



Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Lakeland, FL
Permit 2001



First United Methodist Church of Bartow

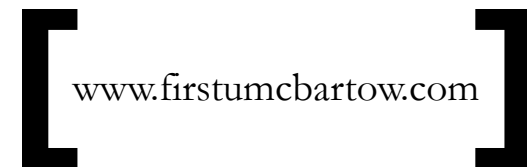
GOOD NEWS

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH,
BARTOW, FLORIDA

455 S Broadway Ave.
Bartow, FL 33830

December 2018

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

- Sunday, December 2 First Sunday of Advent
9 & 11 am Worship + Communion
- Wed, Dec. 5 & 12 Noon: Sounds & Silences of Christmas (Sanctuary)
- Sunday, December 9 Second Sunday of Advent
- Sunday, December 16 Third Sunday of Advent
- Sunday, December 23 One service at 11 am Fourth Sunday of Advent
Choir Cantata
Lunch at Asbury UMC (**Reservations by Dec. 16**)
- Monday, December 24 4:30 & 7 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Services
- Tuesday, December 25 HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS!



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Pastor's Perspective

“Our March to the Manger In 2018”

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.” –Matt 2:11

The “March to the Manger” is a tradition that our church has kept for over a decade. It consists of a special Christmas offering that functions as a “final push” towards our general fund before the year’s end. In 2018, the “March to the Manger” will be very important, because we are counting on it to fulfill our apportionment obligations. We pray that our congregation will give generously and lovingly. This offering will be pivotal in two ways: (1) it will bring honor and glory to our Lord Jesus by enabling us to promote missions locally and globally; (2) it will also help us to continue the legacy of our church, which has been serving Christ in Bartow for more than 150 years. Let me say a little about these two aspects.

When the wise men arrived in Bethlehem to worship the baby Jesus, they brought him gifts of “gold, frankincense and myrrh” (Matt. 2:11). More than simply providing financial assistance to the holy family, these gifts proclaimed the essence of who Jesus is: Gold was a symbol of status and royalty, thus proclaiming that Jesus is King; frankincense was burned in temple worship, and therefore it proclaimed the divinity of Jesus; and myrrh was used to treat wounds and illnesses, signaling that Jesus would suffer and die for our sins. After the example of what the offering of the wise men denoted in Biblical times, through our March to the Manger we will proclaim that Jesus is our king, God and savior.

In regards to our church’s legacy, I want to share a little story: Early in November three ladies came to our office asking to be shown the stain glass windows in our sanctuary. One of them, Mrs. Carol Sue Daniel, said that her great-grandfather was a circuit rider, and that window # 4 was dedicated to his memory. I could not be more surprised when I saw who was memorialized in window # 4: The Reverend William C. Jordan, the founder of our church!!! As it turned out, I had in front of me a great-granddaughter of our founding pastor!! In preparation for our 150th anniversary in 2017, I read many stories of the love and sacrifice that Rev. **Mrs. Daniel**↑↑ Jordan put into the planting of our church, or rather, into the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Polk County. This is precisely our legacy: we have been light and salt in Polk County for over 150 years! Needless to say, we are now in contact with Mrs. Carol Sue Daniel and we look forward to sharing more conversations and to having her visiting our church in the near future.

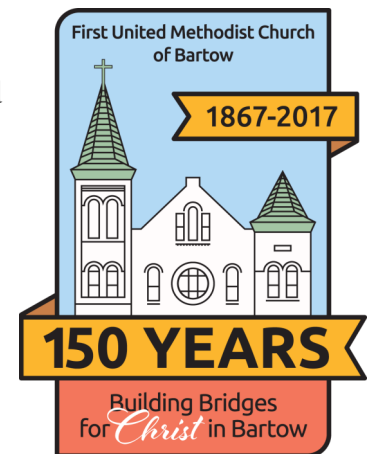


Let us pray and work for a successful March to the Manger on December 23, 2018. May God empower us to continue proclaiming the glory of Jesus and serving the people of Bartow, Polk County, and beyond.

Merry Christmas!!
Pastor Armando

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2018



Building bridges for Christ in Bartow

Inside this issue:

Choir Notes Golden Girls	2
Committees and Meetings	3
Poinsettias	4
Across the Courtyard	5
Birthdays and Anniversaries	6
Calendar	7

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BARTOW

Choir Notes
by Bonnie Allen

It is strange the way God gives His messages to us. As I was doing my daily devotions today, I was reading about the Israelites building a Golden calf to worship when they thought that Moses, who had gone up the mountain to talk with God, had been gone for 40 days. They were afraid that they were in the wilderness without a leader, even though they had actually heard the voice of God forty days before and seen many miracles along the way. It seemed so ridiculous to me that they would build a calf to worship. Then I started thinking about other sermons I had heard that connected that event to every day life, and challenged us to think about what were our idols. That brought thoughts of my home, my children, our farm, and made me take stock of my dedication to those as compared to my dedication to God. If that were not enough, as I started my 20 minute journey to work, on the radio was a preacher talking about idols. I said, "Ok, God, I get it!" His message was that our idols take root in three things; Passion, Possessions, and Position. What will it take for us to realize that God is the ultimate, the giver of all good things, the very source of our life.

Christmas can really challenge our values. The world says to give gifts is the sign of our love. The world says it is ok to charge your purchases, because material things are so important! (possessions) Maybe we think that by giving, people will think we are great and elevate our Position. Wow!! I didn't know that my Christmas newsletter would be all about this!

I actually love Christmas, but have struggled with buying gifts all my married life. God has spoken to me about all this before, and I think He wanted me to share it with you today. Our devotion, our gifts, our dedication should be to the One who gave His life for us. I hope for myself, that I can keep this foremost in my mind as I prepare for this special time.

Sounds and Silences was created almost 19 years ago to take one hour to really be quiet and worship the Holy child. This season is so busy, and it is good to sit back and listen to the beautiful music and think about the reason for the season. Those dates are: December 5th and 12th at noon in the Sanctuary. I am especially excited this year, because Jon Eckman is bringing a group from the High School Band to perform on the 12th. John and Margie Anderson will be performing along with Jenny Heidtman, Elaine Pearce, Richard Lake, Ken Allen, Ina Ogden, Sylvia Spencer, Bill Wright and Beverly Etheredge, the

Methodist school children with Ashleigh and Chris Anderson, Tom Mizell, and there will be more. Wow!!

Our Cantata will be performed on December 23rd. I am excited that Margie Anderson is creating some visuals to go along with the music. I think you will love it. This will happen at the 11 o'clock service. Melanie Chancey and John Hutto will be our narrators. The choir is so faithful and working hard each week to glorify God.

Our Christmas Eve services will be held at 4:30 and 7 pm as usual. So we will celebrate our Lord and Savior with music, decorations, and the giving of our gifts to continue the ministry of this church. May God Bless Armando and Icel as they set such a wonderful example for all of us, and may He bless their trip to the Holy Land so that they might experience even deeper their love for our Lord and the very place that He walked, preached, died and rose again.

I pray that all of us will experience the JOY of Christmas!!

Golden Girls

A huge thank you to Allye Martin for taking Golden Girls to lunch at Catfish County in bus. They had an awesome time. Also a special thanks to Bonnie Allen, FUMC and Asbury helpers for the fun bus trip to the Allen's farm for short horse show and bag lunch. Our next outing will be on Sunday, Dec. 16 when we leave at 6pm from Asbury parking lot to ride the bus to enjoy Christmas lights; then a time of fellowship and refreshments in Asbury's fellowship hall. I hope all the Golden Girls will join in on this special time together.
Karel Hammer

December Menu for 6 pm Wednesday Fellowship Dinners:


5—Sonny's pulled chicken, BBQ beans, coleslaw
Servers: Wood, Lee

12—Covered dish + chicken (\$2/piece)
Servers: Huff, Kloster, Packard, Wright

19—Turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, broccoli casserole, roll
Servers: Presnell, Layton, Roth

DECEMBER 2018



	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		* = Each Wednesday 5 pm Hand Bells 5:30 pm Youth Fellowship 6 pm Fellowship Dinner 7 pm Interger 1 Choir 7 pm Bible Study (Library)	# Each Thursday 3:30 pm Children's Choir (Annex)		1 7 pm Christmas Music Gala @ Polk State College Fine Arts Theater in Winter Haven \$7
		5 9:30, 10, 10:30 am FMS Chapel Services *Noon: Sounds & Silences 6 pm Fellowship Dinner Sonny's pulled chicken, BBQ beans, coleslaw (Wood, Lee)	6 #	7 6 pm FMS K—3rd grade Christmas Program (FH)	8
		12 * *Noon: Sounds & Silences Youth Christmas Caroling 6 pm Fellowship Dinner (Covered dish + chicken (Huff, Kloster, Packard, Wright))	13 #	14 Wedding Rehearsal: Johnson & Thompkins (Sanctuary) 6 pm Light up Bartow Christmas Parade	15 3:30 pm Wedding: Caitlyn Johnson & Arthur Thompkins (Sanctuary)
		19 * 6 pm Fellowship Dinner Turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, broccoli casserole, roll (Layton, Presnell, Roth)	20 #	21 Begin Winter Break for Polk County & FMS Youth Christmas Party	22
		25 Christmas Day Happy Birthday Jesus!	26 27	28	
		1 New Year's Day	2 New Year's Day	3 New Year's Day	
16 + 9 am Contemporary Worship 9:30 am Disciple & Joy Adult Sunday school 11 am Traditional Worship Children's Church	10 Most Mondays 7 am Men's & Women's Bible Study & Breakfast (Perkins)	11 3 Pastor & Icel to Israel/Holy Land—12th 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study (870 Lila) Soup provided, bring Salad, dessert, hordourve			
2 + First Sunday of Advent Communion 2:30 pm Christmas Music Gala @ Polk State College Fine Arts Theater in Winter Haven \$7	4 7 am Men's & Women's Bible Study & Breakfast (Perkins)	5 Pastor & Icel to Israel/Holy Land—12th 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study (870 Lila) Soup provided, bring Salad, dessert, hordourve			
9 + Second Sunday of Advent Guest Preacher: David Stump	11 10 24 Christmas Eve 4:30 & 7 pm Candlelight Services 31 New Year's Eve	12 17 25 Christmas Day Happy Birthday Jesus!			
16 + Third Sunday of Advent ~12:30 pm Lunch Bunch at El Rancho Mexican 3:30 pm Messiah Sing-along 6 pm Golden Girls on bus to see Christmas lights	17 24 Christmas Eve 4:30 & 7 pm Candlelight Services 31 New Year's Eve	18 25 Christmas Day Happy Birthday Jesus!			
23 Fourth Sunday of Advent 11 am Choir Cantata March to Manager Lunch at Asbury UMC	26 27	28			
30 + College Student Sunday	26 4:30—7 pm Sat, Jan 5 Soup Buffet \$7 at Asbury UMC. Eat in or take out. Call 863-333-2030 tickets.	27			

December Birthdays

- 1—Greg Fitzgerald
- 2—Tula Richardson
- 5—Belanca Rosier
- 6—Andrea Croom
- 7—Parker Pannebaker
- 9—Maegan Neely
- Carolyn Presnell
- 11—Carol Schreck
- 12—Eldora Thorn
- Armando Rodriguez
- 14—Ruby Adkins
- Alexis Whitehead
- 15—John Hutto
- 22—Keith Krueger
- 24—Melissa Hicks
- 25—JESUS
- 27—Mary Grose
- 28—David Bergdoll
- Thomas McMillin
- Jane Meyer
- Gwyn Phillips
- 29—Bruce Lee
- 30—Holly Sutherland

♥ **December Anniversaries** ♥

- 6—Brady & Debbie Draper
- 11—Richard & Sue Lake
- 19—Alex & Charlotte Rogers
- 30—Adrian & Jan Jackson
- 31—Ed & Eldora Thorn

New Address: Ed & Eldora Thorn
 Lake Gibson Village
 771 Carpenter's Way, Apt G46
 Lakeland 33809 863-815-6249

Please note: Information for January newsletter should be submitted by **Monday, December 17th**. Thank You for helping us send out the Good News in a timely manner. The Good News is published monthly by First United Methodist Church of Bartow, 455 S. Broadway Ave., Bartow, Florida 33830

2018 October Finance Report	
General Fund	
Summary for October	
Income	\$23,810.05
Expenses	\$20,590.82
Net Income	\$3,219.23
Summary Year to Date	
Balance 12/31/17	\$15,147.60
Net Income YTD	(\$4,767.57)
Balance YTD	\$10,380.03
Apportionments 2018	\$22,994.00
Paid as of October 22	\$6,899.00
Building Fund	
Balance 12/31/17	\$23,571.56
Income	\$19,220.00
Expenses	\$17,950.00
Interest	\$ 140.03
Balance Building Fund	\$24,981.59

Sympathy

*We extend our Christian love and sympathy to the family of **Janice Warren** who passed on to eternal life on November 7.*

Memorial Gifts

*Gifts have been received by **First UMC** in memory of **John Wright***

- by **Barbara Asher, Glen Harrell, Ken Harrell***
- Chris Beatty, Matt Beatty***
- Michael & Sue Britt***
- Brian & Linda Buynak***
- L. Dicks, Inc***
- Richard Dicks***
- Adele Durrance***
- John Eady***
- Rick & Jane Frisbe***
- Tom & Alicia Fitzgerald***
- Carol & Mariann Holland***
- Pat & Elsa Huff for Apportionments***
- Tom & Lavonia Hutto***
- Luther Langdale, Phyllis & John Thompson***
- Nadine Robbins***
- John & Clarice Roth***
- Irene Rothrock***
- Jim & Dinah Slater***
- Mary Nell Smith***
- Wayne & Leah Snell for General Fund***
- Barbara H Syndor***

in memory of

***Wayne & Betty Hill**
Ralph & Martha Snell
*by Wayne & Leah Snell for General Fund**

in memory of

***Janice Warren**
by
Nadine Robbins*



March to the Manger

Once again the season of Advent is a time of preparation to celebrate the joys of Christmas. One means we have used in recent years to focus our attention on Christ as the center of Christmas is our **March to the Manger**. The idea behind the **March to the Manger** is to follow the example of the shepherds who came to the manger to adore the Christ child and the wise men who brought their gifts to the newborn King.

Our **March to the Manger** will take place in our 11 am Worship Service on Christmas Sunday, December 23, but we can begin now to prepare our hearts to “come and adore Him” and present our gifts at Christ’s manger in honor of His birth.

These gifts are used to minister in Christ’s name through United Methodist ministries and missions throughout the world.

Women’s Bible Study

6:30 pm Monday, December 3 at 870 Lila St.
 Bring an hordourve, salad or dessert.
 Soup provided. Come enjoy the fellowship.

Lunch Bunch

Meet at El Ranchito Mexican Restaurant after worship on Sunday, December 16 for good food and fellowship.

Coming in 2019:

Asbury UMC Soup Buffett
4:30-7 pm January 5 \$7.00
 Soup, Salad, Roll, Dessert, Beverage
 863-333-2030 for tickets

Congregational Health Promoter Course
8 am-4:30 pm Saturdays, January 19 & 26
 Bartow FUMC Fellowship Hall
 To register contact Lanet.Owen@baycare.org,
 or 863-533-8111 ext. 521831

Church Family Beach Retreat Sat. Feb. 23
 Leave at Noon for Clearwater on bus,
 Beach, pool, grilled supper, return after sunset.

Homeland Sunday, March 17

Church Leadership Retreat Sat. April 13

First UMC 2018 Advent & Christmas Season

Sunday, Dec. 2 - First Sunday in Advent
 Communion

Wednesdays, Dec. 5 & 12 Noon -
 Sounds & Silences of the Season Concerts

Friday, Dec. 7 - 6 pm First Methodist School
 K—3rd Grade Christmas Program (FH)

Sunday, Dec. 9 - Second Sunday in Advent

Friday, Dec. 14 - Wedding Rehearsal
 6 pm Light up Bartow Christmas Parade

Saturday, Dec. 15 - Wedding:
 Caitlin Johnson & Arthur Thompkins

Sunday, Dec. 16 - Third Sunday in Advent
 12:30 pm Lunch Bunch @ El Rachito
 3:30 pm Messiah Sing-a-long First Baptist Church
 6 pm Golden Girls see Christmas lights on bus
 from Asbury parking lot

Wednesday, Dec. 19
 6 pm - Christmas Dinner

Friday, Dec. 21 - Youth Christmas Party

Sunday, Dec. 23 - Fourth Sunday in Advent
 11:00 am Worship Service - Choir Cantata
March to the Manger
 Lunch at Asbury UMC, bring side dishes
RSVP by Sunday, Dec. 16

Monday, December 24
 4:30 pm Family Contemporary Candlelight Service
 Carols + Communion
 Youth skit
 7 pm Traditional Candlelight Service
 Choir, Carols + Communion

Tuesday, December 25
 HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS!

Sunday, December 30
 Special Offering for *FL UM Children’s Home*

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BARTOW

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

At home with medical issues: Ed Etheredge, Judy Gay, Marjorie Gay, Mary Grose, Pastor Jim Hatch, Walt Heidel, Brandon Hess, Melissa Hicks, Marianne McMillin, Sylvia Mears, Ann O'Berry, Ruth O'Berry, Sara Odom, Bill Poe, Carolyn Presnell, Holly Sutherland, Lee & Louise Taylor, Ed & Eldora Thorn, Roger Waters, Chuck & Barbara Weaver, Greg Wood, Pat Wright

In military: Chris Brooks, Victor Orem
Needing prayers: Pastor & Staff, District Supt. Candace Lewis, Bishop Ken Carter, Christian, Dawn & Joshua Williams, Pioneer Missions, Indonesia
 Cuba Covenant Sister Church: Iglesia Metodista de Santa Cruz del Sur, Camagüey, Cuba

John Wesley Group

Led by Armando & Icel Rodriguez

I would like to say the John Wesley group was a wonderful experience. Our group was led by Icel and Armando Rodriguez. The members were Andrea Croom, Pat & Elsa Huff, Carolyn Presnell, Mary Beth Packard, and Betty Purdue. We all enjoyed our weekly meetings.

I personally loved the daily routine. I got up early enough to do my prayer time, Bible reading and considered what act of kindness I could do for the day. It made me very aware of being kind and also thinking of where I might witness to someone that day. The other commitment was to do two hours of service each week. I believe that helped to make me aware of what I could do for my church.

Our group had the commitment to pray for each other and any others who needed prayer. We all felt good to lift each other in prayer and to see answers to our prayers. We were in prayer for Armando's day, Carolyn Presnell in the loss of her dad and her continued health problems. Betty Purdue in the loss of her dog. We saw healing through the sadness. Of course we continued to pray for Pat's blood pressure and Mary Beth and Icel's mom conditions.

We all had a chance to witness our faith whether it be running into someone who needed encouragement or taking a quiche to a friend and inviting them to church.

We all are better people because of our John Wesley experience! We had a reunion at the home of Pat & Elsa Huff because we didn't want to stop getting together. We had a great supper and prayer time. We will meet again November 26. God is blessing each of us in special ways. We pray our whole church will have the opportunity to do the John Wesley experience.


POINSETTIAS

Please return order form below by Wednesday, Dec. 5th to place a Poinsettia in honor or in memory of a loved one.

Christmas Poinsettias

Our sanctuary will once again be decorated with poinsettias for our Christmas Season Sunday Worship Celebrations & Christmas Eve Candlelight Services. These plants will be quality 6.5" pots with 5-6 blooms.

If you would like to provide one of these plants simply fill out the information below and enclose it along with \$8.00 in an envelope and place it in the offering plate or send it to the church office no later than Wednesday, December 5th.

All who donate poinsettias may take them home to enjoy after our service on Christmas Eve.

(PLEASE PRINT NAMES AS YOU WANT THEM IN THE BULLETIN)

DONOR'S NAME: _____

POINSETTIA TO BE PRESENTED:

_____ TO THE GLORY OF GOD

_____ IN MEMORY OF _____

_____ IN HONOR OF _____

DONOR'S NAME: _____

POINSETTIA TO BE PRESENTED:

_____ TO THE GLORY OF GOD

_____ IN MEMORY OF _____

_____ IN HONOR OF _____

Sounds & Silences

Our church will continue the wonderful tradition of Sounds & Silences during the Advent season by offering two Wednesday midday concerts, **December 5 and 12**. These concerts will give you a chance to enjoy an hour of musical presentations reflecting the Christmas season. The free concerts begin at noon and end around 1:00 pm. There will be performances by instrumentalists and vocalists, including members of our own talented musical family and also some special musicians from our community. Spread the word; tell your neighbors, your friends, and your family. Come and stay as long as you can. It is a wonderful way to find the true meaning of Christmas through the beauty of music.


Across the Courtyard
 by Nadine Waters Robbins
 Church Historian

Ten years ago some FUMC members performed "Off Broadway" (well—actually a few blocks off Broadway). Various FUMCers joined a cast from Bartow and the surrounding area in the holiday-themed production of "Spirit of the Season."

This gala musical extravaganza, conceived and directed by Trish Pfeiffer, with Bonnie Allen as vocal conductor, was presented on the stage of the historic Bartow Elementary Academy Auditorium, formerly known as the Bartow City Auditorium.

In 1923 the City of Bartow and the School District signed a contract for its construction. The School Board donated the land and the City built the structure. In 1949 the Florida Legislature passed a special act allowing the City of Bartow to transfer ownership of the building to the School Board, pending local voter approval. Despite a positive vote, the Title didn't change hands until 1952 after the School Board and the City agreed to share the cost of much-needed renovations.

Over the years the Auditorium served as a venue for numerous community programs. Most notable were the 70's and 80's assortment of musical and variety shows from the Bartow Performing Arts Council (BPAC). During Mark Howard's (Bonnie's brother) involvement in BPAC there were improvements to the facility, including lighting and replacement of the stage curtains. In the 90's the building went through more changes to bring it up to Code Compliance. The "Spirit of the Season" allowed the Bartow Community to once again experience the glory of this 1920's edifice.

Act I consisted of secular musical holiday favorites featuring singers, dancers and actors. FUMC participants in this portion were Brianna Graham, Trish, Lily and Cathrine Pfeiffer, Jennifer Gilmore and Brady Draper (lead vocals), Bonnie and Ken Allen, Brandon Pickard, Heath Petersen, Whitney Lewis, Simone Gable and Laura Roth (BEA 5th Grade Chorus), Ed Thorn (Santa) and FUMC Choir members.

Act II showcased sacred selections that presented the audience with the TRUE "Spirit of the Season." Joining Brady and Jennifer as lead vocalists were Mary Wyant and Heath Petersen, Mini-FUMCers were Jack and Grace Brooks, Taylor Clements, Olivia Chancey, and Betsy and Sam Draper

(with backstage moms). Wise Men were Tim Brooks, Justin Clements and Greg McMillin. Choir members, led by Bonnie were Abby Boerger, Judy Gay, Kimmy McMillin, Holly Sutherland, Amy Whitehurst, Kathy Wood, Pam Wyant, Susan Bergdoll, Elsa Huff, Don Adams, Nadine Robbins, Faye Sarvis, Donna and Harold Wagner, and Jennifer, Whitney, Mary, Ken, Brady, Heath and Brandon.

Due to an overwhelming positive community reaction, the show was repeated the following year adding FUMCers Morgan Pickard (Brooks) dancer, Children Caleb and Belanca Rosier, Stage Manager Brandon Pickard, and Choir Members Lauren Colvin and Janet Young.

Included in both years' Program Notes was "A special thanks to First United Methodist Church and Choir. Please feel free to visit any Sunday at 11:00 and hear more from Bonnie and the Choir."

Christmas Music Gala @ Polk State College
 Fine Arts Theater, Winter Haven \$7 at door
 7 pm Saturday, Dec. 1; 2:30 pm Sunday, Dec. 2

Thank You!

The family of John Wright is deeply grateful for the kindness and support our First Methodist Family extended to us during this difficult time. We sincerely appreciate all of the love and prayers, cards, flowers and food. Your generosity and compassion touched our hearts and will not be forgotten.

Thank you,
 Pat Wright

A special thank you to David Brooks, Jane Meyer and Wendy Wright for helping in the church office while I was away. You are greatly appreciated!
 God's Richest Blessings to you,
 Cynthia Lee

Dear Pastor Rodriguez,

Thanks for coming to my rescue when I couldn't get into the sanctuary to get my photo, and many thanks for all of your local knowledge of my Jordan family. It really opened my eyes. I will get back one day. I have read all of Bartow's FUMC book 1944-1983. There are many families names that I heard my mother and grandmother talk about.

I was in the wedding of H.P. Whidden's daughter Madelyn over 50 years ago. Thanks again for everything.
 Carol Sue Daniel