blessed her with an angelic voice that she leaves your heart warm and drawing you closer to Christ. In fact, during the most recent recording of Lauryn and Dr. Asya, we had to do something for the first time. Instead of turning on the AC, we actually flipped the thermostat the opposite direction turning on the heater. They claim confession is good for your soul...So yes, we had the heat on in a sunny Southwest Florida sanctuary as these two amazing musicians recorded in early January. Perhaps this analogy best explains what Lauryn and Asya have done each time they have gathered to record a handful of songs for our weekly worship services. During a time that COVID prevented our choir or any soloist from singing, Lauryn and Asya would gather together to make beautiful music raising the temperature in worship as we created a meaningful service whether you worshipped online or in-person. Lauryn and Asya have a track record of excellence and don’t let them fool you, most sessions are full of fun, laughter, and even a blooper a time or two as these two fine musicians have recorded both your cherished classic hymns and lovely, fresh contemporary songs.

This month we celebrate the two-year anniversary since Lauryn has been part of our church family even if she remains primarily “behind the curtain.” Perhaps, like that Wizard, the greatest gift that Lauryn has blessed us with is something we have had all along. That is, each week Lauryn and Asya remind us we have a God who is with us and who is always for us. Join with me giving thanks to God for providing us with Lauryn and the superb music Dr. Asya and Lauryn have recorded. Finally, I hope the interview with Lauryn will allow you to see no longer just a talented vocalist behind the screen, but more importantly someone you can know a little more about, relate to, and a friend to Fort Myers Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

A word from Lauryn:

“Wow! Two years already! In a time where musicians were receiving cancellation after cancellation in Spring 2020, Pastor Zach approached me to start recording at FMCC to spread whatever joy we could to the community (in the safest way possible). It started really with so much uncertainty but one thing stayed constant - Pastor Zach’s ability to ‘roll with the punches’, adapt to our new virtual reality, and his pursuance of spreading the gospel despite our difficult circumstances. I feel extremely honored to be included in this Fort Myers Christian family, even two years later, as we slowly make our way back to normal. Know that even though I’m mostly ‘behind the screen,’ I think of this church often and I thank God for the continuous opportunity to be involved in worship here. Working with Asya, Don and Zach, and the amazing FGCU students along the way has been nothing short of wonderful and FUN (Yes, I’m directly referring to those bloopers when I forget some words, a repeat in a song, and we have to do the whole thing over)! Thank you to the whole FMCC family for your ever-gracious hospitality and support, know I think about you often! Until we see each other again! With Love, Lauryn!”

Prayers and Praise to God from the Past Month

Vicky and her family, in the passing of Vicky's husband Doug from liver cancer, Chana Weaver (stepsister)

John Battazzo, praise to God for a good report from MOFITT, Church Family

Carol Krueger, praise that Carol is doing well after a recent fall, Church Family

Gene and her family, in the tragic death of Gene's son in a car accident, Naomi Kratzer (friend)

John Sr and Teri Blasi, COVID and are doing better, Church Family

Ernest Sarkissian, upcoming appointment in Tampa regarding the loss of sight in his right eye, Asya Teruni (husband)

Vicky Maier, Karen Burns (friend in Hidden Harbor)

Edward Sarkissian, lung cancer, Asya (father-in-law)

Kate Seitz, had a successful bronchoscopy at the Mayo Clinic

Rosie Langley (New Address: 9701 Whipps Mill Rd. Louisville, KY 40223)

"...they shall beat their swords into plowshares, their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." **Prayers for Ukraine, Russia, and the rest of the world.**

Annual Congregational Meeting

We invite all members of Fort Myers Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to stay after worship in the sanctuary on **Sunday, March 20.**



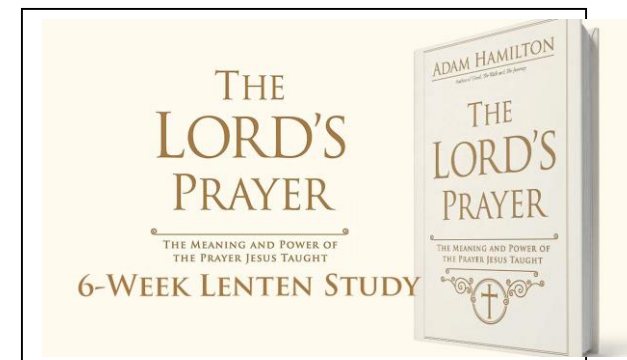
March celebrates two years since Lauryn, Dr. Asya, and Don have been gathering together to record music for both online and in-person worship! We couldn't ask for a more talented and faithful team. Thank you!

Two Ways to Make a Difference

Please join us March 10 at 6pm for Bags of Hope. We will be packing rice and beans for the Gladiolus Food Pantry. Due to COVID, we will not be sharing a meal in advance of packing and ask that everyone wear a mask.

Again this year we will be collecting books for the United Way's Reading Pals program. Your donations provide books for early readers to start their own library at home and to keep them reading over the summer. As you shop, look for learning to read books for children in kindergarten and first grade. A donation box will be placed in the narthex.

Mondays from 10-11:15 (sign-up today)



March Birthdays and Anniversaries
(Email the office if your name is missing)

Dean Brown	Mar.5
Shirley Casady	Mar.15
Steve and Chana Weaver	Mar.17
Kathy Harris	Mar.21

