



# Vantage

March 1, 2024

**HOPE**  
*is alive*

## New Look for the Vantage

I wanted to take a chance and see what my creative energy could come up with. This is an experimental issue. You are encouraged to provide feedback. I will take suggestions to heart and incorporate them as they seem to make the final publication look better and attract more folks to read what is presented here.

Send your ideas to: [marrom33@gmail.com](mailto:marrom33@gmail.com)

Thomas Brown

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## Special points of interest

- BCEO venues on pg. 4
- Pictures from special events
- Information about The Alabaster Jar Podcast

## Pastor Tom's Message



### ***Christ the Lord Is Risen Today*** By Charles Wesley

*Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!  
Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia!  
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!  
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!*

Easter Day is inextricably associated with singing “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today” by Charles Wesley (1707–1788). Of the original eleven stanzas published under the title “Hymn for Easter Day” in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739), most hymnals use only four, or sometimes as many as seven. This hymn is a *tour de force* of exuberant, expressive, and ecstatic language on the Resurrection. Wesley’s hymn was inspired by “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today,” an anonymous translation from *Lyra Davidica* (1708) of part of a Latin hymn “Surrexit Christus hodie.” “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today” is not a narrative hymn. It

does not recount the events that led up to or followed the resurrection of Christ. It is a deeply theological hymn that celebrates the Resurrection with emotive and passionate language, pointing ultimately to the significance of this singular event for humanity. The original fifth stanza follows: *Soar we, now, where Christ has led? Following our exalted Head, Made like Him, like Him we rise, Ours the cross—the grave—the skies!* As Watson notes, “the dashes make the singer pause, and indicate the *enormous* distance between each point; the exclamation mark continues the ecstatic mood” established in earlier stanzas. The original stanza ten emphatically affirms the Resurrection as a living, current event: *Thee we greet triumphant now: Hail the Resurrection Thou!* Wesley will not allow us to relegate the Resurrection to a mere historical recollection. Rather, it is a seismic occurrence at one time for all times. Each Easter, we retell the story and re-remember the experience of the Resurrection

Continued on page 3...

March Scriptures	March Teachings
<b>March 3</b> <b>Mark 9:14-29</b>	<b>Compassion More Than Comfort</b> Christ’s compassion for others came from his prayer life. His power to save a boy and bring healing to him came from his empathy and his love of compassion. As scripture says, “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his compassion never comes to an end.” Let the Lord know what you need. You may have a lot, but you need more. Accept that you need more than you have.
<b>March 10</b> <b>Mark 10:13-16</b>	<b>Adulting in God’s Eyes</b> When do we grow up? When do we become adults? 1 Corinthians 14:20 says, “Brothers and sisters, do not be children in your thinking; rather, be infants in evil, but in thinking be adults.” Being an adult in God’s eyes takes a conversion from feeling needy, incapable, and not responsible to the much better condition of comprehending your calling, position, and significance. Then we see how we are to be givers of gifts and bestowers of blessings.
<b>March 17</b> <b>Mark 10:35-45</b>	<b>Have the Nerve to Serve</b> Thousands of books have been written on leadership, but few on servanthood. Everyone wants to lead; few want to serve. Even Christians want to be “servant-leaders,” not just plain servants. But to be like Jesus is to be a servant. That’s what he called himself, and how he measured greatness. God determines your greatness by how many people you serve, not how many people serve you.
<b>March 24</b> <b>Luke 19:29-40</b> <b>Palm Sunday</b>	<b>Blessed by Happiness</b> The Spanish have a great proverb that goes, “Tomorrow is often the busiest day of the week.” That’s so true. I like what someone said, “I asked God to give me happiness, and God said, ‘No. I give blessings. Happiness is up to you.’” One of the truths we learn from scripture and from Jesus’ triumphal entry is that in this life good times are to be savored because they’re fleeting. Live in God so you know to find happiness now.
<b>March 31</b> <b>Matthew 28:1-10</b> <b>Easter</b>	<b>Get Yourself to Galilee</b> Get yourself to Galilee means claim your power, hold onto your bliss, find your joy, stick to your passion. It means the resurrection you’re seeking needs you to be who you are, where you’re supposed to be, doing what you’re really about. Get yourself to Galilee means returning to where you’re starting place is where things make sense, and where you’re empowered to make a difference.

as if we were present. This kind of memory is known as *anamnesis*, a living memory with much more depth than a reminiscence. Indeed, *anamnesis* is a central part of eucharistic prayers in many Christian traditions, where the birth, ministry, death, and Resurrection of Christ are recalled in preparation for receiving the elements.

## Team Reports

**Member Care:** The Member Care Team welcomes a new volunteer, Nancy Clarke-Fenner, who will assist with phone calls and sending cards to COTH members in need. Jeannie Clinton, Team Leader, can be reached at 561-901-5935 or [jeannieclinton1@gmail.com](mailto:jeannieclinton1@gmail.com) if a member or church friend is in need of assistance.

**Finance Report:** A few highlights to share: \$2500 grant from Florida Conference of the UCC was awarded in December to COTH, thanks to Thomas's excellent application. Funds have been spent to enrich our technology to have a better Sunday Morning livestream, make sound system improvements, and more. Thomas also researched and found savings for COTH through creative bundling of Wi-Fi, telephones, and alarm cellular communicators. Next, is a less expensive copy machine, which is networked to 3 computers – so a little complicated!

We are embarking on the first full year of savings in our expense column with the continuation of a part-time pastor and reduced insurance premiums due to our smaller sized congregation. We will be funding higher pay for the AV/Media on Sunday position, soloists, and infrastructure improvements. We also intend to provide care for young children on a monthly basis and quarterly mission events for our youth which will help keep them connected with others in our church.

It is a joy to see checking account balance in the \$25-30k range! This is due largely to the influx of fees for use of our building from Lifepoint Church since mid-Oct. 2023 and construction companies who pay fees for their workers to park in our lot. Waldorf Early Childhood has an agreement until 2026 that increases modestly each year. They use spaces during weekdays while school is in session. We expect these income streams to continue. In 2024 we have not needed to liquidate any investment funds, and we expect to increase investments in our portfolio. Thank you for keeping the vitality of COTH in your prayers!

**Pledging Report:** So far we have 17 “giving units” or families who have pledged 2024 financial support in the amount of \$49,500. Annual pledges range from \$600-\$5100, with one outlier above and two below. Many folks who do not choose to pledge give very generously, and all

While truly an Easter morning hymn, “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today” is also a hymn about humanity’s relationship with the Eternal One. It is about humanity’s full transformation into the image of Christ and the ultimate consummation of our eternal life in Christ Jesus.

gifts of treasure and time are important and appreciated. 2 Corinthians 9:7 says “Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” You may decide to pledge at any time – ask Sarah for a pledge card and related letters.

**Time and Talents:** We recognize with huge thanks those individuals who share gifts of time, skill, and talents with Church on the Hill. You might ask each what s/he does for our church! Kathy B., Dan S., Thomas B., Barbara L., Larry L., Lois F., Mena, Sarah, Adam, Team Leaders Bob, Jerry, and Jeannie; Nancy F., Mary R., Bobbie S., The Hinshaw family, Deacons Faye and Victor I. Each task or call helps our church remain special and vibrant.

**60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting :** (Annual Report copies are still available in the office)

The 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Congregation was held February 18 following worship. Acting Moderator, Sarah Hugus, called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m. A good-sized turnout of members and those-yet-to-join attended to learn about upcoming plans and to vote on the 2024 budget. Vision Ministry recommended the budget be approved, and it was!

The by-laws were unanimously approved for suspension to allow one member to attend and vote by phone, in order to have a quorum.

The other suspension was to allow Sarah Hugus to continue as Moderator for the 2024 year. She has held the office longer than the by-laws allow, but no one else offered to fill the position.

Other current members of the Vision Ministry/Lay Leadership Team agreed to continue their terms:

Bob Murphy, Lead Deacon  
Jeannie Clinton, Lead of Member Care  
Jerry Clinton, Lead of Publicity

Pastor Tom Lacey provided his State of the Church remarks. Thomas B. and Jerry C. chimed in on particular parts of the 2024 budget and took questions from the floor. Thomas was thanked for his skills in the publishing of our report, which included photos for the first time of 2023 church life.

## Remember Your 2023 Florida Conference UCC Dues!

Church on the Hill is a member of the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ. Yearly dues are \$15.00 per person in your family who is a member of this church through joining or Confirmation. **Our church must pay this amount for all members, so your contribution will definitely help keep our budget on track.** If you are unsure whether you have paid, contact Sarah at: [office@churchofboca.org](mailto:office@churchofboca.org). Every contribution helps!!

## Holy Week Schedule

March 24 Palm Sunday

March 28, 7 p.m. Maundy Thursday worship service

March 31 Easter Sunday

9:15 Children egg hunt on the lawn

10:00 Worship – remember to take home your sponsored lily.

11:05 Live Butterfly release at Randall's Garden



## Events and Notes

### BCEO

All are invited to eat out, dutch treat, almost every Thursday evening. This group has been active, except during the pandemic, for about 20 years. We all make suggestions and decide where we would like to eat. We try to change up the location to suit everyone. When YOU would like to attend, please RSVP to Bob Murphy: 610-996-7827. Here is the February list:

March 7

Outback Steakhouse  
3664 W. Hillsboro Blvd. (Deerfield Mall)  
Deerfield Beach 33442  
561-338-6283  
Menu at [qr.outbackmenus.com](http://qr.outbackmenus.com)

March 14

Chez Marie French Bistro  
5030 Champion Blvd (Polo Club Shops)  
Boca Raton 33496  
561-997-0027  
Menu at [chezmariefrenchbistro.com](http://chezmariefrenchbistro.com)

March 21

Miller's Ale House  
1200 Yamato Road (Shoppes of Blue Lake)  
Boca Raton 33431  
561-988-9142  
Menu at [millersalehouse.com](http://millersalehouse.com)

March 27 **WEDNESDAY** this week

Cap's Place Island Restaurant  
2765 NE 28th Court  
Lighthouse Point 33064  
954-941-0418  
Menu at [capsplace.com](http://capsplace.com)

### A Unique Opportunity Awaits You

Please check out a very special series in the Alabaster Jar podcast that examines the intersections of faith, art, women, and theology. Each Thursday beginning February 1st an episode

will be released focusing on Women in the Bible and the Church, as depicted in sacred art, by highlighting a new website called the Visual Museum, located at:

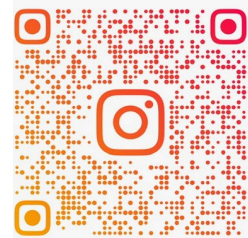
[www.visualmuseum.gallery](http://www.visualmuseum.gallery). The Visual Museum provides a visual record of the impact made by women in ministry and leadership in the early church through the medieval era. The power of art is used to illuminate and explore incredible women's stories in the Bible and early church, as well as their lasting impact on faith today. Click on the QR code below to visit the virtual museum.

Our own Christine Calareso Bleecker created this special podcast series and gives a sneak peek in a conversation on what you can expect! Her interview can be found here on Spotify

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/7mWKYJowJQ7V49pPusNC3U?si=9588a8453af24c8d>  
or on Apple <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-visual-museum-series-what-you-can-expect/id1564127400?i=1000643358976>

Subscribe to the Alabaster Jar podcast so you don't miss an episode!

<https://open.spotify.com/show/1BsiZtDyhnUAphVldYEoe4?si=2b2f25c50b694b48>  
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-alabaster-jar/id1564127400>



[/VISUALMUSEUM.GALLERY](http://VISUALMUSEUM.GALLERY)

## Please nominate yourself or another!

The time of our annual meeting has passed. The role of Church Moderator is filled. However, Thomas Brown is going to be a snow bird and will not continue as Clerk. Several Deacons have completed their terms and would be happy to be replaced. Finance Team needs people. Other teams would like help as well – Publicity, Member Care, and Youth Education. Clerk, Vice Moderator and Treasurer are offices which need to be filled. Please prayerfully consider how your talents and time might be well-appreciated in any of the above positions. Contact Pastor Tom and Moderator Sarah for more information.

<b>MARCH ANNIVERSARIES</b>	03/24	Vicki Schultz
03/18 Lynn and Ron Buttner	03/29	Ash Holland
<b>MARCH BIRTHDAYS</b>	03/29	Linnea Lacey
03/06 Barry Donovan	03/31	Laura Kerzner
03/07 Gail Donovan	03/31	Patty Parks
03/15 Seth Peterson		
03/17 Thomas Lacey		

## Upper Room Devotionals 2024

These periodicals are released every other month. **March/April** is available now. <https://www.upperroom.org/devotionals>

## Prayer Requests

Please contact Pastor Tom with needed prayers. Text him at 561-306-5208 or email him at [pastortomlacey@gmail.com](mailto:pastortomlacey@gmail.com) or to [COTHPRAYERS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:COTHPRAYERS@GMAIL.COM)

## Email Communications

Please let us know if you would like to receive electronic copies of the weekly worship bulletin and Vantage newsletter by sending us a note at [office@churchofboca.org](mailto:office@churchofboca.org)

## Stay in touch for the latest news/photos!

- **Facebook:** Church on the Hill-Congregational Church of Boca Raton
- **Twitter:** @UCCchurchboca
- **Instagram:** @ChurchontheHill\_
- **Website:** [www.churchofboca.org](http://www.churchofboca.org)  
(Same address; new look and content plus many of the usual items still available.)

**Vantage Newsletter Deadline** Wednesday March 15th at noon  
All articles, pictures, or announcements for the next Vantage are due.

**Sunday Bulletin Deadline** Every Wednesday at noon

**Sunday Bulletin Announcements** Wednesday each week.  
Email items to: [marrom33@gmail.com](mailto:marrom33@gmail.com)

## ONA Covenant

At Church on the Hill, we affirm that every person has worth as a unique creation made in the image of God. We recognize, value and give thanks for the many diverse gifts of God among us. We believe that through diversity, all can worship together and grow in a faith that transcends our differences. Accordingly, we declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation, inviting and welcoming lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons into the full life and ministry of Church on the Hill, as well as persons of every race, culture, age, ability, gender and economic status. *ONA Covenant adopted January 13, 2019*

## Offering / Donation / Contribution Options

- Zelle: mobile pay using our COTH email  
**No Fee!!** address: [office@churchofboca.org](mailto:office@churchofboca.org)
- Cash: offering plate on Sundays  
Check: offering plate on Sundays OR send via U.S.Mai  
Credit/Debit Card: COTH Website: [churchofboca.org](http://churchofboca.org)  
-under the "Give" tab. the "Donate" button allows you to give using PayPal and/or Credit/Debit card  
PayPal: search for: Church on the Hill Boca Raton  
Bank e-check: send an e-check directly from your bank

*Special donations/offering may also be made using all these methods. Please indicate in the 'note' field if your donation is for a special offering.*

## Events and Notes

God  
is still  
speaking,

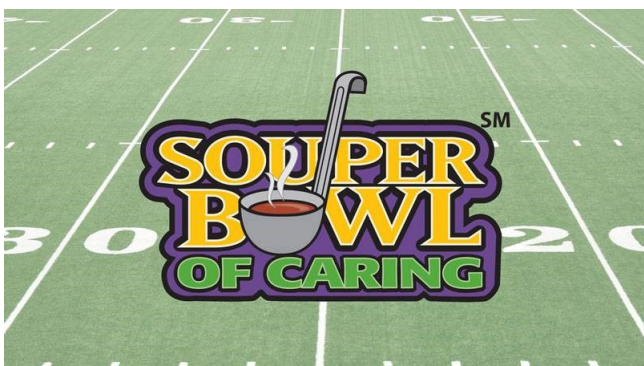
### Elizabeth Ehlers Award Presented to Bob Murphy

The final celebration was honoring Bob Murphy (and Rocky) as the 2024 recipient of our perpetual award "The Elizabeth Ehlers Faithful Servant Award." Pastor Tom provided important details of how Bob is a pillar of our church and numerous ways he serves and provides great insight into the sometimes-difficult decisions the Vision Ministry has to make. Congratulations Bob!



### Souper Bowl of Caring

Soups were donated by Karen, Marit, Sarah, and Barbara. Thanks to Elise, Lucas and Karen for serving soup. What a great adaptation on a Church on the Hill tradition The soups were Corn Chowder, Greek Chicken, Lentil with veggies, and creamy cheesy spinach. Marit and Lucas provided football-themed decorations. A table full of folks stayed to enjoy soup together in the Rosser Room while others took theirs "to-go." Your donations of \$175 have been sent in a check with a note to St. Joan of Arc Food Pantry.



## Easter Lily Orders

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ plants to decorate the church for Easter.  
**Please enclose \$12.00 per plant**

Print Your Name (to be printed in bulletin on Easter Sunday):

Contact Phone:

**Please PRINT clearly**  
**Circle Memory or Honor**

In Memory/Honor of:

In Memory/Honor of:

In Memory/Honor of:

In Memory/Honor of:

Drop this form in the collection plate at the end of service.  
You may also send an email with your request along with payment via Zelle, PayPal, or Bank E-check. Personal checks or cash are also good.

**Use these forms to make your Easter Lily and butterfly purchase.**

### New Mission Initiative

Church on the Hill has budgeted \$500 for the Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance, Inc. The Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance mission is to eliminate substandard and overcrowded rental housing for farmworker families and low-income residents of Immokalee, Florida.

For more information go to:  
[www.immokaleefairhousing.org](http://www.immokaleefairhousing.org)

## Butterfly Orders

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ butterfly(ies) to release at the church on Easter Sunday morning.

**Please enclose \$8 per butterfly**

Print Name (to be printed in bulletin):

Contact Phone:

**Orders must be placed by March 15th**

## Church on the Hill

**Address:** 251 SW 4th Avenue  
Boca Raton, Florida 33432

**Office Phone:** (561) 395-9255  
**E-mail:** office@churchofboca.org  
**Web site:** www.churchofboca.org

**Pastor:**

Tom Lacey

Cell/work phone: 561-306-5208 email: tomlaceypastor@gmail.com

**Church Moderator:**

sarahhugus@outlook.com

**Prayer Requests:**

cothprayers@gmail.com

**Sunday Worship Service**

In-Person & on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/bocaucc/](http://www.facebook.com/bocaucc/)

***Staff***

**TV Monitor & LiveStream Administrator:**  
Marit Hasmats-Lacey

**Accounting Manager / IT Consultant**  
Markus Asch

**Worship Song Leaders:**  
**Guest Musicians**

**Accompanist:**  
Georgene Barger

**Sexton:**  
(Jan-Pro Co.)

***Volunteers***

Sarah H, Kathy B, Bob M, Thomas B, Lois F, Dan S,  
Faye F., The Hinshaws, Barbara & Larry L.;  
Marit H-L, photographer.

**Property**  
Bob Murphy

**Member Care**  
Jeannie Clinton

**Publicity**  
Jerry Clinton

**Deacons**  
Bob Murphy



First Class Stamp

BOCA RATON FL 33432  
251 SW FOURTH AVE  
CHURCH ON THE HILL