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FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
BARTOW, FLORIDA

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Bartow, FL 33830

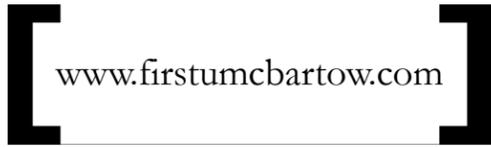
JANUARY 2023

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Building Bridges for Christ in Bartow

IMPORTANT DATES IN THE FUTURE

Sun, Feb 5, 10:30 am:

Worship and Communion

Sat, Feb 11, 10 am—2 pm:

Church Planning Retreat in Fellowship Hall

Lunch will be provided.

Wed, Feb 22: ASH WEDNESDAY

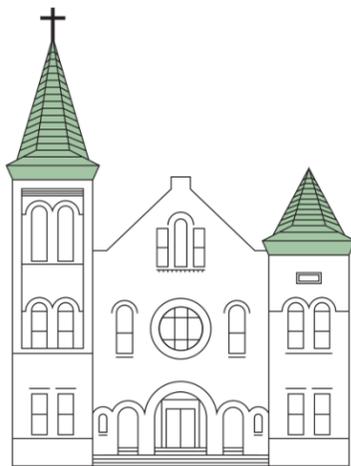
WATCH FOR...

New ministries starting

Former ministries re-starting

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!



The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it. —John 1: 5

Happy New Life! What a wondrous time this is! We have just celebrated the birth of the Christ-child and the light that floods our darkness and sends it scattered away. Now, on the first Sunday of the new year we will celebrate the revealing of God's loving and mighty acts of salvation through Jesus Christ that are for all people. Further, we will have the opportunity to promise ourselves to God in 2023 as we pray together Wesley's Covenant Prayer:

I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,

Exalted for thee or brought low for thee. Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely & heartily yield all things to thy pleasure & disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thou art mine, and I am thine.

So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, Let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

I am always humbled and overwhelmed by this prayer. It promises so much *and* it is a promise made with God! How can I— how can we— possibly keep such promises? Only with God's help. That's the whole point! And that is also why it means so much that the very next Sunday we will reaffirm our Baptismal vows. In those vows we are asked and claim some very important things:

Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin? I do.

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves? I do.

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races? I do.

According to the grace given to you, will you remain faithful members of Christ's holy Church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world? I will.

Do you see it? We are able to do God's will in our lives and the world *and* renounce wickedness, reject evil, and repent of our sins *because* of the freedom and power God gives us! The grounding we have in Christ's grace makes it possible to serve God completely and fully with all God's children in the body of Christ. Sometimes that means we are busy, sometimes someone else is busy. Sometimes we are poured out, sometimes we are supporting someone else in their pouring, and sometimes we are being poured into.

Who we are in Christ is only possible because we risk opening ourselves to the love and light of Christ into the working of our hearts and living of our lives. This month during worship we are going to hear many stories of people in our community and world who serve and have been served, love and are loved because of the empowering work of the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ. In our Bible Study, we will learn how prayer, presence, gifts, service, and witness are all integral to how we grow in our relationship with God, each other, and all the world.

Our new life in Christ is continually evolving as we are going on to perfection. Our Baptisms are just the beginning of the story. What follows is the glorious, empowered, redeemed rest of our lives! We become a part of the light that shines!

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 January – 2023

January always signifies a new beginning for me. It is a fresh start with whatever is going on in my life. We probably all make goals and

resolutions at this time of year, but rarely do we accomplish all that we desire.

I read something so wonderful today in the Joel Osteen book, “It’s Your Time”. He starts by talking about a man in the newspaper industry that was going to be laid off. This person had a family, and had to find a job. He began to study digital technology with his company so that when layoffs were beginning, he was positioned to start a new career as a TV media manager. He was planting a seed by taking a risk and doing the work.

Joel goes on to remind us that when we think we are going to be buried by hardships, to never give up. That we all have a God-given destiny. Jesus was sent here to die for us. He was dead and buried, but he overcame death and rose again. This is symbolic for each one of us.

His takeaway truth is: Remember, as a believer, the same power that raised Christ from the dead lives on the inside of you. There is no challenge too difficult, no obstacle too high, no sickness, no disappointment, no person, nothing that can keep you from your God given destiny. If you stay in faith and keep a good attitude, you will rise again. God will turn those stumbling blocks into stepping stones, and you’ll move forward into the victory He has in store for you!

I am reminded of our darling little 4-year-old, Zachary who comes to church regularly. He was very sick, and was sleeping on the sofa. He woke up and said, “Papa, the power of God is in me”. Wow!! If we could all have the faith of a little child. That wisdom came from his grandmother, I bet. She is a godly woman and has cared for Zachary since he was a baby. The mighty Power of God is within us all. So, if you feel discouraged or buried under a lot of problems, take the promises of God into your

life. Pray, Believe, have Faith, Study His Word, and keep taking steps. He will direct you on the path that will take you to your God given destiny. The Mighty Power of God is in those who believe!

May God be with you now and through this new year.
Love, Bonnie

WEEKLY REMINDERS

Monday Morning Prayer Zoom & 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.



Take Off Pounds Sensibly

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
\$5 donation full meal, \$2 covered dish + chicken
(Bible Study afterwards at 6:45 in the Library)

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

Wed, Jan 18: Chili, salad, baked potato

Wed, Jan 25: Covered dish + Chicken

Volunteers needed!! Ms Carolyn will not be there on the 25th!!!

JANUARY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Epiphany *10:30 am: Epiphany Sunday, Wesley Covenant Prayer, & Communion	2 9 am Prayer Zoom Church Office Closed	3 5:30 pm Choir 5:30 pm TOPS– FH	4	5	6	7
FMS out for Christmas Break						
8 Baptism of the Lord *10:30 am: Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows in Worship 12 pm: Emmaus Lunch & Planning Mtg	9 9 am Prayer Zoom 9:30-11 am FMS Chapel Services 11:30 am Women's Bible Study	10 5:30 pm Choir	11	12	13	14 5 pm: Emmaus Dinner & Worship
15 Remembering our Baptism in Community *10:30 am: Mike Williams from Light-house Ministries in Worship 12 pm: Lunch Bunch Catfish Country	16 9 am Prayer Zoom MLK JR Day Church Office Closed FMS closed	17 5:30 pm Choir 5:30 pm TOPS– FH	18 6 pm Fellowship Dinner Chili, salad, baked Potato 6:45 pm Bible Study CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS DUE	19	20	21
22 Remembering our Baptism in Justice *10:30 am: Worship	23 9 am Prayer Zoom 9:30-11 am FMS Chapel Services 6 pm Church Council	24 5:30 pm Choir	25 6 pm Fellowship Dinner Covered dish + chicken 6:45 pm Bible Study	26	27	28
29 Children's Home Remembering our Baptism in the World *10:30 am: Douglas Williams from Argentina in Worship	30 9 am Prayer Zoom 9:30-11 am FMS Chapel Services	31 5:30 pm Choir 5:30 pm TOPS– FH				

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

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BARTOW

VOLUME 27, ISSUE 1

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

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

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 5- Bob Pfeiffer | 17- Bill Wright |
| 8- Aaron Presnell | 18- Diane Pannebaker |
| 9- Mary Beth Packard | Sam Draper |
| 10- Talesha Clements | 25- Eric Presnell |
| 14- Erin Johnson | 29- Paisley Snell |
| Missy Turbeville | 31- Bailey Whitehead |

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 9— *Eddie & Jennifer Hartsaw*
23— *Dick & Jean Thompson*
23— *Bill & Barbara Hess*
31— *Wayne & Leah Snell*

SYMPATHY and MEMORIAL GIFTS

Our Concerns:

Jennifer & Liz, Josh A, Ken A, Margie & John Neil A, Andrea B, Pat & Jerry B, Jackie E-healing, Connor J-healing, Landry Family (*Margie's neighbors*), Levi—healing for femur, Colin L— healing, BJ J, Mary Beth P, James P— healing, Lynn R (*Betty's cousin*), Tula R-healing, Steve R —healing, Lynn S— healing, Betty S— (*Elsa's Aunt*), Kathy W, Johnny & Hilda Z-wholeness, FMS teachers

Ongoing Prayers:

Beverly A, Jerry B, David B, Cathi & Charles C, Beverly E, Karel H, Jim H, Brandon H, Pat H, Keith K, Allye M, Brenda R *Missy's Mom*, Dick & Joyce S, BJ S, Louise T, Jean & Dick T, Ken W, Bill & Joan W, Patricia W, -Leaders of OUR COUNTRY & everywhere to do God's will, -Everyone affected by COVID, other sickness, repressive governments, & natural & human caused disasters, winter storms, all the caregivers that serve unconditionally for our loved ones and friends.

Serving in the Military:

Jeremy B, Victor O, Joseph S

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 & Staff; District Supt. Emily Hotho, and our Bishop Tom Berlin

PLEASE NOTE

Information for the February newsletter should be submitted by **Friday, January 13th**. 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

Fellowship Events

Lunch Bunch

Sun, Jan 15 at Catfish Country

Join us monthly for food, fun, and fellowship!

The 50+ Group is getting a new name!

AND Plans are in the works for more activities!
SO Watch for more information coming soon!

UpComing Special Sundays & Events

Sun, Jan 1, 10:30 am: Worship Epiphany, Covenant Prayer, & Communion

Join us as we begin 2023 by celebrating the revelation of God's redeeming love in Christ for ALL THE WORLD and re-covenanting ourselves to God with prayer!

Wesleyan Covenant Prayer For a New Year

I am no longer my own, but thine.
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.
And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
Thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth,
Let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

Sun, Jan 8, 10:30 am: Worship 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.

Using our Gifts and Talents..

Decorators Wanted!

We are putting together a Decorating Team!
We would like to have a group of people that are interested in helping decorate for luncheons and other events and times.
Watch for a sign up sheet in the Sanctuary or call or email the church!

We are looking for... Ushers and Greeters!

Talk to Pat Barber or call or email the church!

Sun, Jan 8, 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 Living out our Baptismal Vows: Mike Williams from Lighthouse Ministries

Wed, Jan 18: Wednesday Night Ministries Return!

Fellowship Dinner: 6 pm
Bible Study: 6:45 pm

Sun, Jan 22, 10:30 am: Worship Living out our Baptismal Vows: Do justice, love kindness, & walk humbly with our God

Mon, Jan 23, 6 pm: Church Council REPORTS DUE BY Wed, Dec 18!

Sun, Jan 29, 10:30 am: Worship Living out our Baptismal Vows with special guest, UMC Missionary in Mendoza, Pastor Douglas Williams

ACROSS THE COURTYARD

by Nadine Waters Robbins, Church Historian



As promised, "Out of the Box, Chapter III."

In our last episode...

The year is 1965 and a majority of Bartow FUMC members had rejected their building committee's proposal for a new church building on the site on North Broadway between

McKinney Branch and Richland Manor Road, and so... A "New" committee was formed to look into possible sites in the neighborhood of the existing sanctuary.

"...Foremost in the committee's mind was a desire to find a site reasonably close to downtown Bartow which could contain all the church buildings and still be financed by the congregation." One of the suggested sites was four lots a block south of the church. On this property were the homes of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Wiggins, Mrs. Rosemary De Coster, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Davidson (Pam Wyant's parents), and Mrs. D. W. Hall (Betty Fitzgerald's aunt). The official board learned that the proposed site could be acquired for \$90,000. "The three families from the three northern lots moved to their new homes and Mrs. Hall remained (for a time) in the house she had occupied for more than 50 years with Life Tenancy privileges. Mrs. Hall, a long time member of First Church said she would be glad to move away any time the church wanted her to... By quarterly conference in February, 1967, the congregation was ready to plan for a building on the new property... It was decided that the main educational building was most needed to contain classrooms, nursery and toddler facilities, library, parlor, fellowship hall and PARKING AREA...

In August 1968, the congregation approved the building of the Educational Unit for (an) estimated \$275,000. Immediately plans were started for the financing... In 1969 visitation teams called upon all members... And pledges of almost \$200,000 were brought in... During the period between the purchase of the site and the betting of the bid, the De Coster and Davidson homes had been razed... Ground was broken on April 13, 1969... Reverend William Sims (FUMC Pastor) and Reverend Robert Temple (Asbury Pastor) conducted the religious portion of the Ground Breaking ceremonies... Every person (present) dug a

"symbolic shovel full of dirt." (source: FUMC Church History)

Today, in addition to the many uses of the building by our FUMC congregation, its function as First Methodist School has enabled our church to expand not only "Out of the Box" but "Out of the Building"

... and THAT is another story!

Grace Notes

Hello Everyone!

We ran out of room in last month's newsletter, but I didn't want to pass up on the opportunity to thank everyone for the many and various ways you shared your love and care for me during Pastor Appreciation Month.

THANK YOU so very much! Your words and gifts were a blessing.

I am so thankful for all of you! The ways you use your gifts, talents, and resources to share the love of Christ is a joy to experience!

Again, THANK YOU for everything!
In the love and peace of Christ,
-Pastor Missy

To the helpers, decorators,
set up, and clean uppers-

Thank You!

Thank you for helping with our
two Sunday luncheons,
our many Wednesday Night Dinners,
and Advent decorating!

Your many hands helped the work to be
light! THANK YOU!!

BLESSINGS SHARED

During the holidays, *together* we gathered two HUGE stockings of socks and underwear (& t-shirts!), a big box full of zippers, a thumb drive, multiple car loads of food, over \$2000 toward various ministries, and made Christmas a little brighter for ten seniors!

AND REACHING OUT...

Ways we are the body of Christ in the world!

JACKETS AND BLANKETS

With the colder months here, many children and adults find last year's jacket is gone or too small. For some, recent times have meant choosing to buy food or clothes. 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!

So, 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. **The Bartow Church Service Center** will be distribute everything brought in to our area.

GRACE DINER

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.

Those interested in this wonderful ministry can **volunteer** in many ways 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!

Uniforms for Local School Children

For many years, a group of local woman 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.

Please be in **prayer** for and **consider giving** to the **Children's Clothing Fund**.

Did you know? We have church mailboxes!

Want to send a Thank You, Birthday, or seasonal card? Use our mailboxes in the Ushers room! Any donations from saved postage will go to Missions and Outreach :)

First Methodist Evangelical Church of Mendoza and Albert Schweitzer School in Argentina

We are excited to be building relationships in Argentina with Primera Metodista Evangelica Iglesia (First Methodist Evangelical Church) de Mendoza and Albert Schweitzer Escuela, the church's affiliated school.

We are working with their pastor, UMC Global Missionary (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 our brothers and sisters in Christ and learning from each other about how we do ministry in our communities.

As we grow this relationship, we ask that everyone **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 our church with **Douglas Williams** on the memo line.

Want something more tangible?
We are collecting **zippers** and **fabric** 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.

Got Blood?

We would like to have the Bloodmobile come one Sunday in the Spring!

When you give blood you help save 3 lives!
Just 3 drops can save an infants life!

Would you be willing to give blood?
If you would be interested in donating, watch for the sign up sheet in the Sanctuary!
Or call or email the church office!

REACHING IN....

Ways we support and resource the body of Christ.



New Bible Study starting in late January! A Disciple's Path

Ever asked or been asked...

What does it mean to be a Christian?

How can I grow closer to God?

I don't need church to be a Christian, do I?

What does it *mean* to be Methodist?

Is tithing for real?

I'm shy. I can't witness, can I?

I go to worship, isn't that enough?

Interested in the answers and maybe finding ways to talk to others about these questions? Then this study is for you! As we dig into the rich soil of our membership vows, we will all be challenged. You might even discover new and exciting ways to walk your path as a follower of Christ!

If you are interested in joining this Bible Study, talk to Pastor Missy!

Our primary meeting time will be Wednesdays at 6:45 pm

(we are seeing if there is interest for another group that meets during the day)

Devotional Breakfast group will restart mid January!

Previously, we met on Monday 7-8 am. We are interested in possibly meeting at Broadway Diner. If you are interested in joining us, please contact the church office or call Walt at 215-237-7985. If you have suggestions of other locations/ days/ or times, please let us know.

Church Planning Retreat
Sat, Feb 11: 10am-2pm

We will meet in the Fellowship Hall and Lunch will be included. We will share plans and vision the next 18 months or so! Bring your calendars!

Connectional Giving..
What's That?

Usually called Apportionments, these moneys "fund the programs and activities approved by delegates from your church. Your church's apportionment is your church's fair share of the cost of these programs and activities. Your apportionment is important! Your church's giving makes a big difference!"

Connectional Giving helps fund ministries like...

Churches with vital ministries (often very mission oriented) that are struggling financially, *but* have a plan for stability.

Missions Infrastructure (so every cent of every dollar sent to a missionary or mission project goes completely there— nothing for administration)

Disaster & Crisis Relief Infrastructure

WE CARE
Congregational Care Team

Would you like to be a ray of SONshine in someone's life? Are you looking for a way to share the love of God? Do you enjoy talking on the phone OR writing a note OR sending an email or text OR visiting with friends?

Congregational Care has some wonderful opportunities for YOU! Talk to or email Pat Barber, pabarber14@verizon.net about how YOU can be a part of our amazing **WE CARE congregational care team!**

Jesus calls us *salt* and *light!* Join in this glorious way to help add flavor to lives and share that lifegiving *Sonshine*. You can help change everything in someone's life simply by sharing the love of Christ that is in you by touching base and reaching out!

First Methodist School

...Just a few of the things that have happened in the last semester!



Morning Assembly!



Middle Schoolers with FMS Halloween Theme



Super Citizens for the first 6 weeks!



Christmas Float



Hurricane Cleanup after the storm.



5th- 8th grade helped Ps. Missy tell the Christmas story to the younger kids!



Halloween Float



VPK with Christmas Tree in Sanctuary