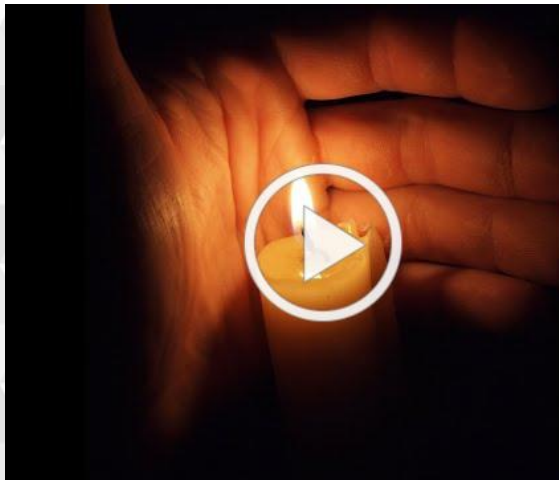




April 23, 2021



If you haven't seen this special message from Mike, please take a moment to watch this important video message and then share it with your family and friends by copying the link and pasting it to the social media channel of your choice. We continue to encourage you to light your candles and share them with us. Please remember to send us a picture at [mediaministry@whatis1st.com](mailto:mediaministry@whatis1st.com).



# 24/7 Prayer

## MAY 13 - 23

SIGN UP AT [WHATIS1ST.COM/PRAY247](https://www.whatis1st.com/pray247)  
KICKS OFF FOLLOWING OUR PRAYER MEETING  
MAY 13 AT 6 PM IN THE SANCTUARY

### Word from Worship

Hey 1st family--

Here we are quickly approaching May! As strange as this past year has been, the time since Christmas seems to be flying. Some of our church families are leaving for the long hot summer, and some who have been enjoying online worship are now returning to worship with us in person. Many tell me they are back as a result of completing Covid vaccinations and we are blessed to be able to praise Him together again. I do want to inform you of a couple changes with the check-in process. After serious discussions and consideration we will no longer be taking temperatures when you enter. We have great faith that you will stay at home and rest if you are not feeling well. We are also reevaluating our check-in policies. Currently we ask that you check yourself in on-line, but we will not be entering your attendance in the computer when you arrive. We will keep you informed of any upcoming changes as they occur. Please continue to wear your name tags, as we will continue to require masks be worn in campus buildings. Thank for your cooperation with all the many changes we've had during the past year.

Our lives, or mine at least, is always changing it seems. Just when I think everything is going smoothly, something happens. This used to cause me to gripe or complain or wonder who or what I could blame for the situation. I sure don't know the answers to these ever changing events - but now I see clearly what I can do. I can pray! Mathew 26:41 shows us that Jesus told the disciples- "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation." I'm still working on it but now rather than watch and complain, put down the other person, etc, I know I need to stop and pray, - fervently and sincerely. Somehow it's easier, and certainly a lot more effective.

As a church family, let's join together and sign up to pray during our 10 day, 24/7 prayer journey. Sign up sheets will be available Sunday at church or online, [whatis1st.com/pray247](https://www.whatis1st.com/pray247). Let us pray!

I'm praying for you,  
Rosie Young  
Worship Coordinator  
rosie.young@what1st.com

## ***A Firm Foundation***

What does the future hold for The United Methodist Church? It is the question being asked all around our denomination. What should be the response to the competing visions and notable division within contemporary Methodism in North America? Can we explore the issues confronting us in a post-Christendom era without rupturing our relationships?

A valuable resource for Pastor Mike's current sermon series, this carefully curated volume engages the deep heart questions of United Methodists and casts a compelling vision by trustworthy voices for dynamic faith. Contributors explore the power of classic ideas such as:

- The Lordship of Jesus Christ
- Engaging scripture meaningfully
- The power of the Holy Spirit
- The promise of sanctification
- Living with undivided purpose
- Fostering dynamic discipleship
- The gift of the global church

*A Firm Foundation* is a useful tool not only in navigating present challenges but in pursuing the future promise for the people called Methodists. The foundational principles which have guided Methodist thought from the beginning of John Wesley's countercultural movement remain rich resources as we explore what it means to remain faithful disciples in the tradition of the Wesleys. *A Firm Foundation* books are currently available for sale in the church office and at each service if anyone would like one for \$10 each.



## **2020 Annual Report is Now Available!**



The 2020 Annual Report is now available online. Click the link below to access your copy. Thank you for your faithfulness and support throughout the past year. We look forward to even greater things in the year to come!

**[Click Here for our 2020 Annual Report](#)**

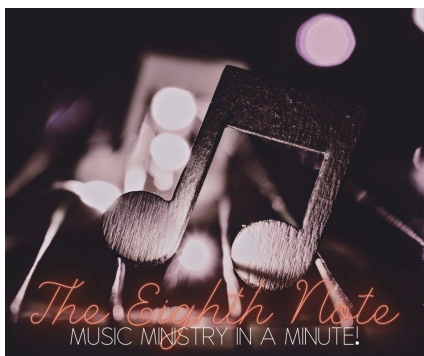
**Thank You 1st Church Family!**



The summer youth missions team would like to thank everyone who donated to the purple passion project this past Lenten season. Your generous donations will help us as we book flights, housing and rental vehicles get us around to the work sites in Kenosha, Wisconsin. As always, we covet your continued prayers for our team as we meet regularly to train and prepare this mission trip.



## **The Eighth Note – Music Ministry in a Minute!**



Greetings Everyone,

Did you know the beloved Easter hymn, “Up From The Grave He Arose”, was written in 1874 by Robert Lowry, a Baptist Minister from Pennsylvania? Lowry wrote these famous hymns (text and tune) “Nothing But The Blood”, “Shall We Gather At The River” and composed the tunes for “Marching To Zion” and “I Need Thee Every Hour”.

Ira Sankey helped to make “Up From The Grave He Arose” popular by including it in the Moody-Sankey Revivals.

Wanted Three More Handbell Ringers!

Summer is a great time to consider joining the Chancel Ringers. We practice social distancing and have a lot fun making music. The group rehearses on Wednesdays at 6:30PM in the Life Center. Ability to read music is necessary. Contact David Bellows for more information: [david.bellows@whatis1st.com](mailto:david.bellows@whatis1st.com)

Soli Deo Gloria!

David Bellows

Director of Music Ministries

This Sunday's Music – April 25, 2021 – 11:00AM Service

Prelude: Toccata for Flute – P. Yon

Offertory: Alleluia, Christ Is Risen! – J. Kirkby

Postlude: Praeludium in C Major, BWV 137 – D. Buxtehude



## Join us to Celebrate & Be Heard ! Mental Health Awareness Walk

**Saturday, May 1, 2021  
9 - 11 a.m.**



**@**

**Laishley Park**



*Guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs  
Pet friendly/kid friendly event • Please follow social distancing guidelines*

There will be a brief program where community members share their inspiring stories.  
Then, we'll embark on a scenic 1/2 mile walk through our beautiful  
Harbor Walk in effort to raise awareness for mental health.

**FREE T-shirts to first 100 walkers  
FREE refreshments & snacks • Community information tables  
Honor Beads • Raffle Prizes • #AntiStigma rocks • And more...**

**No registration necessary; we hope to see you there!**

### Bargain Boutique Update

The Bargain Boutique would like to thank you for your continued support during this season, and make you aware of their new phone number, 239.264.6533. Operating hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 am until 2 pm. The Bargain Boutique is located on the corner of McGregor and West Marion Avenue.

### Attention all cookie bakers!

The "Thank You" (aka Cupcake) ministry needs you. Our next "Thank You" target for July will be the Hospice workers who do such a fabulous job with the end of life process both as a comfort to families and for those that are passing on. Please, if you love to bake and would like to participate in this fun and rewarding ministry, call me,

Kathy Kresge at 941-661-1175 or Gail in the church office.



## Harmony Class to Offer New Andy Stanley Bible Study

The Harmony Class will begin a new 6-session Bible study this Sunday, April 25th at 10:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. This video-based study is, 'better decisions, fewer regrets' - 5 Questions to Help You Determine Your Next Move - by Andy Stanley. In this Bible study, Andy teaches us five catalytic questions to ask every time we make a decision. Stop regretting bad decisions! Learn how to ask more questions first! Moderator Debbie Harrington invites everyone to attend. RSVP requested but not required to [debbie2u@comcast.net](mailto:debbie2u@comcast.net) or text 941.380.0213.

## Scroll down for more of *The Bridge*

### Media Deadlines

As we continue to move back to in-person for our Bible studies, small groups and church events, we want to encourage you to promote your events and outreach programs in our weekly newsletter, *The Bridge*. All articles and media submissions must be received by 5 pm on Wednesday. Recording times are limited and must be scheduled **no less** than two weeks prior to your desired promo date. To schedule a recording or submit an article for *The Bridge*, please email [christa@whatis1st.com](mailto:christa@whatis1st.com).

**FOLLOW US & JOIN US THIS SUNDAY LIVE AT 9:15 & 11 AM  
ONLINE ON FACEBOOK, YOUTUBE AND WHATIS1ST.COM**

## Scroll down for Worship Service information

### Praise in the Park



Join us this Sunday at 8 am for *Praise in the Park*! Open to everyone, this is your opportunity to join us for "in person" worship as we enjoy God's scenery from the lawn of the beautiful Gilchrist Park Pavilion, *weather permitting of course*. Please plan to bring your lawn chairs and/or blankets, and, yes, we will be asking you to practice social distancing. Don't forget to join our "Praise in the Park" group on our Church

App!

As a reminder, our outside services are always subject to change due to the weather. Please make sure you are connected with us through the app, our email list or social media to receive our updates concerning schedule changes.



See you Sunday for Praise in the Park!

## Join us for Worship In-Person This Sunday!

If you are planning on attending our services please remember the following:

- **Masks are required at all times.**
- Social distancing is being enforced per CDC recommendations.
- Families may sit together, but please leave three seats between you and others not in your family.
- If you are feverish or not feeling well, we ask that you stay home and join us online on our Facebook and YouTube channels.



At this time, you may only enter the Life Center through the **main entrance facing the Fellowship Hall courtyard**. All other exterior doors will be locked. We'll see you Sunday!

## Opportunities

### Service Opportunity

We are looking for a couple of volunteers to water our flowers on campus through the remainder of the dry season. Unfortunately, we do not have a sprinkler system, and the job can be a bit overwhelming for the small maintenance staff we have on hand. If you are interested, please call the church office, 941.639.3842 and Gail will direct you to Joey DePetro for further information. Thank you and have a great day!

### Church Website Update Coming!

We are currently finalizing our new website. We are looking for a volunteer who is available to assist our Director of Media Ministries with updates as needed. Experience with the newer version of WordPress templates is helpful. For more information, please contact Christa by email at [christa@what1st.com](mailto:christa@what1st.com) or you may call Kathy in the church office.

### Friendship Ministry Callers

We are looking for volunteers to be a part of 1<sup>st</sup> Church's "Friendship Ministry Callers," an important component of ConneXions. ConneXions is the new faith initiative which Pastor Mike announced in early 2021. He challenged us all with the question "How do we become the Church of Jesus Christ, as Jesus



intended us to be?" Surely, outreach and kindness play a large role. Mainly because of Covid, there is an urgent need to stay in touch with members of our spiritual family. Many of these folks are not able to attend weekly services yet yearn for fellowship and spiritual nourishment. Would you be willing to make check-in calls again for the Church? We are beginning a telephone ministry, hoping to get commitments for callers who can make 10 - 15 calls at least every six months, if not every quarter, so no one slips through the 1st Church cracks. Please consider if you are able to serve the faith community in this action. If so, please contact Gail Sexton at [gail.sexton@whatis1st.com](mailto:gail.sexton@whatis1st.com) or 941-639-3842.

## Media Volunteers Needed!

Our Media Team is in need of several individuals to help in the media booth with slides and cameras on a rotating schedule. No experience required, and full training will be provided. We also need two to three people to serve as hosts for our online services. Hosts are responsible to greet our viewers, answer questions and provide information about our church app, online giving and prayer team in the chat area on both our Facebook broadcast and YouTube channel. Training will be provided as well. If you are interested in any of these positions, please email Christa, [christa@whatis1st.com](mailto:christa@whatis1st.com).



## Get Connected!



Pastor Mike recently introduced the new accountability small group ministry, "Connexions." This is your opportunity to connect with other Christ followers, to hold each other accountable in your daily walks with Christ and implement some of the same practices and worship habits developed by Methodist founder. Connexions will challenge you and help build stronger relationships with

other believers. If you haven't signed up to be a part of this next step at 1<sup>st</sup> Church, we encourage you to do so today. Please send an email to Gail Sexton, [gail@whatis1st.com](mailto:gail@whatis1st.com) or call 941.239.3842, ext. 207.

## 2021 Bible Reading Schedules



We want to encourage you to join us as we once again read through the Bible. **Reading calendars** are available for download and printing on our website, [whatis1st.com/bible2021](http://whatis1st.com/bible2021), and hard copies are available in the Life Center. Start your new year





*Church Center*

- DOWNLOAD THE APP FROM YOUR PHONE OR TABLET'S APP STORE.
- OPEN THE APP AND SEARCH FOR 1ST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH.
- FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS TO SET UP AND CONFIRM YOUR ACCOUNT.
- NOW YOU MAY CHECK IN, GIVE YOUR TITHES & OFFERINGS AND WATCH OUR SERVICE ALL FROM YOUR PHONE OR TABLET.

*Worship with us  
Live Every Sunday*

**8 am Praise in the Park**  
@ the Gilchrist Park Pavilion

**9:15 am Contemporary**  
**11 am Traditional**

**Live in the Life Center & Online**

whatis1st.com @whatis1st @1stunitedmethodistchurch  
Children's & Youth Sunday School at 9:15 am

**MEDIA MINISTRY**  
**IMMEDIATE POSITIONS NEEDED:**  
**CAMERA OPERATORS, VISUAL TECHS,**  
**& VIRTUAL GREETERS**  
EMAIL [CHRISTA@WHATIS1ST.COM](mailto:CHRISTA@WHATIS1ST.COM) FOR INFO



# Rosie's

PRAYER MOMENTS



**THURSDAYS AT NOON**  
**HISTORIC SANCTUARY**

# PRAYER

*team*

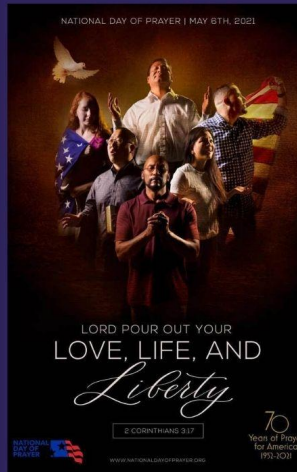
**TUESDAYS AT 9 AM**

EMAIL [PRAYERTEAM@WHATISIST.COM](mailto:PRAYERTEAM@WHATISIST.COM)  
FOR MORE INFORMATION

## FOOD PANTRY

# SUNDAY

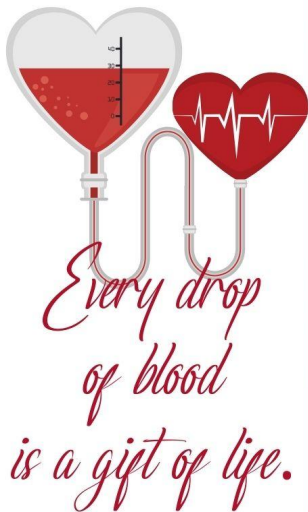
**MAY 2, 2021**



COMMUNITY  
NATIONAL DAY OF  
PRAYER SERVICE

**THURSDAY**  
**MAY 6 @ 12 PM**

**PUNTA GORDA**  
**CITY HALL ANNEX**  
126 HARVEY ST, PUNTA GORDA



## ONEBLOOD BLOOD DRIVE

**MAY 9, 2021**  
**8:30 AM TO 1:30 PM**

**Main Parking Lot**  
1st United Methodist Church  
507 W Marion Avenue, Punta Gorda

Appointments recommended  
**To schedule visit:**  
[oneblood.com/donate-now](http://oneblood.com/donate-now)  
use sponsor code # 10245.



## TODAY MATTERS

MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRIES

Connecting the mind, body and soul embraced through faith,  
empathy and dignity by removing the stigma of mental health.



**RANDY GRIMES**

The Life Center @ 1st United Methodist Church 507 West Marion Avenue, Punta Gorda  
Visit [whatist1st.com/todaysmatters](http://whatist1st.com/todaysmatters) for more information or call 863.244.6289

**Saturday, May 15**  
**4:00 pm in the Life**  
**Center**

**Guest Speaker:**

**RANDY**  
**GRIMES**

Former NFL Player  
Tampa Bay Buccaneers  
Motivational and Recovery Speaker  
**Everyone is Welcome!**



+++

## Ways To Give



WEBSITE  
WHATIS1ST.COM



ACH WITHDRAWAL  
CALL 941.639.3842 TO SET UP



BY MAIL  
1ST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
507 W. MARION AVENUE  
PUNTA GORDA, FL 33950



BILL PAY  
CONTACT YOUR FINANCIAL  
INSTITUTION FOR INSTRUCTIONS.



*Light Your  
Candles & Pray*

EMAIL YOUR CANDLE IN THE WINDOW PHOTOS  
TO [MEDIAMINISTRY@WHATIS1ST.COM](mailto:MEDIAMINISTRY@WHATIS1ST.COM)

**Our Office Hours are Monday - Thursday from 9 am to 4 pm**  
**507 W Marion Avenue, Punta Gorda 33950**  
**941.639.3842 - [whatis1st.com](http://whatis1st.com)**

FOLLOW US & JOIN US THIS SUNDAY LIVE AT 9:15 & 11 AM  
ONLINE ON FACEBOOK, YOUTUBE AND [WHATIS1ST.COM](http://WHATIS1ST.COM)



## 1ST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

507 W MARION AVENUE, PUNTA GORDA, FL 33950  
941.639.3842 | [WHATIS1ST.COM](http://WHATIS1ST.COM) | [1STCHURCH@WHATIS1ST.COM](mailto:1STCHURCH@WHATIS1ST.COM)  
OFFERING NEW LIFE IN JESUS CHRIST BY SEEKING, SHAPING & SENDING DISCIPLES

