

Sunday Sermon Themes and Scriptures

<p>Date: December 1, 2024 Sermon Series Title: Advent sermon series: The Journey Towards Hope Sermon Title: Mary starts the journey towards hope Old Testament: Jeremiah 23:5 New Testament: Luke 1:26-38</p>	<p>Date: December 8, 2024 Sermon Series Title: Advent sermon series: The Journey Towards Hope Sermon Title: Joseph starts the journey towards hope Old Testament: Isaiah 9:2 & 6 New Testament: Matthew 1:18-25</p>
<p>Date: December 15, 2024 Sermon Series Title: Advent sermon series: The Journey Towards Hope Sermon Title: Mary & Joseph continues the journey – even when it is hard Old Testament: Isaiah 7:14 New Testament: Luke 2:1-7</p>	<p>Date: December 22, 2024 Sermon Series Title: Advent sermon series: The Journey Towards Hope Sermon Title: The Shepherds join the journey towards hope Old Testament: Psalm 72:1-20 New Testament: Romans 13:1-7</p>
<p>Date: December 24, 2024 (Christmas Eve) Sermon Series Title: Advent sermon series: The Journey Towards Hope Sermon Title: Jesus is the hope – the New Adam Old Testament: Isaiah 61:1-2 New Testament: 1 Cor. 15:45-49</p>	<p>Date: December 29, 2024 Sermon Series Title: Advent sermon series: The Journey Towards Hope Sermon Title: Why did God become human? Old Testament: Isaiah 42:1-4 New Testament: Matthew 12:15-21 & John 1:1-5 & 9-14</p>

Church Contacts

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Office Hours: Monday – Thursday: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Friday – Office Closed.

Newsletter and Bulletin Deadlines

We have a lot of ministries and events going on at Burton and it is important to get the word out regarding them. So, please remember the *deadline for getting information into the weekly bulletin is on Wednesdays. The deadline for monthly Beacon articles is the twentieth of each month.* Please send all information that you want placed in the bulletin or in the Beacon to the office at bae_bmumc@att.net.

DON'T MISS THE DEADLINE!

December Birthdays:

December Anniversaries:

	<u>DAY</u>		<u>DAY</u>		<u>DAY</u>
Annabelle Bricker	4	Sharon Braunberns	23	Bud & Gail Preston	17
Kay Comer	4	Betty Anne Gear	24	Gene & Virginia Spear	19
				Carol & Alan Ackenhausen	23



The Beacon

a monthly newsletter publication of Burton Memorial UMC
December 2024

Brothers and Sisters,

May God's grace give us the necessary joy, peace, and patience to love our neighbors.



John Wesley, the 18th century leader of the Methodist revival, taught a robust and biblically based theology. This theology has three main emphases: 1) Original sin, 2) Saved by grace through faith, and 3) Holiness (both personal & social). Three months ago (September) we learned about original sin. Two months ago (October) we explored grace. Last month (November), we talked about personal holiness. Now, in December, we learn about social holiness. So, let's finish strong with social holiness!!

Before we discuss social holiness, we should review personal holiness. Personal holiness is having a heart that is solely motivated by an unconditional love for God, neighbor, and self. We cannot become holy on our own. Our sinful nature will get in the way. Only God's grace can change our hearts so we can become holy. God's grace is the unconditional love of God that is made known to us by the Holy Spirit. As we pray, fast, study Scripture, worship, and look to serve others, God's grace works to change our hearts to make us holy.

Now we can look at social holiness.

Social holiness is working to make the Kingdom of God more of a reality on earth. The Kingdom of God is life as God intends - life as God intends in heaven, inside our hearts, and on earth. God does not intend for there to be poverty, so we, as followers of Christ, do what we can to alleviate poverty. God does not intend for there to be hatred, so we, as followers of Christ, do what we can to love everyone. God does not intend for there to be oppression, so we, as followers of Christ, do what we can to establish justice.

Let's talk about justice. Justice stops the strong from oppressing the weak and the rich from taking advantage of the poor. Justice for the poor, marginalized, and oppressed people of the world is important to God because God loves everyone. There are hundreds of verses proving this. Here is a sampling: Ex. 32:9; Deut. 1:16, 10:18, 15:11, 27:19; Lev. 19:10, 15, 33, 34, 24:22; Ps. 72; Pro. 14:31; Isa. 1:11-17, 42:1-4, 58:1-9; Mic. 6:6-8; Amos 5:11, 12, 14, 15, 24; Mat. 12:15-21, 25:35-36; Luke 1:46-55, 4:16-21; James 1:27, 2:1-7; 1 John 3:17-18. Social holiness includes justice.

Social and personal holiness are complementary. With personal holiness, unconditional love fills our hearts. We then begin to empathize with people who are poor, oppressed, or marginalized. This leads us to help people and advocate for justice. In other words, our hearts full of love, which is personal holiness, compel us to make the Kingdom of God more of a reality on earth, which is social holiness.

William Wilberforce was a rich aristocrat in the English Parliament during the 1700s. Like many members of Parliament, he lived an easy, luxurious, and partying lifestyle. He developed a reputation for hard drinking, excessive gambling, and relentless pursuit of women. As you can imagine, during this stage of his life, William did not care about personal holiness, much less social holiness.

That all changed, however, when he gave his life over to Christ while vacationing in France. He suddenly cared about being holy. He changed his life of debauchery and started to receive God's transforming grace through worship, prayer, and Bible study. In this way, he started to achieve personal holiness. As he became more holy, William started to wonder how he could use his position as a member of parliament to help people.

Well, as he was wondering about this, some members of an anti-slavery society visited him and solicited his help to end slavery. From that point on, he worked tirelessly as the abolitionist leader in Parliament. He headed the parliamentary campaign against the British slave trade for twenty years until the slave trade was made illegal with the passage of the [Slave Trade Act of 1807](#). He continued to fight against slavery until 1833 when Parliament abolished slavery itself in England and all her colonies.

So, personal holiness progresses into social holiness. Is this true for us? Are we personally becoming more holy so we can pursue social holiness?

In Christ,
Pastor David L. Charlton



Potluck Luncheon

Burton will be having a potluck for ***Sunday, December 1, at 11:30 am in the Fellowship Center***, following the 10:00 am service. The theme is ***Maryland Crab Festival***. Bring your favorite fall dish or dessert. If you do not cook, just bring yourselves. There is always more than enough food.

Church Council

We will have our final church council meeting of 2024 on ***Tuesday, December 3*** in the Fellowship Hall. Dinner will begin at 5:15 pm with the meeting called to order at 5:30 pm. A review of 2024 and looking into 2025 will be part of the agenda for the evening. Please plan to attend!



Annual Christmas Concert

Our Burton Ringers will share their ringing gifts on ***Sunday, December 1st at 5:30 pm in the sanctuary***. Scripture, music, and stories will accompany our handbell choirs to bring you the songs of the sacred Advent and Christmas season. Refreshments will be served on the patio immediately following the concert. A love offering to fund our ministries will be taken. Please plan to attend and bring some friends!

Campus Ministry

If you would like yourself, your child, grandchild, or great grandchild to be put our "student database," please send your request to bae_bmumc@att.net, or call the church office at 305-852-2581. We will need the name of the child, grade, and school. ***Please also let us know if someone has graduated so we can honor them.***



Coral Isles Church Blue Christmas



Blue? Yes, blue as in the blues. As in "I am feeling blue." Not everyone is up and cheery for the Christmas holidays. Coral Isles Church is having a ***Blue Christmas Service on Wednesday, December 18 at 6:00 pm at 90001 Overseas Hwy, Tavernier***. This worship service is designed to help those who are depressed during the holidays.

United Nations Conference on Biodiversity

Green Team

At the recent UN biodiversity conference in Cali, Colombia (COP 16), there was a growing momentum towards integrating biodiversity considerations into all sectors of the economy and society. Businesses will face increasing pressure to adopt nature-positive practices, disclose their environmental impacts, and contribute to conservation efforts. One of the most compelling outcomes of the conference was the acknowledgment of the crucial role of Indigenous peoples and local communities as biodiversity custodians and partners in its conservation, restoration, and sustainable use. As members of the faith community of the Florida Keys, the Burton Green Team intends to play an essential role as custodians of the creation. Join us as we prepare for the 2025 Earth Day celebrations.



CDC Holiday Events

Our Child Development Center (CDC) had their parade and Trunk or Treat on October 31. The Costume parade at the Child Center is always fun! Lots of “heroes” and “heroines” - no scary stuff! Bags of goodies from the parents and some church members were distributed to the amused children. Many thanks to all who participated!

In December, a Santa Claus visit is planned for December 6 at 10 am in the playground, with gifts provided for the kids and staff. On December 11, there will be a Christmas classroom party where kids will exchange gifts with one another.



A lovely Thanksgiving dinner for the parents and children was held on November 19, with serving help from church members.

Fit For Christ Exercise Group

The Fit For Christ weekly group, with support, education, and exercise for all ages, is still on hiatus. Watch your bulletin or newsletter for an announcement of its return



Tai Chi Open House Weekly Classes

Strength, Flexibility, and Stillness all in one exercise class? At Burton? Yes, twice a week!



We are blessed that **Tai Chi** is being offered here at Burton in the *Fellowship Center on Tuesdays from 9:45 am to 11:15 am, and on Monday nights from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm*, for all levels of ability. All teachers are volunteers and class costs are by donations to cover the costs of the class location. *You can start any time.* The benefits are amazing and the history is fascinating. I hope you will check out their web site and the classes they have to offer. <https://www.taoisttaichi.org/> Why not start out the new year by joining this group?

Status of Offerings



Please remember that the weekly offerings pay the expenses of our worship services, as well as contributing to the various church ministries. Below are the offerings and website collections for October 2024 to date, along with the expenses for the same period. The Year-to-Date totals show our expenses exceed our offerings. The difference is funded by our Child Development Center (CDC) income. The goal going forward is to grow our church, so we are no longer dependent on this income to pay church expenses.

Last Four Weeks					Year to Date		
Week	Date	Offering	Expense	+ / -	Offering	Expense	+ / -
1	6-Oct	\$1,949	\$904	1,045	\$91,018	\$218,900	-127882
2	13-Oct	\$1,546	\$3,817	-2,271	\$92,564	\$222,717	-130153
3	20-Oct	\$3,236	\$5,417	-2,181	\$95,800	\$228,134	-132334
4	27-Oct	\$749	\$1,205	-456	\$96,549	\$229,339	-265124

We are continuing with our Facebook Live services at 10:00 am, with videos posted on Facebook. If you are not able to attend services in person, please help us by either mailing your normal donation by check to Burton Memorial UMC, 93001 Overseas Highway, Tavernier, FL 33070, or go to our website: bmumc.net and click on **Give Online** in the upper right corner of the home page to set up a payment online.

Christmas Gifts for Staff

Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee

Dear Burton Congregation:

With the Advent Season upon us, we would like to present Pastor David and the staff of Burton Memorial (Esther Dieujuste, Sexton, Betsy Edwards, Administrative Assistant, Chris Chandler, Food Pantry coordinator) with a monetary Christmas gift as an appreciation for all they do for us at Burton. If you would like to contribute, you may use the self-addressed envelope enclosed in the newsletter. You can put it on the offering plate on Sunday morning or mail in your gift to Burton Memorial UMC, 93001 Overseas Hwy, Tavernier, FL 33070. (Please make checks out to Burton Memorial UMC and put "Christmas Gift" in the memo line.)



God's Kitchen/Food Pantry

Burton is still in need of help with our Food Pantry Ministry. We can use extra hands in the pantry to help with deliveries on Wednesday and Thursday mornings, and to serve our clients Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 am to 12 pm and Thursday evenings from 5 pm to 7 pm. Please call the office at 305-852-2581 to get more details or to volunteer.

God's Kitchen recently received a \$6,000 grant from the FKEC Charitable Trust, to help with purchasing the fresh produce and meat for our meals. Many thanks to this wonderful organization and to Mary Lou for her efforts in obtaining this grant.

We are still looking for groups or individuals to help with our God's Kitchen Free Dinner on Thursdays, helping to cook, serve and clean up. If you can help, please call or text Mary Lou Wilkinson at 305-394-3878, or call the office at 305-852-2581 to help.



United
Women
in Faith

United Women in Faith

May the gratitude for your blessings remain with you not just at Thanksgiving but throughout the year! Thank you to everyone from Burton church who has decided to participate in our annual Thank Bank Offering. Offerings may be handed in any time during the coming year by leaving in the church office or giving to Mary Lou Wilkinson or Pat Fincannon. All money collected goes to help vulnerable women, children and youth in America and around the world. Every gift makes an impact!

Our December meeting will be held on Monday, December 23 at 6:30 pm at Mary Lou Wilkinson's house.

Call Mary Lou if you need directions or a ride (305-394-3878). Everyone who can should bring Christmas cookies or some other goody to share for our refreshments. Barbara Koch will provide the program on Women and Mentoring.

Just a reminder to all readers that one of the books in this year's Reading Program is not available on our shelves but may instead be checked out from the Monroe County Public Library. We get credit in the category Education for Mission for reading "The Book Woman's Daughter" by Kim Richardson. It is an interesting and thought provoking read.

Finally, our annual tea is fast approaching. Baked goods sign-ups will be circulated at the December meeting so start thinking about which one of your delicious baked goodies you wish to donate to make this tea a superlative success. Tickets to sell will also be handed out to table hostesses at our December 23 meeting. Since we have a limited number of tables and seats, members of the congregation please be sure to contact Mary Lou, Pat, or Barbara to reserve a seat as soon as possible. Last year we had to turn a few people away and we do not want to ever have to do that again. Tickets are \$25.

Love is in the Air as our Valentine's tea approaches Sunday, February 16 at 2:30 pm. We have a truly fun program planned along with a repeat of our popular silent auction from last year. If you have any lovely new or nearly new items that you wish to donate to our auction, please contact Mary Lou Wilkinson. Your treasures last year helped us raise a significant amount of money for missions.

Ho Ho Ho! I think Santa wants you to give tea tickets to your friends and relatives. Spread the Love!

P.S. An ecumenical Women's Bible study is being held every Tuesday in January and February from 10:00 am to 12 pm at Barbara's house at Coral Harbor Club, 88181 Old Highway in Islamorada. The study book is Lynn Japinga's "From Daughters to Disciples: Women's Stories from the New Testament." Call Barbara (716-913-1061) for directions or more information. All women are welcome.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

We sent a baby blanket and hat to South America for a new baby. Not only do we make prayer shawls and blankets for the needy, we knit and crochet for any occasion.

Please join us on Thursday evenings at 6:30 pm in the Joy Classroom to knit or crochet. We have fun and loads of laughs. For more information, please call Virginia Spear, 305-522-2978.



Prayer Bead Ministry- Continues With Sharing Our Circle of Love

Our Protestant Prayer Bead Ministry began here at Burton Memorial in 2016 when we introduced it during our Annual Tea to 100 of the ladies that attended. Over these years, our ladies have individually purchased all the material and strung the Prayer Beads and smaller Chaplets so we may sell them with every dollar received available for helping others.

This message was given to the children at the Florida Keys Children's Shelter in November with \$200 worth of CVS Gift Cards:

Our Prayer Bead Ministry is a Circle of Love...

The ladies lovingly and prayerfully string the prayer beads, the prayer beads are bought by someone who wants to give to someone they love or to keep and the money we receive is lovingly used to buy these gift cards.

Closing the Circle of Love

An additional \$200 of Gift Cards will be given prior to Christmas. You might recall that in February of this year, we provided \$300 worth of cards, and it was a huge success and so thanks to those who have bought our Protestant prayer beads...you have become part of our "Circle of Love." If you would like more information, contact Linda Norman at 305-393-2589. Please feel free to call or text or email to lindalillonorman@gmail.com.

Visionary Sunday

Brothers and sisters,

May God's grace give us the necessary joy, peace, and patience to love our neighbors.

Visionary Sunday is January 5 at 11:30 am (right after worship). ALL ARE WELCOME! Lunch will be provided. Please attend. The purpose of this gathering is to plan the major church events for 2025.

In preparation for this gathering, please reflect on the mission statements of the United Methodist Church (UMC) and Burton Memorial United Methodist Church (BMUMC).

The mission statements are:

UMC Mission Statement: To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

BMUMC Mission Statement: We are an uncommon church for common people offering a love of neighbor without boundaries. We share the Gospel of Love by gathering together to celebrate a faith relationship with Christ. We serve both God and His children through our ongoing prayers, talents, gifts and dedication of time until He comes again in glory.

Thank you and God bless. Pastor David Charlton



Homeless Recognition Day

Each year we gather at the gazebo in Settler's Park, Tavernier, to remember our neighbors who died while Homeless in 2024. This is a brief interfaith community memorial service filled with prayers, candles, blessings, and music. Please mark your calendar to be there this year. Let us join together reaching out to God in faith, embracing our neighbors with agape and celebrating life and community. ***This year's Homeless Recognition Day will be held on Saturday, December 21, 2024, from 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm.***

A Meditation on John 1:1-14 - A Reminder of True Christmas

Scripture: John 1:1-2: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.”

Meditation: Jesus is THE WORD. He was always with God because he is God – one of the persons of the Trinity. Jesus is in a perfectly loving relationship with THE FATHER and THE HOLY SPIRIT.



The type of love that binds together THE FATHER, THE HOLY SPIRIT and THE WORD is the same type of love we should strive to have for one another. God is love.

Just as our words reveal our innermost thoughts, desires and character, THE WORD reveals some of God’s innermost thoughts, desires and character. If you want to know God’s character, look at Jesus. You will find that God is a good & loving God.

Scripture: John 1:3-5: “Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.”

Meditation: THE WORD, along with THE FATHER and THE HOLY SPIRIT created all that is seen and unseen.

Scripture: John 1:6-9: “There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.”

Meditation: THE WORD is the light that shines in this sinful and broken world. This light provides hope & direction just as a lighthouse illuminates the way for lost sailors. This light beckons everyone into an eternal, loving relationship with God in God’s kingdom.

Scripture: John 1:10-13: “He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.”

Meditation: Not everyone recognizes or follows THE WORD. Many prefer to remain in darkness and rule as if they are gods. But, to those who acknowledge and follow THE WORD, they become children of God.

Scripture: John 1:14: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Meditation: THE WORD became flesh – a human named Jesus. He is like us in that he had to be born and mature like the rest of us. He is not like us in that he was conceived by THE HOLY SPIRIT and was perfectly obedient to THE FATHER. He had no sin.

This is what Christmas is about.
David Charlton

Christmas Eve Worship Services

Tuesday, December 24

Family worship – 6:30 pm

Candlelight service – 11:00 pm

Burton Memorial UMC Sanctuary