

The Spark

JANUARY 2022

Embodying Love | Demanding Justice | Transforming the World

HAPPY
**NEW
YEAR**
2022

www.rivierachurch.org

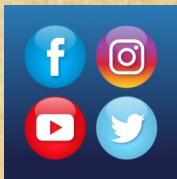
Mission Statement

Riviera Presbyterian Church is a spiritual community that accepts and embraces all God's children.

We are a Matthew 25 Church

Clerk's Corner...

Riviera Presbyterian Church
5275 Sunset Drive
Miami, FL 33143
(305) 666-8586
11:00am Sunday Worship Service
Office Hours M - F 9:00-5:00
www.rivierachurch.org
Connect with us on social media



@RivieraChurch

All The People
Ministers

Dr. Walter Busse
Director of Music
rivierapresmusic@gmail.com

Anna E. Rosas
Youth Education and Outreach Assistant
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Barbara Prieto, CCA
Certified Church Administrator
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Rev. Rosemary Noga Welton
Rev. Dr. David Welton
Parish Associates for Visitation

Session Members

Susan Mazzola
Clerk of Session

Susan Admire
Karen Collier
Laura Fothergill
Amparo Hernandez
Elaine Lanaris
Barbara Overton
Bryan Page
Rey Prieto
Michele Ready
Alejandra Rondon
Butch Sorenson
Mimi Sutherland



Happy New Year!

Despite all that's happening in the world (and there's always something going on out there that impacts us), it is in our DNA to look forward to a new year. Things will be different, things will change, stuff will happen – this is all inevitable. Fingers-crossed, prayers said, hopefully, touch wood, with luck, and God willing – 2022 will offer us the light at the end of a long, somewhat dark tunnel. Riviera has always been and has remained the light within that darkness - a place where we continue to come together to worship and share fellowship, whether virtually, in person or in a mixed-up version. We greet and see each other and have a common bond in the refreshing and uplifting spirit that is Riviera Presbyterian Church. We carry that spirit with us into 2022 whatever happens!

Your Clerk of Session sneaked a peek at a previous January 'The Spark' newsletter which covered January 6 being the Epiphany of the Lord. I'm not a lifelong Presbyterian, and even after reading the article, I still didn't have a good understanding. However, the internet did (listening to Rosemary and Anna on Sunday 1/2 also helped). Here's some information all from Wikipedia:

Epiphany (*/əˈpɪfəni/ ə-PIF-ə-nee*), also known as Theophany in the east, is a **Christian feast day that celebrates the revelation (theophany) of God incarnate as Jesus Christ**. ..In many Western Christian Churches, the eve of the feast is celebrated as Twelfth Night (Epiphany Eve).

Why is Epiphany celebrated 12 days after Christmas?

Christians believe that the 12 days of Christmas mark the amount of time it took after the birth of Jesus for the magi, or wise men, to travel to Bethlehem for the Epiphany when they recognized him as the son of God.

How is the Feast of the Epiphany celebrated?

The epiphany feast completes the season of Christmas by inviting us to discern the identity of the Christ child. Three traditions—baking a kings' cake, marking a door lintel with the magi's blessing, and elaborating worship with lighted candles—help us interpret the Christmas season appropriately.

King Cake. King cake is eaten on January 6 in honor of Epiphany, or Twelfth Night, which historically marks the arrival of the three wise men/kings in Bethlehem who delivered gifts to the baby Jesus. (The plastic baby hidden inside king cakes today is a nod to this story.)

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Clerk's Corner Continues...

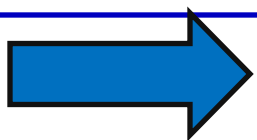
*Marking Doors. Either on Twelfth Night (5 January), the twelfth day of Christmastide and eve of the feast of the Epiphany, or on Epiphany Day (6 January) itself, many Christians (including Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics, among others) write on their doors with chalk in a pattern such as **20 □ C □ M □ B □ 21**, with the numbers referring "to the calendar year (20 and 21, for instance, for this year, 2021); the crosses stand for Christ; and the letters have a two-fold significance: C, M and B are the initials for the traditional names of the Magi (Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar), but they are also an abbreviation of the Latin blessing *Christus mansionem benedicat*, which means, *May Christ bless this house*. "Another form, for Three Kings day, is to mark the door with **IIIK** (the Roman numeral three followed by "K" for "Kings").*

Elaborating worship with lighted candles. No explanation needed here!

I don't know if this information is helpful. I do remember eating King Cake when we lived in Houston, Texas. Very strange to see a little pink plastic baby baked in a cake. Let's move along.

Watching Morning Joe and listening to the Reverend Al Sharpton, I was reminded that the first day of January is the last day of Kwanzaa - a celebration of **community, family and culture** within the African-American community. There is something 'celebrated,' either religious or secular, on each and every day in January. I've mentioned two: Epiphany and the end of Kwanzaa. The first day of January is also the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. Additionally, there's National Science Fiction Day January 2 (I like that one); Orthodox Christmas January 7; Korean American Day January 13; World Religion Day January 15; Martin Luther King's Birthday January 17; Roe V. Wade January 22, National Pie Day January 23 (yum!); International Holocaust Remembrance Day January 27; National Lego Day January 28; and National Croissant Day (another yum and I skipped National Chocolate Cake Day on January 27!).

I've digressed a lot. Let's just celebrate being together whether on zoom or not at church on Sunday, committee meetings, Sunday schools and more. And, since this is written after January 2, many thanks for resuming and participating in Holy Grounds online.



Transition to an Interim/Transitional Pastor

January Update

It's exciting speaking with Pastors from around the country about the Transitional/Interim Pastor position at Riviera. Team members learn about their faith background, what they're doing now, what they want to do in the future, and their interest in coming to Riviera. This search process continues into 2022 with several new candidates. Members of the team have also had several interesting questions about the process. Thanks to our colleagues at the Presbytery of Tropical Florida who support and guide us and answer our queries quickly!

Direct any specific questions to rivierachurch@bellsouth.net or contact one of the Transition Team members: Cris Sweeny, Michele Ready, Bryan Page, Susan Mazzola.

Discipleship News...

Youth Sunday School at Riviera

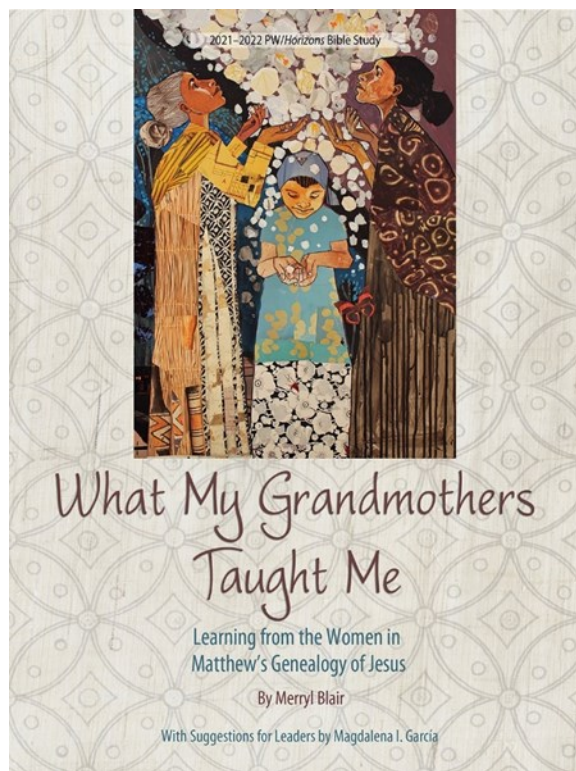
Covid continues to be a challenge to everyone feeling comfortable, getting back together in the church, and our maintaining a consistent program for our Youth. Riviera recently announced in-person worship for a limited number of vaccinated people in the sanctuary, while also having a live worship service available to all on Zoom, and afterward recorded on YouTube.

For Riviera and for me, Anna E. Rosas, Youth Education & Outreach Assistant, the safety of our youth is paramount when considering resuming regular Youth Sunday School and other youth activities; and we know and understand many parents decide to stay home. The Children's Sermon is an integral and consistent presence in Riviera's worship service. After the Children's Sermon, instead of leaving the sanctuary for traditional Sunday school, an activity will be arranged at the back tables in the Sanctuary for all children. In-person Sunday school will resume when it is safe to do so.

Beginning in February, Riviera will deliver an activity bag to each child. February's activity bag will focus primarily on Lent but also recognizes ♥ Valentine's Day! Subsequent activity bags will be delivered for: April (Easter 🐰 and Pentecost); July (Summer and back to school); and October (Fall/Winter holidays).

Our Sunday Youth Reading Group continues on Zoom every Sunday at 4 p.m. The current book is ***A Wrinkle in Time*** and we're somewhere in Chapter 3 - Join us! You can request a book from the church for your reader or you can use this link: <http://albanycomplementaryhealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/A-Wrinkle-in-Time-Madeleine-LEngle.pdf>

Register your child to join the Zoom each Sunday by contacting Anna E. Rosas at rivierapreschristianed@gmail.com



Women's Study Group – Wednesday, January 19 @ 7:30pm via Zoom

The hymn "Live Into Hope" (Glory to God Hymnal 772) may serve to capture the spirit of Bathsheba—taken, widowed, deprived of her child, and thrust into the role of protector of a future king. She gained and claimed "the right to speak," and did so with cunning and authority.

Join the discussion on Bathsheba by contacting Karen at kc33134@aol.com for the Zoom information.

"Live into hope of liberty, the right to speak, the right to be, the right to have one's daily bread, to hear God's word and thus be fed."

Congregational Care News...

★HAPPY★
BIRTHDAY!

Karen M —6

Mary H —12

Carolina F —18

Luke F —29

If we missed your birthday or you do not want your birthday listed, please contact the church office at rivierachurch@bellsouth.net

From Dr. Walter Busse...

The Riviera Chancel Choir and the Riviera Ukulele Ensemble will be taking a break in the month of January.

Stay tune to starting date and new upcoming musical opportunities for all ages.

Worship Committee...

We would love for all members and friends to be participants in leading worship in 2022.

Please take a moment to fill out the doodle survey that was emailed to you or you can go to this link: https://doodle.com/poll/i7rsdnt7du9t3p4c?utm_source=poll&utm_medium=link

to pick your dates. The task is simple. All you do is read the liturgy provided. You may participate in person, on Zoom or sending a video.

If you have any questions, please contact Barbie in the church office rivierachurch@bellsouth.net

Don't wait for someone else to sign up—sign up today.

Mission News...



Winn-Dixie

Let's Fight Hunger Together!

Every \$12.99 Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet bought at our local Winn-Dixie location this month will send us a **\$1 donation**

Keep spreading Joy into the new year with a beautiful Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet and help the Riviera Food Pantry fight hunger.

The Riviera Food Pantry was selected by Winn Dixie's Bloomin' 4 Good Program to receive a \$1 donation for every \$12.99 Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet with the red circle sticker. For the month of December we received \$83 for our food pantry. Thank you to all who participated.

For January ONLY AT THIS: Winn-Dixie 8710 SW 72 ST.

So head on over and purchase a bouquet to cheer up a friend with the Covid blues.

Buy one for your elderly neighbor who lives alone.

The co-worker who goes that extra mile to help you.

And don't forget to pick up one for YOU because you deserve a beautiful bouquet!

And not only will you be bringing beauty into someone's life, but you will also be helping to feed the hungry in our local community.

Mission News...

Riviera is honored to support the LEAP Program, the only nonprofit agency in all of Florida to focus on women in prison using a holistic entrepreneurship model. One of the current LEAP students shared this poem with us, a wonderful reminder of the beauty in all of us. You can support LEAP by donating to, or shopping at, their Dragonfly thrift boutique at 3141 SW 8th Street.

'It's Beautiful' poem written by a current LEAP student:

I sit quietly taking it all in...

I notice I am not alone, I am
surrounded by others that
are like me yet not like me.

It's beautiful!
Each one of us has a story,
each one of us has a past
and each one of us has a future.

It's beautiful!
Each one is unique,
and has a different strength,
and yet we all have different weaknesses.

It's beautiful!
Through these weaknesses we
all are growing, and learning,
and becoming whole.

It's beautiful!
Each of us on separate journeys
in life, yet our paths
brought us together.

It's beautiful!
We are Leap 21

By: Anonymous