

**RUF Committee Report of the RUF COMMITTEE**  
**SUNCOAST FLORIDA PRESBYTERY (SFP)**  
**North Fort Myers**  
**Tuesday, May 14, 2024**

**I. Business Referred to the RUF Committee:**

1. None

**II. Statement of Major Issues Addressed**

1. Discuss RUF Affiliate Agreement
2. Report from RUF Campus Minister Lucas Tanner

**III. Recommendations:**

1. None

***The new RUF Affiliation Agreement:***

The Chairman gave a brief update on the progress of the new RUF Affiliation Agreement. He had heard from the RUF State coordinator, Curtis McDaniel asking if we needed any more information and inquiring as to the status of our committee's leanings on the agreement. Pastor Lucas reported that he had heard that RUF had worked through most of the issues other Presbytery's had with the Agreement and that these issues had been smoothed out. Our committee will wait until it is ratified at General Assembly in June this year before bringing it before our Presbytery for action.

***Report to Committee by Campus Minister – Rev. Lucas Tanner:***

***Spring Semester:***

Pastor Lucas reported that RUF activities had been completed for the Spring Semester with the final large group meeting held the previous week and a pool party over the past weekend. The group said goodbye to 12 graduating seniors, five of whom were on the ministry team and were also small group leaders. This represents a significant loss of leaders who will need to be replaced for the next school year.

At the farewell, each of the seniors addressed the group about how God had been at work in their lives through RUF, and these were inspiring for those returning next year. The speeches from the five students who were on the ministry team were powerful, encouraging those returning to participate as much as they can.

One student shared that before he came to RUF he had never had a Christian friend or community and that through RUF God had undone a lot of his fears through coming alongside him and supporting him. He shared that he had developed close and intimate friendships such as he'd never experienced before – intimate, godly, fellowship and community. This student will be staying in Fort Myers to work and has joined Providence Christian Church in our Presbytery. He is another example of how RUF is feeding solid new young people into our churches.

Pastor Lucas finished preaching through the Book of Romans. The students really liked this series of sermons about how the gospel changes the way we think about our lives and the church. There was a strong attendance of students at RUF throughout the year. There was no drop off of attendance as can

happen as the end of year comes and the students get busier with assignments and exam preparation. There were more than 100 students in large group every week which was very encouraging to Pastor Lucas.

Three prayers Pastor Lucas had at the beginning of the year were all answered by God. First, that God would raise up a strong music team after the turnover of graduating seniors last year. Noah, an RUF graduate, built a strong music team of whom none graduated and are all coming back next year. Noah himself, will also return as an intern with Pastor Lucas, the first intern RUF@FGCU has had. Second, the Lord blessed the freshman outreach to give them a strong freshman class. Third, the Lord blessed with a great freshman bible study in the fall that carried over into the spring.

Fifty-four students are attending the National RUF Summer Conference at Laguna Beach, outside Panama City Beach, FL during the week of May 06. Among these are a lot of freshmen. This is the largest group ever to have gone from RUF@FGCU and is likely to be in the top five group numbers of all RUF college campuses across the nation. The travel arrangements for students going to the summer conference are as they have been for all previous years; students take other students in their cars. This year some parents would not allow their children to travel with other students and so the number attending could have been higher. Pastor Lucas will look into perhaps chartering a bus to take the students next year. Pastor Tim Udouj, Senior Pastor of Grace and Peace Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC will be the key speaker at Summer Conference this year. Pastor Udouj is an RTS graduate who served as an RUF minister for 12 years prior to taking a pastorate.

Summer semester begins at FGCU on the week of May 13. Freshman orientation begins at FGCU at the end of May and continues through the end of July. This is the main way for RUF to get new student contacts before they start school as most RUF students at FGCU do not come from PCA churches. This year, FGCU is running orientation sessions on only two days per week throughout the summer, as opposed to four days per week in previous years. There will be enough students doing summer classes and living in town to help have a presence at all orientation days.

Pastor Lucas will be officiating at two weddings of RUF students over the summer; Luke and Kaya in June, and Conner and GG in July. Pastor Lucas is looking forward to the new school year with having Noah Brown as an intern (starting June 01) who will work with the freshmen and continue to lead the music team. Noah is a member of Providence Christian Church.

Pastor Lucas will be restructuring the leadership team in the Fall to accommodate the growth of the ministry and position for continued growth. Over the summer, Pastor Lucas will be in contact with other RUF campus ministers who have large student groups, to discuss with them how they structure their larger RUF ministries.

One exciting item for prayer is for Christina McWhite to return to work with Pastor Lucas at FGCU. After graduating from FGCU, Christina was an RUF intern at Winston Salem State University (a HBCU institution). Christina applied for and was accepted as RUF staff and wants to come back to FGCU to work with Lucas. A female staff member needs to raise more support than an intern and is responsible for more ministry than an intern, and Pastor Lucas would be delighted for Christina to join the team at FGCU. This transition is likely to occur in 2025, but could happen as early as the upcoming school year!

***Finances:***

The RUF support account is on pace to make budget for the coming year and is currently healthy (see the financial statement in the Presbytery meeting business packet). Thank you to all the churches who support this invaluable ministry where after 8 years now a good number of students have gone on to seminary, RUF internships, and have joined local churches. This ministry is surely helping to train up church leaders for the next generation.

***Family:***

Pastor Lucas' wife, Bobbilee, is doing well and is still home-schooling Sadie full time.

Son, Isaac, is recovering well from shoulder surgery. He injured his shoulder at the end of the football season. After surgery he initially had to sleep in a recliner and could not drive, but he is now back in bed, and can drive again. Isaac finished his last high school class and will attend FGCU in the Fall on a full Bright Futures scholarship. Isaac has already made friends within RUF@FGCU.

Daughter Sadie has now had her teeth braces taken off and is enjoying that new look and feeling.

Daughter Molly did well in school this past year. She continues with her seamstress activities.

***Prayer Requests:***

A season of prayer was had for the RUF ministry at FGCU, for students, and for Pastor Lucas and his family.

**1) *Ministry:***

- a. Praise that the Fall semester finished strong with no diminution of attendance.
- b. Praise that Pastor Lucas' preaching through Romans was so well received by students.
- c. Praise that 54 students went to Summer Conference, including many freshmen.
- d. Praise for healthy finances and prayer for continued giving.
- e. Prayer for many productive student contacts during the summer orientation sessions.
- f. Prayer for wisdom for Lucas as he restructures the ministry to cater to growth and position for future growth.
- g. Prayer for Noah Brown as he joins the ministry as a male intern and music leader.
- h. Prayer that Christina McWhite can join the ministry for the Fall semester as RUF staff.

**2) *Students***

- a. Prayer for Luke and Kaya as they prepare for their wedding in June.
- b. Prayer for Conner and GG as they prepare for their wedding in July.
- c. Prayer for a new strong Leadership Team for the next year.
- d. Praise for a great music team this year and that it will continue without change.
- e. Praise for strong small groups this past semester.

**3) *Family:***

- a. Praise that Bobbilee is doing well.
- b. Praise that Isaac's shoulder surgery went successfully and prayer for complete healing.
- c. Praise that Sadie's braces are off and prayer for her ongoing health issues.
- d. Prayer for Molly to continue well in her school studies and hobbies.
- e. Prayer for Lucas as he continues to lead this ministry well.

**IV. May 1, 2024 via Zoom.**

**Committee Members Present:** RE Mark Wardell (Chairman); RE Ken Herbold (Vice Chairman); TE Lucas Tanner (Campus Minister); TE John Anderson; TE Keith Ledford; TE Bill Broderick