



# The Courtyard Chatter

April 2025 • Volume 56 • Number 4

A Publication of First Presbyterian Church of Bartow

## What's INSIDE

### Table of Contents

- 1 Gray Matters – Rev. Barry Gray
- 1 It's Cake Auction Time!
- 2 Order Your Easter Lilies
- 2 Good Friday Cross Walk Service
- 3 April 2025 Calendar
- 4 April Birthday Calendar



## GRAY MATTERS

### Nailed To The Cross! – Rev. Barry Gray

As we approach Easter, we look forward to celebrating the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is the main focus of our salvation. According to Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:17, without the resurrection, our faith is futile, and we are still in our sins – yes, the resurrection is that crucial! But in order to be resurrected to new life, Jesus also had to die. We know that Jesus was nailed to the cross for our sins, but we seldom reflect on all of the realities that the cross brings to bear on us and for us.

That first Good Friday, after a full week of activities that defined who Jesus was and what he came to do, Jesus was nailed to the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. But it wasn't just the Jewish leaders and Roman

*(Continued on page 4)*

## FPC Youth Cake Auction

Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup> after morning service everyone is invited and encouraged to join us for the always fun and lively FPC Youth Cake Auction!

Help our Student Ministry raise funds for upcoming summer camps and events.

Join us in worship - stay for lunch & bidding fun!

**Let's support our Youth on April 6<sup>th</sup>!**







**Rev. Barry Gray**  
Pastor

Barrymg@live.com  
355 S. Florida Ave.  
Bartow, FL 33830  
(863) 533-5005



### Order your Easter Lilies

Place a lily in the sanctuary for Easter in honor or in memory of a loved one. The lilies will decorate our sanctuary on Easter Sunday morning and you may take your plant home after our Easter Service on Sunday, April 20, 2025.

Cost: \$9.00 per plant.

Scan the QR Code to order online or sign up at church.



## LET'S PRAY

**Pray One For Another —James 5:16**

Mica Barrington, Jesse Beeles, Laurie Benton, John Bianco, Sonja Bianco, Drew & Priscilla Boren, Dr. Bill Brown in China, Kathi Colvin, Tina Colvin, Marsha Dalley, Faye DeJong, David Delph, Tracy Eades, Fred Egli, Becky Falcone (Owen), Saylor Falletta, Betty Fitzgerald, Janey Fox, Harley Gibbs, Karin Gray, Sarah Hallock, Dot Harris, Doug Hartsaw, June Hollingsworth, Travis Hoover, Paul Johnson, Robert Jones, Johnathan Kimble, Fred & Sheila Lepley, Kelli Heidel Losh, Alice Martin, David McClintock, Monette Monroe, Charlie Morgan, Ezra Myers, Becky Arnold Pate, David Patt, Willene Pawley, Angie Reese, Benjamin Sanchez, Luke Shaver, Lisa Shenson, John Stansel, Marsha Stephenson, David Stewart, Toni Strickland, Catherine & Mike Sudlow, David Tanner, Grey Thompson, Vicki Tillis, David Tindell, Debbie & Ted Turbe, Cathy Whistin, Glenda Wiggins, Our Pastor & family, Our Elders and Staff, Our Children & Youth, Our Military & their families, Our Nation, Leaders, Community & Our Church.

### Good Friday Cross Walk and Community Service

Fort Blount Park, Bartow  
April 18th — 12:00 Noon

### A Community Testimony to God's Love and Grace Through Christ



**FOUR GATHERING PLACES** — On each side of town a gathering from churches and individuals assemble to march. Each location is about 1/2 mile distance from Fort Blount Park on Main Street and Broadway.

- North— Jimmy John's Parking Lot (N. Broadway Avenue)
- South— First Assembly parking lot (S. Broadway Avenue)
- East — The Chicken Shack (E. Main Street)
- West — Whit's Building Supply (W. Main Street)

#### THE MARCH

Promptly at 11:40 AM (so arrive a little early) the four processions of marchers, led by their "cross bearers" and song leaders, will begin the 1/2 mile journey to Fort Blount Park, singing along the way.

#### THE MEETING PLACE

At 12:00 Noon, a 45-minute Good Friday Community Service will begin at Fort Blount Park.

#### WHO TO CONTACT

First Baptist Church, (863) 533-9055.

#### WHAT TO DO IF IT RAINS

Meet at First United Methodist Church; 310 S. Broadway at Noon.

# APRIL CALENDAR

First Presbyterian Church of Bartow  
 Rev. Barry Gray, Pastor—barrymg@live.com  
 355 S. Florida Ave; Bartow, FL 33830  
 (863) 533-5005 — fpcbartow.org



April 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>Join us Sundays:</b> 9 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship		1	2	3	4	5
<b>Communion</b> <b>YOUTH CAKE</b> <b>AUCTION</b> today after morning worship	7	8	9	10 Feeding Bartow at CSC; 1-2 PM	11	12
<b>Palm Sunday</b> <b>Easter Dinner</b> After Church in Fellowship Hall	14 Women's Monday Night Bible Study and Fellowship; 6:00 PM; Place to be Announced	15	16	17 <b>Maundy                      Thursday</b> Session Meeting 6:30 PM; East Room	18 <b>Good Friday</b> Good Friday Cross Walk and Community Service; 11:30 AM; details on pg. 2	19
<b>Resurrection                      Day</b>	21 6:00 PM; Women of the Cloth; Evening Group; East Room <i>NOTE: Day group                      will not meet today</i>	22	23	24 Feeding Bartow at CSC; 1-2 PM	25	26
Staff Meeting; following Church; Meet in East Room; lunch provided	28 Women's Monday Night Bible Study and Fellowship; 6:00 PM; Place To Be announced	29	30			

## Schedule of Weekly Events

### Sundays:

- 9:00 AM — Sunday School
- 9:35 AM — Pre-Service Prayer; meet in Sanctuary
- 10:15 AM — Worship
- 4:00 PM — Intercessory Prayer; Office Conference Room

### Mondays:

- 9:30 AM - 1:00 PM — Women of the Cloth Sewing Group;  
 Meet in East Room; *NOTE: Group will not meet during the  
 day on the 3rd Monday of the month; join us in the evening  
 every 3rd Monday at 6 PM in East Room.*

### Growth Wednesday: (Childcare provided for all activities)

- 5:15 PM — Handbell Choir Rehearsal; Choir Room
- 5:30 - 6 PM — Dinner in Fellowship Hall

### Growth Wednesday: (Childcare provided for all activities)

- 6:15 - 7:30 PM — Growth Wednesdays
  - ⇒ Wednesday Warriors; Rooms 3 & 5; Downstairs
  - ⇒ Pursuit Youth; Room West 6; Upstairs
  - ⇒ *The Chosen* film & discussion; East Room
  - ⇒ *Abide* Women's Bible Study; Church Library
  - ⇒ Adult Choir Rehearsal; Choir Room

### Thursday:

- 7:15 AM — Men's Bible Study at PalletOne;  
 6001 Foxtrot Avenue; Bartow
- 9:30 AM — Ladies Bible Study; East Room (Sep — May)
- 2:30 - 4:30 PM — Grace Diner Meal Ministry; Meals Served in  
 the Fellowship Hall; Doors open at 3:15 PM

# APRIL BIRTHDAYS

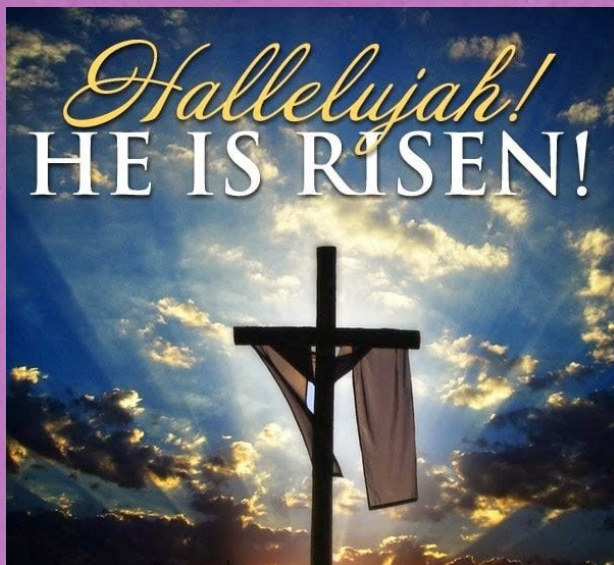
## Birthday Calendar

- 04/01 Alban Nelson  
04/07 Mica Barrington  
04/08 Melanie Bohde  
04/09 David Munroe  
04/10 Deena Fussell  
Mei Mei Lauen  
04/12 Fred Egli  
04/15 Jay MacBride  
04/16 Melanie Chancey  
4/18 Kris Chancey  
04/20 Mandy Craven  
Sheila Lepley  
04/21 Samantha Smart  
04/24 Matthew Guay  
04/25 Doug Hartsaw  
04/27 Len Jordan  
04/28 Rose Henderson  
Altin Lord  
04/30 Jeff Fussell  
Patrick Mulligan

## Happy Birthday!

*Did we forget your birthday? Let us know so we can add you to our calendar! email us*

***Office@fpcbartow.org***



# GRAY MATTERS

— Rev. Barry Gray

*(Continued from page 1)*

officials that nailed him there. In Acts 2:23 Peter told the crowds gathered on the day of Pentecost: “This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.”

What this tells us is that we, as well as the collective Jews and Romans (according to God’s gracious will), also bear the blame for Jesus’ crucifixion. If it was not for our sinfulness, Jesus would not have had to die. But “God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” It is our participation in sin that nailed Jesus to the cross, however, it was not the nails, but the love of God for us, that kept him there.

While Jesus was nailed to the cross because of sin, it was not for his own sins, for he was without sin, but he took on himself our sins that we might be forgiven. Colossians 2:13-14 tells us that not only was Jesus nailed to the cross; something else was nailed there also. “When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave all our sins, having cancelled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us, and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.”

Our sins – the accusations against us because we have broken God’s law were nailed to the cross with Jesus. The Bible tells us that the accusation against Jesus “THE KING OF THE JEWS” was nailed above his head as he hung there, and with that accusation; all of our sins were nailed there as well.

In light of all this, we are also encouraged to consider ourselves as being nailed to the cross, as well. For Romans 6:6-7 tells us: “For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.”

And then in Romans 6:11, Paul tells us: “In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.” In Galatians 2:20, he says: “I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

So, when Jesus was nailed to the cross, our sins were not only nailed there with him. By faith, we were also nailed to the cross in order that we may die to sin and live for God. The cross was a very busy and full place that first Good Friday, and we are not only the cause, but also the beneficiaries of that dreadful execution.

As you continue to look toward the glory of Easter, let it be set securely in the amazing context of all that happened that day when Jesus was nailed to the cross!

— Pastor Barry