

Since the spring of 2020, I noticed the comeback of classic board games. Whether it was the fact families were social distancing, ran out of films on Netflix, or simply wanted to show your grandchildren/children your mighty Sherlock Holmes detective skills in the game *Clue*. Not only did stores bring out some of the retro board games on their shelves, but also on Amazon *WS Game Company* has a complete set of 12 vintage bookshelf board games from Candy Land to Yahtzee. While you couldn't pay some people enough money to get them to play Monopoly, this company knows there is something about dusting off and taking a game of the shelf, opening the box, sitting around with family and friends, and rolling the dice. To say this in one word, community. Or, you might prefer the word fellowship or even communion.



Most of us are familiar with Saint Augustine's famous words "My Soul is restless until it rests in you, O God." However, reading the greatest story ever, reflecting on the overarching message of both the Old Testament and New Testament, it's not only us yearning to God, but also God is yearning to belong to us. That is, God desires communion with us and goes to all lengths to grab our attention and make God's home in us. This intimacy, true love, cannot be forced, but a relationship freely offered and received. In the opening of the Gospels, God becomes a child dependent on human parents just like you and I to eventually being a dead man pierced by a Roman soldier and laid in a dark tomb. And as the classic hymns goes "Amazing grace how sweet the sound..." Jesus rises from the grave, and he humbly stands looking at you and I, asking with eyes full of compassion: "Do you love me? And again, "Do you love me?" And finally a third time, "Do you love me?" In Henri Nouwen's book *With Burning Hearts*, my favorite spiritual giant writes "Eucharist is recognition. It is the full realization that the one who takes, blesses, breaks, and gives is the One who, from the beginning of time, has desired to enter into communion with us."

For over a thousand years, the Lord's Supper or Communion has entailed much more than a bit of bread or small taste of *Welch's 100% Grape Juice*. If you do not believe Biblical scholars, just read 1 Corinthians 11 for yourself, and it's obvious the Lord's Supper was not a communion packet nicely placed in the pew but a full blown meal. In fact, Paul had to scold some people who were so hungry they couldn't wait for others to eat the meal as well as discipline those who were getting drunk at the table...From this description, it shows that the Lord's Supper was a gathering of believers, over an actual meal, and they would enjoy conversation and fellowship with one another. They would remember the words of Jesus, and how Christ was ultimately taken, blessed, broken, and given to them and now to us.

Since many of you signed up already, it's no huge secret that we are taking the good, old fashion "potluck" off the shelf! Although we might be smaller and have different faces around the tables, we are forming a community of love and grace. On Sunday, February 12, we hope you stay after worship to join us in the fellowship hall to eat lunch as we build new and enhance previous relationships with one another. Additionally, this is a great reason to bring a neighbor or family member to church. If you are unable to bring a dish, you can

always donate a love offering. Please be sure to sign up in the narthex. Finally, special thanks to Chana, Rita, and Sharla, for leading the efforts.



Prayers and Praise to God from January

Rubins, in the death of Harry's brother Al, Church Family
Rubins, prayer for Harry's son-in-law's father who has terminal cancer, Church Family
(Update) Bob Skaggs, Healthpark Rehab, Church Family
Kate Seitz, home from the hospital, Church Family
(update) Pam Williams, lung surgery on February 20th, Church Family
Runyon, prayers for both Shirley and Kenny regarding recent falls, Church Family
Bob Lucas, undergoing cancer treatment at Mofitt Cancer Center, Ray and Linda Schneider (friend)
Debbie Stingis, cancer treatment, Schneider Family (friend)
(update) Sandy Shomper, home from the hospital and back in Fort Myers, Church Family
Kerry, pneumonia, Shirley and Kenny Runyon (daughter)
Donna, recently diagnosed with breast cancer, Barbara Wodarczyk-regular visitor (daughter-in-law)
Miles Family, both Rev. Ray and Wendy are recovered from COVID, Church Family
(Update) Naomi Kratzer, moved to Brookdale Assisted Living, Church Family
Hildur Skaggs, is recovering well from a small stroke, Church Family
(update) Carol Krueger, recovered from COVID, Church Family
Sally Saberton, had open heart surgery on Jan. 3, Shirley Fizer (friend)



Members from the Gulf Coast Harmonizers, The Cordials, will join us on Sunday, February 12.

Important Dates:

2.5 Commitment Sunday and Pledge Cards are due
2.19 February Board Meeting
2.22 Ash Wednesday Service at 6pm



Outreach Corner

We are one month into the new year and the food needed is still great. Super Bowl Sunday is just right around the corner. You can help by providing nonperishable items. Examples are peanut butter, beans, rice, cereals, canned vegetables, canned fruit, etc., Totes will be placed in the narthex and you can choose your favorite team in the AFC or the NFC. Thank you in advance.

Linda Lee, New Outreach Chair

Special Thanks

Special thanks to individuals and families of Fort Myers Christian for their generous gifts to the church!

The outside windows of the sanctuary are all shined up.

Tree branches and other debris were cleaned up around the campus.

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

(Name Missing? Email the office.)

Linda Schneider	4 th
Bob Herbst	5 th
Rev. John Vickers	12 th
Butch Griggs	17 th
John Davidson	18 th
Pam Williams	20 th
Judy Hesse	25 th
Diane Bodanske	28 th