

PASTOR'S e-NEWSLETTER

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Our 98th Year

"The friendly little church on the Circle in Everglades City"



1926-2024



Pastor Bob & Millie

AS I SEE IT . . . There sure is a lot going on at *"the friendly little church on the circle."* The plantings on our church campus, our Memorial Garden, either side of the steps at the front entrance of the church, and the sign in front of the church have been removed and completely renovated with new shrubs and plantings. A Bike/Pedestrian Committee was established in 2019 by the city to assess the needs and set priorities for projects in the city to create a local Bike/Pedestrian network. A new sidewalk in front of church is part of Everglades City's plan to offer residents and visitors safe and accessible places to walk, bike, hike, and jog. Our church will be right in the middle of this year's Seafood Festival with a tent on the circle in front of the church selling cookies. Our campus will once again become handicap parking for visitors to the Festival with volunteers from the church selling cookies and coordinating parking cars. Our church hosted the Diamonds of the Everglades Tea. And the Women of the Church had a very successful Pulled Pork Dinner Jan. 26th. And we continue to serve 120 families of our community through Food Distribution every Wednesday. It's an exciting time! Why don't you come and be a part of this?

DIAMONDS OF THE EVERGLADES TEA

The 22nd Tea was hosted by Reach Out Everglades and C.O.P.S. Assoc., Inc. and held in our church to honor Senior Diamonds (70 years and over) January 12th at 2 PM. The oldest Diamond was Cathy Taylor at 97½. Fifty ladies attended who enjoyed eating, sharing fellowship and door prizes. The Servers were Men and Women Officers of the Collier County Sheriff's Office. The Board of Directors are Connie Barker, Karen Cochran, Elaine Middlestaedt and Dottie Joiner.



GIVING WHEN YOU'RE AWAY

It's now possible to support your church when you are not with us. We have made it possible for you to send your gifts by using our website. Go to our website, click on Donate Now and follow the instructions. You can use our mailing address above to mail your contribution. We have a very active program in several areas of our church life, and we need your regular support to achieve our goals.

SEAFOOD FESTIVAL FEBRUARY 2,3,4

There will be NO Sunday School and Morning Worship will be at 9:00 AM

The church campus will be used for Handicap Parking beginning at 10 AM, so please move your car immediately after church by 10 AM. The Cookie Booth will once again be directly in front of the church on the circle. Be sure and visit it and grab a sack full of our delicious Seafood Festival cookies.



The Season of Lent begins this year on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14th and continues until Maundy Thursday, March 28th three days before Easter Sunday. Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays. The word Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lectern*, meaning "lengthen" and refers to the lengthening days of spring. The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan, and preparing to begin His ministry. Lent is a time of repentance, fasting and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection. In the early church, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by new converts. And then it became a time of penance by all Christians. Today, Christians focus on relationship with God, growing as disciples and extending themselves, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of themselves for others. Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days, because each Sunday represents a "mini-Easter." That's why you will see the designation "Sunday in Lent" rather than "Sunday of Lent" in the church bulletin naming of these Sundays. On each Lord's Day in Lent, while Lenten fasts continue, the reverent spirit of Lent is tempered with joyful anticipation of the Resurrection. You will see displayed in the front of the church a large candle sitting in a tall (usually 48 inches) stand. It bears a light high in the vision and hearts of the people as they cry, *"Alleluia! Christ is risen."* This candle is called the paschal candle, "Pasch" comes from the Hebrew word *"pesah,"* meaning deliverance or Passover -- thus connecting the Resurrection to the Exodus.

This was produced by Ask The UMC

**VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE www.evergladescommunity.church
to see and hear the Pastor preaching the sermon. You can also, read the sermon there.
Go to - www.evergladescommunity.church**

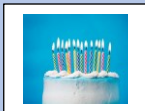
MEMORIAL GARDEN RENOVATION

Wednesday, January 10th, a team from Brightview completely renovated and renewed our Memorial Garden. Marcus May, our Ginger May's brother, and Branch Manager for 30 years with BrightView, the nation's leading commercial landscape company, and George Ledesma, Enhancement Manger who has been in the industry 25 years headed up the project which is a complimentary project with all labor, plantings and materials being donated to our church. Marcus wrote, "Today, the Naples team at Brightview exemplified the importance of giving back to the community. Despite bringing in numerous new clients, we took the time to beautify Everglades Community Church, a lovely church in the heart of the Everglades. Our efforts didn't go unnoticed as the local paper even wrote an article about our selflessness. At Brightview, we believe in the power of family, loved ones, and culture – and that volunteers can make a difference.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 22 – Evan Derleth
- 24 – Kathy Barnard



SHROVE TUESDAY is February 13th, which is the day before Ash Wednesday, Feb 14th which marks the beginning of the 40 days of Lent leading up to Easter. The name "shrove" comes from the word "shrive," which means to confess one's sins and receive absolution.