



# The Grapevine



## *Our Story of Belonging*

**Reverend Edward Dunn**

A neighbor shared a recent copy of the alumni magazine from Notre Dame University. The magazine's cover depicted a nearly empty sanctuary with the caption, Mass Exodus. One of the featured articles was an interview with a professor and author on the topic of decreased participation in traditional Christian churches.

The interview was lengthy; the content heady at times but I found it very interesting reading, could be summarized by saying that churches today are not the same as they were seventy years ago. Lives today are not the same as they were seventy years ago. It's when the church tries to force values, or insist that people today live as if it were seventy years ago, that people will reject what the church has to say as irrelevant.

Before I get too deep in this topic, here is what really captured my attention in this magazine: the notes from and about the alumni. It has been a number of years since I last saw a printed alumni magazine. I had forgotten about the section (usually toward the end) in which each year or class share events in the lives of members.

Although I had no connection to the members of these classes, I was intrigued by the notes shared about reunions, about new jobs, about marriages and births; about retirements and about deaths. It got me thinking about the schools and the years I attended. It made me curious to know what was happening in the lives of my classmates.

And it has me reflecting on the future of the church. It is based in part on the shared past of its members. When we gather it is to remember and to tell stories of times together. It is also an occasion to share our present...things that are happening right now. And occasionally we might spend time discussing what our future might look like.

The future of our church is dependent on our connection with God and with one another. It is based upon the grace we have received from God and the grace we give each other; the forgiveness and mercy God shows us and that we show each other. It is dependent upon acting together to create memories and yet from those actions to chart our future.

Each edition of our Grapevine newsletter includes pictures of people and events in our church. Each of them reveal the present and the future of the church. They tell our story of belonging.

Blessings,  
Edward





## May Session Highlights

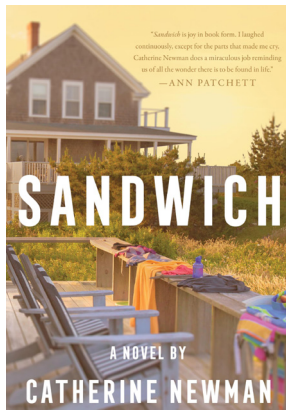
- Approved changing the date for Communion in July to the second Sunday, which is Pentecost Sunday. Communion in the summer (July and August) will be served by intinction.
- The Outreach Offering for May will go to Meals on Wheels and for June, July and August to the Food Bank of Manatee County.
- Authorized \$3,000 of budgeted funds to be sent to the Nortons, our missionaries in Guatemala.
- Approved the Annual Music Performance of the Creative Arts Academy being held on Saturday, May 17th.
- Approved requests by Rev. Dunn for vacation time during May 16-19 to attend his daughter's wedding, and travel to attend a continuing education event by the Pension Board on May 20th.
- Approved setting summer hours for the church Office at 9 am to 12 noon on Tuesday through Thursday (3 days) beginning June 1st through September 1st.
- Approved hiring Nicklos Bachelder as an Audio-Visual Sound Technician on an Independent Contractor basis for the remainder of the year to replace Elena Burke.
- Approved a quote of \$3,200 to repair the gutters and downspouts that were damaged or destroyed in the last storm.
- Approved a quote of \$76, 280 to bring the Office elevator into compliance with State standards.
- Approved an increase in the Lawn Service contract of \$45 per month (~8%) for this year.



The Renewal Team is currently looking for volunteers to support the preparation and enhancement of our worship services and Bible classes. Additionally, assistance is needed for fellowship activities within our congregation. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact one of the following team members:

**Gail Dickerson, Marilyn Gillette,  
or Jan Jarrell.**

## Palma Sola Book Club



**MAY 14 | 1 - 2:30PM JUNE 9 | 1 - 2:30PM**

Join in any second Monday at 1pm in the Media Center & Zoom for fun conversation.

### 2025 READING LIST

For more information, call Vicki Schooley at (941) 518-2315.

## Men's Group



### MEN'S GROUP

You're invited to attend the Morning Men's Group. Get to know the men you see in church. Share your story. Enjoy fellowship.

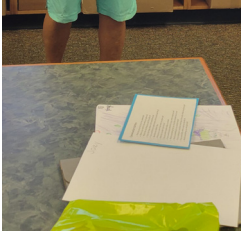
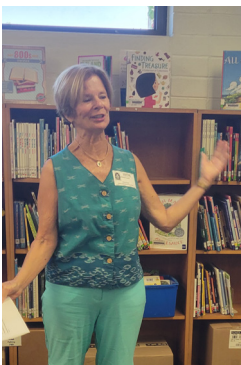
#### MEETINGS START AT 8:30A

**MAY 1** - Fellowship and breakfast | Poppi's Place restaurant

**MAY 15** - Fellowship & a discussion about Christian Living | Fellowship Hall

Please contact Ron Dickerson  
[rondickersonupc@gmail.com](mailto:rondickersonupc@gmail.com)

## Pen Pal Party Pictures





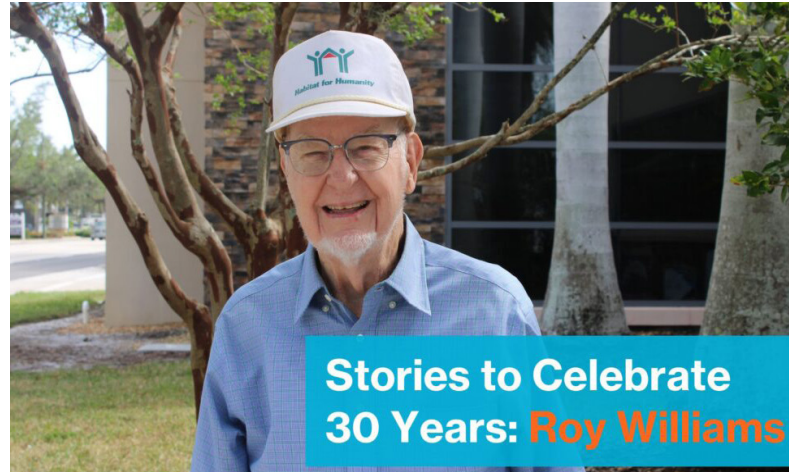
# *A United Easter 2025*





# Celebrating 30 Years: Roy Williams on Getting the Framework Right

As Manatee County Habitat for Humanity celebrates its 30th anniversary, we honor the visionaries and volunteers who laid the foundation—quite literally—for decades of impact. Among those pioneers is Roy Williams, a retired mechanical engineer who traded retirement by the pool for rooftops, toolbelts, and trusses.



His story is emblematic of the heart, grit, and generosity that fueled our earliest builds and helped transform a fledgling nonprofit into a lasting force for good in our community.

Thirty years ago, Roy Williams retired to Bradenton, but instead of settling into a quiet life, he rolled up his sleeves and got to work. Having previously volunteered with Habitat in Texas, Roy wasted no time applying his engineering skills to the construction of trusses for the very first homes built by the newly-formed Manatee County Habitat for Humanity.

In those formative days, Roy joined forces with a group of dedicated local leaders—John Davidson, Susie Walters, Steve Roskamp, and Curtis Hamlin—who were all-in on Habitat’s mission. “We worked every Saturday,” Roy recalls, “and soon realized we had to meet on Tuesdays too—just to prep, get materials, and make sure volunteers were used efficiently.”

The team took over construction of several homes initially started by the more established Sarasota affiliate. “We looked at them with a little envy,” Roy admits, “They had big sponsors and large tracts of land. But we worked hard and got Tropicana to sponsor a house—and even had some of their employees join us on site.”

As homes rose from the ground, so did the need for land, donors, and infrastructure. Roy remembers Harry Baaker, a devoted supporter who pitched in with both funds and tools—and even offered up closet space in his building to serve as Habitat’s first “office.” That \$5,000 here and \$5,000 there eventually helped...

... construct the group's first warehouse.

That Palmetto warehouse originally stored excess building materials, but the stash grew so large the team decided to sell off some of the surplus. "We advertised, and contractors and homeowners showed up in droves," Roy says. That successful sale was the seed that later grew into Manatee Habitat's ReStore.

Like any young organization, Habitat faced challenges. "We built just one house the first year," Roy remembers, "and the designs were tricky—28-foot-wide structures with angled doorways and tricky trusses. After a few tries, we simplified the blueprint, reducing costs and making construction more volunteer-friendly." Then came Hurricane Andrew, and with it, new building codes that demanded structural redesigns and even dictated how many nails to use.

Over his 15 years with Manatee Habitat, Roy estimates he worked on around 90 homes. "There was a small group of us—Jack Williams, Chuck Peabody, Gary Taylor—and we each had our specialties. Donna Davenport stepped in to help homeowners understand their responsibilities, and that became vital to the success of the program."

For Roy, there was particular joy in figuring out the trusses. "Every house should have a covered entry—that was my thing. Designing that into a simple rectangular structure made the truss work more complex and interesting." One of his favorite projects? Building the gazebo at our Village of the Palms community.

Though he stepped away from building in 2005, Roy still proudly wears his Habitat hat, signed by Habitat founder Millard Fuller. From his home in Freedom Village, he can now drive past dozens of homes that carry the imprint of his skill, sweat, and service—a lasting legacy of what community, commitment, and compassion can build.

*Thank you, Roy, for your unwavering dedication, craftsmanship, and heart. Your early leadership and countless hours on the build site helped shape the foundation—both literal and figurative—of Manatee Habitat. As we celebrate 30 years of building homes, communities, and hope, we are deeply grateful for pioneers like you who made it all possible.*

# May Outreach Update

As we consider how our church will evolve in the future, I am reminded about the many blessings we have to carry forward. Your participation in giving and volunteering in the many outreach opportunities makes me smile and know WE WANT TO SERVE THE LORD, no matter what. Let me show you some of the ways you serve and can serve.

## **April Outreach Highlights:**

- We are filling the Blessing Box, at the entrance of the east parking lot, on a weekly basis from your donations and funds collected from 3 Cents a Meal and Scottish Sunday donations. Items are going quickly.
- A total of the January, February and March Outreach Offering for Our Daily Bread was \$1163.
- The Outreach Offering for April was for One Great Hour of Sharing. \$3000 was donated from our Missionary Support budget to the Nortons in Guatemala.
- Our March 30th for "3 Cents a Meal" was \$353. Added to the amount in December of \$225, the total is \$578. The money was sent to Our Daily Bread, Beth El, and • Mision Peniel in equal amounts of \$192.67.
- We received our last pen pal letter from the 2nd grade students at Palma Sola Elementary School and attended a wonderful celebration party at the school on Wednesday, April 23rd where we were able to meet our pen pals and enjoy sharing time with them.
- The Dreyer Trush expended \$10,693.00 by the end of March. April expenditures are not available at this writing.
- Easter gifts were purchased for our homebound members and delivered by their deacon.
- Baby wipes were collected for our April DOES IT Project. Diapers were purchased with \$150 from our budget to add to the donation to the clients of Loaves and Fishes.

## **May Outreach Opportunities:**

- Our DOES IT (done on every Sunday) project for May will be collecting pet food for the clients of Meals On Wheels with pets.
- Volunteers will be attending Brookdale Assisted Living on May 5th from 2-3 to celebrate Cinco de Mayo with the residents. All are welcome to join in.
- S.T.R.E.A.M. Joshua Assembly, May 19th at 6:30 PM at Southeast HS to celebrate the achievements of STREAM
- Creative Arts Academy will be having their annual music performance on May 17 th at 2:00 PM.



# May Outreach Opportunities

## Ongoing Opportunities:

- Servers for Our Daily Bread on Fridays are always needed. Contact Dorothy Simes if you would like to volunteer.
- We continue to collect non-perishable food items in the cart in the Narthex to donate to Our Daily Bread of Bradenton. They are always in need of shelf stable items to stock the Loaves & Fishes food pantry.
- Please keep in mind our Blessing Box by the east parking lot. The Blessing Box serves as a mini food pantry for our local neighborhood, and you are welcome to add to it or take from it as needed.
- Contributions of loose change, soft money, and checks for FELT (Feeding Empty Little Tummies) are always welcome. To donate, use the envelopes in the pews or mail a check to the church office with "FELT" in the memo line.
- Join your church family in Fellowship Hall after worship each week to make PB & J sandwiches to share with the clients of Our Daily Bread. Thank you to all who have been bringing in supplies, making sandwiches, and helping SPREAD the love of Christ to your neighbors in need!
- The Holy Strollers walking group meets every Friday at 9 am at the north entrance of Robinson Preserve. You are invited to gather for exercise, conversation, and a short devotional in the great outdoors.

## May Outreach Offering

Our **Outreach Offering** for May will go to **Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee**, which provides nutritional assistance and caring, supportive services to homebound seniors in Manatee County. Home delivered meals are delivered by volunteers to over 1000 seniors per day. These meals serve those who are not able to leave their homes and purchase food, or who have limitations that leave them unable to prepare meals. This crucial service allows seniors to continue living independently. Last year Meals on Wheels delivered over 306,000 meals to homebound or disabled seniors in Manatee County.

**You may donate to Meals on Wheels:**

- during the worship service, in your offering envelope,
- by mailing a check to the church office with "MOW" in the memo line, or
- or contribute through [online giving](#)



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# TOGETHER AS ONE



**MAY 17th | 2 PM**  
**\$10 DONATIONS**



**DOOR PRIZES!**

**United Presbyterian Church (Fellowship Hall)**



# May Birthdays & Anniversaries

**MAY 1** Lee Schouw

**MAY 2** Liz Brackmann &  
George Peredy

**MAY 6** Ron Dickerson  
Gilbert & Anita Smith

**MAY 8** Roger Tyrrell

**MAY 14** Diane Hayward

**MAY 19** Phyllis Wachunis

**MAY 20** Jackie Hoyle

**MAY 23** Joan Dowling

**MAY 25** Louise Van Pelt  
Elenita & Marty Musgrove

**MAY 27** Donna Lesch, Nina Richardson

**MAY 30** Joyce Knouse

## *Remembering the lives of*

George Saile, Janet Dick, Jeanne Schrader, Kathy Muscatell, Phyllis Reichert, Rev. Peter MacFarlane, Lois Lee, Cindy Perez, Nancy Shimandle



## PRAYER GROUP

2nd & 4th Tuesday 11a | Room 14

**HOLY STROLLERS  
WALKING GROUP**



**JOIN US ON A WEEKLY STROLL  
TO GET SOME FRESH AIR**

**EVERY FRIDAY AT 9AM**

**ROBINSON PRESERVE  
(NORTH ENTRANCE)**



- United Presbyterian Church | May 2025 Newsletter -

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Bradenton, FL 34209  
941-792-3141

[www.upchurchbradenton.org](http://www.upchurchbradenton.org)

# May

## 2025

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

				1 <b>MEN'S GROUP</b> 8:30a   Poppi's  <i>Renewal - 6p</i>	2 <b>HOLY STROLLERS</b>   9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a	3
4 <b>Present Word 8:45a</b> <b>Worship Service</b> w/ Communion 10a   Fellowship	5 <b>Cinco De Mayo @</b> <b>Brookdale</b>   2P	6  <i>Outreach / 3p</i>	7  <b>Bell Choir</b>   6p <b>Chancel Choir</b>   7p	8	9 <b>HOLY STROLLERS</b>   9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a	10
11 <b>MOTHER'S DAY</b> <b>Present Word 8:45a</b> <b>Worship Service</b> 10a   Fellowship  Janet Dick Memorial Service 11:30a	12  <i>Palma Sola</i> <i>Book Club / 1p</i> <b>UPC SESSION</b>   1p	13 <b>PRAYER GROUP</b>   11A <b>DEACONS- 6:30P</b>	14 <b>Finance &amp; Investment</b>   3P  <b>Bell Choir</b>   6p <b>Chancel Choir</b>   7p	15 <b>MEN'S GROUP</b> 8:30a  Peace River Presbytery   7p	16 <b>HOLY STROLLERS</b>   9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a <b>GRAPEVINE INPUTS DEADLINE</b>	17 <b>CREATIVE ARTS ACADEMY</b> <b>CONCERT</b>   2P
18 <b>Present Word 8:45a</b> <b>Worship Service</b> 10a   Fellowship	19  <b>STREAM's Joshua Assembly</b>   6:30p	20	21  <b>Bell Choir</b>   6p <b>Chancel Choir</b>   7p	22	23 <b>HOLY STROLLERS</b>   9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a	24
25 <b>Present Word 8:45a</b> <b>Worship Service</b> 10a   Fellowship	26 <b>MEMORIAL DAY</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	27 <b>PRAYER GROUP</b>   11A	28  <b>Bell Choir</b>   6p <b>Chancel Choir</b>   7p	29  Session Project Regeneration   1p	30 <b>HOLY STROLLERS</b>   9a Our Daily Bread 9:30a	31

### Church Office Hours Monday - Thursday | 9am - 4pm

View the online church [Calendar](#) for latest information about Sunday worship services, Bible study, outreach and other events. Livestreamed and recorded worship services may be viewed at [Online Worship](#).