

The Spark

MARCH 2022

Embodying Love | Demanding Justice | Transforming the World

Where Do You See God In Your Life?



Everyday there is a point where you are frustrated or sad about something and God shows you that he is there and your problems seem ok. But in order to do this you have to slow down and open your eyes to notice that you are not alone, and it will be ok.

One of my favorite scenarios is when I really wish something would happen. Normally it is at night and I'm sad. So I go up on the roof of the boat to be alone. I am teary but face into the wind and look up. The stars twinkle down like God's eyes watching me, and the breeze blows through my hair like a giant hug, and wipes away my tears. I take deep breaths and just sit up there until I feel peaceful and calm.

Another way I see him is when I go somewhere and my parents are talking to friends. I'm bored and I wander a little bit away and look for something to do. I recently did this and met Maida. Maida is from Chile. I saw her sitting on the ground weaving palm fronds together. It reminded me of how I like to weave plastic strings to make lanyards. I ask if I can try and she shows me how to weave a mat. Then I give her my lanyard strings and show her how I weave them together. Being open to start a conversation, I learned something new and felt less alone. We got to know each other really well by the time my parents were ready to leave and I had a new friend. I'm so glad I went looking for what else God had to show me rather than choosing to be alone.

At sunset, I've also seen God in my life. As the sun creeps down toward the horizon it eventually gets hidden behind the clouds. The day is ending but the sun is so bright that rays of sunlight shine across the sky and it looks like heaven. How great is it that even though bad things are happening in the world, God still shines through and shares his love to everyone.

A couple of days ago I saw something super rare that made me swell up with happiness. We were driving the dinghy through very shallow water so the sand was getting stirred up in our wake. The water was very calm though so you could see the bottom. I looked down and saw twinkling green lights in the water. Bioluminescence! As if God, again, is shining through the dark. I have never seen light like that, so vivid. I went home barely able to stop smiling.

There are countless ways I see God every week. They show me that I am not alone, encouraging me to take a deep breath, and that it will be ok. So if you keep an eye out, he is hard to miss.

—Jackie Fouche

—Look inside for pictures taken by Jackie where she saw God.



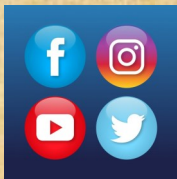
Mission Statement

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
rivierapreschristianed@gmail.com

Barbara Prieto, CCA
Certified Church Administrator
rivierachurch@gmail.com

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 St. Patrick's Day! Everybody's Irish on St. Patrick's Day! We enjoy Irish soda bread, beer, corned beef and cabbage, colcannon, Irish coffee – something for everyone. Speaking of food, Riviera is *easing* back into Holy Grounds. Starting in March, we will begin to enjoy fellowship after worship with coffee, lemonade, water, and cookies (or something similar). But, for the time being, we will keep it simple with your Discipleship Committee supplying a sweet treat to have along with our beverages.

The South Florida weather in these early months of the year is heavenly. So, it is a pleasant coincidence that we are celebrating worship at Riviera in person and in the sanctuary with the windows open. On one recent Sunday, February 20, with no air conditioning and the windows wide open, sitting in the sanctuary was glorious. A cool eastern breeze was occasionally felt wafting across the seats by those worshipping. The sanctuary was delightfully warm, yet oh so comfortable – like having worship service outside, but we were inside – lovely, peaceful.

Riviera begins the Lenten season with Anna Rosas and The Rev. Rosemary Noga Welton offering ashes to the parents and teachers on the morning of Ash Wednesday, March 2, at the Child Care Center. At Riviera, we will get together as a congregation at an Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 pm that evening. You'll learn more about special activities during Lent in this issue of The Spark.

The season of Lent lasts from Ash Wednesday to the evening of Holy Saturday –40 days. Lent is very often associated with 'giving up' something. However, I recall that our former Pastor advocated that we should embrace something new instead of giving up something. I liked that. Use this time to challenge yourself, do something new, or do something old differently. Missy also initiated the distribution of "gratitude" journals. I enjoyed carrying around my gratitude journal and often used it for making lists of things to do in between my notes of gratitude. I also liked that the little notebook came with a card printed with my favorite version of The Lord's Prayer.

Riviera will again distribute a small Lenten notebook on Sunday, March 6, and everyone is encouraged to note their thoughts as we proceed through the 2022 season of Lent. Jot down your thoughts, not only of gratitude but also your lists; something you've just heard on NPR; who you need to call; people about whom you're concerned; a book someone just recommended; a card you need to buy; that song on the radio you want to download; or new words you need to lookup. You also might keep track of your daily meditation, daily exercise, or daily prayers. This year's Lenten journal is like carrying a little bit of Riviera with you every day!

—Susan Mazzola
Clerk of Session

Clerk's Corner Continues...



Transition to an Interim/Transitional Pastor

March Update

Your Riviera Transition Team is happy to be speaking with one candidate who is excited and enthusiastic about the prospect of becoming Riviera's Transitional Pastor. Due diligence has been done on both sides. The next step has our candidate meeting with The Rev. Dr. Daris Bultena at the Presbytery of Tropical Florida and with us in person. You can only do Zoom meetings for so long!

As always, we appreciate the support and guidance from Presbytery and especially from The Reverend Pat Ashley, our liaison from the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry and The Rev. Dr. Daris Bultena.

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

Worship News...

During the upcoming Lenten Season, the worship team will be exploring the Psalms. Therefore we extend an invitation to our **Lenten Sermon Series on The Psalms starting Sunday, March 6 at 11:00 am with Communion.** Together we will focus on the following words: protection, confidence, comfort & assurance, forgiveness, and finally, joy.

Worship Leaders in March:

March 2: Ash Wednesday Service, 7:00 pm

March 6: Rev. Dr. David Welton

March 13: Anna Rosas

March 20: Rev. Rosemary Noga Welton

March 27: Dramatic Reading Group

Visit our website's Home Page

(www.rivierachurch.org) to register for in-person worship or get links for digital worship services.



From Dr. Walter Busse...



RPC MUSIC HAPPENINGS

Attention anyone who loves music... Why not think about participating in one (or more) of our many music offerings at RPC? (No experience necessary!)

1. **Adult Choir** - meets every Thursday evening in the church hall for fellowship and pot luck dinner at 6:30 pm followed by rehearsal at 7:30 pm.

2. **Ukulele Ensemble** - meets every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month after worship in the sanctuary. Note: ukuleles will be provided for use free of charge!

3. **Handbell Choir** - meets whenever there is a 5th Sunday of the month after worship in the sanctuary.

4. **Soloist** - Voice or Instrument (any) - will be scheduled as available - just let Walter know of your interest!

If interested, contact Dr. Walter Busse any Sunday after church or via email at rivierapresmusic@gmail.com.

Stewardship News...

Per Capita

2022

\$37 per member

[Click Here to
Donate](#)

Thank you for being a partner in the ministry and mission of Riviera Presbyterian Church.

Your generous support in 2021 has made a difference in the lives of many people and helped our church reach them with the Good News of Jesus Christ. God has done and continues to do remarkable things through us and with us – things that matter in our community!

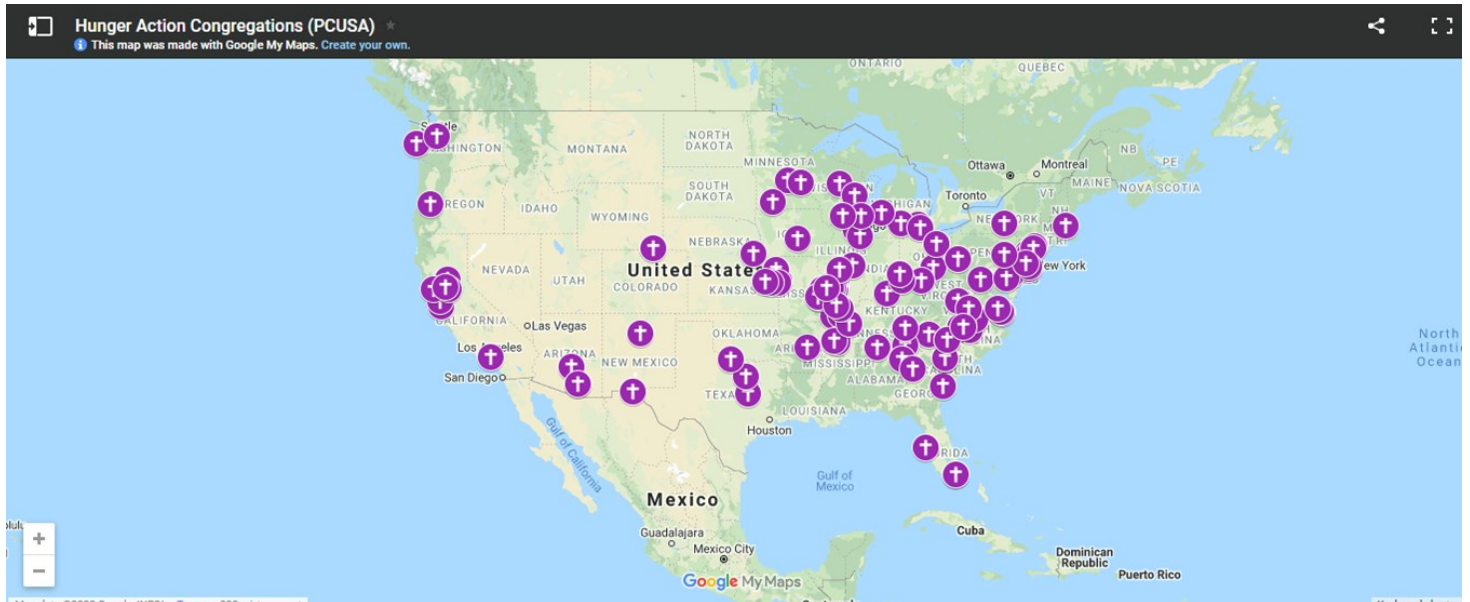
The 2021 Contribution Statements have been mailed out. If you did not receive your copy please contact the church office at rivierachurch@gmail.com.

Mission News...



HUNGER ACTION CONGREGATION NEWS: *March 6, 2022 Food Pantry Workshop*

Riviera is one of two HACs in Florida. The map below shows the others in the PC(USA) denomination. For anyone interested in a way to personally engage with our hunger mission, please consider joining Ellen Anderson on March 6, 2022 for a workshop to learn more about how she prepares the "individual bags" that the food pantry assembles!



Congregational Care News...



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

Anna R.—2
Jim C.—3
Robbie A.—6
Matthew S.—6
Doreen R.—8
Rosemary W.—11
Robert F.—13
Fabian C.—15
Raymond K.—23

Discipleship News...

Lenten Micro-Practices.

This year during Lent the children and adults of Riviera are being asked to practice Lenten micro-practices. A Lenten micro practice is a bite-sized spiritual practice (3-10 minutes a day) that will prepare us for Easter.

Each Sunday during the children's sermon Anna will teach about a new practice and encourage us to do the practice throughout the week. In total, as a community, we will apply 6 different practices to our Lenten journey. An example of one of the practices is a Holy Pause. Every day for that one week, we will take a pause (2-5 minutes) and ask "where was God present?".

We hope you join us on our Lenten journey!



Women's Study Group will meet via Zoom on Wednesday, March 16 @ 7:30pm.

Join us as we conclude Mary's story.

Contact Karen Collier at kc33134@aol.com for the Zoom link.

Zoom Meeting ID 894-7650-2156

Passcode 333227

**Sunday Bible
Study Class
10:00 am EST**

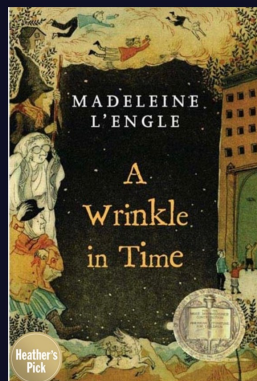
Join in person or on Zoom

**Theology Uncorked
Resumes
Sunday, March 13 @ 5 pm**

You are invited to attend Theology Uncorked at Titanic Brewery and Restaurant located at 5813 Ponce de Leon, Coral Gables, FL 33146.

This month's discussion will be led by Carol Thompson.

Please RSVP to rivierachurch@gmail.com



**YOUTH
READING
GROUP**

Sundays at 4:00 pm
via Zoom
Contact Anna for link



rivierapreschristianed@gmail.com

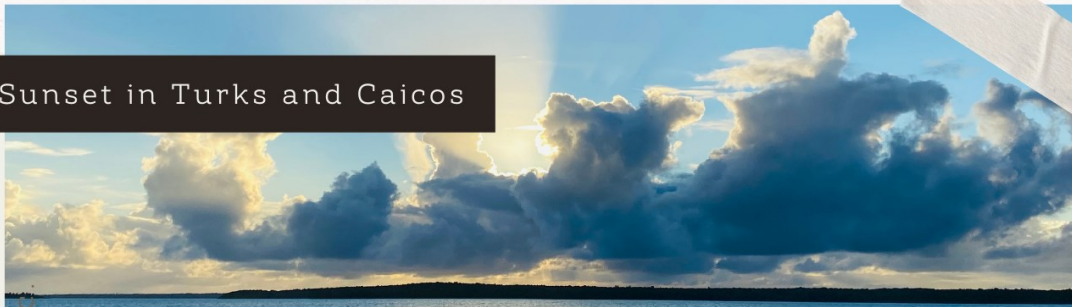
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tuned

One More Thing...



Our spiritual practice for February was at an outdoor labyrinth as a walking meditation. This event was an opportunity to calm the mind and enjoy peace, quiet, and reflection in our busy world.

Sunset in Turks and Caicos



El Paso de Dona Blanca,
Puerto Plata Dominican
Republic



Morning showers in
Georgetown Bahamas



Wood Carver on
Little Farmer Cay, Bahamas.

Fouche
Family
Travels

2022



Sailors Cross at Chincoteague, VA

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