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FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
BARTOW, FLORIDA

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DECEMBER 2022

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Building Bridges for Christ in Bartow

IMPORTANT DATES IN THE FUTURE

Sun, Jan 15, 10:30 am:

Mike Williams from Lighthouse Ministries will be with us sharing in Worship

Wed, Jan 18, 6:45 pm:

New Bible Study starts: A Disciple's Path

Sun, Jan 22, 10:30 am:

More about our Baptism

Sun, Jan 29, 10:30 am:

Doug Williams, UM Missionary from Mendoza, Argentina will be sharing in Worship

WATCH FOR...

Long Term Planning Event on a Saturday in early February

Ash Wednesday is February 22

BE IN PRAYER...

Would you be willing to share a story about your faith? This Spring we will be asking for volunteers to share brief witnesses along certain themes as part of our Worship. You have a story of hope someone needs to hear. Please be in prayer, as it might need to be heard this Spring in Worship!



But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people."
-Luke 2: 10

Happy New Year! Some of you are thinking that the busyness of this holy season has gone to my head and we have skipped Christmas, but no! We are actually at the beginning of our Christian year! November 27, the first Sunday of Advent this year, is the first Sunday on the Christian Calendar. We ended the year celebrating Thanksgiving and Christ the King Sunday. We thanked our God for our many blessings, the greatest of which is the love and resurrected life we experience in Christ when we open our hearts to Jesus. We sang, we heard and meditated on the Word, we prayed, we blessed food, and then... we ate food together and took it to others! In all these things we followed the lead of the only one we call King of our lives, Jesus.

Now we start a new year. A year that begins with hope, with peace, with joy, and with love. A year that will bring choices. Choices to follow the way of the Christ-child, a way of justice, mercy, and grace or... to follow the ways of this world, a way of oppression, fear, and judgment. As the choir practiced our Advent and Christmas anthems, I was struck by the importance of what we do as Christians sharing the light of Christ into the world. We carry a candle burning with the love of God to people who may have only ever known the darkness of judgment and derision. We are given the awesome responsibility of putting peace as precious cargo into each others hands. With each moment we may choose to be Christ to another or something less. In choosing to be Christ, we give the gift of hope and joy in place of the negativity that seems to pervade our world right now. This is vital work we do.

As we prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ-child, most of us do not wait as people who have not experienced God's love in our lives. We join in the celebrations of this season as people who seek to be reminded of who and whose we are. We anticipate the peace in the prayers, joy in the carols, love in the community of faith, and light that lifts and shatters the darkness. We are poised to burst into peals of "Joy to the World" and raise our voices about glorious eggshells in "Angels We Have Heard On High." But not everyone is waiting with excitement. Some dread this season. The pressures of getting and spending, of pretending that everything is ok for family gatherings, take their toll on many. Even on those of us who know the real reason for the season. And some, some don't understand what all the hoopla is about.

While we talk about miracles, angels, shepherds, hope, peace, love, and joy we are being watched and judged by those who desperately need to experience the grace of Christ. And if they don't see us acting like Christ to one another, they will keep going, keep looking. And they would be right to. As followers of Christ, we are to be known by our love.

To choose hope, offer peace, operate with joy, and love as if life depended on it is part of what we can do and be as Christ-followers. Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love are not things that just happen. They are all consequences of the light of the world who shines in the darkness. They are all possible because God made a choice to love us even in our brokenness. God is love and chooses love. We are made in God's image and empowered by the Holy Spirit to love like God With Us did, to love like Jesus... to live like Jesus. Love is a choice, a hard choice. Ask Jesus who washed his betrayer's feet. Yet aren't we glad Jesus chose love? So many people desperately need to meet the love of Christ in us. We are given a gorgeous responsibility, let us meet it without fear and with joy that is boundless. Merry Christmas!

In the Love, Grace, and Peace of Christ,
-Pastor Missy

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FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BARTOW

CHOIR NOTES, by Bonnie Allen



Choir news December 2022

Did this year really go by that fast? It just seems to me that I am in a whirlwind spinning from this to that with one day blending into the next so quickly. The Christmas Season is upon

us, and I pray that we can take some time to be quiet, and really enjoy this special time in our lives.

I pray that we will all understand the immense gift that God has given us, and to live a life pleasing to him.

I am reading a Joel Osteen journal book entitled. "A Time for Us". Although many people criticize Joel by saying that he is giving false hope, I think he has some great insights and inspiration for his readers. One quote says, "The greatest difficulty comes before the birth of a dream." I am seeing that played out in my life right now. I also think about our church with its dwindling attendance. I know that we all are praying for God's direction and I know that Pastor Missy is giving all she has to give. Which is quite a lot!! Her sermons are packed with teaching and truth. She is very organized, and hard working. Her positive can-do attitude is beautiful and inspiring. So we wait expectantly for God's people to come and be filled with His Holy Spirit. We are also very thankful for everyone in our church family whether present or absent. We are bound together in the wonderful love of Jesus.

We will be having many of our traditional services, but also some that are quite unique to our congregation. I really want to encourage everyone to come on Dec. 7th, at noon, to our one and only Sounds and Silences. This year will feature a group from the Carpenter's home with Pat McMahon as one of the soloists. Their director lost her ability to sing, so she created a group called the Silent Singers. They will perform many of the beautiful Christmas songs that we all love, with videos and more. Please come and support them if you are able.

A beautiful story is one of great difficulty resulting in a great surprise and blessing. Pat McMahon found that the mobile home that he and his Mother shared was filled with mold. His Mom passed away and he became ill and moved to The Estates of Carpenter's. Pat, if you remember, had lost a leg in an accident when he was young. He became a professor, and when his Mom became sick, he came back to take care of her. He had never been married. After he moved to Carpenter's home, he met a delightful woman, and they are now engaged to be married. I think they call that a God-Wink! So sweet and wonderful.

God is so good! We never know the extent of His love for us.

All of our dates will be listed on the calendar, and our hope is that we will see you all at worship and beyond.

Merry Christmas and a very happy and healthy new year!
Lots of love and prayers always,
Bonnie

WEEKLY REMINDERS

Monday Morning Prayer Zoom and Call
Every Monday morning at 9 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! Even if you can't join us in those ways, please join us in prayer however you are able each Monday at 9 am.

All are welcome, ladies and gentlemen! We meet in the fellowship hall on the first and third Tuesday of the month at 5:30 pm. We share a program and tips to encourage and support each other to reach our goals.

FELLOWSHIP DINNERS
Wednesdays at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall

If you would like to help with dinner set up or clean-up, we could use you! Please call Carolyn at 863-712-8885.

December 7th: Covered Dish + fried chicken

December 14th: Turkey, sweet potato casserole, broccoli casserole, rolls *Bring a holiday dessert to share.

December 21st: Enjoy the time with your family!

December 28th: Enjoy the time with your family!

Dec 7 -Last Spiritual Gifts within the Body of Christ Bible Study at 6:45pm!

DECEMBER 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 2nd Advent- Peace 10:30 am: Worship on Facebook or in Sanctuary 2 pm: Messiah Practice in Sanctuary 3 pm: Messiah Selections Community Concert in Sanctuary	5 9:30-11 am FMS Chapel Services 11:30 am Women's Bible Study 870 Lila Street	6 5:15 pm Choir- Choir Rm 5:30 pm TOPS Mtg - FH	7 12 pm Sounds and Silence In Sanctuary 6 pm Fellowship Dinner Covered Dish + Chicken 6:45 pm Bible Study	8	9 6 pm Christmas Parade	10
11 3rd Advent-Joy 10:30 am: Chrismon & Creche Service on Facebook or in Sanctuary 5 pm: 50 + Christmas Party (1895 Hermosa)	12 9:30-11 am FMS Chapel Services 6 pm Church Council Meeting	13 5:15 pm Choir- Choir Rm	14 6 pm Fellowship Dinner Turkey, sweet potato & broccoli casseroles, rolls *Bring a holiday dessert to share. 6:45 pm Christmas Music Extravaganza	15 6:30 pm Bartow High School Choir Performance in Sanctuary	16	17
18 4th Advent- Love 10:30 am: March to the Manger Service on Facebook or in Sanctuary	19	20 5:15 pm Choir- Choir Rm 5:30 pm TOPS Mtg- FH	21	22	23	24 5 pm: Christmas Eve Service of Carols, Communion, & Candlelight
FMS out for Christmas Break						
25 Christmas Day 10:30 am: Christmas Carol Service on Facebook or in Sanctuary	26 Church Office Closed	27 5:30 pm Choir- Choir Rm	28	29	30	31
FMS out for Christmas Break						

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BARTOW

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1- Greg Fitzgerald | 22- Keith Kreuger |
| 2- Tula Richardson | 25- Robert Lopez |
| 6- Andrea Croom | 26- Dano Rodolewicz |
| 7- Parker Pannebaker | 27- Mary Grose |
| 9- Maegan Neely | 28- David Bergdoll |
| Carolyn Presnell | Gwyn Phillips |
| 10- Eldora Thorn | 29- Mary Lopez |
| 12- Alexis Whitehead | 30- Holly Sutherland |
| 15- John Hutto | |

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 15 George & Ina Ogden
16 Richard & Sue Lake
19 Alex & Charlotte Rogers
30 Adrian & Jan Jackson

CHRISTMAS CARDS!!! A GREAT WAY TO GIVE TOWARD THE BUILDING FUND!

Our very own Trish Pfeiffer made some beautiful Christmas Cards of stained glass windows. For \$25, you can purchase a pack of 12 cards. All the proceeds go to the church building fund.

*These are limited quantities and are available in the church office.

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

Not at home:

Mary Grose (New Horizon, WH)

With medical issues:

Beverly Albritton, Jerry Barber, David Bergdoll, Ron Burke, Floyd Davis, Charles Colvin, Ed & Dee Dean, Olivia Driscoll, Jackie Ewing, Judy Gay, Sam, Max-ine, Peter, and Jane (friends of Tommy), Karel Hammer, Brandon Hess, Pat Huff, Connor Johnson, Keith Krueger, Allye Martin, Susan Melson, Steve & Tula Richardson, Brenda Roberts (Ps. Missy's mom), Dick & Joyce Sarvis, Lynn Sheetz, Betty Shepherd (Elsa's aunt), BJ Simpson, Louise Taylor, Jean & Dick Thompson, Donna Wagner, Ken Wetherington, Kathy Wood, Bill & Joan Wright, Johnny & Hilda Ziefel Family

Please pray also for all the caregivers that serve unconditionally for our loved ones and friends.

In military: Jeremy Brister, Victor Orem, Joseph Szlezak

Others needing prayers:

Pastor & Staff

District Supt. Emily Hotho, Bishop Ken Carter
Pioneer Missions, Indonesia: Christian, Dawn & Joshua Williams

Sister Church: Iglesia Metodista de Santa Cruz, Cuba
Missionaries in Angola: Leo & Cleivy Garcia, Kutela Katembo, Serguey and Graciela Espinosa.

Iglesia Evangelica Metodista Argentina
FUMC-Bartow as we continue to be the hands, feet, and heart of Christ in the world.

PLEASE NOTE

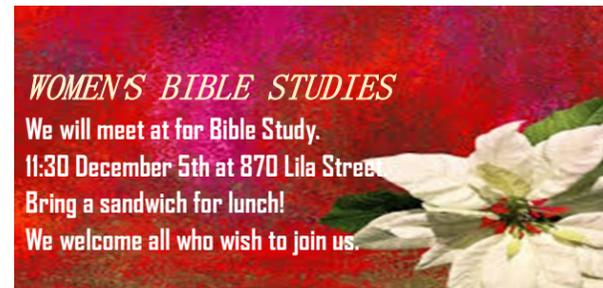
Information for the December newsletter should be submitted by **Friday, December 16.**

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.

Don't Forget!

The **Newsletter** is available in a variety of ways! Printed copies are 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

Discipleship and Fellowship Events



Lunch Bunch

Join us monthly for food, fun, and fellowship!
We will have a 50+ Christmas Party at Pat and Elsa's
1895 Hermosa Ave. December 11, 5pm
RSVP to Elsa H 863-632-2133. Thank you!

UpComing Special Sundays & Events

Sun, Nov 27

First Sunday of Advent– Hope

HANGING OF THE GREENS Service

We will celebrate the beginning of Advent with a gorgeous, interactive service of scripture, music, and sharing the meaning behind so many of our beautiful decorations. Sign up to read in the Sanctuary or church office.

Sun, Dec 4

10:30am Second Sunday of Advent– Peace

Messiah Selections in Sanctuary

2 pm: Open practice for *Messiah* Selections

3 pm: Community Choir Selections from Handel's *Messiah*

Wed, Dec 7

NOON- Silent Singers special Advent Worship

Join us as the Silent Singers from the Carpenter's Home help us prepare us for this blessed season. While not a resident of Carpenter's Home, Pat McMahan, who has helped so much in our ministry here, will be one of the featured soloists.

Hope to see you there!

6 pm Dinner & 6:45 pm Last Bible Study of 2022

Sun, Dec 11

**10:30 am The Third Sunday of Advent– Joy
Chrismon & Creche Service**

This Advent we will have another special Service to deepen our understanding of this sacred time of year. In our Chrismon & Creche Service we will look at the background and meaning behind our Nativity and Chrismons.

5 pm 50s and Over Christmas Party

Over 50? YOU are invited to Elsa & Pat's home at 1895 Hermosa Ave to celebrate the blessed season. Please bring a gift in the \$5-\$10 range that you would like to receive for a gift exchange.

Wed, Dec 14, 6 pm

*Last Fellowship Dinner of 2022 -bring a dessert!
Christmas Music Extravaganza begins at 6:45 pm*

Sun, Dec 18

*The Fourth Sunday of Advent– Love
And March to the Manger*

**Christmas Eve Service, 5 pm
Carols, Communion, & Candlelight**

Join us for a beautiful service that blends traditional and newer elements together in a moving Lessons and Carols Service that incorporates communion and candlelight.

CHRISTMAS

Sun, Dec 25, 10:30 am

Christmas Worship & Carol Sing

Sun, Jan 1, 10:30 am

Epiphany Sunday & Wesleyan Covenant Prayer

We will celebrate the revelation of God's redeeming love to all the world & humbly respond to the gift of Christ with our lives.

Sun, Jan 8, 10:30 am

*Baptism of the Lord Sunday &
Reaffirmation of our Baptismal Vows*

As we remember Jesus' Baptism, we reaffirm our own baptisms, God's claim on us, the Holy Spirit's empowering, and the freedom we have in Christ to live according to God's will.

NOON- Emmaus Lunch and Planning Meeting

Sat, Jan 14, 5 pm

Emmaus Gathering, Meal, & Worship

All potential pilgrims are invited! We will start in the fellowship hall with a meal & follow with worship in the sanctuary.

Sun, Jan 15, 10:30 am

*Worship with Mike Williams from Lighthouse
Ministries*

ACROSS THE COURTYARD

by Nadine Waters Robbins, Church Historian



Recently Bartow has weathered two major named storms, as many of us deal with the after-effects of Ian and Nicole and look for a “silver lining” in the dark clouds, we sometimes hear the harsh words, “Just get over it.”

One of the “silver linings” that our FUMC congregation lately experienced was the in-person return of one of our “Golden Girls”, Beverly Albritton, who had been joining us online. In a May 2001 FUMC Newsletter Beverly shared her encounter as a participant in “The Cooper River Run”, an annual event whose logo sports appropriately, “Cooper River Run– Get Over It.”

“The Cooper River Bridge Run in Charleston, South Carolina was held on Saturday April 7, 2001. The Sunday Charleston paper reported 27,000 people entered the annual run/walk... It is such an interesting event because you are actually running/ walking across the twin spans of the Cooper River Bridge. One Span has an elevation of 164 feet and the other... 155 feet. It is the most awesome experience when you reach the top of the span where it actually feels like the bridge is swaying. My children... My grandsons... a family friend... and I participated in the event this year. Last year (we) entered the 4 mile walk and enjoyed it so much that we decided to enter the 10k (6.2 miles) this year. If you enter the 10k you are issued a “computer chip” which you lace into our shoe laces and your time is activated when you actually cross the START LINE...

I am glad to say that we all finished. We did not break any records but we finished and had a great time in the process. We can't wait to enter again next year.” Beverly Albritton.

Just as Beverly and her family accomplished their “Just Get Over It” task of the Cooper River Bridge Run, with God's help we can say “Just Get over It” as we cross and rebuild our personal “bridges”.

Thank You

Dear Church Family,

So far I have been enjoying retirement although I do miss not being in the day to day of the church office.

Being able to spend extra time with my daughters, and their families, has been wonderful! I just want to thank the church family for the beautiful study Bible, and all those who signed it. Thank you too for the money. Thank you for the angel pendant and chain.

Thank you for the kind words in your cards and for those said on All Saints' Day.

Thank you to all who hold a special place in my heart for your friendship.

You have been a great, loving family to me, Bruce and our family through these 22 years, with 16.5 years at the church in the office.

The Lord has really blessed me since we moved to Florida. His ways are always more wonderful that what we can ever hope for in the future.

Again, thank you from my heart, for the blessing the First United Methodist Church of Bartow has been to me.

In His Love,
Cynthia Lee

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

Our Thanksgiving Luncheon on Nov. 20 was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who cooked, attended, brought food to others, and helped with getting things ready and cleaning up! You made everything go smoothly. We were able to take food to a lot of people who were not able to be here in person!

commanded by Christ to love one another and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be able to live out that command!

The Holy Spirit may nudge you in various ways to respond to some of these ministries: a pair of socks, a jar of peanut butter, a thumb drive, or a financial gift, but no matter what other way you respond, **please be in prayer for these ministries and the individuals involved.**

If you do feel called to respond financially, please make sure to put your monetary gift (cash or check) in a giving envelope and LABEL IT. Extra envelopes are in the pews, the back of the Sanctuary, and in the church office.

Please include the ADVANCE SPECIAL # or the NAME OF THE MINISTRY OR MISSIONARY. This is very important because some areas have several ministries. If you are not specific, we will not know which ministry you have felt called to respond to! **THANK YOU!!!**

INDONESIA

Situation: Greg Wood's daughter, husband, and family, (Dawn, Christian, and Joshua Williams) are Pioneer Missionaries in Indonesia. Dawn's husband, Christian, likes to say they are “ministering in northwest Indonesia for King Jesus”!

Response: In addition to **prayer**, you can support the Williams with **a check** made out to the church with “Williams, Indonesia” on the memo line.

CUBA/ FLORIDA COVENANT

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**

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. Further, there are certain ministries that are dear to this church's heart: feeding children lunch in Quessua, helping people have clean water, and missionaries in several areas of East Angola.

EAST ANGOLA/ FLORIDA COVENANT
Response: Pray & give to **East Angola/FL Cov.**

QUESSUA CHILDREN'S FEEDING PROGRAM

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

CLEAN WATER

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

Serguey & Graciela Espinosa, Missionaries

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

Leo & Cleivy Garcia, Missionaries

Response: Pray & give to Adv. Spec #3022182

Kutela Katembo, Missionary

Response: Pray & give to Adv. Spec #3022031

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 their pastor, UMC Global Missionary (and ordained elder from the Iowa Conference) Doug Williams, who helps us understand the cultural nuances between our countries. While we have taken fabric and thumb drives down 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 Albert Schweitzer Escuela!

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

If you feel called to **give financially**, checks can be made out to the church with **Adv Spec #3022122** on the memo line and your funds will support Pastor Doug and other Global Missionaries (and the ministries they work with) in the area.

Want something more tangible?

We are collecting **zippers** for the women's sewing group and **thumb drives** for the students at Albert Schweitzer.

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

Blessings Booklet-

Newsletter Edition

Even in these days that have been difficult in various ways for so many of us, we have many things to be thankful for! As we are blessed, we are called upon to be a blessing to others so that ALL may experience the love of Christ in the world.

We are not all called by God to serve in the world in exactly the same ways, but we *are* all called to serve in *some* way. Compassion and mercy are steps in our walk as Christ followers. We are

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 & blankets & place your items in the chest provided in the Sanctuary. Everything brought in will be distributed in our area through the Bartow Church Service Center.

Uniforms for Local School Children

Situation: A group of local woman formerly worked with the Needlework Guild of America to sew and later raise money for children to have appropriate clothes for school. For a variety of reasons, there are children in Polk County who do not have the uniforms they are required to wear for school. Some might have a single uniform that they are washing out every night to be able to wear the next day. Now called **The Children's Clothing Fund**, this group of women continues to tirelessly raise funds to buy much needed uniforms for students.

Response: Be in prayer for and give to the Children's Clothing Fund.

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. People are having even more difficulty since the hurricane came through and they suffered material losses and perhaps time at work also. The service center provides bag lunches for the needy daily as well as other lunch foods to families who come by. Hunger doesn't stop for the holidays, in fact it can get worse!

Response: Bring in nonperishable lunch foods such as peanut butter, jelly, fruit cups, protein or breakfast bars.

GRACE DINER

Situation: Grace Diner is a community service housed at First Presbyterian Bartow that serves a hot meal once a month. Hungry people are served their meal & treated with respect & dignity. Currently Grace Diner is in need of cooks, servers, greeters, & clean up crews. This ministry is an opportunity for those who are hungry to be fed emotionally, physically, & spiritually.

Response: Volunteer in an appropriate capacity at Grace Diner. Perhaps talk with friends and create a team to volunteer together. Contact the Bartow Church Service Center at 863-533-5822 to find out more and volunteer.

ZOE PROJECT

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 give to Zoe Project. Make checks to the church with memo Adv Spec # 982023

REACHING IN.... AND REACHING OUT!

Ways we support the body of Christ and are the body of Christ in the world!

POINTSETTIAS!!!!

Our sanctuary will once again be decorated with poinsettias for our Christmas Season Sunday Worship Celebrations & Christmas Eve Candlelight Services.

These plants will be 6" pots with plenty of blooms.

If you would like to provide one or more of these plants please be sure to print your name and designate if the poinsettia is to be given "to the glory of God" or "in memory of" or "in honor of" someone and enclose it along with \$6.00 in an envelope and place it in the offering plate, bring by the church office, or mail it to the church.

Please write the name exactly as you will want it printed in the bulletin.

There will be a bulletin insert you can fill out Sunday, Nov 27 and Dec 4 for those who are with us in person.

THANK YOU!

Cornucopia

The cornucopia on the altar has been shared in memory of Adele Durrance by Pat and Elsa Huff. Adele was a faithful member of our church for over 90 years and always made sure the cornucopia was on the altar in November.

Blessings Booklets What's a Blessings Booklet?

It is a little book filled with various ways YOU can share your blessings to be a blessing to others! Some of the opportunities are time sensitive. Read yours soon, so you don't miss out on something God is calling you into!

The FOOD DRIVE CONTINUES!

In an effort to have plenty of Holiday food for hungry families in our area, we began our Holiday Food Drive for Bartow Church Service Center back in October. We continue taking the food gathered to the Center.

KEEP BRINGING IN FOOD! CHRISTMAS is right around the corner and food prices are still high. PEANUT BUTTER is always good and those SPECIAL HOLIDAY ITEMS (stuffing, canned hams, yams, etc) are a wonderful treat for this time of year!



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Newsletter Edition

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Response: Be in prayer for and give to the **Children's Clothing Fund**.

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. People are having even more difficulty since the hurricane came through and they suffered material losses and perhaps time at work also. The service center provides bag lunches for the needy daily as well as other lunch foods to families who come by. Hunger doesn't stop for the holidays, in fact it can get worse!

Response: Bring in nonperishable lunch foods such as peanut butter, jelly, fruit cups, protein or breakfast bars.

GRACE DINER

Situation: Grace Diner is a community service housed at First Presbyterian Bartow that serves a hot meal once a month. Hungry people are served their meal & treated with respect & dignity. Currently Grace Diner is in need of cooks, servers, greeters, & clean up crews. This ministry is an opportunity for those who are hungry to be fed emotionally, physically, & spiritually.

Response: Volunteer in an appropriate capacity at Grace Diner. Perhaps talk with friends and create a team to volunteer together. Contact the Bartow Church Service Center at 863-533-5822 to find out more and volunteer.

ZOE PROJECT

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 give to Zoe Project. Make checks to the church with memo Adv Spec # 982023

commanded by Christ to love one another and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be able to live out that command!

The Holy Spirit may nudge you in various ways to respond to some of these ministries: a pair of socks, a jar of peanut butter, a thumb drive, or a financial gift, but no matter what other way you respond, **please be in prayer for these ministries and the individuals involved.**

INDONESIA

Situation: Greg Wood's daughter, husband, and family, (Dawn, Christian, and Joshua Williams) are Pioneer Missionaries in Indonesia. Dawn's husband, Christian, likes to say they are "ministering in northwest Indonesia for King Jesus"!

Response: In addition to prayer, you can support the Williams with a check made out to the church with "Williams, Indonesia" on the memo line.

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. Further, there are certain ministries that are dear to this church's heart: feeding children lunch in Quessua, helping people have clean water, and missionaries in several areas of East Angola.

EAST ANGOLA/ FLORIDA COVENANT

Response: Pray & give to East Angola/FL Cov.

QUESSUA CHILDREN'S FEEDING PROGRAM

Response: Pray & give to Quessua Children

CLEAN WATER

Response: Pray & give to E. Angola Clean Water

Serguey & Graciela Espinosa, Missionaries

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

Leo & Cleivy Garcia, Missionaries

Response: Pray & give to Adv. Spec #3022182

Kutela Katembo, Missionary

Response: Pray & give to Adv. Spec #3022031

If you do feel called to respond financially, please make sure to put your monetary gift (cash or check) in a giving envelope and LABEL IT. Extra envelopes are in the pews, the back of the Sanctuary, and in the church office.

Please include the ADVANCE SPECIAL # or the NAME OF THE MINISTRY OR MISSIONARY. This is very important because some areas have several ministries. If you are not specific, we will not know which ministry you have felt called to respond to! **THANK YOU!!!**

CUBA/ FLORIDA COVENANT

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

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 their pastor, UMC Global Missionary (and ordained elder from the Iowa Conference) Doug Williams, who helps us understand the cultural nuances between our countries. While we have taken fabric and thumb drives down 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 Albert Schweitzer Escuela!

If you would like to share ministry ideas with church ministry leaders, talk to Pastor Missy about how!

If you feel called to give financially, checks can be made out to the church with Adv Spec #3022122 on the memo line and your funds will support Pastor Doug and other Global Missionaries (and the ministries they work with) in the area.

Want something more tangible?

We are collecting zippers for the women's sewing group and thumb drives for the students at Albert Schweitzer.

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