

The Spark

December 2022

Embodying Love | Demanding Justice | Transforming the World

BLUE CHRISTMAS

THE LONGEST NIGHT HYBRID SERVICE

Wednesday December 21st

Soup & Bread Meal 6pm, Worship 6:30pm

Join us as we honor this longest night of the year
with a contemplative service of scripture, prayer, song, and candle light.



rivierachurch.org

In this season of Joy, we often experience the longing and grief of loss all the more deeply. Our Longest Night worship service offers space to see the sacred in the dark of our life. On this night, we remember that Hope meets us, even in the midst of despair.

Children and youth are invited to join us in worship. Free childcare will be available for our youngest family members.

Mission Statement



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

We are a Matthew 25 Church

Pastor's Reflection...

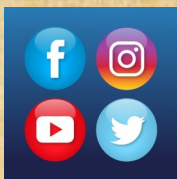
Riviera Presbyterian Church
5275 Sunset Drive
Miami, FL 33143
(305) 666-8586

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

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

"Life begins in the dark." - Barbara Brown Taylor

Every year, as Advent begins, I'm reminded again just how much we talk about light and darkness in this season. I am also reminded just how much we tend, in our modern-day, western world to pair light with goodness, and darkness with evil. But it's just not true.

The reality is much more beautiful and complex.

Darkness is sacred, just as light is sacred.

Light **and** **Darkness** are essential to the survival of our bodies and our spirits.

The darkness of this season is not something to be feared. It is a gift.

We are called to walk in the dark, to look within at what resides there.

Small miracles?

Newly formed dreams or hopes?

Unspoken truths waiting their turn to emerge?

As we enter the season of Advent, let us celebrate the darkness and the light. Both are necessary. Both are Holy. Let us welcome the wisdom we find when we learn to honor them equally.

TO KNOW THE DARK BY WENDELL BERRY

To go in the dark with a light is to know the light.

To know the dark, go dark. Go without sight,
and find that the dark, too, blooms and sings,
and is traveled by dark feet and dark wings.

Many Blessings,

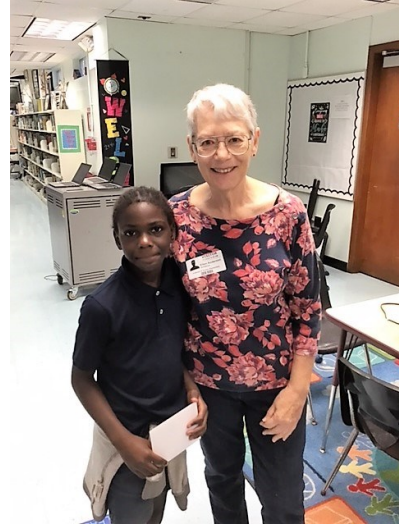
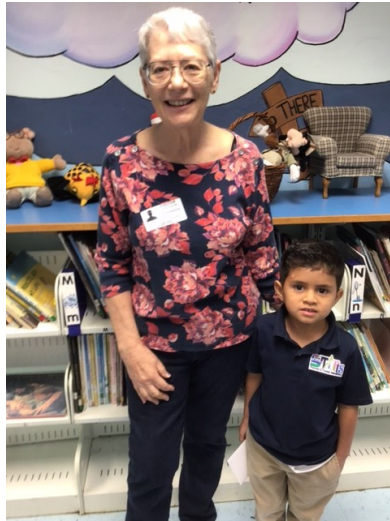
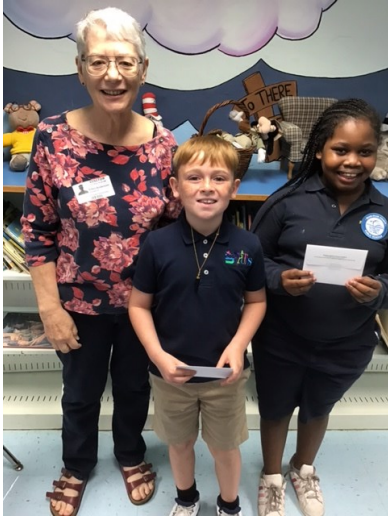
Rev. Melanie

Mission News...

Mission Missive

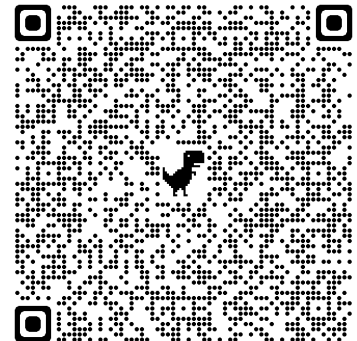
Frances Tucker Elementary School

On **Monday, November 14**, we distributed grocery gift cards.



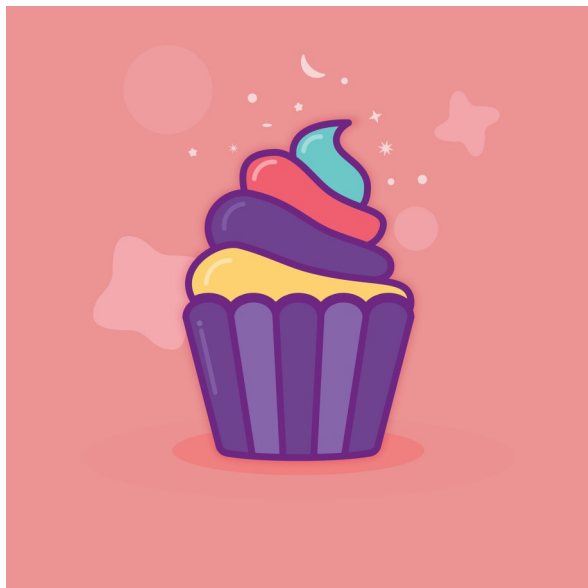
On **Sunday, November 20** we began our Angel Tree project for the first graders. We have the "About Me" sheets for each student to help choose presents. We set a suggested limit for each child at \$20. The gifts need to be returned to the church by **December 18**. On **Monday, December 19** we will distribute the gifts in the morning. [All are invited to help us.](#) It is a truly warm and fuzzy event. Remember, for some of these children it will be the only gift they receive.

If you would like to participate but do not have the time to shop you may donate funds and we will do the shopping for you. Use the QR code and look for the Christmas Tree Angel fund.



Congregational Care News...

HAPPY BIRTHDAY DECEMBER BABIES



Kathy S. - Dec. 10

Jackie J.—Dec. 14

Sandy B.—Dec. 15

Bonnie H.—Dec. 18

Walter B.—Dec. 22

Amparo H.—Dec. 22

Stewardship News...

On **Sunday November 20** as we consecrated our pledges to the church, and celebrated the generosity of our community. You can still use the digital pledge card available on our website at www.rivierachurch.org/give or send an email to the church at rivierachurch@gmail.com, if you have not been able to send in your pledge.

Our goal is to have 100% of members turn in a pledge - - knowing every pledged amount, no matter how big or small, helps us better plan for the future.

What an exciting future it is! With your help, we will continue our work as a mission-driven church, that promotes for justice and peace for all God's children. In our worship, education, and mission, we will share the news that all are loved unconditionally. "Embodying Love, Demanding Justice, Transforming the World."

Your voice, your dreams, and your vision matter!

Christian Education News...

Hybrid Bible Study

In-person or virtually
Sundays at 10:00 am EST.

Zoom Information
Meeting ID: 894-7650-2156
Passcode: 333227

rivierachurch.org



Learn and spiritually grow with us!

Riviera offers a **Hybrid Bible Study Class** to help you grow in your knowledge of God's Word in ways that make a difference in your life.

Whether you're a new believer, a long-time follower of Christ, or just curious to learn more, join us!

Children Sunday School



Email rivierapreschristianed@gmail.com

Our Children's Sunday School begins after the Children's Sermon and held concurrently with the worship service. All children (toddlers, youth, tweens, teenagers - members and visitors) are invited to leave to attend Sunday school with Anna Rosas, our Youth Education and Outreach Assistant.

Toddlers and smaller children will be cared for by Josephine Gurri, our Nursery Care Provider.

Riviera is using the Follow Me Curriculum from the PC(USA) which covers the practices Jesus did and teaches us to do as faithful followers. Contact Anna via email at rivierapreschristianed@gmail.com for more information



NEW DATE FOR DECEMBER

The **Women's Study Group** will meet on **Wednesday, Dec. 14**. If you have any questions please contact Karen Collier at kc33134@aol.com

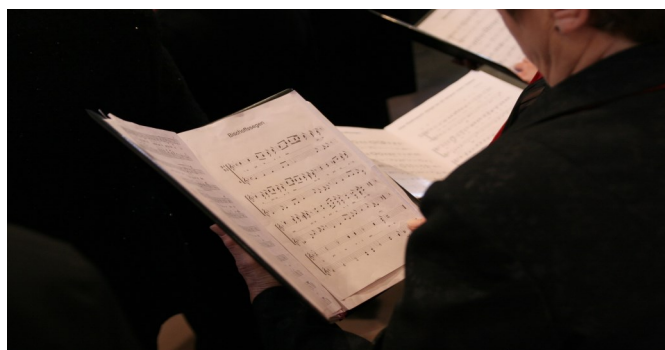
Worship News...



Ukulele Rehearsal
Sunday @ 12 noon
In-Person & Zoom



Riviera Bell Choir
Rehearse the 5th Sunday of
the month after worship



The Riviera Choir meets for a fellowship meal and rehearsal on Thursdays. Come for appetizers at 6:30pm, dinner at 7:00pm and rehearsal at 7:30pm.

Bring a dish to share if you are able. Email our Music Director, Walter if you are interested in finding out more details.
rivierapresmusic@gmail.com

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24 at 6:00pm

A service for all ages



One More Thing...



Youth News

Enter a world where music creates magic
and every song is a spell.

Youth Reading Group
Sunday @ 4:00 pm via Zoom

Reach out to Miss Anna to RSVP
rivierapreschristianed@gmail.com

THEOLOGY UNCORKED

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

TITANIC RESTAURANT & BREWERY
5813 PONCE DE LEON BLVD CORAL GABLES FL 33146



I2.II.

5:00 PM

Poinsettias

You are invited to participate in beautifying the sanctuary for the Christmas Eve Service by ordering a traditional Poinsettia.



\$15.00 per plant
Deadline to order 12/18



Following the Christmas Eve service, the plant(s) may be taken home or left to be given to our members and friends who are ill or unable to leave their home. A list of donors and those remembered and honored will be included in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

Please email the church with the name of loved ones and select from the following categories: ***In Memory of*** ***In Celebration of*** ***In Honor of***

Email: rivierachurch@gmail.com

Share this news with
friends & family

Way to help the RPC
Food Pantry

Shop at the Winn Dixie

6770 Bird Road



SUPPORT A
NON-PROFIT
NEAR YOU

**FIGHT HUNGER
WITH US!**

We will receive a \$1 donation for every \$12.99
Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet with the red circle
sticker sold this month at our local Winn-Dixie.

Winn/Dixie