

September Edition 2022

I can still visualize this ball player's picture hanging proudly in the family room above where my great uncle would stay up all night watching the St. Louis Cardinals games and of course the nightly news. This was long before Albert Pujols nor was it Bob Gibson, Ozzie Smith, or even Stan Musial "Stan the Man." Instead, it was a picture of Willie McGee. My great aunt quite often and passionately would share McGee was her favorite baseball player not because of his stats such as MVP award in 1985, hitting .353 with 10 home runs, 82 RBI, and 56 stolen bases. Instead, it was because of an interview in 1982, which McGee was asked what he was going to do after being part of the World Series Championship team. As a young rookie he replied "I'm going to buy my momma a car." This man's gratitude spoke volumes as he would become one of the all-time fan favorites who ever played ball in Busch Stadium.

McGee not only knew two powerful words, but also knew the importance of expressing them. Thank you! As much as I want my own children each year to learn more in math, history, and science. As much as I hope my kids to grow in their reading and writing, and for their vocabulary to enrich each semester of the academic year. Nevertheless, I want them to never lose sight or grow out of those initial words any good parent and grandparent install in their children's brains- "Thank You." I hope those words generate from their hearts, flow sincerely from their mouths, and they liberally use those words as they cultivate a life of gratitude towards God and neighbor.

Perhaps a secret to gratitude is intentionally making the time to simply pause. To pause and take in the beauty surrounding us. Although this can be challenging due to the ever-demanding and fast-paced world we often find ourselves sucked in. It seems that if we are not constantly looking and moving forward that we might miss out. The media has a way to play into this and frighten us that we might miss out on the newer, bigger, or better thing. However, without building the appropriate amount of margin in our lives to simply pause we just might miss out on even more. In particular, miss out on the beautiful people right around us. The dedicated women and men who have helped shaped us or walked with us through the dark valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23:4). Whether we are intentionally or unintentionally dismissive, let's create a rhythm of pausing so that God can open our minds and hearts to the blessings around us and be thankful.



Let me share three faithful members that we can all be thankful for in our church.

- i. Chana Weaver. Although our church is filled with faithful members who are generous with their time, energy, and resources for missions, Chana constantly raises the temperature in outreach. She is always sharing a way we can together make a positive difference in the community.
- ii. Dr. Asya Teruni. Although so much of my time is planning music with our college students and professional vocalist via constant calls/texts and meetings, none of this would be possible if we didn't have an amazing pianist. Asya has both an abundance of talent and heart!
- iii. Dean Brown. Finally, and definitely not the least important, unless you want the sound off in worship (I'll let you decide on that one). While Dean might not get the attention being in the sound room practically each week, I'm thankful for Dean's faithful service with lights, sound, screens, etc.

As we enter the fall months, let us not wait until we stuff our faces and fill our bellies with Thanksgiving turkey until we express thankfulness. Instead, let us begin to cultivate gratitude now by beginning to use those powerful, transformative two words- Thank You!

Prayers and Praise to God from the Past Month

Judee Buhlinger, breathing challenge with palliative care, Church Family
Carol Trompeter, after a recent fall is back home with rehab, Church Family
John Battazzo, Church Family
Mackenzie Lee, recent MRI and scans, Linda Lee (granddaughter)
Harry and Mary Rubin, both have COVID, Church Family
Rachel Weaver, COVID, Chana and Steve (daughter)
Joe D'Alessandro, COVID, Sydney (husband)
Karen and Mike Burns, Mike is doing well after his shoulder operation, Church Family
Evelyn and Ricco, praise for Evelyn's successful lung transplant, John Sr. (friend)
Millie Dalrymple, back at assisted living after foot infection, Church Family
Dr. Asya Teruni and family, in the passing of Eduard Sargsyan, Church Family (father-in-law)
 Asya's address: 2355 Woodland Ter., Fort Myers, FL 33907
Elaine Maley, Mpl is transforming into leukemia, Church Family
Antonio Rivera, is in critical care in the hospital, Ricardo R. (grandfather)
Kim, had a stent put in after having 90% blockage, John Blasi Sr. (daughter)
Linda Schneider, MRI on lower hip, Church Family
John Blasi Sr., back surgery on August 29, Church Family
Laura Faber, Moffitt for radiation regarding stage three lymphoma, Lori Summers (friend)
Continued Prayers for the flooding in the Midwest
Linda, recent stroke, Charlie and Sue (friend)
Shirley Fizer, praise as getting over her UTI, Church Family
Sydney D'Alessandro, is recovering well at home from her orthopedic surgery, Church Family
Ueli Knobel-Simonsmeier, praise for feeling better after several weeks of dizziness, Church Family



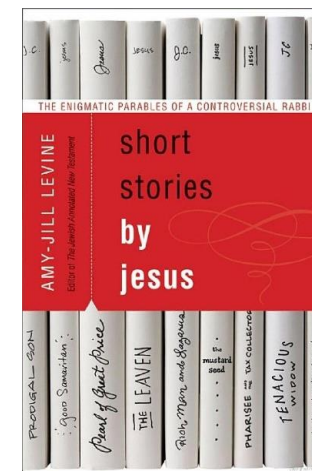
FGCU senior and member of the chamber choir, Kelsie Gibb, is back and will be our primary vocalist this semester. Also, Katy Sumrow, professional vocalist, will sing more regularly on rotation.

September Birthdays and Anniversaries

(Email the office if your name is missing)

Peggy Roley	10 th
Colton Seitz	11 th
Michelle Foo	13 th
Tama Knobel-Simonsmeier	14 th
Ray Schneider	15 th
Barbara Peters	16 th
Ronnie Ginter	24 th
Zach Taylor	26 th

How well do you know the parables of Jesus? Would you like to learn more how Jesus' original, Jewish audience might have understood these challenging and subversive stories? Do you want to grow and be stretched in your faith? Join us for our Fall 6-Week Bible Study using Dr. Amy Jill Levine's book on parables. This will be on Mondays, from 10-11:15am.



Outreach Corner

Happy Anniversary to the Caring Circle! One year ago Rita Azer-Battazzo, Johnny Blasi, Judee Buhlinger, Sydney D'Alessandro, Betty Johnston, Steve Larson, Mary Rubin, Sandy Shomper, Hildur Skaggs, and Steve Weaver began writing a note to a different homebound member each month. This monthly outreach has made a difference to recipients as they stay abreast of what is happening at FMCC, they receive encouragement and they stay connected. If you would like to be a part of this important ministry, please contact Chana Weaver.

Are your Christmas Jars filling up with loose change? If you haven't picked up a jar yet, it's not too late to be a part of this year's Christmas Outreach. Decorated jars and a brief description of this outreach effort are available in the narthex. Contact Judy Hesse or Chana Weaver for more information.