

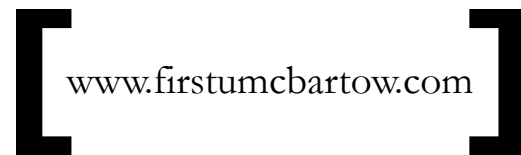


FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
BARTOW, FLORIDA

455 S Broadway Ave.
Bartow, FL 33830

MAY 2023

Phone: 863-533-0904
Fax: 863-533-9023
E-mail: firstumcbartow@aol.com
https://www.facebook.com/fumcbartow



Building Bridges for Christ in Bartow

IMPORTANT DATES IN THE FUTURE

AND...

ICEL Rodriguez will be here Sunday, June 18 to share with us about Angola!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL, JUNE 26-30 in the mornings
Marketplace style. We are going back in time to Bethlehem!

BE IN PRAYER...

Would you be willing to share a story about your faith? This Spring and early Summer we are 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!



First United Methodist Church of Bartow

VOLUME 27, ISSUE 5

GOOD NEWS

MAY 2023

“...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

Does anyone else feel a bit worn out? There has been so much going on! In October, we had a hurricane. In November, we were still cleaning up even as we celebrated Thanksgiving and began to get ready for Advent and Christmas. In January, many of us were sick and what would become a drought and a horrible pollen season started. February brought beautiful days and more pollen and sinus issues. Our church began to put together our Lenten devotional booklet and we talked about being the body of Christ through our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. We had a church planning day and struggled with denominational issues in our coffee talks. We worshipped with our Methodist brothers and sisters on Ash Wednesday and our whole community during Holy Week. Is it any wonder that some of us might be a bit tuckered out?

And yet, once again we are reading those words from Acts 1: 8 at the top of this article. Really? Can't we take a break from witnessing for a moment? Just sit back, take a little time to rest in God? Must we always be sharing the good news of Christ in all places? The answer to all these questions is YES. Yes, we are reading those words, can take a break, rest in God, and continue sharing Christ.

What does it mean to be a witness? For those of you who heard the sermon on April 23rd, you might remember that witness is a word that can be a noun or verb. We usually think of being a witness to Christ as sharing the good news of Christ wherever we are, but we are also called to witness the ways in which God in Christ is at work in the world. The Holy Spirit moves in us so that we have the ears to hear and the eyes to see the wondrous things God is doing.

Just look around, drink it all in. What about that sunrise or sunset? What about that friendly customer or cashier at the store? Did you see that puppy make the child laugh or that squirrel on the YouTube video? Did you hear the birdsong? Yes, it started outside your window at 4:30 am, but what a wondrous thing that such a small animal can make such a melodious racket! Do you notice the smile on the face of that father as he patiently teaches his daughter how to dribble a basketball? What about that mother who is white knuckled in the car teaching her fifteen year old how to drive? The love of God is on display in all of this.

For those who are tired, perhaps it is time to simply be and drink in all the wonder, love, and grace with which God is surrounding us. Sometimes we need to be a verb-type witness— to just soak up the beauty of God's creation with all our senses and to allow the small and large interactions of love and care to roll over us. Jesus offers us rest, a laying down of burdens, and a shared yoke that is light. It is ok to spend time beside still waters and have our souls restored. This is a witness, too.

It isn't that our sharing of and being the love of Christ in Jerusalem, all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth is *not* important. It is that it *is*. If we aren't filled with living water, we can't be poured out. We cannot share that which we have not in some way experienced. We so often understand the empowering of the Holy Spirit to be for the role of witness *to* others. It is important that we recognize that we are empowered to act as witness *of* God's love in whatever forms they present themselves for our own well being also.

Are you tired? Go rest and witness. Are you energized? Go forth and witness. There are opportunities to witness all the time. Will we take them? I pray we do!

With love in Christ,
-Pastor Missy

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FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BARTOW

CHOIR NOTES, by Bonnie Allen



Choir News May—2023

Last May, we were saying goodbye to Armando and Icel. We did not know who would be coming, and how it

would all work out. Then the Lord sent us Pastor Missy. She looks and acts like a 21 year old, even though she isn't. She is a ball of fire. Nothing is impossible for her including moving furniture in the Sanctuary, cutting palm branches, preparing dinner for us, singing with the choir, teaching the children, working with the school, and preaching with fervor and excitement. Some of you probably know how intelligent she is, but I get to witness it at every meeting. She is full of wisdom. One of the aspects of her that I love is her positivity. Can you just hear her excitement as she announces, "Hooray! |We have a finance meeting on Thursday!". Her message for months has been about the body of Christ – You and Me. She preaches love every Sunday, and prays for unity and outreach. We have been blessed again with a devoted preacher who loves the Lord, and is dedicated to His service. Thank you, Lord.

I am a transplant to the Methodist denomination. For some people, the doctrine is very important. I have never been one of those. I read the Bible, and I know how God has spoken to me through His word. He has literally saved me with His word. I believe that His word is alive and as sharp as a two-edged sword. All of us are different, and yet, we have come together in this place to worship our Lord and Savior.

I came here 22 years ago to serve only through the Christmas Season. I was not a qualified choir director, but I knew I was supposed to take the job. This has become my church family, and I love each and every one of you. I am hoping that our

church will grow and prosper as I am sure the Lord wants the same. It seems like the world is trying to shut down the church, and people who believe. Some make a mockery of Christians. Honestly, I can see why the Bible seems incredulous to some. The miracles, and Christ's resurrection seem crazy to the unbeliever. I get it!

When you come to the bottom and you have no where else to go, God is there! No one could ever convince me that there is no God, because I have seen the miracles in my own life that only He could perform. He told me to take this job, and I complained; I haven't ever directed a choir of adults, Lord, I don't know how to get the music, Ken won't like it if I tie up every weekend, and so on and so on! He told me that he would give me the music, he would help me do the job, and He has!! Through many difficult trials with my daughter, He gave me strength to be strong for her. With many financial difficulties, He made a way in a miraculous way. So I believe!! I BELIEVE! So many proofs. I am no one special! I am your average person seeking God every day to make it through. This is all because of God's amazing grace in my life. There are many more miracles that I could tell you about, but, for now, that is enough.

Spring is here with new life all around us. I pray for new life for our church, and for all those going through difficulty now. Never give up! God is sooooo good. He hears! He answers! And He has a wonderful future for all of us. May we Praise Him every day of our lives.

One of my favorite scriptures is in Isaiah. It says: I will be your God for all your lifetime, even when your hair is white with age. I will carry you along and be your Savior. I can honestly say that He has!!

Love to all,
Bonnie

MAY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 9 am: Prayer Zoom 9:30-11 am: FMS Chapel Services 11:30 am Women's Bible Study 870 Lila St	2 8 am: Breakfast and Devotions Broadway Diner 5:30 pm: Choir	3 6 pm: Wed Night Dinner Covered Dish & Chicken \$2 6:45 pm: Bible Study	4	5 Kathy Wood Yard Sale	6 Kathy Wood Yard Sale 11:30 am Golden Girls Luncheon
7 *10:30 am: Worship & Communion 12 pm: Lunch Bunch 2 pm Child/Youth Protection Policy Training –Library	8 9 am: Prayer Zoom 9:30-11 am: FMS Chapel Services	9 8 am: Breakfast and Devotions Broadway Diner 5:30 pm: Choir	10 6 pm: Wed Night Dinner Ham & Fixin's \$5 6:45 pm: Bible Study	11 4:30 SPRC Meeting in Library 6pm: Finance Meeting in Library	12	13
14 Mother's Day *10:30 am: Worship	15 9 am: Prayer Zoom 9:30-11 am: FMS Chapel Services	16 8 am: Breakfast and Devotions Broadway Diner 5:30 pm: Choir	17 6 pm: Wed Night Dinner Covered Dish & Chicken \$2 6:45 pm: Bible Study	18	19	20
21 Ascension Sunday *10:30 am: Worship	22 9 am: Prayer Zoom 9:30-11 am: FMS Chapel Services	23 8 am: Breakfast and Devotions Broadway Diner 5:30 pm: Choir	24 6 pm: Wed Night Dinner Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes & Green Beans \$5 6:45 pm: Bible Study	25 LAST DAY of SCHOOL for FMS	26	27
28 Pentecost Sunday *10:30 am: Worship	29 Memorial Day 9 am: Prayer Zoom Church Office and FMS closed	30 8 am: Breakfast and Devotions Broadway Diner 5:30 pm: Choir	31 NO DINNER NO BIBLE STUDY			

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

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BARTOW

MAY BIRTHDAYS

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

Ongoing Prayers: Beverly A, Jerry B, David B, Ed E, Karel H, Jim H, Brandon H, Pat H, Keith K, Allye M, Mary Beth P, James P (positive), Lyn R (Betty's cousin), Betty R (Missy's stepgran), Brenda R (Missy's Mom), 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

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

- 2- Kathy Moss 15- Mackenzie Ward
3- Aaron Bruns 16-- Janie Robinson
4- Patti Tuttle 19- Kayline Lowe
5- Marlene Simpkins 20-- Brett Lowe
7- Alyssa Fitzgerald 22- Jennifer Daniels
8-- Susan Bergdoll 27- Sherry Lingle
Sara Van Hook 29- Jase Clements
Margie Anderson Joan Wright
9-- Richard Lake
10-- Adrian Jackson

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

- 6- Bob & Trish Pfeiffer
15- Larry & Sheran Walker
23- Lanny & Laura Sheffield
24- Chris & Elicia Brooks
28- Bill & Cindy Etheredge



A picture from our Cuba Missions Luncheon sponsored by MOE
Again, thank you to the MOE Team, everyone who made desserts for the auction, and all who donated!
Together, we raised over \$1,400 toward a generator for our sister church in Santa Cruz del Sur!

PLEASE NOTE

Information for the June newsletter should be submitted by Friday, May 19th. 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. Thank you!

NEW DIRECTORY

We are making a new directory and want to make sure that your information is up to date! *If you didn't fill out and turn in the contact info page on the commitment card, please fill this out and turn it in. Thank you!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name _____
Cell Phone _____ Land line _____
Email _____
Birthdate (including year) _____ Anniversary (if applicable) _____
Address _____
Alternate Address _____
If you are seasonal, which months are you usually in Florida? _____
In Case of Emergency
1) Name _____ Phone _____ Relationship _____
2) Name _____ Phone _____ Relationship _____

Thank you! You are valuable and you are loved!

Grace Notes

Special Thanks

With sincere gratitude, Keith Krueger and Mary Beth wish to thank all who brought us food-snacks and meals, while we were suffering from various illnesses in April. Having a hot, homecooked meal made a great difference in the speed of our recovery. Thank you, all!

Thank You to:

Barbara Hess for making cakes each month at lunch bunch.
Betty Fitzgerald for helping with children.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

to our Lenten Soup and Sandwich makers on Wednesday Nights! This church family has AMAZING cooks!

THANK YOU Holy Week Helpers!

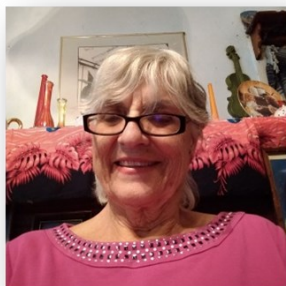
-the LOVE FEAST team for all your hard work -the, musicians, soloists, and John Hutto for making our gorgeous Tenebrae Service such a gift.
-MOE team and others for Egg Hunt Help!
-Elsa Huff, David Brooks, Betty Fitzgerald and Lynn Sheetz for the Easter cross.
-Karel Hammer for the Easter bags for the children
-the Praise Band and Choir for ALL THE MUSIC!!!!

Have a "Thank you" Grace Note you want to share? Email the church office at firstumcbartow@aol.com

ACROSS THE COURTYARD

by Nadine Waters Robbins, Church Historian

May 2023



On quite a few occasions Pastor Missy has informed our congregation about the activities of PEACE (Polk Ecumenical Action Council for Empowerment). This groups' purpose is to build justice ministries and work cooperatively to identify root causes of community problems, take action to resolve them and to build a strong coalition capable of negotiating community interests with a special concern for the "vulnerable". Those of us who have attended PEACE gatherings have been inspired by the testimonies of some of those "vulnerable" individuals who have benefited from the works of PEACE.

In the early 1970's some of our most "vulnerable" population included the numerous migrant agricultural families who came primarily from Mexico, Guatemala, Puerto Rico and Cuba. A major topic of concern addressed at the 1972-75 Annual Conferences included the need for better treatment of migrant workers and their families. It stated "the decline in ethical behavior brings scandal to our government at local and national levels... there is a need for the church to maintain its historic role as 'the setting for a visionary dream and a place of risks'".

During that era, Betty Bergdoll (mother of David) had a visionary dream which ultimately led to the establishment of a Spanish mission in the Gordonville Community where a large number of migrants were in residence. Prior to the construction of an actual church building Betty led a cluster of FUMC members to teach Sunday School classes and hold Bible School. In addition some of our FUMC congregants would drive to the Alturas area and transport the migrants to the Gordonville services. FUMC members also gave other opportunities to let the Spanish speaking residents feel that they were part of the community.

Betty and her group planned a party in the

basement of our FUMC annex. Some of the invites were hesitant to come to Bartow at night as a number of their cars still had Texas license plates. FUMC called the police department to let them know of the situation. However, despite this, some of the migrants were detained on their way home. Helpful FUMC friends helped them by paying their fines and "conferring" with several judges who attended FUMC. At a later date, Betty was responsible for contacting the Conference and convincing them to add "migrants" to their program agenda. During the early 1980's United Child Care Ministries, which provided leadership for day-care facilities at Gordonville and Wahneta had headquarters in our FUMC annex.

(Note: Another of Betty's visions, to serve the children of our community led to what has now become First Methodist School.)

What is your "vision"? (AKA our recent commitment cards). Is your vision for (as Ps Missy says) Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, or to the ends of the earth?

MISCELLANEOUS

MOTHER'S DAY CARNATIONS



If you would like to purchase a carnation in memory or honor of your mother or another special mother in your life, or to the Glory of God, they are available for \$2. Fill out the bulletin insert from 4/30 or 5/7 OR call/ email the church office with the info. Carnations will be available on Mother's Day!

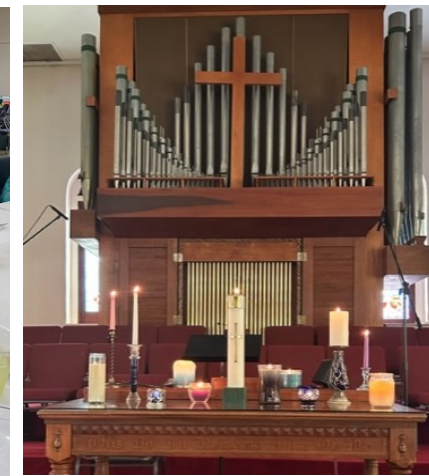
HOLY WEEK



Palm Sunday: Hosanna, Loud Hosanna!



Maundy Thursday: Love Feast and...Tenebrae Service



Good Friday: Community CROSS-WALK



Holy Saturday: Community Easter Egg Hunt We made butterflies to symbolize the Resurrection!



Easter Sunday: Community Sunrise Service!



Hallelujah! Christ is Risen!

Happy Easter from your FUMC Bartow Church Family!



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.

Breakfast and Devotions Tuesdays at 8 am Broadway Diner!



Everyone is invited!

April breakfast picture

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNERS

at 6 pm
in the Fellowship Hall
\$5 donation full meal,
\$2 covered dish + chicken

RSVP by Monday noon each week,
THANK YOU!

- May 3rd: Covered Dish & Chicken \$2.
- May 10th: Ham, Sweet Potato Casserole, Collared Greens, Green Beans, Corn Bread \$5.
- May 17th: Covered Dish & Chicken \$2.
- May 24th: Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes, & Green Beans \$5.
- May 31st: *No Dinner*

Bible Study afterwards at 6:45 in the Library

Fellowship Events

Golden Girls Reunion Luncheon



MAY 6
Main Street Baptist
1140 Main Street

This is for existing members. New members will be welcomed when we have our fall gathering.

*If you are interested in coordinating Golden Girls starting in the Fall, please talk to Karel Hammer.

Lunch Bunch: May 7th
at noon
RSVP TO THE CHURCH BY
WEDNESDAY MAY 3RD



Ruby Tuesday's Lunch Bunch in March

Silver Saints had an awesome dinner and BINGO night! If you missed it, make plans to join them for their next event... Details soon to follow...



First Methodist School



Ms. Tasha and Mrs. Shannon's Class



Mrs. Katie and Mrs. Lili's Class



VPK Praying in Sanctuary

VPK Class of 2023!!! Kindergarten Here We Come!

VPK getting their feet washed (after hearing about Jesus washing his disciples feet) from Ps. Missy in Chapel.



REACHING IN....

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

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDIES
MAY 1, 11:30 AM.
870 Lila Street
ALL WOMEN ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!

Wednesday Night Bible Study
6:45 pm in the Library

We are taking a few weeks to study various topics as the Spirit moves us as we decide on our next Study.

Interested? Join us!
 It is a wondrous time of conversation, learning, and growth.

The WE CARE
Congregational Care Team

Calls and cards, little gifts and meals, visits and smiles, all this and more make up part of what it means to be the body of Christ and specifically a part of the WE CARE Committee!

Want to be a part of this fantastic ministry? Sign up in the Sanctuary, call or email the church office, or talk to Pat Barber or other team member.

Child/Youth Protection Policy Training in the Library
May 7 at 2 pm
 (after Lunch Bunch)

If you volunteer with Children or Youth or are planning to, please join us. Everyone who regularly volunteers with children or youth is required to have this training. THANK YOU!

If you cannot make this training, but need to have it, talk to Missy to schedule a training.

Connectional Giving...
 Connectional Giving helps fund ministries like...

Equitable Compensation and Mission Support
 This fund supports the salaries and other expenses of pastors at under-resourced churches and missions. These pastors and churches/missions were previously supported through the Equitable Compensation portion of the Clergy Support apportionment and/or through the Districts.

World Service Fund
 World Service apportionment provides the basic financial resources for the core ministries of our denomination. It underwrites Christian mission around the world, empowers, enriches spiritual commitment and provides the means to equip and nurture our lay leaders through education and professional support. This fund helps God's children everywhere and enables the proclamation of our Christian faith.

- General Boards and Agencies – It represents the minimum needs of the denomination's general agencies which serve as a resource to local churches and as an extension of local churches in ministry and mission on a conference, national and world level.
- Mission Giving – The major thrust in mission giving in our church begins here. Every dollar given for relief efforts goes directly to people in need. Every dollar given to support the work of over 2,000 mission personnel goes directly to that personnel. In addition, when there is not enough money available to provide salary support for these missionaries through our Advance Special giving, World Service funds are used to make up the shortfall.

-Dorothy Tucker

You have a story of hope someone needs to hear!

Please be in prayer as to whether God is nudging you to share a story about your faith during Worship.

Sign up in the Sanctuary or by contacting the church

AND REACHING OUT...

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

Our Sister Church in Cuba

The Mission Outreach Evangelism Team would like to thank you for your generosity in contributing towards sending much needed medicines to the Methodist churches in Camaguey, Cuba. With your contributions in November of 2022, the medicines were purchased and shipped in December of 2022 and they arrived in Cuba mid March, 2023. A long journey, but what a blessing to the people who need it!

Our sister church in Cuba, Santa Cruz del Sur, is located on the southern coast of Cuba in the Camaguey Province about 400 miles east of Havana. Jose Luis Vizoso Garcia is the Pastor of the church along with his wife, Mercedes. The church has 165 members and they support 6 missions.

For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in. Our sister church lives by this Bible verse and feeds the hungry with what meager staples they can find. The church collects from the parishioners their first fruits every 2nd Sunday of the month and uses what can be spared from the collection plate every 4th Sunday of the month to help feed families who have little to nothing.


Electricity is sporadic throughout Cuba. The church and people have daily outages which can last up to 18 hours and often leads to food spoilage. The outages are also an aggravation when they happen during church services. As anyone who has been to a church service in Cuba knows, the music is very important to them and VERY LOUD. The Pastor has mentioned what a blessing a small generator would be. **With your generous support on April 23rd during worship and at our Cuba Missions Luncheon, we raised over \$1,400 to help make buying a generator a reality!**

Again, the MOE Team would like to thank you for your support of our sister church. They pray for us daily—let us keep them in our prayers and pray for them!

Kathy Wood Yard Sale
 Fri May 5th and Sat May 6th
 1430 Hackl Blvd Bartow



I'm planning for this sale to (hopefully) be great. Every penny I make goes for items needed for my soups and other items. Please leave donations in the screen room at my house. Thank you!

oneblood 
 Share your power.

Thank you to everyone that participated in our blood drive. We were able to collect 8 pints. That is an opportunity to possibly save 24 lives. **The Big Red Bus will return for your next opportunity on June 11.** My goal is to double our last collection. Won't you please help?
 - Barbara H

Mark your Calendars!

Bethlehem VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
 Marketplace SCHOOL

JUNE 26-30, 9 am-12 pm
 We are going back in time to Bethlehem to hear about Jesus' birth!
 Available for a day or the week?
 There is a place for you in Bethlehem!
 Sign up to volunteer.

We are Collecting Eye Glasses!

May is National Eye Health Awareness month.

We will be collecting eye glasses to provide to the Lions Club so that they can share them with people in need.

There will be a collection box available on the back pew.

