

Sunday Sermon Themes and Scriptures

Date: December 7, 2025 Sermon Series Title: The Faces of Christmas Sermon Title: The Shepherds Old Testament: Isaiah 9:2 & 6 New Testament: Luke 2:8-20	Date: December 14, 2025 , 2025 Sermon Series Title: The Faces of Christmas Sermon Title: King Herod. Old Testament: Isaiah 7:14 New Testament: Matthew 2:1-8 and 13-18
Date: December 21, 2025 Sermon Series Title: The Faces of Christmas Sermon Title: Mary Old Testament: Micah 5:2 New Testament: Luke 1:46-56	Date: December 28, 2025 Sermon Series Title The Faces of Christmas Sermon Title: Jesus Old Testament: Jeremiah 23:5, Isaiah 9:2, 9:6, 7:14, Micah 5:2 New Testament: John 1:1-18

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	Betty Anne Gear	24	Bud & Gail Preston	17
Kay Comer	4			Gene & Virginia Spear	19
				Carol & Alan Ackenhausen	23



The Beacon

a monthly newsletter publication of Burton Memorial UMC
December 2025

Brothers and Sisters,

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



Welcome to part 3 of the 4-part series, "The 4 Ways to be Church". In part one (October), we looked at the church as a hospital for sinners. Last month (November), we looked at the church as a loving family. This month (December), we look at the church as a non-violent army. We'll end the series in January 2026 by looking at the church as a worshipping community. To effectively obey the great commandment (Matthew 22:37-40, Mark 12:28-34 & Luke 10:25-28), fulfill the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20), and meet the great expectation (Micah 6:6-8, Isaiah 1:17), the local congregation must look upon itself as a hospital for

sinners, loving family, non-violent army, **and** worshipping community.

So, the church is a non-violent army. An army is an organized group of people fighting against an enemy. Yes, as followers of Christ, we have an enemy. Before we describe our enemy, we must recognize that we should never consider other people to be our enemy. Jesus commands us to love all people, to include people we think of as our enemies. (Matthew 5:43-48, Romans 12:20 & Proverbs 25:21-22) Thus, we should not consider people to be our enemies.

So, if people are not our enemy, then what is our enemy? Ephesians 6:12 provides the answer, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." This verse starts off by reemphasizing that people are not our enemy. Then it provides two types of enemies. The first type consists of the 'rulers, authorities, and powers of this dark world'. The second type consists of the 'spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms'.

The 'rulers, authorities, and powers of this dark world' refer to the oppressive systems of injustice. Jesus came, not only to free us from the guilt & power of sin, but to also establish justice. In Matthew 12:15-21, we learn that Jesus fulfilled a prophecy from Isaiah. This prophecy states, "Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and **he will proclaim justice to the nations**. He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, **until he has brought justice through to victory**. In his name the nations will put their hope." (Isaiah 42:1-4)

It makes sense that God is a God of justice. God loves every person on this planet. It breaks God's heart to see one group of people oppress another group of people. Justice is the action taken to prevent oppression. God, therefore, pursues justice.

The 'spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms' refer to the hateful influence Satan and his demons have on this world. The Apostle Peter describes Satan as a "...roaring lion looking for someone to devour." (1 Peter 5:8) Satan & his demons use deceit to influence people to violently establish systems of oppression.

Our strategy is to peacefully resist hatred & injustice with truth & love. We engage with truth as we fulfill the great commission (Matthew 28:19). We engage with love as we obey the great commandment (Matthew 22:37-38) and live up to the great expectation (Micah 6:8).

Our tactics vary. Many congregations use the tactic of mitigating the negative effects of sin & inequality. They do so by establishing food pantries, clothes closets, tutoring programs, mentoring programs or other ministries that address the needs of the surrounding community. Other congregations may lobby the government to pass laws to protect vulnerable members of society or safeguard the environment. Some congregations may participate in non-violent protests.

For us to be an uncommon church for common people, offering a love of neighbor without boundaries, we must be a loving family, a hospital for sinners, a non-violent army, and a worshipping community. I will write about that last one in the January 2026 Beacon Article.

In Christ Jesus,

David L. Charlton
Pastor

Church Council

We will not have a church council meeting in December.



Potluck Luncheon

Burton will be having a Christmas Holiday potluck on Communion Sunday, ***December 7, at 11:30 am in the Fellowship Center***, following the 10:00 am service. Bring your favorite dish or dessert to share. If you do not cook, just bring yourselves. There is always more than enough food.

Ringing News

We are always looking for new ringers. If you are interested in joining our handbell choir, please see any ringer for more information.



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.***

Men’s Bible Study

The next meeting of the United Methodist Men will be in January 2026. Stay tuned for date, time, and location. If you have any questions, please contact me at 443-623-8554 or email me at famrem5@aol.com.

John Rimmel

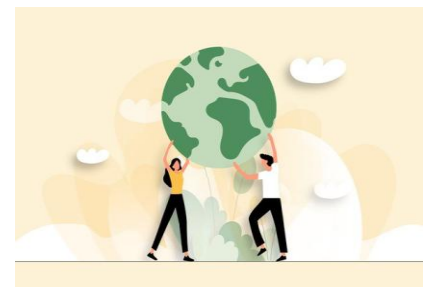


Green Team Book Review

Climate Church, Climate World: How People of Faith Must Work for Change Paperback – March 23, 2023 by [Jim Antal](#) (Author), [Bill McKibben](#) (Foreword)

Rev. Jim Antal contends that climate change is the greatest moral challenge humanity has ever faced. Hunger, refugees, poverty, inequality, deadly viruses and war. Climate change multiplies all forms of global social injustice. Environmental advocate The author calls on the church to meet this moral challenge, to embrace a new vocation so that future generations might live in harmony with God’s creation. Antal proposes how people of faith can embrace new approaches to worship, preaching, witnessing, and other spiritual practices that honor creation and cultivate hope. This revised and updated edition includes a new chapter on government policy shifts, and the current science of climate change. Published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2023.

Jack Grove, Green Team



God's Kitchen/Food Pantry



Burton's food pantry has been blessed by numerous donations in the last month, which have helped us to keep up with the increased need in our community.

Thank you to **Winn Dixie Tavernier** for their generous donation of \$500.00 for Burton's food pantry, and to Linda Lillo Norman who was instrumental in this gift.

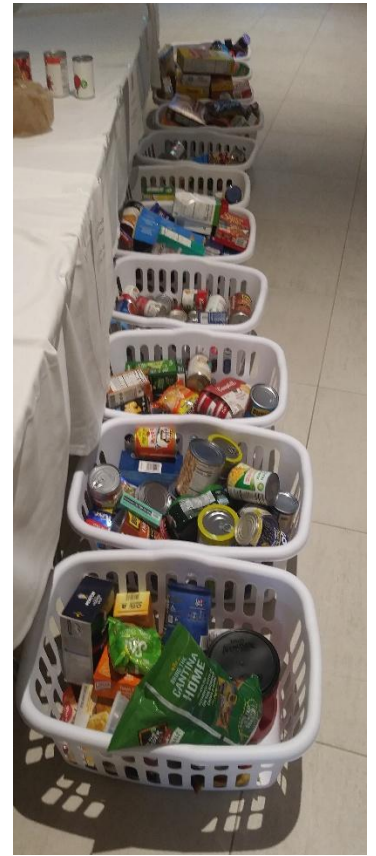
Ocean Reef hosted a Food Drive for 3 area pantries on Monday, November 24 (right). They also donated an emergency response grant of \$5,000 to the food pantry. This is in addition to the grants we have already received from them for the food pantry and the CDC summer program for 2025.

Plantation Key School again held their Thanksgiving Food Drive – a lovely amount as usual from their parents (below).



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 Wednesdays from 9 am to 12 pm and Thursday evenings from 5 pm to 7 pm. Please call the office at 305-852-2581 for info or to volunteer.

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, 305-852-2581.



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?

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 17 at 6:00 pm at 90001 Overseas Hwy, Tavernier.** This worship service is designed to help those who are depressed during the holidays.

A Meditation on Philippians 2:5-11

Philippians 2:5-7: “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.”

Meditation on 2:5-7: Jesus was equal with God. The only way to be equal with God is to be God. Jesus, however, decided not to grasp or hold on to equality with God. Instead, He entered humanity through childbirth and became ‘God in the flesh’. As such, He showed us how to be a perfect human. To do that, Jesus had to ‘empty himself’ or ‘make himself

nothing’. In other words, He willingly let go of some of His Godly characteristics so he could become a genuine human completely dependent on God the Father for support, guidance and power. He maintained this love relationship with His Father through total cooperation with the Holy Spirit. The relationship Jesus had with His Father is the type of relationship we should strive to have with God. Jesus is our perfect example. This is what Christmas is all about.

Philippians 2:8: “And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death--even death on a cross!”

Meditation on 2:8: Not only did Jesus enter our world as a human, He also lived a life of obedience to the Father. God became human and allowed Himself to be falsely arrested, unfairly tried, beaten, whipped, spat upon, ridiculed, tortured and finally, murdered on a cross. He did this to become the one and only sacrifice necessary to pay the penalty for our sins. In this way we can freely accept God’s forgiveness and enjoy an eternal love relationship with God. This is what Christmas is all about.

Philippians 2:9-11: “Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

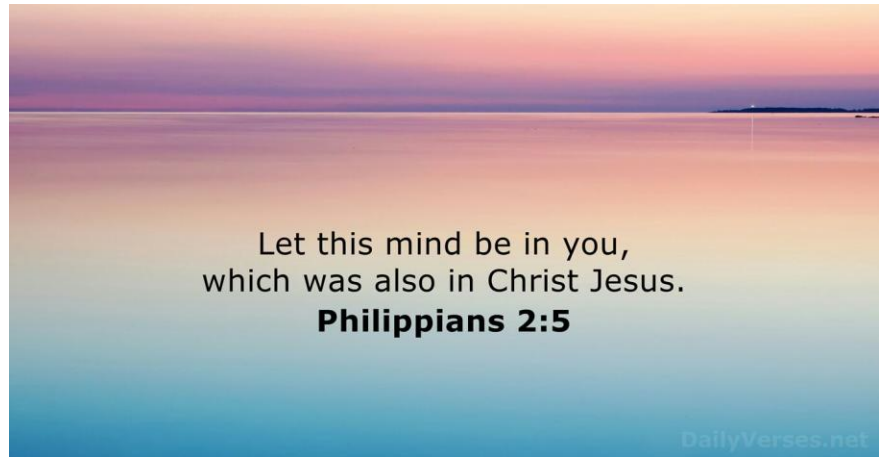
Meditation on 2:9-11: The evil that sought to destroy Jesus on the cross didn't have the last word. On the third day Jesus rose from the dead and proved himself to be The Son of God who came to save the world from sin. At that moment, the decisive battle was won. Sin, death and evil began to fight a losing war. Jesus was glorified and declared to be Lord by God the Father. This is what Christmas is all about.

Why would God do this? Why would God become human? The answer is simple, He loves us and we matter to Him. As sinful humans who live in a fallen world, we yearn for answers concerning our predicaments, trials and suffering. It often seems like evil is triumphant and goodness is weak. When tragedy hits, we wonder, “Where is God?” and, like Psalm 10:1, we cry out, “Why, O LORD, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?” God answered these pleas over 2,000 years ago in a town called Bethlehem. God entered our world as a human named Jesus and experienced the same anguish and pain we experience. God knows our pain. We matter to God. This is what Christmas is all about.

If we matter to God, then God cares about how we live. God is like the perfect Father who is concerned about His child’s behavior. How we act matters to God. Do we love each other? Are we taking care of the poor and marginalized? Do we stand up for the weak and oppressed? Are we willing to sacrifice for others? What are we doing to join God in God’s work to usher in the Kingdom of God?

This is what Christmas is all about.

Pastor David L. Charlton





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 2025**, 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	28-Sep	\$1,023	\$4,886	-3,863	\$75,992	\$159,127	-83,135
2	5-Oct	\$1,918	\$6,078	-4,160	\$77,910	\$165,205	-87,295
3	12-Oct	\$1,522	\$1,397	125	\$79,432	\$166,602	-87,170
4	19-Oct	\$2,046	\$10,931	-8,885	\$81,478	\$177,533	-96,055

The above YTD expenses do not include our insurance and workman's compensation payments to the District of \$53,635, paid in March. It does reflect our first two apportionment payments for 2025 of \$13,231. We are working to restore our online services at 10:00 am, with videos posted on Facebook. If you cannot 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** in the upper right corner of the home page to set up a payment online.



United
Women
in Faith

Our November 23rd meeting was held at the home of Linda Lillo Norman. This meeting was a quarterly planning meeting for UWF activities from December through February. Mary Lou started with a nice devotional from the UWF Prayer Calendar, followed by a prayer of thanksgiving for our group and the delicious soup and salad luncheon prepared by Linda and Mary Lou.

Book reviews for the 10 new books for our 2025 and 2026 Reading Program were presented by Barbara Koch. Members present signed out some of these books to read. The rest will be on the UWF bookshelves in the church narthex. Multiple copies of the book, *The Girl with the Louding Voice*, were purchased to allow more women to read the book in time for our February group book discussion which will be led by Barbara.

The next meeting will be held at Mary Lou Wilkinson's house on Monday, December 22nd at 7:00 pm. Members are to bring a snack or goodies to share. Mary Lou will provide Christmas punch. A special holiday offering will be collected of food items or cash donations for Burton's Food Pantry in lieu of having a gift exchange. Members are also asked to bring in as many Response magazines as they can find to be used for our January program which will be a breakfast/brunch at Harry Harris Park on Monday, January 26th at 10:00 am. The group made a decision to have soup and baked goods sales as the mission fundraiser for 2026 since the annual tea has become increasingly difficult for our small group to sustain. Consequently, on Saturday morning, January 17th we will be selling three different preordered soups, (chili, beef vegetable, and turkey vegetable) in the fellowship hall as well as tables of baked goods. We will offer two sizes, quarts for families and pints, suitable for shut-ins or individuals who do not like cooking for themselves. This is a chance for everyone to reach out to someone who could use a meal or a sign that someone is thinking of them. Prepayment is greatly appreciated when at all possible. Preorders can be given to any UWF member who has a preorder sheet or can be made by calling Mary Lou Wilkinson at 305-394-3878.

If all goes reasonably well, we expect to repeat this soup and baked good sale on the third Saturdays of February and March. Burton's unit is excited to be pursuing this new activity which is part service project to our community and part fundraiser to support UWF mission work with women, children and youth in the US and around the world. You can help by getting the word out to your friends, family and coworkers!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Here are just a few of our beautiful prayer shawls. *Join us Thursday evenings from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in the Joy classroom for fun and fellowship.* We have supplies and we teach. Our prayer shawl ministry will meet on December 4th and 11th and recess till January 8th. For more information, please call Virginia Spear, 305-522-2978.



CDC Thanksgiving

Last week, the CDC cooked up a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner for parents and children. Church members helped serve so the teachers could join in.



Homeless Recognition Day

Each year we gather at the gazebo in Settler's Park, Tavernier, to remember our neighbors who died while Homeless in 2025. 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 Sunday, December 21, 2025, from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm.*

Yuletide Fellowship Worship

On Sunday, December 21, halfway thru the 10:00 am service, we'll go outside to fellowship and have a birthday party for Jesus.

Christmas Eve Worship Services

Wednesday, December 24

Candlelight worship service – 6:30 pm

Burton Memorial UMC Sanctuary

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, Ari Poholek, 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.)



There will be a work day on Saturday, December 13 at 8:00 am on the Church Grounds.
Bring you gloves and wear your work clothing.

Church Work Day



The Florida Conference
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Disaster Recovery Ministry  **UMCOR** PARTNER

Support for Those in the Path of Hurricane Melissa

Hurricane Melissa made landfall in Jamaica with sustained winds of 185 mph. This is the strongest storm in the island's history and is expected to be the most destructive, with neighboring countries also feeling its devastating impact. In the early aftermath of such devastation, churches often ask how they can help. Here are some practical ways to respond:

Pray — Lift up the people and communities of Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and across the Caribbean.

Give

Support recovery efforts through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) by going to <https://umcmmission.org>, then click the 'Give Now' button in top right-hand corner. Click "Find an Advance Project". Click "Advance Projects" near bottom of page. In the search bar, put 982450. Then click the [982450 advance](#). UMCOR is prepared to support the response efforts of our Methodist partners in Jamaica and the Caribbean. Funds collected will go to deliver essential supplies like food and water, support the removal of debris, and provide temporary shelter for the displaced.

Additionally, you may give to the Florida Conference's Cuba Fund to support our ministry partners directly affected by this storm.:

Donate by Check:

Payable to "FLUMC Treasurer," (Write "Cuba relief" on the memo line)

Mail to: Florida Conference Center, Attn: Molly McEntire,

450 Martin L. King Jr. Ave., Lakeland, FL 33815 *Donate Online:*

<https://florida-reg.brtapp.com/OnlineGivingCuba>