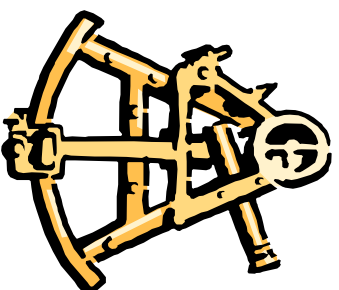


North Port Community
United Church of Christ
3450 S. Biscayne Drive
North Port, FL 34287



THE NAVIGATOR

December 2018

*From the
Pastor*



December 2018

After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother," the angel said. "Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother and they stayed there until Herod's death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: "I called my Son out of Egypt." When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. So Joseph got up and returned to the land of Israel with Jesus and his mother. But when he learned that the new ruler of Judea was Herod's son Archelaus, he was afraid to go there. Then, after being warned in a dream, he left for the region of Galilee. So the family went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what the prophets had said: "He will be called a Nazarene." *(Matthew 2:13-15; 19-23)*

Dear Church Family,

I don't know about you but as for me, I so do look forward to the Advent and Christmas Season but in a different way not like in years past. Some years back Caroline said to me during Advent: "**Dad this is the time when CHRISTMAS IS!**". I have to admit it, I am facing this season with some apprehension and even fear. Change will do that to us sometimes. The one thing I most want to focus on, actually with all of my heart, is the center of the message of Christmas. JESUS is here. Immanuel, God with Us! No

matter what, that truth will never change! Let's hold on to that wonderful promise with all of our heart, strength and mind.

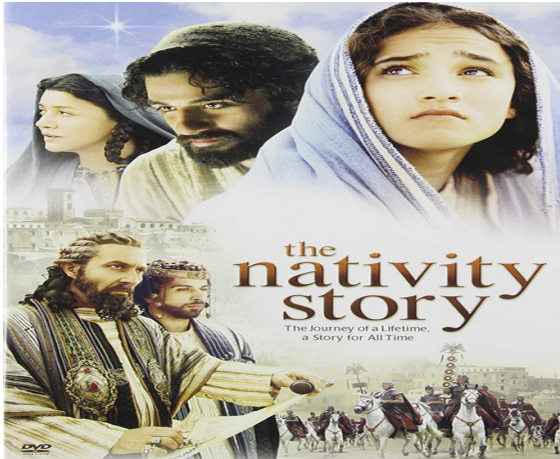
Our church family is in high gear preparations for this festive season. The sanctuary is being transformed right now as I am writing these lines. It will look wonderful and welcoming. The Christmas Eve Service is of course one of the highlights of our annual ministry here at the church. Today I have been reminded of something that is very true for us as followers of Christ. Much of our Christian faith journey is not lived on the mountain top but in the everyday life experiences.

Mary, Joseph and the newborn Jesus had to run for their lives to Egypt. They stayed there for some time and lived ordinary lives in a Community with other people. They lived the everyday kind of life just like you and me. When Christmas Eve is over, when family and friends have gone back home and we, too, return to everyday life things we can build our days on the sure foundation that God is with us, always, no matter what!

Here are some words that I read and reminded me again and encouraged me to follow HIM to the best of my abilities, faithfully all of the time. Christmas Season or the everyday kind of days.

***"There were but three Disciples allowed to see the Transfiguration, and those three entered the gloom of Gethsemane. No one can stay on the mountain of privilege. There are duties in the valley. Christ found His life-work, not in the glory, but in the valley and was there truly and fully the Messiah (*Thank God). The value of the vision and glory is but their gift of fitness for work and endurance
(Streams in the Desert/Devotional)***

**Wishing you and your family a Blessed Christmas
and New Year 2019.**



**Please join us for our
*Family Movie Event.
In preparation for the Advent
and Christmas Season.
Saturday, December 1st
@ 3:00 pm
(*With Concession Stand)**

Here are a few select images for you to enjoy.



**Church Family
Thanksgiving
(11-18-2018)**

Christmas Cantata Rehearsal

(11-18-2018)



**Visit with Alden, Sharon and Eileen at the
Port Charlotte Seventh-Day Adventist Church
(11-24-2018)**



**Transforming our Sanctuary for Advent and Christmas
(11-26-2018) Thank You!**

Together in Mission:
Pastor *Attila Szemesi*/NPCUCC

**Pastor Attila is in the office
Monday — Thursday
To schedule an appointment, Call
the office—426-5580**

**Email:
npcuccpastor@frontier.com
Please Visit our Website:
www.npccucc.org**

Singles Dinner Group



Singles are invited to meet for dinner December 13th at 5:30 p.m. at Applebee's. Sign up on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

Average monthly attendance:

October 2017—122

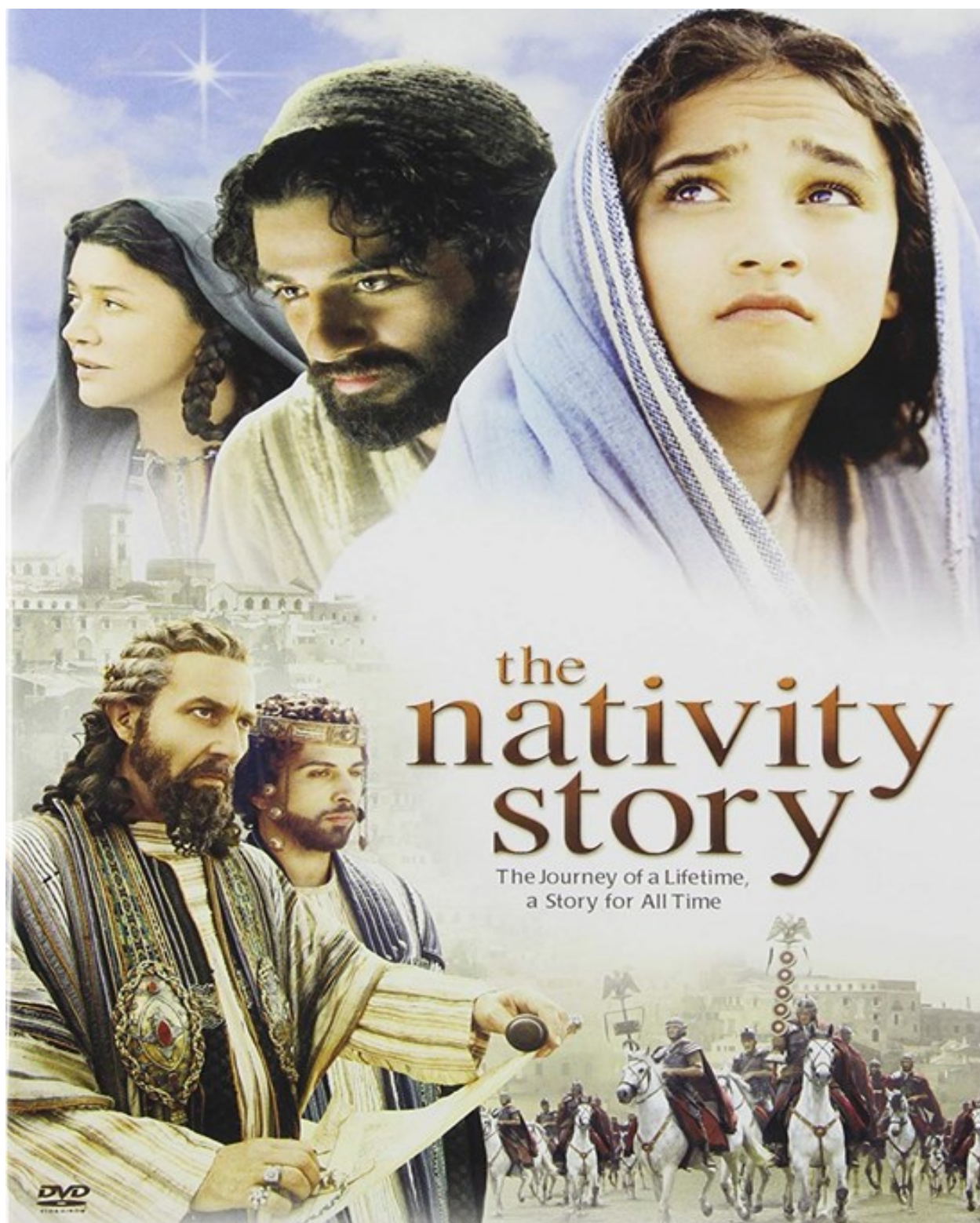
October 2018—124



Sheryll Norris is at Port Charlotte Rehab on Rampart Blvd. She would love visitors. Due to her rehab schedule, she requests visitors to come in afternoon after 2:00 p.m.

Winona Vannoy sends greetings from her daughter's home in Texas. She'd love to hear from you. Cards can be sent to her at: 500 N. Angel Light Drive, Spicewood, TX 78669.

John and Anne Barkenquast sends thanks for again participating in the Undy Sunday program. Donated by our church were: 27 pair of socks, 127 underwear, 3 t-shirts.



**Free Movie
Saturday, December 1st
3:00 p.m.**

**Join us...and
Invite your friends
And family!**

**North Port Community
2nd Annual
Faith Builder Church Retreat**



“God Has A Story With You!”

**Thursday February 28—Saturday March 2, 2019
DaySpring Conference Center, Parrish, Florida
“A Sacred Place set Apart...”**

The details have been finalized and we are now ready to start taking reservations for our second annual church retreat.



SPACE IS LIMITED - We can only accept a maximum of 40 participants this year, so sign up now.

The price for the retreat will include accommodations for 2 nights lodging and six meals – Dinner on Thursday, 3 meals on Friday and 2 meals on Saturday.

Double Occupancy - \$200 per person

Single Occupancy - \$275 per person (does not guarantee private bath)

There are just a few rooms which have bathrooms included. Others rooms will require 4-6 persons to share hall bathrooms.

SIGN UP NOW ON THE SIGN UP SHEET IN FELLOWSHIP HALL.

A \$50 deposit per person should be turned into the church office no later than December 10th. Final payment is due January 28th. Checks should be made payable to “NPCUCC Church Retreat”.



Questions??? See Sally Rutledge, Doug Minich, or call the church office to talk to Patti or Terry.

Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)

If you are over 70 1/2 and have an investment plan, you are required to withdraw a percentage, determined by the IRS, every year by December 31st. If you take this as income it is a taxable event to you.

A great way to avoid taxes, and to fulfill your church pledge, is to donate this, or a portion of it, to North Port Community United Church of Christ. This can be simply done by contacting your broker.

Please consider this as you prepare for the end of the year.

**Regards,
Douglas Minich, Board of Trustees, Chair**



Save the Dates:

**March 9 —
50th Anniversary
Dinner & Program**

**Special Church Services:
March 10
March 17**



New to the shelves is Mitch Albom's novel "*The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*".

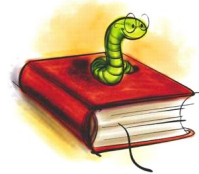
This long awaited sequel to "*The Five People You Meet in Heaven*" reminds us once again that all endings are beginnings; —we need only to open our eyes to

experience them. From the book jacket: "You have heard the phrase 'heaven on earth'...at certain moments, when death is close, the veils pull back between this world and the next.

When they do, it is possible to glimpse certain souls already departed. You can see them awaiting your arrival, and they see you coming".

Also new is "*Seize the Day: Living on Purpose and Making Every Day Count*" by Joyce Meyer. Instead of idling in your own disappointments and despair, commit to letting God direct you to the joyful life He has planned for you.

The church library has many books on Christmas. Check them out!

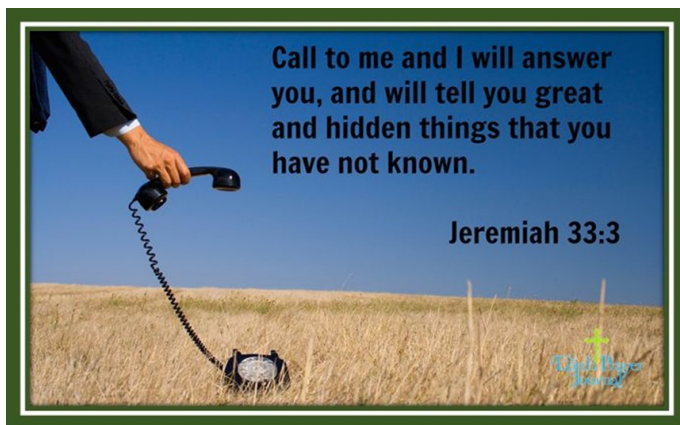


Merry Christmas to all and Blessings in the new year.

**Start your day with
Breakfast, Friends
And good conversation!**



All women are invited to join together for breakfast on Wednesday, December 5th at Olde World Restaurant at 8:30 a.m. Check the sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall for more details.



Call to me and I will answer
you, and will tell you great
and hidden things that you
have not known.

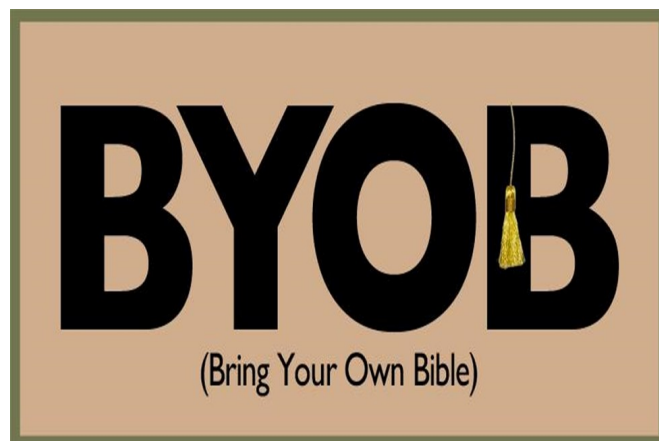
Jeremiah 33:3

**Prayer Line:
941-426-5580**

**(If you get the answering
machine, please call back)**

(*This is not a counseling line but a prayer line).

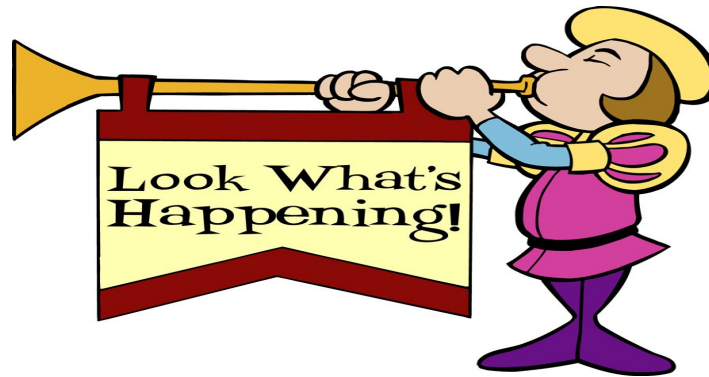
**Bible Study
Every Tuesday
11:00 a.m.
Bring a lunch
If you wish.**



*No Matter who you are,
or where you are on life's journey,
you are always welcome here!*

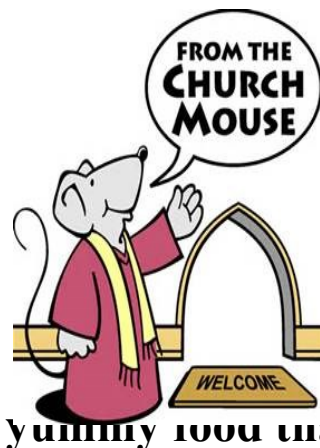


**Join us on Wednesday morning for
Morning Prayer
7:00 a.m.—9:00 a.m.**



UPCOMING EVENTS TO WATCH FOR!

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| December 1 | Movie Event—The Nativity Story |
| December 9 | Choir Cantata |
| December 15 | Breakfast with Santa |
| December 24 | Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:00 p.m. |
| January 12 | Grief Support Seminar |
| January 19 | Southwest Regional UCCW meeting |
| February 14 | Fashion Show |
| Feb. 28—March 2 | 2nd Annual Church Retreat |
| March 9 | 50th Anniversary Celebration |
| March 10 & 17 | Special 50th Worship Services |



From the Church Mouse.....

We hear everyone talking about what they are thankful for and how many ways they are blessed. Mrs. Mouse, Pip and I are so thankful that our home is in this warm and friendly space. We are also very stuffed from all the yummy food that was at the feast the other day.

We did get a bit nervous when we heard lots of quacking and talk about a duck church. Thought for a while we were going to have new moving in. Not sure how well ducks and mice would get along, but we checked around really carefully when everyone left and didn't find any ducks, so I guess we're good for a while. Now that we have the duck situation under control, we can start looking forward to the man in the Red Suit and the new tree we hear is coming soon. Merry Christmas to you and yours.



Ye Olde Church Mouse & Pip



Prayer Shawl Ministry



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

**Attention knitters
and those who crochet!**

Join our Prayer Shawls Group. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 2:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. We hope to see you there. Please Note there will only be one meeting in December due to Christmas.



FOOD FOR THE NEEDY

Remember the 2nd Sunday is our Collection of Food for those who are hungry. We alternate months, going to Salvation Army and Face of Hope.



**The Church Office
will be closed
Tuesday, December 25
for Christmas Day**

We will also be closed on December 31st, January 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th as Patti and Terry spend time with family.

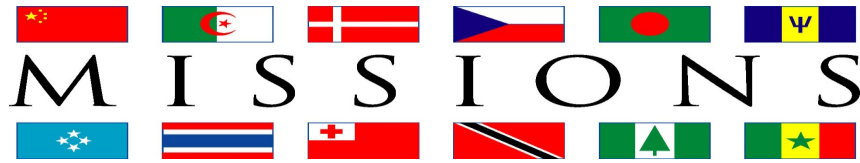


Dine to Donate!

Please continue to take your vouchers to Perkins each time you dine there. Perkins will collect the vouchers and quarterly send us a check donating 10% of the subtotal of everyone's bills. A win/win for everyone.

**Large enough to serve you;
small enough to know you.**





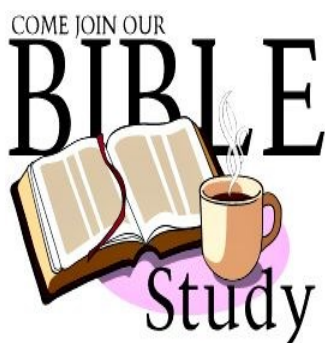
ECHO Mission Update

As you remember Echo's Seed Bank ministry in Chiang Mai, Thailand, is our ECHO mission project this year. The good news is that the Seed Bank in Chiang Mai has increased its seed distribution! Office staff has been helping the Seed Bank staff process the seeds at the new site as well as at the old site. As they are currently managing two seed bank sites, there is a lot of seed? All hands on deck!

In August the staff distributed a total of 623 trial seed packets, 5 Chaya cuttings, and 4000 grams (8.83 lbs.) of bulk seed to 98 people from 6 countries (Thailand, Cambodia, Nepal, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia).

Thank you for caring and giving.

- Sharon Miller, for the Mission Committee



In Home Bible Studies....

**December 27—6:00 p.m.
at the Sally Rutledge's home. Call
Delores Edwards for more info.
876-3376.**

**Join us.....
Breakfast with
Santa**



**December 15, 2018
8:30 to 10:30 a.m.**

**North Port Community UCC
3450 S. Biscayne Drive
North Port, FL 34287
941-426-5580
Email: northportucc@juno.com**



**Breakfast:
\$5 for adults; Children 5-12 \$3.00
Children under 5 free**

Free crafts for children
Bring your camera for pictures with Santa!

Tickets are now on sale!



NEW MEMBER INQUIRER'S MEETING SUNDAY, JANUARY 6th

Pastor Attila will be holding a New Member Inquirer's meeting on Sunday, January 6th following worship.

If you are not a member of NPCUCC but think you might like to join, we hope you will set aside this date and join us.

The purpose of this meeting will be for you to meet some of the church's leaders and hear what they do in the church, and learn some of the history and mission of our church.

Those that wish to join the church will be received into membership during worship on a Sunday in January.

Here at NPCUCC we have both Full Members and Associate Members. Full members are typically our year round (or mostly year round) residents. Associate Members typically still go north for about half the year and are still active and involved in their church up north and wish to keep their main membership there. Both Full and Associate members have the same voting rights on church matters and can serve on any and all committees.

Attending this meeting does not mean a commitment to membership. It is only for you to "inquire". If you are not yet a member, but have an interest, call the church office.

Lunch will be served in Decker Hall and the meeting will follow in the Sanctuary.

December Birthdays:

| | |
|---------|---------------------|
| Dec. 1 | Angela Stolting |
| Dec. 3 | Jeanie Doll |
| Dec. 3 | Landon Livingston |
| Dec. 4 | Hannah Padalik |
| Dec. 5 | Gary Tallman |
| Dec. 5 | Annalisa Williamson |
| Dec. 5 | Gregory Williamson |
| Dec. 12 | Lisa Williamson |
| Dec. 13 | Dave Sanford |
| Dec. 15 | Boo Vance |
| Dec. 22 | Grace Johnson |
| Dec. 25 | Sophia Bonsky |
| Dec. 25 | Dorothy J. Covert |
| Dec. 29 | Marian Holsinger |
| Dec. 30 | Louise Hall |
| Dec. 31 | Anne Smith |



The following members and friends will be celebrating a Wedding Anniversary in December.

| | |
|---------|---------------------------|
| Dec. 6 | Jim and Barbara Mills |
| Dec. 7 | Gary and Nadyne Tallman |
| Dec. 17 | Bob and Nancy Doll |
| Dec. 21 | Larry and Jeanie Doll |
| Dec. 23 | David and Andrea St. Onge |

DECEMBER

ALTAR FLOWERS:

| | |
|---------|--------------------------------|
| Dec. 2 | Linda Reese Carolyn Perkins |
| Dec. 9 | Agnes Bushey |
| Dec. 16 | Sheryll Norris |
| Dec. 23 | Rona Hunnisett |
| Dec. 30 | Ed and Patti Boger |



Thank you to:
North Port Natural Florist
Your "Green" Florist
13632 Tamiami Trail
North Port, FL 34287
426-1197

For providing us with our flowers every Sunday.

Our NPCUCC Vision:
"NPCUCC is a welcoming
congregation that
celebrates the diversity of
our members but focuses
on what we as Christians
have in common in order
to nurture growth and
healing."



**HAVE YOU MADE A WILL?
DID YOU REMEMBER
YOUR CHURCH?**



NORTH PORT COMMUNITY U.C.C.

Rev. Attila Szemesi, Pastor

3450 S. Biscayne Drive

North Port, FL 34287

Phone: (941) 426-5580

Fax: (941) 426-7370

E-mail: northportucc@juno.com

******CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE******

www.northportucc.org

Visit us on Facebook

Check us out on You Tube:

<http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZOJIYvzmRjXqkRjYki-Gpw>

Sunday Worship Service: 10:00 am

Office Hours: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm Monday-Thursday

Closed on Friday

Patti Bourque, Office Manager

Terry Hong, Office Assistant