

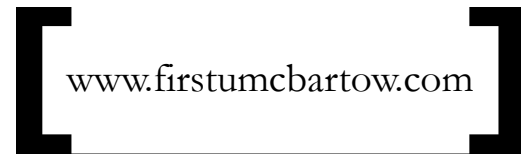


FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
BARTOW, FLORIDA

455 S Broadway Ave.  
Bartow, FL 33830

DECEMBER 2023

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Fax: 863-533-9023  
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https://www.facebook.com/fumcbartow  
YouTube: First Methodist Bartow



Building Bridges for Christ in Bartow

**IMPORTANT DATES IN THE FUTURE:**

**JANUARY 7TH, 10:30 AM: BAPTISM OF THE LORD SUNDAY &  
REAFFIRMATION OF OUR BAPTISMAL VOWS**

**12 PM: LUNCH BUNCH**

**JANUARY 21ST, 12 PM: 1ST QUARTER MISSIONS LUNCHEON  
ARGENTINA AND ZOE EMPOWERS**

**FEB 1ST-4TH: MEN'S EMMAUS**

**FEB 8TH-11TH: WOMEN'S EMMAUS**

**FEB 11TH, 12 PM: VALENTINE'S LUNCHEON**

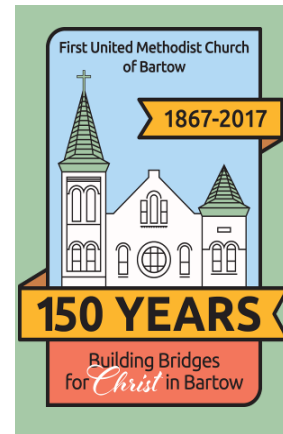
**FEB 14TH: ASH WEDNESDAY**

**BE IN PRAYER...**

**In this season when we celebrate the Gift of the Christ Child and His saving grace, let us be in prayer for all of those who seek to share the love of Christ as well as those who still need to know the love of Christ.**



Did you know we have a **Facebook** page and a **YouTube** page?  
Share with your friends as you "Follow" us and watch services at First United Methodist Church Bartow, Fl on Facebook and First Methodist Bartow on YouTube!



First United Methodist Church of Bartow

**GOOD NEWS**

VOLUME 27, ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2023

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

*-Romans 15:13*

Just before sitting down to begin writing, I was counting out candles for tiny Advent Wreath kits that will be handed out this Sunday. Advent is here and we are reminded with the wreath and candles of God's never-ending love for us and the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love that is made manifest in our lives through Christ who is the Light of the world.

Do we need all these symbols? Do we need the hymns? The words of the prophets? The sounds and silences of the season? I think we do. God gifts us with multiple experiences to encounter the good news of Christ. We need each opportunity, each method, each note, each message. In these varied ways, our God of the universe touches our lives and hearts and opens us to a greater understanding of the message of saving good news that is a source of great joy for all creation.

Every circle reminds us of God's eternal loving nature. Every evergreen is a testament to God's everlasting love for us. Each time we see a five pointed, Bethlehem Star we can notice it's human shape and remember that God came to be with us in Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. With each "Silent Night" we consider the faith of a young woman who trusted in God when confronted with the impossible. Like Mary, our souls magnify the Lord and we sing of our "Joy to the World" as the angels did so long ago.

With each candle lit, we remember that The Light of the World called us the light of the world. That means each day we are given another opportunity to participate in what God is doing in the world and be an example of hope, peace, joy, and love lived out.

Our new bishop has been preaching about hope a lot, and as one of the preachers at Annual Conference shared, this isn't a hope that is merely wishful thinking. The hope we profess as Christians is a hope grounded in Christ. It is a bone, body, soul deep knowing and faith that we are not alone, we are loved, and that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ and the empowering for witnessing to that love we experience through the Holy Spirit.

We live a hope that is active, that takes risks to seek peace; that witnesses to a joy that is deeper than the happiness of the moment; that loves recklessly by the world's standards; and that shines in the darkness. Fortunately, we live this life of light, love, joy, peace, and hope together. And, as the body of Christ we resist the darkness, fear, apathy, dissension, and despair that seek to overwhelm us.

We are created for this! We are created for a loving relationship with God and each other. Jesus commands us to love one another because He knows we are more complete together. So this Advent, as you decorate, sing, and worship; bring others on this journey with you. Share a meal, invite someone to church, meet to serve others, and pray together. With the Holy Spirit's help, you will know what to do. But don't wait! Someone desperately needs the hope, peace, joy and love you have to share.

With love in Christ,  
-Pastor Missy

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FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BARTOW

CHOIR NOTES, by Bonnie Allen



Mrs. Bonnie is out recovering from Appendicitis and our prayers are with her, Ken, her family and all the medical staff.

Because our Bonnie is so organized and such a planner, others (especially

MARGIE) are able to keep things going. Thank you to everyone for stepping up!

Having said all that, if you were considering participating in the Church Christmas Talent Extravaganza on Wed, Dec 13, please sign up in the Sanctuary or contact the Church ASAP! We need a few more acts! Serious or silly, share your gifts with your church family, friends, and neighbors!

**DORI'S DESTINATIONS:**

Dori Huntoon joins us seasonally and is active in her Floral Lakes community including overseeing their monthly Bus trips! We have been invited to join in the fun! Thank you, Dori!

All aboard! Bus trip coming up!

Date: **Thursday, January 18th, 2024**

Destination: **The Edison & Ford Estates in Ft Myers** *The trip includes round trip transportation, entrance & tours of the estates, and lunch & gratuity.*

Times: **7:45am to 5:00pm**, leaving from Floral Lakes.

Cost: **\$119 per person by January 4th.**

Checks are made out to Small World.

Please contact:

Dori  
989-860-2045  
huntoondoris@gmail.com

# Grace Notes

Have a "Thank you" Grace Note you want to share? Email the church office at [firstumcbartow@aol.com](mailto:firstumcbartow@aol.com)

### Thank you

to Jenny Brooks for sharing her talents and for making the beautiful tote bags for Vilma and Vivi in Mendoza!

**Thank You! Thank You! Thank you!**  
to the great team  
(Laura, Barbara, BJ, Carolyn  
& any others we missed)  
who planned, decorated, set & cleaned  
up the Thanksgiving luncheon.

Thank you also to all who brought food  
and took it to others!

*This is the body of Christ  
working together!*

*Bonnie sends her thanks for all  
your love and prayers!  
She loves you all and is sending  
her love right back to you!*

Many heartfelt thanks...

To you all for your prayers and support for both sides of my family and me during this season of loss.

Your care and love is appreciated more than words can ever express.

With love in Christ,  
-Missy

# DECEMBER 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 1st Sun of Advent <b>*10:30 am: Worship &amp; Communion</b> <b>Hanging of the Greens Service</b> 12pm Lunch Bunch At Ruby Tuesday Emmaus Luncheon	4 9:30-11:10 FMS Chapels 11:30 Women's Bible Study 870 Lila Street	5 8 am: Breakfast and Devotions Broadway Diner 9:30 am: Prayer Zoom 5:30 pm: Choir	6 12 pm; Sounds & Silences- Various Voices 6 pm: Wed Night Dinner <i>Pottluck &amp; chicken \$2</i> 6:45 pm: Bible Study in Library	7 2:30 pm Youth	8 6 pm: Bartow Christmas Parade FMS will have a float!	9
10 2nd Sun of Advent <b>*10:30 am: Worship</b> 2 pm Messiah Sing-A Long Practice 3 pm Messiah Sing-A Long Performance	11 9:30-11:10 FMS Chapels	12 8 am: Breakfast and Devotions Broadway Diner 9:30 am: Prayer Zoom 5:30 pm: Choir	13 12 pm; Sounds & Silences- Silent Singers 6 pm Wed Night Dinner <i>Salad, Lasagna, Garlic Bread, &amp; Dessert \$5</i> 7 pm Christmas Talent Extravaganza	14 2:30 pm Youth Christmas Party 6 pm: FMS Christmas Program	15	16 2-4 pm: Casa Vida 5th Anniversary
17 3rd Sun of Advent <b>*10:30 am: Worship through music: Choir Cantata &amp; March to the Manger</b>	18 FMS Closed 5pm Bingo Beef 'O' Brady's	19 FMS Closed 8 am: Breakfast and Devotions Broadway Diner 9:30 am: Prayer Zoom 5:30 pm: Choir	20 FMS Closed NO Wed. Night Dinner No Bible Study	21 FMS closed NO YOUTH	22 FMS closed	23
24 4th Sun of Advent <b>10:30 am: Worship</b> <b>5 pm Christmas Eve Service</b>	25 FMS & Office Closed Christmas Day Rejoice! The LIGHT has come into the world and darkness did not AND cannot overcome it!	26 FMS & Office Closed 8 am: Breakfast and Devotions Broadway Diner 9:30 am: Prayer Zoom 5:30 pm: Choir	27 FMS Closed NO WND No Bible Study	28 FMS Closed NO YOUTH	29 FMS Closed	30
31 <b>10:30 am: Worship</b>	JANUARY 1 FMS & Office Closed	JANUARY 2 FMS Closed	JANUARY 3 FMS Closed NO WND NO Bible Study	JANUARY 4 FMS Returns NO YOUTH	JANUARY 5	JANUARY 6

\* in the Sanctuary, on Facebook, and by Monday on YouTube



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BARTOW

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2- Tula Richardson 22- Keith Kreuger
3- Andrea Croom 25- Robert Lopez
4- Parker Pannebaker 26- Dano Rodolewicz
6- Maegan Neely 28- David Bergdoll
Carolyn Presnell Gwyn Phillips
7- Eldora Thorn 29- Mary Lopez
9- Alexis Whitehead 30- Holly Sutherland
15- John Hutto

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 10- George and Ina Ogden
11- Richard & Sue Lake
19- Alex & Charlotte Rogers
31- Ed & Eldora Thorn



Isaiah 9:6-7 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over His kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Please remember these in your prayers, visits, and other expressions of Christian love.

We pray for the chronically ill and homebound: Beverly A, Diane A, Jerry B, David B, Peg B, Shawn F, Karel H, Brandon H, Pat H, Keith K, Allye M, Heath P at his mom's!, Mary Beth P, Mary Ellen R, Lyn R Betty's cousin, Steve R, Richard- Beverly E's friend, BJ S, Louise T, Jean & Dick T, Bill & Joan W, Patricia W, Johnny & Hilda Z
-Leaders of OUR COUNTRY & everywhere to do God's will
-Everyone affected by COVID, other sickness, repressive governments, gun violence, & natural & human caused disasters
Serving in the Military:
Jeremy B, Victor O, Joseph S, Bryson T
Missionaries and Others:
Pioneer Missions, Indonesia: Christian, Dawn & Joshua William; Sister Church: Iglesia Metodista de Santa Cruz, Cuba; Missionaries in Angola: Leo & Cleivy Garcia, Kutela Katembo, Serguey and Graciela Espinosa; Iglesia Evangelica Metodista Argentina Pastor Doug Williams; Our Pastor, Church, & School Staff; District Supt. Emily Hotho, and our Bishop Tom Berlin

Don't Forget! The Newsletter is available in a variety of ways! Printed copies are on the table in the back of the Sanctuary, in the Ushers' Room to the left of the Sanctuary entrance (facing the altar), and in the Church Office in the Education Building. It can be found in digital format in the EMAIL the church sends out with it attached each month AND the website: firstumcbartow.com. If you wish to receive a newsletter by mail, please contact the church office at firstumcbartow@aol.com or 863-533-0904. Thank you!

Large print bulletins can easily be made! Contact the church office if you would prefer a LARGE PRINT BULLETIN!

PLEASE NOTE

Information for the January newsletter should be submitted by Friday, December 15th. Thank You for helping us send out the Good News in a timely manner. The Good News is published monthly by FUMC-Bartow 455 S Broadway Ave, Bartow, FL 33830.

March to the Manger: Closing the Gap Sunday, Dec 17

As hopefully all of you read in the letter you received from the church, we are shifting the emphasis of March to the Manger, our end of year giving campaign, to help close the gap between our current giving and expenditures. This gap is not a result of extravagant spending or poor stewardship, we are simply in a time of transition when we are growing ministries within our post-Covid reality.

By being fiscally responsible and asking for you to pray and consider an extra financial gift to the church on Dec 17, we are doing what we can to pull less from our rainy day fund. This gives all our members an opportunity to keep the church financially healthy as we continue the work of Christ in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. The work to the world begins at the manger. Join us!

Connectional Giving...

Connectional Giving helps fund ministries like ...

Clergy Support Fund The Clergy Support Fund provides funding for the expenses borne by the Florida Conference to sustain, support, hold accountable, and nurture our clergy. Our system of appointed clergy is an essential part of our connectional United Methodist Church.

The Clergy Support Fund is used in the following ways:

- Clergy Benefits and Equitable Compensation - The local church is the primary salary-paying unit for pastors, but the Florida Conference pays a variety of clergy benefits and expenses, including a substantial subsidy for equitable compensation.
Clergy-Related Conference Boards - Pays the meeting and program cost of our Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM).
Bishop's Office and Residence - Pays the Episcopal office and Episcopal residence expenses which are not paid by the General Church (through the Episcopal Fund).
District superintendents and Cabinet - Pays for the salaries, benefits, and business expenses of our eight district superintendents; and the meeting-related and other costs of the Cabinet.
Judicial Process - Pays for the cost of the conference committee on Investigations and Judicial Procedures, which handles difficult clergy matters. It also pays the Conference's costs related to clergy suspensions during the investigative and judicial process.

-Dorothy Tucker

SHARING OUR BLESSINGS

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house." "Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the flood-gates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." -Malachi 3:10

Want to give online? It's easy and free! Talk to your bank about how you can ZELLE your tithe, offerings, and other gifts directly from your bank account to the church's bank account. Use the email address firstumcbartow@aol.com to give!

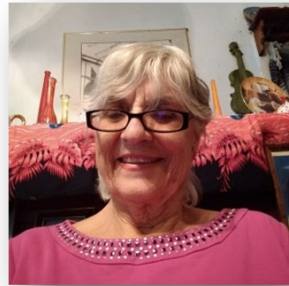


Looking for Offering Envelopes? We are using leftover unused offering envelopes that we have from former years. Because of this AND because it makes less work for our wonderful counters, please make sure that your: name, amounts, and what you are giving toward are clearly marked on the outside of your envelope. Thank you!



### ACROSS THE COURTYARD

by Nadine Waters Robbins, Church Historian



December 2023

This month, one of FUMC's "Happy Holiday Happenings" is the "rebirth" of the Annual Talent Show. Over the years, under the direction of Bonnie Allen or Pam Wyant, FUMCers and friends showcased a variety of assorted acts and abilities. After a few years hiatus, and "never saying no to Bonnie", this event returns to the First Methodist stage.

Some twenty years ago, "Christmas Potpourri- Talents and Treats of First Methodist Church of Bartow" featured the dynamic duo of Heath Peterson and Ted Wright as Masters of Ceremonies. They constantly amused the audience with their quips and comments on presenters and their well-known "top ten" lists. (In future years the multitalented Brandon Pickard took his turn as creative show-host.)

In 2003 FUMC performers didn't include the Andrews Sisters, the Pointer Sisters, Heart or the McGuire Sisters, however our local crowd was graced by the singing, dancing, and instrumental gifts of the Wyant Sisters (Jack's girls) and the Locke Sisters (Melissa Hick's daughters).

"A Christmas Song" was performed by the so-named "Siamese Wyant Twins". (Was that Saramary, Saramanda, or Mandamary???) Family acts were prominent with "The Chin Family Johnson" (Chad's crew) and assorted acts by the Allen family (Bonnie, Ken, and Jennifer Gilmore). My dad, Wendell Waters and I collaborated on our rendition of "Gonna Lay Down My Burden" (AKA "Down By The Riverside").

Resident musicians Richard Lake on the trumpet and Bill Wyant on the piano took the crowd to a "Winter Wonderland". Our children's Choir (some who now have children of their own such as "new mommy" Amy Whitehurst Pickard) wowed their parents and

friends with timely tunes.

To perk up the crowd and add some more hilarity to the festivity HenRoy BellLowefonte (AKA Pastor Roy Lowe) with his "A Calypso Christmas Song" (Don't ask) had everyone "rolling in the aisles".

As you experience the return of the Bartow First United Methodist Church Talent Show, as in years past, you will be entertained, enthralled and expecting the unexpected. No resumes' or tryouts are required. So join the fun and fellowship of the Talent Show as a participant or spectator with the hope that this will continue as an annual event at FUMC.

**Contact the Church office to sign up for the Talent Show!  
December 13th at 6pm.**

**FUMC in Ministry with FMS... We are working to create a Craft Time for Elementary children on Wednesdays to start in January.** Interested? Contact the office, sign up in the Sanctuary, or talk to Pastor Missy!



### Poinsettias

**\$10 each**  
(approx. 2 qt pot)

Please contact the church office at 863-533-0904 or [fristumcbartow@aol.com](mailto:fristumcbartow@aol.com) to order your poinsettia(s)...

*In honor of someone,  
In memory of someone,  
or to the Glory of God.*

**Orders are due Wed, Dec 6!**

Thank you!

## SHARING MINISTRY IDEAS AND LEARNING ABOUT EACH OTHER



Understanding the local economy: Visiting a Winery and Olive Farm. Two MAJOR industries in Mendoza. Thank you, Pastor Doug for hosting us!



We were invited to Emilio and Antoinela's wedding. This was a huge honor. Emi is Viviana's son. Viviana leads the neighborhood outreach ministry in Barrio Patron Santiago. We left at 1:30 am... before the dancing started!

Worshipping on Sunday. People from Iowa, Florida, Michigan, Argentina, and Brazil... meeting at Christ's table in Mendoza. This is the body of Christ!



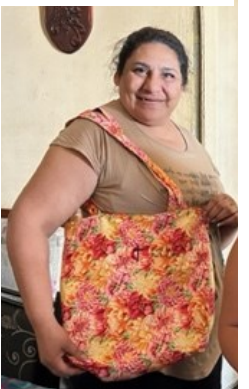
← Lunch at Vilma and Willie Bravo's with hiking afterwards to look out over Mendoza. Vilma helps lead children's ministry and Outreach. Their daughter Michelle works part-time for the MEC and was translating for the other group in Rosario.



Then to a folklore show to experience the varied cultures of the country!



Vivi LOVES her new tote made by Jenny Brooks



↑ Back to CAS to meet the Art Class and to catch some Folk dance practice by the students



Making → sandwiches for the Pastoral Mario feeding ministry with Dori, Vilma, Vivi, Hilda, & Teresa



Pastoral Mario! Ministering and feeding people from Mendoza and beyond!



Last night in Mendoza... Meeting with the Junta (Steering Committee) to get to know each other better, talk about ministry, and share ideas.





Dori and Missy arriving in Buenos Aires with Avy from Hyde Park UMC



Meeting Pastor Amarillo and Bishop Americo at First Methodist Evangelical Church of Buenos Aires



Dinner together with our entire group with six Florida UM Churches represented!



Our big group at Constitucion MEC, meeting Pastor Pinto. Guided by Alberto from the Bishop's office who learned a new saying: "herding cats"



← Spending time with women who had been trafficked and learning more about each other

Meeting some of the ladies' children, too!



Visiting EX-ESMA: a museum created in a former secret interrogation center to help teach about the 30,000 disappeared



Outside EX-ESMA: The obelisks read... Justice Truth Memory



Art and creativity are strongly supported in Argentina, including painting underpasses!



← Helping with Chapel at Juana Manso School in a port area of BA  
Breakfast on the bus after missing our flight! →



Safely arrived in Mendoza! Just in time for group project day at Colegio Albert Schweitzer. Here's one on the Black Plague!



← Making pipe-cleaner rings!  
Hosting an Asado (a grill-out) for the leadership of Colegio Albert Schweitzer to build strong relationships



# First Methodist School



**STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math**  
Older students helping the younger ones with a project!

**FMS Turkey Art work!**



Preschool Art with the letter R

PIE tasting! **YUMMY!!!!**



Studying Hard!!!



**FUMC & FMS Growing Strong Together**



**AND... MORE TO COME!!!**





**WEEKLY REMINDERS**

**Breakfast and Devotions**



**Tuesdays at 8 am**

**Broadway Diner**

**Everyone is invited!**

**Prayer Zoom**

Every Tuesday morning at 9:30 am you are invited to join us for prayer via zoom video or voice call. Please call or email the church office for the link/phone number! If you can't join us in those ways, please join us in prayer in one accord.

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNERS**

at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall  
RSVP by Monday noon each week,  
**THANK YOU!**

Dec 6: Covered dish \$2

Dec 13: Lasagna, Salad, Garlic Bread, and dessert \$5

**NO Bible Study or Wed Night Dinner**  
**December 20th, 27th or**  
**January 3rd**



*Enjoy the time with family and friends!*

**Youth meets**

**Thursdays, 2:30 -5 pm**

*Interested? Contact the Church Office!*

**Fellowship Events**



**Ruby Tuesday Lunch Bunch**

**Dec 3 after worship**

**First Sundays of the month, 12pm**

*RSVP to the Church Office by Wed Nov. 29 before 2pm at 863-533-0904 or firststumcbartow@aol.com.*

**Mark your Calendars!**



**Silver Saints and Choir Christmas Party**  
**Sunday Dec 17, 5 pm**

*At the Huffs!*  
**RSVP to the church office by the 6th.**



Our Thanksgiving Luncheon was great fun AND we took to-go packs to folks to share the love of Christ beyond our walls!

**ARGENTINA**

**First Methodist Evangelical Church of Mendoza and Albert Schweitzer School**

**Situation:** We are building a relationship with Primera (First) Metodista (Methodist) Evangelica (Evangelical) Iglesia (Church) de (of) Mendoza and Albert Schweitzer Escuela (school), the church's affiliated school. We are fortunate to be working with several people in Argentina who help us understand the cultural nuances between our countries. While we have taken some items to Mendoza, most of what we are doing is getting to know other brothers and sisters in Christ and learning from each other about how we do ministry in our communities.

**Response:** First, **be in prayer** for PMEI de Mendoza and Colegio Albert Schweitzer!

If you would like to **share ministry ideas** with church ministry leaders, talk to Pastor Missy about how to do that.

If you feel called to **give financially**, Checks made out to the church should have **Argentina** on the memo line. We will be having a Missions luncheon in January. Further, please **be in prayer over joining a group going in late June**

Want something more hands on than money, but not quite hands on all the way to Argentina?

We are collecting sewing notions, including **zippers and snaps, etc.** for the women's sewing group and **thumb drives as well as gently used laptops and tablets** for the students at Albert Schweitzer.

They can be dropped off in the Sanctuary on Sundays or at the church office during the week.

**Sister Church in Cuba**

**Situation:** We have a sister church in Cuba!

We seek to support the Iglesia Metodista de Santa Cruz with prayer, visits when possible, and financial gifts to help with their ministries. Cuba's economic situation is dire and basic necessities are expensive, much less the small extras that help make ministry easier.

**Response:** Continue to lift our sister church, Iglesia Metodista de Santa Cruz, in **prayer**. Make a **financial gift** through our church with "Cuba Sister Church" on the memo line and/or on the directions on your giving envelope.

**EAST ANGOLA**

**Situation:** East Angola is alive with the love of Christ, but the area faces an uphill battle as the country continues to build and rebuild infrastructure after decades of war. Below we listed just some of the ministries that are ongoing in East Angola. Our own Florida Conference is in covenant with East Angola to support ministries through prayer as well as various forms of physical support.

**EAST ANGOLA/ FLORIDA COVENANT**

**Response:** Pray and give to East Angola/FL Cov.

**QUESSUA CHILDREN'S PROGRAM**

**Response:** Pray and give to Quessua Children

**CLEAN WATER**

**Response:** Pray and give to E. Angola Clean Water

**Serguey & Graciela Espinosa, Missionaries**

**Response:** Pray and give to Adv. Spec #100130 (include their names)

**Leo & Cleivy Garcia, Missionaries**

**Response:** Pray and give to Adv. Spec #3022182

**Kutela Katembo, Missionary**

**Response:** Pray and give to Adv. Spec #3022031



# BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

Our missions and outreach are not simply seasonal.

These ministries and more happen year round.

Yet in this season of gratitude and anticipation as we prepare our hearts anew for the gift of Christ, it seems especially appropriate to celebrate these ways we are invited to participate in God's glorious way of love and care for all people.

We hope you will be in prayer for these ministries throughout the year.

## JACKETS AND BLANKETS

**Situation:** As the colder months approach, many children and adults will find last year's jacket is gone or too small. These last months have meant choosing to buy food or clothes for many. People who are working, on fixed

incomes, or living on the margins for many reasons are finding it difficult to buy necessities, much less a blanket or coat that has become a luxury. Those of you with families know that children often need a new coat every year!

**Response:** Through the end of January, you are invited to bring in NEW OR GENTLY USED jackets and blankets and place your items in the basket provided in the Sanctuary. Everything brought in will be distributed in our area.

## SOCKS AND UNDERWEAR

**Situation:** We have families and individuals in our area who do not have a permanent home. They might stay in a hotel or with family/ friends for a short time and then relocate. Many of them don't have the opportunity to wash their clothes regularly. This leads to poor health conditions. Even if they have to wear their other clothes for longer periods, with new socks and underwear people can stay healthier! Studies have even shown that foot health leads to less ER visits in homeless populations.

**Response:** Bring new socks and underwear of any size to the sanctuary and place them in the giant stockings marked sock OR underwear, as appropriate! Pray for those who do not always know where they will lay their heads.

## LUNCH FOODS

**Situation:** With inflation, the cost of living has caused a lot of families to have difficulty getting the food they need. Many have suffered other material losses because of storms, health, or other situations.

The Bartow Church Service Center provides bag lunches for the needy daily as well as other lunch foods to families and others in need who come by.

Our church also creates a few small bags to keep on hand for emergency needs.

**Response:** Be in prayer and bring in nonperishable lunch foods such as peanut butter, jelly, fruit cups, protein or breakfast bars.

## ZOE Empowers DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP WITH TOGETHERNESS GROUP OF RWANDA

**Situation:** Due to the AIDs epidemic, war and violence, COVID, and other reasons many children are orphaned in Africa. Family members, friends, and villages do what they can, but many orphans are left to fend for themselves through panhandling or day labor. They are often also taking care of younger siblings. ZOE Project is a three year, Christ-centered, small group (of children and youth) based empowerment and entrepreneurial training ministry.

**Response:** Be in prayer for and watch for any special asks for ZOE. Especially at the January Quarterly Mission Luncheon. You can make checks to the church with Adv Spec #113017 or ZOE on the memo line.

# UpComing Special Events, Seasonal Services, and Sunday Worship

## December Dates!

*Dec 3: 1st Sunday of Advent- Hope*  
10:30 am: *Hanging of the Greens with Communion*



*Wed, Dec 6, 12 pm: Sounds & Silences* Various Musicians  
*Poinsettia orders due!*



*Dec 10: 2nd Sunday of Advent- Peace*  
10:30 am *Worship*  
2 pm: *Messiah Sing-a-long Practice*  
3 pm: *Messiah Sing-a-long Performance*

*Wed, Dec 13, 12 pm: Sounds & Silences- Silent Singers*  
6 pm: *Wed Night Dinner*  
Menu: Salad, Lasagna, Garlic Bread, Dessert \$5 RSVP by Mon. Dec 11  
& *Talent Show Extravaganza*

*Dec 17: 3rd Sunday of Advent- Joy*  
10:30 am: *Choir Cantata*  
& *March to the Manger: Closing the Gap Challenge*  
*Bring an extra financial gift to help us meet our 2023 financial obligations without pulling from our rainy day fund!*



5 pm: *Silver Saints and Choir Christmas Party*

*Dec 24: 4th Sunday of Advent- Love*  
10:30 am *Worship*



5 pm: *Christmas Eve -Light Lessons, Carols, Communion & Candlelight*



*Sun, Dec 31, 10:30 am: Worship*



Ways we are the body of Christ in Jerusalem through Nurture & Discipleship

**WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDIES**  
**DECEMBER 10, 11:30 AM.**  
870 Lila Street

*All ladies are welcome to join us!  
Bring a sandwich or salad. We will have soup.*

**The WE CARE**  
Congregational Care Team



You may have noticed that we have had a lot of people for whom we have been in prayer recently. Many times these individuals or their families could use a meal, visit, or someone to help with transportation to appointments. **This team is awesome, but we can not do it all without you!** If you could help or know someone who could benefit from any of these ministries, please contact Dorothy Tucker or the church office.

Thank you!



Happy Mommas and Babies!

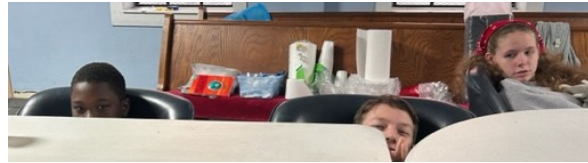
**Wednesday Night Bible Study**  
6:45 pm in the Library

**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY**  
Sunday Mornings



Children's Moment with Mrs. Ina!

**First UMC Youth Group is here**



**Thursdays, 2:30 - 5 pm**



More fun than you can shake a pool noodle at!  
*Interested? Contact the Church Office!*

**THE UPPER ROOM**

**DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE**

**These are available for you to pick up from the table in the back of the sanctuary or in the office.**

The small pocket version is \$1 and the large magazine addition is \$2.

Ways we are the body of Christ in Judea, Samaria, & beyond through Mission Outreach Evangelism!

**Christmas Caroling**

**MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD**  
*Come join us as we celebrate the season with our voices with our shut ins.*



We will meet in the parking lot of the education building Friday, December 15th at 6:00. You do not need a beautiful voice, just a desire to spread some Christmas cheer. We will enjoy some fellowship afterwards with hot chocolate and cookies. *Please call the office to let us know if you will be participating, as we don't want to leave without you!*

**BARTOW COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER NEWS**

Saved by Bartow High School Cheerleading Squad!

The Tuesday before Thanksgiving they bagged and handed out food. With many regular volunteers out due to illness or surgery, the squad was a God-send helping out where needed!

Look like fun? Talk to Dorothy Tucker!



We have been invited to help celebrate the **5th Anniversary of Casa Vida**, a mission of the United Methodist Church in Winter Haven at their Open House on

**Sat, Dec 16 from 2-4 pm**  
**3657 S. Rifle Range Road.**

*Please keep this amazing ministry in your prayers!*



**Coming In January!**

*Kathy Wood will have a yard sale. Money raised goes to purchase food to feed hungry folks. Donations can be left in the screened in porch at her house.*



**OUR SISTER CHURCH IN CUBA NEEDS OUR PRAYERS!**

**THEY ARE ASKING FOR PRAYER SO THAT EVERYTHING NECESSARY WILL GO THROUGH SO THAT THEY HAVE A NEW ROOF.**

As many of you know, with our help, our Sister Church in Cuba, Santa Cruz del Sur, has been working on getting their church roof repaired. It looks like they are ready to start the repair, but desperately need our prayers. They have located the people who will sell the roof shingles. Additionally the same people will transport them. They also have the person who will install them. However, because of the political situation in Cuba, even something as simple as having a roof put on is difficult.

**THEY ALSO NEED PRAYER THAT THE WATER SYSTEM TO THE AREA WILL BE FIXED SOON!**

Please also keep them in prayer since they have had no running water for the last couple of weeks. The government run water system lost a pump motor that feeds part of Santa Cruz del Sur and the government is not responding to the broken motor. The church filled three large water containers and the reserves are dwindling. Church members are taking containers in wheel barrows to areas that have water to bring back to the church.

Pastor Alexis said, "We continue to have faith in God, who can perform miracles. We will not stop and will continue to march in the Name of Jesus Christ. Luke 18:27"