

The Good News

Emmanuel United Methodist Church | FEBRUARY 2025

5115 Cortez Road West – Bradenton, FL 34210 – 941-792-3497

PASTOR'S DESK

Reverend Haley Eccles

Answering God's Call: The Story of Jarena Lee

I believe we are in a season of preparation, reflecting on how God is calling us to connect more deeply with our community. During this time, it's important to consider how the Gospel invites us to grow in love, understanding, and unity. This month, Black History Month, gives us an opportunity to reflect on the lives of faithful leaders whose stories both challenge and inspire us. Among them is Jarena Lee, a trailblazer in the early Methodist movement, whose life offers us powerful lessons in perseverance, faith, and God's call.

Jarena Lee's Call to Preach

Born in 1783 to free African-American parents in New Jersey, Jarena Lee faced significant obstacles from an early age. Despite these challenges, she experienced a deep sense of calling to preach the Gospel. When she shared her call with the AME Church's founder, Bishop Richard Allen, she was initially denied the opportunity to preach, as women were not typically allowed to serve in such roles at that time.

Yet Jarena Lee's faith remained steadfast. She continued to minister informally, trusting that God's call would make a way. Years later, in an unexpected moment during a worship service, Jarena was compelled by the Spirit to speak when the preacher faltered. Her words left a profound impression, and Bishop Allen affirmed her calling, granting her the authority to preach. She became the first African-American woman authorized to preach in the AME Church and spent her life traveling extensively, proclaiming the Gospel and encouraging believers.

Faith That Inspires Us

Jarena Lee's story challenges us to consider what it means to truly trust in God's call, even when the path forward feels uncertain or opposed. Her life reminds us that the Gospel calls us to embrace the fullness of God's diverse and beautiful kingdom.

As she wrote in her autobiography:

"If the man may preach, because the Savior died for him, why not the woman, seeing he died for her also?" Her courage and obedience invite us to ask: How is God calling us to step out in faith today? How might we challenge our own assumptions, open our hearts more fully to God's work, and prepare ourselves to serve?

For some, reflecting on Black History Month may feel like stepping into unfamiliar or even uncomfortable territory. We might also feel uncomfortable as we consider our mission to our community, finding all the reasons to say no, without considering the ways God can bless us when we say yes! Yet as followers of Christ, God uses these moments to refine us and prepare us for mission. Celebrating stories like Jarena Lee's helps us to live into the vision of God's kingdom, where every tribe, tongue, and nation is united in worship and service (Revelation 7:9).

An Invitation to Growth

In this season of preparation, I invite us to reflect on how God might be using stories like Jarena Lee's to sanctify us—to help us grow in grace and to shape us into a community that reflects God's love. Consider these questions:

- How might Jarena Lee's faith and courage inspire us to embrace our own callings?
- What barriers—internal or external—might God be inviting us to confront?
- How can we as a church be more intentional in celebrating and embodying the diversity of God's kingdom?

As we journey together, let us remember that God is always at work, shaping us and calling us to greater faithfulness. May Jarena Lee's story inspire us to listen for God's voice and to prepare ourselves for the mission ahead.

Blessings,
Pastor Haley





FEBRUARY:



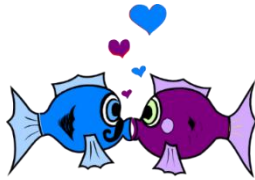
February

BIRTHDAYS

5 John Deffendall
10 Eli Eccles
12 Linda Wilkinson
20 Josie Seamon
22 Norman Kiel
23 Jane Hasek
24 Ginny Gilmore
25 April Galbraith

ANNIVERSARIES

14 Mr. & Mrs. Larry Linder



If your birthday or anniversary was missed, please contact the Church office at email: Secretary.eumc@gmail.com

2025

Keeping Up

Thank you for being faithful in your giving.
It is through your generosity that the church can continue to operate, and these gifts are very important and very much appreciated.

Here are the ways you can give to Emmanuel UMC

1. In Person on Sunday Morning
2. Drop off at the office in the mail slot located in the church office door.
3. Mail to the church at:
5115 Cortez Rd. W.
Bradenton, FL 34210
4. Easily online!

You may visit our website online and click the donate button to give digitally. **You may also copy and paste the link below into your favorite web browser:**

<https://www.eumcbradenton.org/online-giving>

2024 Year End Contribution Statements

Please contact the church office if you have any questions regarding your 2024 Giving statement.

Dear Emmanuel Church Family & Friends

Please remember these and our dear ones in Assisted Living, Homebound, in the Hospital and out of state in your prayers. Your prayers, cards and other expressions of Christ's Love will help give encouragement & lift their spirits. If you need an address, please contact the church office. 941-792-3497

Recent Requests

April G.	Grayson P.
Bill D.	Janelle F.
Chad C.	Kris B.
Dee Dee S.	Maxine J.
Emma O.	Paula S.

NEEDING PRAYER?

If you have a prayer request and want to be added to our prayer list, please feel free to write on your 'Connect card', call or email the church office and leave a message

941-792-3497

Secretary.eumc@gmail.com

In Loving Memory

Douglas 'Doug' Michael

09/02/1931-01/03/2025

Our longtime friend and member Doug Michael has passed into eternal life. A service was held in Ohio with family and friends. Please keep Phyllis and the family in your prayers.

Cards and notes of sympathy may be sent to:

Mrs. Phyllis Michael
3873 Catalina Drive
Bradenton, FL 34210

Ray Moore

06/05/1930 - 01/23/2025

Member and friend Ray Moore entered into heaven on Thursday, January 23. A Celebration of Life service will be held in Ellenton, FL. Please keep the family in prayer. Cards and notes of sympathy and love can be sent to:

Mrs. Ginger Moore
[715 50th St. Ct.](#) West
Bradenton, FL 34209



Record of Faithful Giving

General Offering

1/5	\$ 3,870.00
1/12	\$ 4,719.85
1/19	\$ 1,233.00
1/26	\$ 2,260.00

Weekly Attendance

1/5	69
1/12	78
1/19	83
1/26	75

Sunday School Bible Study

10:45am

1/5	NA
1/12	17
1/19	17
1/26	15

DECEMBER: Online Viewers

	FB	YouTube
12/1	2	22
12/8	2	39
12/15	2	29
12/22	5	26
12/24	2	24
12/29	No Video	

Lunch Bunch

Come join us! We'd love to welcome you to great fellowship and fun at Lunch Bunch this month on **Tuesday, February 11th** at 11:30 at Beef 'O' Brady's (4925 W. Cortez Rd.). You don't need a reservation, just show up in the private dining room and order what you'd like from their menu. Hope to see you soon!

BEEF 'O' BRADY'S

★ GOOD FOOD, GOOD SPORTS ★

IMMERSE

The Bible Reading Experience™

The website can be found here: <https://immerseible.com/beginnings/>

Resources on the website include a video overview each week and an audio recording for each day if it is easier to have the passages read to you. They also have a downloadable family guide.

Our New Members Are:

Gary Brelsford
Susan Brelsford
Ryan Cromwell-Cravo
George Pearson
Nancy Pearson



Ryan Cromwell-Cravo



Gary and Susan Brelsford



Strawberry Shortcake Missions Fund Raiser



Mark your calendars now for **Saturday, February 22nd, at 2:00** and start inviting your friends to join you to have some delicious Strawberry Shortcake. Made with fresh strawberries (some with sugar and some without) and all the fixings made just the way you like it. Church Fellowship Hall. Donations appreciated for missions.

YOU ARE INVITED!

Mark Your Calendars and Invite Your Friends

Week 4

27-Jan	Ex 25:1-27:21
28-Jan	Ex 28:1-31:18
29-Jan	Ex 32:1-34:35
30-Jan	Ex 35:1-38:31
31-Jan	Ex 39:1-40:38

Week 5

3-Feb	Lev 1:1-6:7
4-Feb	Lev 6:8-12:8
5-Feb	Lev 13:1-16:34
6-Feb	Lev 17:1-22:33
7-Feb	Lev 23:1-27:34

Week 6

10-Feb	Num 1:1-4:49
11-Feb	Num 5:1-9:23
12-Feb	Num 10:1-14:45
13-Feb	Num 15:1-19:22
14-Feb	Num 20:1-24:25

Week 7

17-Feb	Num 25:1-30:16
18-Feb	Num 31:1-36:13
19-Feb	Deut 1:1-3:29
20-Feb	Deut 4:1-9:6
21-Feb	Deut 9:7-14:21

Week 8

24-Feb	Deut 14:22-20:20
25-Feb	Deut 21:1-26:19
26-Feb	Deut 27:1-28:68
27-Feb	Deut 29:1-32:47
28-Feb	Deut 32:48-34:12

PURSES WITH A PURPOSE:

(MANATEE LIFE CHURCH)

We are partnering with Manatee Life Church (Formerly known as Manatee UMC) from now through the month of February. We are accepting donations of gently used purses.



These purses will be filled with supplies and be offered to the local women's groups who work with the homeless, displaced and abused women in our area. Please drop off your donations in the designated area in the Narthex or church office.

If you would like to also donate the personal care items which will fill the purses here is a list below:

Purses with a Purpose Needs List:

Disposable Wash Cloths
Tampons
Hair Clips/Barrettes
Small Toothpaste
Combs & Brushes
Toothbrush Holders
Razors (Men & Women)
Small Body Wash
Lip Balm
Nail Clipper Sets
Body Pouf
Shower Caps
Nail Brushes
Tissues
Small Mouthwash
Small shaving cream

PERSONAL CARE

