

# The Spark

JULY 2022

Embodying Love | Demanding Justice | Transforming the World

## Where Do You See God In Your Life?

I recently told some friends that I wish the prayers of the people weren't so heart-wrenching every week. Since this pandemic season began it feels like we haven't caught a break. We have had an insurrection, attacks on women's rights, the war in Ukraine, and many other things that make us wonder "where is God?". Yet, even as I wonder if God is around, our God has been faithful and I have indeed seen God.

One glaring instance where I've seen God is in the care the congregation exhibits for our community and neighbor. I have seen God in the prayer request emails and in all the Covid measures we adhere to during worship. I've seen God every time we ask our neighbors how they are doing. I've seen God in the food pantry. I've seen God in committee meetings and in session meetings where wisdom and kindness guide the agenda.

A second instance where I've seen God in this season is in science. I've seen God in covid specific medications and vaccines. I've seen God in complex calculations and in chemical equations. I've seen God in clinical trials and in placebos. I've seen God in the complex beauty of MRNA. And I've seen God in the intricate weave of N95s. I've seen God in science.

Lastly, I've seen God in my church kiddos. I've seen God in their inquisitive questions. I've seen God in their honest prayers. I've seen God every time they lead us in the liturgy. I've seen God in the kindness they show each other be it in play or in learning. I've seen God, simply in their smiles.

Even though every week seems to bring new trials, God has been ever-present, and ever-faithful even if I don't always notice in the moment. As this season continues, I need to remember to pause, look back, and realize that God is with me, with us, even as we ask where is God.

—Anna Rosas

### 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...

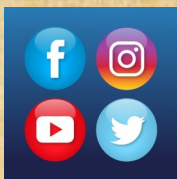
Riviera Presbyterian Church  
5275 Sunset Drive  
Miami, FL 33143  
(305) 666-8586

11:00am Sunday Worship Service

Office Hours M - F 9:00-5:00

[www.rivierachurch.org](http://www.rivierachurch.org)

Connect with us on social media



@RivieraChurch

All The People  
Ministers

Dr. Walter Busse  
Director of Music  
[rivierapresmusic@gmail.com](mailto:rivierapresmusic@gmail.com)

Anna E. Rosas  
Youth Education and Outreach Assistant  
[rivierapreschristianed@gmail.com](mailto:rivierapreschristianed@gmail.com)

Barbara Prieto, CCA  
Certified Church Administrator  
[rivierachurch@gmail.com](mailto: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

## Pastor's Reflection

Rev. Melanie Marsh

Beloved Friends,

It feels perfectly fitting that I write my first Spark greeting to all of you in the height of summer.

Summer is the transition season. It's the moment of the year when the cycle begins to shift from light toward dark, from planting toward harvest. The new life of spring reaches full bloom, and greatest abundance. The learning year winds down, fun and relaxation take center stage, as we prepare to move from one year, one class, one milestone to another.

In our family, the summer months have often meant moving from one place to another. We pack up. We clean out. We rediscover old treasures, and let go of what we no longer need. It's a familiar annual process of reflection – looking back on where we've been over the past months or years, and looking toward a new and still incomplete picture of our future.

The Creator seems to extend an invitation to all of us as we settle into this in-between season:

Delight in the beauty. Take breaks. Take stock. Discover new things. Rediscover old treasures. Notice what we have grown out of, and what we are growing into. Prepare for the joys and challenges of our next season of life. Imagine new possibilities!

Our journey together may just be beginning, but the cycles of life and faith remain eternal. I look forward with joy and excitement to all that lies ahead for us. I hope that you will join with me in our first worship service together on Sunday July 10<sup>th</sup>. We will celebrate communion and give thanks for our partnership as a community.

Many Blessings,  
Rev. Melanie

## Mission News...

### March for Our Lives

Riviera Elder, Barbara Overton, met up with other members of the Presbytery of Tropical Florida at the recent March for our Lives in Coral Gables. The March was attended by hundreds of people and was one of 500 rallies held around the country. The crowd heard the call from local politicians, gun safety advocates, and gun violence survivors to push for legislation.



**Blood Drive**  
**July 10**  
**11:30 AM—3:00 PM**

## Worship News...

The Worship Committee is grateful for our Parish Associates for Visitations, the Rev. Rosemary Noga Welton and the Rev. Dr. David Welton, our Youth Education & Outreach Assistant, Anna Rosas, for taking up the mantel and preaching monthly while we were in search mode for our Transitional Pastor. We also thank all the other elders and pastors that filled our pulpit. Thank you for your commitment to Riviera.



## Congregational Care News...

### Happy Birthday

Some Birthday Wishes For Loved Ones

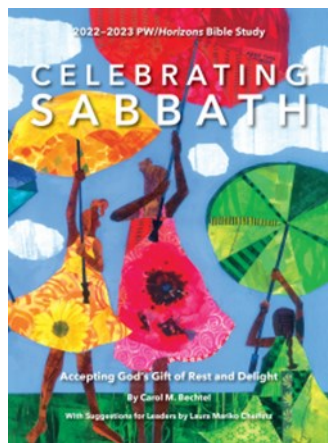
Cindy H. - 7  
Leah P. - 10



David G. - 25  
Dylan D. - 27

If we missed your birthday or you do not want your birthday listed, please contact the church office at [rivierachurch@gmail.com](mailto:rivierachurch@gmail.com)

## Discipleship News...



### Riviera's Women's Study Group Book: *Celebrating Sabbath* *Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight*

Sabbath reminds us to honor God who honors us by giving us a day each week to reset our pace, our priorities, and our lives.

Join us on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm. Contact Karen at [kc33134@aol.com](mailto:kc33134@aol.com) for the Zoom Link.

### Youth Sunday School

Reach out to Anna for details

[rivierapreschristianed@gmail.com](mailto:rivierapreschristianed@gmail.com)

**Zoom Meeting ID 894-7650-2156**

**Passcode 333227**

**Sunday Bible  
Study Class**

**10:00 am EST**

**Join in person or on Zoom**