CORAL GABLES CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING, JUST PEACE, W.I.S.E., CREATION JUSTICE,
ANTI-RACISM, AND SANCTUARY CHURCH OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

ALL are welcome to this time and place of worship.
Know that in this church you are welcome as you are and for who you are.

As followers of Christ, we are compelled by the Gospel to seek
reconciliation and wholeness in a world that is all too often an unloving place.
Therefore, whether you are gay, straight, or in-between;
whatever your country of origin or ancestry;
whether you are a believer, a doubter or a seeker;
in Christ's love, we welcome you, so that by the power
of the Holy Spirit we can work together to
usher in God's Reign of justice, peace, and mercy.

Whether you join us today in-person or online, please know that our worship of God
is enhanced because of your presence and participation from wherever you are….

ORDER OF WORSHIP

July 20, 2025 *Our faith is over 2000 years old; Our thinking is not.* **11:00 a.m.**

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left, and could say, 'I used everything you gave me.' ~ Erma Bombeck

**Please stand as you are able*

GATHERING MUSIC

Dr. Gregory Taylor, piano

WELCOME

Please check in on Facebook or Instagram and let your family and friends know that you are joining us at Coral Gables Congregational UCC.

Invite your family and friends around the world to worship with us online each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. at gablesucc.org/live.

CHORAL CALL TO COMMUNITY

I'll Fly Away arr. Mark Hayes

The Summer Choir with Greg Jackson, Charmyn Kirton, and Alex Woods, soloists;
Andy Godley, guitar; Rob Shank, bass; Greg Taylor, piano; and Seth Woods, percussion

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: We who live with faith in God proclaim,
Many: "God, you are my refuge and my fortress,
in you I will trust forever."
One: May we who trust in God know that holy love surrounds us.
Many: God is with us throughout our days.
One: When we call out to God
Many: we trust that we are heard.
One: God is with us in the beginning, in the journey, and in the end.
Many: **Therefore, we rejoice and give thanks for the enduring presence of God.**

***OPENING HYMN** *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our present help amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe does seek to work us woe;
With craft and power great, and armed with cruel hate,
On earth without an equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;
But there is one who takes our side, the One of God's own choosing:
You ask who that may be? Christ Jesus sets us free!
With mighty power to save, victorious o'er the grave,
Christ will prevail triumphant.

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God has willed the truth to triumph through us.
The powers of evil grim, we tremble not for them;
their rage we can endure, for lo, their doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.

That Word beyond all earthly powers forever is abiding;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours, for Christ is with us siding.
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
The body they may kill: God's truth shall triumph still,
God's reign endures forever.

***THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

One: There are no strangers in God's House, just friends we have not yet met. Greet your neighbor with Christian love and let them know that you're glad to see them! And to those worshipping online, we are so very glad you are with us as well. Peace be with all of you.
Many: And also with you.

If you are in the sanctuary, offer a wave, hug, handshake, smile, or nod to others.
If you are gathered with others at home, share words of peace with one another.
If you are worshipping individually, know the peace of Christ is with you.
Email, text, or message your family and friends and share words of peace with them.

***SUNG INTERLUDE** from Taizé

Bless the Lord, my soul and bless God's holy name;
Bless the Lord, my soul who leads me into life.

At this time, all children through 5th grade are invited to attend Sunday School. Please go to the Fellowship Hall and you will be taken to your classrooms.

***Please Note**: Childcare is available each Sunday for children Pre-K and under in the Education Wing.*

SCRIPTURE LESSON *I Thessalonians 4:13-18*

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Friends, listen. God is still speaking.
Thanks be to God!

THE MORNING MESSAGE

Elephant in the Pew
The Rev. Dr. Laurinda Hafner

CHORAL RESPONSE *Abide With Me* arr. Molly ljames

The Summer Choir

At this time, you may text your prayer requests to Pastor Laurie at 305.968.6482 or email her at 3059686482@vtext.com to be included in this morning's prayers and on the church prayer list which the Called to Care Prayer Team prays over each week.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER

You are welcome to use the language or words of your tradition or choice.

Our Creator, who is in heaven,
hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Yours is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO GIVE, SERVE AND BELONG

Please know that your financial support of the church does great things not only within these walls but far beyond. If you wish to give on your mobile device today, please text "GABLESUCC" to 833.245.6434 or go to our church app.
You can also give at gablesucc.org/give.
Offering plates are available at the doors for your gifts as well.
Thank you for your generosity and support of the work and ministry of Gables UCC.

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God above the heavenly host,
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** *Pues si vivimos (In All Our Living)*

Pues si vi-vi-mos, para Dios vi-vi-mos
y si mo-ri-mos, pa-ra Dios mo-ri-mos.
Se-a-que vi-va-mos o que mu-ra-mos,
so-mos del buen Dios, so-mos del buen Dios.

In all our liv-ing, we be-long to God;
And in our dy-ing, we are still with God;
So, wheth-er li-ving, or wheth-er dy-ing,
We be-long to God; we be-long to God.

God sent Christ Je-sus to be our sha-lom,
To show us mer-cy and heal-ing love;
So in our liv-ing, and in our dy-ing,
Christ is our sha-lom; Christ is our sha-lom.

***BENEDICTION**

***THE SUNG BENEDICTION** *Alleluia*

As we end our service, you are invited to join hands with your neighbor as an expression of our unity in Christ and lift them up in glory to God on the second verse.

***POSTLUDE** *Etude - Tableau in E Flat minor, Op 39, No 5* Sergei Rachmaninoff
Dr. Greg Taylor, Piano

During the postlude, you are invited to come forward to the piano if you wish to enjoy the music. Please join us in the Fellowship Hall for our Connection Café. A time to connect over conversation and refreshments. ***Visitors, we would LOVE to have you join us!***

TODAY:

SERMON FEEDBACK CAFÉ
12:15 p.m. in Havighorst Lounge or Zoom

Join in a conversation with Pastor Laurie about her Elephant in the Pew sermon for the day. How would you have answered the question? Do you see things differently? Dissenting views are encouraged!

YOUNG ADULT GROUP
Havighorst Lounge and then Catalonia House following Worship

After Pastor Laurie's first Elephant in the Pew sermon and some of the Sermon Feedback Café in Havighorst Lounge, come discuss the "elephant" with other young adults. We will also brainstorm together some ideas for an Elephant in the Pew question we want to pose to Pastor Laurie and the congregation to be addressed later in the summer! Come for food, quality conversation, and a space to be curious! Food (wings and veggies) will be provided, and potluck items encouraged but not necessary!

BLOOD DRIVE
Sunday, July 20 from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

The Big Red OneBlood Bus will be in the church parking lot to receive your life-giving donation of blood for those in need. OneBlood is a not-for-profit community asset responsible for providing safe, available, and affordable blood to their hospital partners and patients.

FROM THE GREEN CHRISTIANS

PLASTIC FREE JULY®

Join the Movement!
The Green Christians invite you to take part in Plastic Free July!
Stop by our booth in the Fellowship Hall after worship this morning
to discover simple, impactful ways to cut down on plastic and care for God's creation.

We'll also share updates on this year's Season of Creation 2025 and exciting new directions for our team — and we'd love your ideas!
Let's connect, share hope, and be part of the change.

A WARM AND CORDIAL WELCOME TO ALL GUESTS

If you are visiting with us for the first time this morning, we welcome you. We are grateful we have found each other. And, if somehow, there is something in you, some still small voice seeking a place to live out your faith, to ask important questions, and to serve beyond yourself, we invite you into our community. For more information about the church or membership, please contact Pastor Laurie at 305.448.7421, ext. 116 or at LaurieH@gablesucc.org.

We are also a large online congregation of expats from our congregation who have moved to places around the country and around the world; as well as folks who are actively involved in the church who have never set foot in our building, but are committed to our vision, values, and beliefs as a progressive, open-minded, and open-hearted Christian congregation. Whether an expat or "vurcher" (one who attends church virtually each week), please join us each Sunday for worship and for other programs and educational experiences online throughout the week.

No matter who you are or where you are on your life journey, you are welcome here.

STAY IN TOUCH

Once a week or so, Pastor Laurie emails a pastoral letter, *Laurie's Lines,* to all members and friends, filling them in on the week's events, any special concerns that have arisen, and general church business. If you would like to be included, contact Elena at ElenaK@gablesucc.org.

CHURCH APP

For all Apple and Android users, get your official Gables UCC App by going to the App Store or Google Play and downloading it. It's free! And it will keep you up-to-date and connected with church information, special announcements, calendar, and the staff. Need help? Contact Elena Korallis, our Communications Coordinator, at ElenaK@gablesucc.org.

FAIR TRADE MARKETPLACE:

Open TODAY 12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m. ~ Located outside the Fellowship Hall

Come and shop in support of our justice ministry. Each of your purchases helps artisans in developing countries build strong, local economies. These skilled workers are paid fair-living wages while crafting sustainable products that do not harm the environment. No child labor used.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Weekly, the Called to Care Team receives prayer requests from church family and friends. Each **Wednesday at 12:30 p.m.**, they gather in prayer over Zoom to lift up these prayer requests, to pray for the church, and for the needs of the world. If you have a prayer concern to be prayed over by Called to Care, you may text it to Pastor Laurie at 305.968.6482 or email Carol Fifield, the Called to Care coordinator at miamifife@gmail.com.

FOOD PANTRY

Your donations of food go a long way in helping the hungry of our community. Please drop off your bags of groceries at the church or you may also donate financially at gablesucc.org/give. Under the fund column, select "Food Pantry." We LOVE getting boxes filled with canned goods.

INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW:
How do I become a member of the church?

If you've wished for an open and embracing community of faith to nurture your spirit, grow your faith, and serve others, then we invite you to join the family of Gables UCC.

If you are interested in "inquiring" about Gables UCC and what it means to be a member of our family of faith, please join Pastor Laurie and other church members for our next Inquirer's Gathering on **Sunday, August 24 at 12:15 p.m. in the church library.** Join us to learn more about Gables UCC, what we value and believe, our history, and our denomination, the United Church of Christ. If you are interested in "inquiring" but unable to attend, please be in touch with Pastor Laurie at Laurieh@gablesucc.org.

BOOK STUDY IN JULY
Rooted in Faith and Justice
Sundays, through July 27 at 9:45 a.m. in Havighorst Lounge

Are you struggling to understand the complexities and injustices in Israel/Palestine? This book edited by Rebekah Choate, Krista Johnson Weicksel, and Peter Makari offers a powerful and enlightening perspective through the eyes of Palestinian Christian leaders and thinkers.

THIS SUMMER, TRY ON THE CHOIR!

If you love to sing… but think you can't… or you can… the Summer Choir is for you!

This summer, try us on! We guarantee a fit! Come as you are and join us on **Sundays, July 27 and August 24**. We gather at **9:00 a.m.** in the music room for rehearsal, prior to the 11:00 a.m. service. For more info, contact Music Ministries Coordinator, Dr. Charmyn Kirton at 305.448.7421, ext. 121. After the summer, you'll fall for us!

PARENTING with PRIDE
presents
Our 2nd Annual
PARENT EDUCATION SUMMIT
PRIDE IN EVERY BACKPACK: PARENT TOOLS FOR A SAFE, SUPPORTED SCHOOL YEAR
TUESDAY
July 29, 2025
10:00am- 2:00pm
FREE!
Virtual Program
Join parents, educators, and advocates for a day of learning, healing, and action. Discover your rights, gain practical tools for self-care and school advocacy, and hear from experts working on the frontlines of education. The summit will feature workshops, community conversations, and an inspiring keynote speaker whose story will move and motivate.

Rev. Brandan Robertson is a noted author, activist, and public theologian, dedicated to exploring the intersections of spirituality, sexuality, and social justice. He serves as the Pastor of Sunnyside Reformed Church in New York City and is the founder and Executive Director of The Devout Foundation. Known as the "TikTok Pastor," Robertson's inclusive theological content reaches over 300,000 followers and has garnered 10 million views. He has authored, contributed to, or edited 23 books, including the INDIES Book of the Year finalist *True Inclusion*. His work has been featured in TIME Magazine, CNN, and The Washington Post. Robertson is a sought-after speaker who regularly presents at prestigious platforms like The White House and Oxford University, continuing to inspire and challenge audiences around the world. In preparation for this event, you may purchase his book in the Fellowship Hall following worship today.

CHURCH MEMBERS - BE SURE TO GET YOUR NAMETAGS

If you have lost, misplaced, or perhaps never picked up your nametag, please let us know so you will have one for **Spirit Sunday, September 14**. Not only does a nametag make you identifiable as a church member, but it also helps folks to catch your name, and for you to learn other people's names. It especially helps with those whose face you recall, but whose name you can't quite remember.

There is a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Table before and after worship, or be in touch with Geneviève at GenevieveS@gablesucc.org to get your nametag.

WE BELIEVE GOD CAN BLOW THE LID OFF ANY BOX AND TURN IT INTO A DANCE FLOOR. WE ARE OUT OF THE BOX PEOPLE.

DISCOVER MORE THAN THE RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARC TOLD!

We are off once again and we'd love to have you join us as we embark on a spiritually enriching journey through Egypt and Jordan, exploring ancient wonders and historical landmarks that showcase the region's rich heritage.

The dates are **March 21-28**, which is also spring break for Miami-Dade Schools so that families can join us. This is one of the gifts of traveling as a church family; we get to know one another of all ages and backgrounds.

Together we will explore the Pyramids of Giza, visit the Sphinx, learn about Egyptian history and its biblical connections, such as the story of Moses. We will visit significant ancient and Coptic Christian sites; delve into the vast collection of Egyptian antiquities at the Egyptian Museum, particularly the iconic treasures of Pharaoh Tutankhamun; discover the remarkable ancient city of Petra; stand atop Mt. Nebo, gazing upon the Promised Land as Moses once did; climb or take a camel ride up Mt. Moses; experience the Dead Sea; and so much more as we immerse ourselves into the cradle of civilization.

Interested? Please be in touch with Pastor Laurie for further information and details.

A special informational session will be held on **Sunday, September 7 at 9:45 a.m.** in Havighorst Lounge and on Zoom. There will also be study opportunities throughout the year in preparation for this remarkable trip.

JUNE 12 - AUGUST 21, 2025

Thursday, June 12
Hot Fiddle
Epic genre-busting ride — from classical and jazz, to fiddle and rock!

Thursday, June 26
Bridget Kibbey
Virtuosic and soulful power has audiences cheering!

Thursday, July 10
Anthony Hervey
A GRAMMY® "Emerging Artist to Know"!

Thursday, July 24
Leland Ko
2024 Naumburg International Cello Competition first-prize winner!

Thursday, August 7
Ken Peplowski
Jazz clarinetist extraordinaire remembering Benny Goodman!

Thursday, August 21
Tyreek McDole
Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition first-prize winner!

Community Arts Program

2025 SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

40th Year

Reserve your tickets today, before they SELL OUT!
305.448.7421, EXT. 120 / CommunityArtsProgram.org

Tickets $35 - $50
Packages Available

7:30 p.m. Concerts at:

Coral Gables Congregational United Church of Christ
3010 De Soto Boulevard
Coral Gables, FL 33134
(across from the Biltmore Hotel)
Free & Convenient Parking

The Stanley R. Sterbenz Trust

LADY SUZANNA P. TWEED AND CARLETON TWEED CHARITABLE FOUNDATION, INC.