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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TUESDAY, FEB. 21, 2023

**United Church of Christ General Minister and President to Join New College Students at Feb. 28 Protest**

 The national leader of the United Church of Christ, the Rev. John Dorhauer, will be joining New College of Florida students before the school’s next board of trustees meeting in Sarasota, Feb. 28.

 The students are protesting Florida Governor Ron DeSantis’ plans to overhaul the small honors university into a more conservative example of higher education.

 As the General Minister and President of the Protestant denomination that helped fund the creation of the small liberal arts college in 1960, Dorhauer will express his concern with Florida Governor Ron DeSantis’ decision to recreate the school by appointing a conservative board of trustees and seeing a political ally hired as New College’s interim president.

 Dorhauer will speak at the NCF for Educational Freedom rally, organized by students opposing the leadership changes at New College of Florida.

**When:** Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2023

                11:00 a.m. – 2 p.m. ET

**Where:** The Harry Sudakoff Conference Center

                5845 General Dougher Pl, Sarasota, 34243

 Rev. Dorhauer will be accompanied by the pastors of the three United Church of Christ congregations in Sarasota: Congregational UCC, First Congregational UCC, and St. Andrew UCC, along with members of their churches.

 “St. Andrew United Church of Christ in Sarasota stands with New College and their historic commitment to intellectual freedom and the sharing of diverse ideas in and out of the classroom,” said the Rev. Mary Alice Mulligan. “We stand with the students as they struggle to be heard. We oppose efforts to limit New College students’ access to academic materials which provide a broad range of information and viewpoints, and which will expand their view of the world God created. We support Rev. Dorhauer and appreciate his willingness to speak on behalf of the denomination we love. We intend to be present at the time of the board meeting to show support for New College and its historic roots in the United Church of Christ.”

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*The*[***United Church of Christ***](https://www.ucc.org/)*, a mainline Protestant denomination, has more than 770,000 members and over 4,700 congregations nationwide. Headquartered in Cleveland, it is a church of many firsts: the first mainline denomination to ordain a woman, the first to ordain an openly gay man and the first predominantly white denomination to ordain an African American.*