



The Lighthouse

Matecumbe United Methodist Church
"Bringing the Light of Jesus Christ to Our Islands"



Matecumbe United Methodist Church

81831 Overseas Highway

Islamorada, FL 33036

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 905, Islamorada, FL 33036

Office Phone - (305) 664-3661

E-mail - matumc@bellsouth.net

Website – matecumbeumc.org

Office hours – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.



Worship Service Sunday - 11:00 am

YouTube Services

Don't miss any of the weekly services. [Click here](#) to select the Sermon you would like to hear.



January 2022—A New Year

Many years ago Joshua was leading the children of Israel, getting ready the next day to lead them across the Jordan River into the promised land. They were going into the future. God said something to his people in Joshua 7 that I think he wants to say to us as we approach a new year. Joshua 7:13 is the advice he gave for those facing the future: "Consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow." It is the perfect time to Renew our walk with God.

In 1897 three Swedish explorers set off to fly a balloon to the North Pole. They almost went into the ocean. They lost their trail rope and quantity of ballast. Presumably, after a time the balloon became so heavily coated with ice it was forced down before reaching the North Pole. The explorers struggled for two months on the shifting ice but ultimately died on White Island. It was the excess weight that brought them down.

Scripture says, "wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with such a great cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." A perfect time to make the main thing the main thing.

In the wake of a New Year I like the words of George Eliot. "It is never too late to be what you might have been."

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Let's Get Together!

Sunday School: 9:45 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Stained Glass: Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Men's Breakfast – Thursday 7:30 a.m. at Lorelei.

On Tuesdays the sanctuary is open for prayer. 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Book Club: On January 19 the book club will be meeting in Friendship Hall at 10:30. Members will discuss "The Circle Maker" by Mark Batterson. Read later in the newsletter about the impact this book has already had for several book club members and their goals for 2022. Join the group! You will learn to pray circles around your biggest dreams and greatest fears. Kathy Sill has copies of the book.



Bible Study: Thursdays at 7 pm with Rob Kolb in Fellowship Hall. We have been getting really good reports about the Bible Study time—from those who are Bible experts and those wanting to learn more.

Hope: Romans - January - March 2022

(after Hebrews)

Love: John - April - June 2022

Monthly Lunch after

Church Service:

Monthly lunches after the church service have resumed.

Please plan to join us for dinner in Fellowship Hall, following the service, Sunday,

January 23. If you are able, bring a "covered dish" to share for the main meal. Dessert will be provided, as Florida strawberry season is here. All visitors are truly welcomed. Bring a friend.



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Free Books: Please feel free to take a book from the narthex for you or to share with someone.

The Library in Fellowship Hall

Check out all the great books there that you can borrow! Religious books, inspirational books, educational books and popular novels too.



Prayer List: Call church office to add or delete names.

Please remember those on our prayer list and others who are struggling:

Emily Vecella, Phyllis McIntosh, Borden Makepeace, Philip Ammann's family, Barbara Long & family, Toni Kenworthy, Lou Ann, Chuck Darney, Lin & Larry Baglog, Blake Bennett, Pat, Larry Rail, Eugen, Randy Baad and Family, Judy Nicholson, Russ, Jim Reynolds, Dasha Dmitrievna, Emma Kuchynskaya, Slava, Larisa, Marlene & Ray Law, Joan Larouche, Craig Lindback, Donna Ross's granddaughter, Pastor Rick Koole, Matt Hendel & Linda Whitman, Terry & Marvin Snow, Jeanne, Art Bain, and Danny Collins.

Church Tours:

If you have family or friends who would like to tour our church, see the stained glass windows, and learn about the fascinating church history dating back to 1890, Carol Wagner is available for tours most every Tuesday. Call the church office or go to the stained glass workshop in Fellowship Hall between 10 am and 4 pm Tuesday.

Thank you Carol Wagner.

Even with COVID, Carol provided 49 tours in 2021 and 327 tours since 2016.

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Praygod Nnko:

Special Church Visitor

At the January 2 church service, we welcomed a guest from far off Tanzania, a country in East Africa.

Praygod Nnko is working at Cheeca for the next year.

He recently graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Tourism Management from Sokoine University of Agriculture in his home country. He was selected from the entire population of Tanzania to travel to the U.S. to learn techniques that he can then take back to Tanzania to share with tourist employers at his home country's restaurants and resorts. He will spend the year filling numerous positions at Cheeca so he can return home with a broad understanding of the practices in an American tourist environment. He hopes to run his own restaurant eventually.

Curious about Tanzania? The country celebrated its 61st year of independence from Britain last month. Tanzania's population is nearly 60 million with over 11% of the population employed in the tourist industry. The primary language is Swahili with English as the secondary language. Praygod speaks excellent English.



Tanzania, while considered a poor country economically, is a paradise for nature lovers. With more than 4 million wild animals, 430 different species, found in Tanzania, the highest concentration of animals per square mile in the world, it is considered the very best safari destination anywhere.

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Let's Stay in Touch

Email Addresses: Do you know someone who would like to receive emails from the church with our newsletters and with links to Pastor Bob's sermons each week. Send us their email.

January has a Fifth Sunday: Two years before the Home was founded in 1908, Florida churches were asked to take up a special offering to help fund the future Florida Methodist Orphanage. The offerings were taken up on fifth Sundays. And this vital tradition of fifth Sunday contributions to the Children's Home continues.

Since there is a fifth Sunday this month, our church will be taking up a special Fifth Sunday Offering for the children's home. Our contributions are extremely important. We can make a difference in the lives of these children.

Face Book: We have a FaceBook page where we post the weekly sermons and special events. Look for it.

Church Website: Go to www.matecumbeumc.org

You can read stories about the history of the church, listen to previous sermons, read about church members and more.



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Susan and Brooks Bateman

This fascinating couple, married in 1985, haven't changed much since then but they certainly have had a positive impact at the church. And to think it was something as simple as canned chicken and vegetables that brought them together.

Years ago, they had a mutual friend who tried diligently to arrange a blind date but Susan just wasn't interested. And then the friend suggested, "At least let Brooks take you out to dinner."

Susan's eyes lit up at the suggestion. She was on a tight budget, frankly tired of the same boring nightly dinners of canned chicken and vegetables. But it was more than the meal that enticed Susan to accept future dates. It took three years but when Brooks didn't propose marriage, Susan did! The two had much in common, but their unique diversities of interests and lifestyles were appealing as well.

Susan had a degree in engineering, probably influenced by her engineer father, and a degree in art though she insists she had no artistic talent. Art was the closest degree available at the University of Central Florida for someone considering a career in interior decorating.

Brooks had an associate degree in criminal justice from a junior college and then his bachelors degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He followed his father's lead in law enforcement and became a deputy sheriff in Orange Co Florida. With thousands of hours of flight experience, Brooks transported maximum security prisoners by air, including the likes of Ted Bundy and Squeaky Fromme.

Susan grew up in Minnesota recalling that her memory of childhood was accentuated by the death of her beloved big brother Jimmy. When Susan was eight, Jimmy had a horrific accident doing an experiment in their garage. Young Susan and her other two brothers were often cared for and fed by loving community members as their mother spent a majority of her time at the hospital at Jimmy's side until he died, still hospitalized, more than a year after the accident.

Brooks' father's law enforcement career took the Bateman family from one Florida location to another as Brooks grew up, and the family spent much time in the Florida Keys. Brooks was named after Uncle Brooks who worked for the Florida Department of Transportation back in 1935 when the destructive Labor Day storm hit the Keys. Uncle Brooks was in charge of the highway for a number of years when the railroad right of way and the bridges were used to create the Overseas Highway after the storm, a conversion completed in just three years. Brooks remembers many stories of Keys history relayed by family.

Both retired now, Susan and Brooks have interesting stories of their careers. What didn't Susan do? She sold handbags at Burdines Dept store, worked for a florist, was an engineer for Martin Marietta, sold carpet, sold Weekenders clothes (taking outfits to ladies' homes, teaching them how to dress for success), and then she worked at a CD molding factory! She was continually in search of a position that would provide a sense of self worth, provide motivation and inspire her creativity. Our church is probably where she found all of that as a volunteer designer, instructor, facilitator of a stained glass group effort to create amazing windows in our sanctuary and Fellowship Hall!

[Click here](#) to read church news and the story of the stained glass windows that will leave an impact on our church forever.

When Brooks left the Orange County Sheriff's Department, he flew corporate planes for a couple years until hired by Eastern Airlines. Then in 1988 he took a job with US Customs Service as an officer/pilot, going through intensive training for interdicting drug smugglers, managing crime scenes and flying a variety of fixed wing aircraft and military type helicopters. Following the Customs years, Brooks worked for Airborne Express and simultaneously worked parttime for Monroe County as a road deputy. In 2009, Brooks became Director of Flight Operations for the Monroe County Sheriff's Department, responsible for Trauma Star. He retired in 2015 but then the FAA enticed him to be an aviation safety inspector for 747s.

Now most Sundays you will be greeted by Brooks as you come into the church that boasts the fantastic stained glass windows. Susan often sings solos during church services. She plans to write a sequel to the book "God Made Me Do It," the story of the incredible windows. She also hopes to write a book about taking care of her dad, Lewis, for the years before his death. Lewis was a regular in the church stained glass workshop and an incredible influence in life with the Batemans.

Aren't we all happy that Brooks invited Susan to dinner all those years ago.



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Making a Difference in 2022

Are we just sitting in our pews instead of getting out and trying to make a difference? The church and the church family can help us spiritually but it starts with us helping them!

What is your plan to help the church in 2022? What can the church do to help you?



Carol Wagner: I am hoping to provide more tours of our church while continuing to enhance the church with our stained glass efforts that provide beauty and also funding for other projects. Ours is a historic church with so many fascinating stories of the church's past. Our efforts today will become the history in the future. We need to spread the word.



Kathy Sill: In 2022, I would love if members of the church, new and old, would begin to feel more a part of the church family and find a niche and participate in more than just Sunday services. Let's fill the pews every Sunday.

The book club read the "Circle Maker" this month—a book full of wisdom and encouragement related to prayer. I hope we can move on to the author's book "Draw the Circle" which applies the principles of *The Circle Maker* in everyday life.



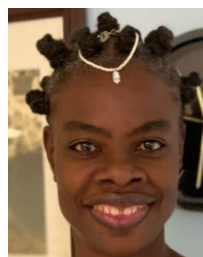
Jan Grewe: In 2022 I hope to get more entune with God's plan through the church Bible study opportunities as they are so eye-opening: learning to do things with the right attitude and heart. God blessed me with my love of music, so I want to utilize that blessing for the benefit of the church. I want to encourage more people to get closer to Jesus.



Susan Bateman: I am so impressed with the Book Club selection for January, "The Circle Maker" by Mark Batterson. I want to diligently follow the ideas: 1. Do the best with what you have, where you are; 2. Help people maximize their God given potential; 3. Live life with authentic integrity.



Gerry Ferris: I love the Methodist church and how welcoming it is. I always enjoy the Pastor's messages to us. I realize that even ordinary people can do the little things that can help those in need. What an impact we can make on the lives of people sometimes with just a kind word. Wouldn't it be great to fill more seats so that more folks can get a taste of the spirituality that we are enjoying.



Esther Dieujuste: The church has helped me so much with the difficulties I have been facing in my personal life. Now, this year, I want to do more to help the church and its missions, like assisting with projects at the nursing home.

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