

# The Spark

May 2023

Embodying Love | Demanding Justice | Transforming the World



## challenge

Stop wasting food—take the challenge at home!

RPC's food waste challenge will start on May 7 and end on June 4.  
You'll only need garbage bags or a dedicated trash can.

Week 1 Measure the weight or volume of how much food your family threw out.

Weeks 2 to 4 Implement the smart strategies that we'll be giving you to reduce food waste, such as smart shopping, smart storage, and smart meal preparation.

Week 5 Total up how much food (and money) you've saved compared to Week 1 and bring those results to church.

We'll supply work sheets for keeping track of food waste and we'll keep a running count of how much food we've all been saving. We'll also be sending out tips for reducing food waste every Wednesday.

See page 7 for more details

### Mission Statement



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

**We are a Matthew 25 Church**

MATTHEW 25

# Pastor's Reflection...

Riviera Presbyterian Church

5275 Sunset Drive

Miami, FL 33143

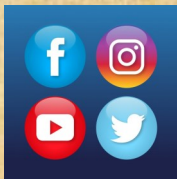
(305) 666-8586

11:00am Sunday Worship Service

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

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

Connect with us on social media



@RivieraChurch

All The People  
Ministers

Rev. Melanie Marsh  
Pastor

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)

## Session Members

Susan Mazzola  
Clerk of Session

Karen Collier  
Laura Fothergill  
Amparo Hernandez  
Bryan Page  
Rey Prieto  
Michele Ready  
Alejandra Rondon  
Butch Sorenson

## Pastor's Reflection

Beloved Community,

Happy Eastertide!

As we celebrate the Risen Christ over the next few weeks, our focus is on the community of faith and how we show up in the world around us. One of the ways that faithful show up is through activism and advocacy.

**People Acting for Community Together (PACT)** is a local organizing alliance that connects Houses of Worship for the greater good of their communities.

*PACT uses the power of large organized people to hold public officials accountable to create systemic change in Miami-Dade County. PACT is a 'direct action' organization, it hosts large community assemblies where public officials are encouraged to adopt solutions to serious problems.*

*PACT identifies issues through an extensive 'Listening Process' reaching more than 1,500 members. After the listening process, PACT members vote on 2-3 problem areas to focus on for the year. Once PACT members achieve victory on a campaign, leaders put in place a series of checks and measure to ensure that progress is made. Public officials remain accountable even after the original objective has been fulfilled.*

- People Acting for Community Together, "Our Story"

In this Easter and Earth Care Season, together we are considering the question:

**"What soil is God calling us to tend here and now?"**

PACT will be holding a listening session at Riviera this month on May 23 @ 6:30pm. This is a perfect opportunity for us to hear from our neighbors about the needs that are greatest, the places of longing, and the relationships that we might be able to build in our community and beyond. I hope that you will join us as we hear from PACT and from those who God has placed in our midst in this time and place.

Many Blessings,  
Rev. Melanie





# Mission News...

## Food Pantry Volunteers Needed



**Mondays & Wednesdays  
9:00 am - 12 noon**

Help people facing *food* insecurity by *volunteering*.

Sign up sheet is available in the Welcome Area in the sanctuary or call the Church Office at 305-666-8586 x3 or email at [rivierachurch@gmail.com](mailto:rivierachurch@gmail.com) for available dates.

**Thank you, Winn Dixie  
for donating \$505  
to date to the  
Riviera Food Pantry**

**Bloomin' 4 Good Program**



We are grateful for your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS). Through your generosity, we collected \$222.33\* for this special offering!

\*denotes to date, April 24, 2023

# Congregational Care News...

Nicole P.—May 3  
Cheryl E.—May 11  
Janet P.—May 16  
David W.—May 16  
Nancy S.—May 17  
Sofia V.—May 23  
Belinda V.—May 28



To our dear Riviera Church family,

Grace and peace to you all! Thanks to all who have reached out to us during our move. We have survived the winter and are enjoying a beautiful spring in Columbia, Maryland. We miss you all, but thankfully, we've found a new church home at First Presbyterian of Howard County. It's a place with welcoming people, meaningful worship and a great music program, so we feel blessed to be there.

On April 14th, we purchased a new home and are getting settled there. The house search began last October, and the Lord finally provided just the home we needed. In fact, it is only half a mile from the church - definitely the Holy Spirit at work!

The move has provided many blessings. We are spending time with our nephew and his family, David's sister, and connecting with long-time friends in the area. In the past few months, we've taken advantage of the rich cultural life here, with trips to Baltimore, Washington D.C. and New York City. (What a joy to be traveling by car and train, instead of flying.)

Please do keep in touch and come see us when you're in the neighborhood. We have a lovely guest room waiting to welcome you. We love you all and continue to pray for Riviera Church.

Yours in Christ's service,  
David and Rosemary

You can obtain our new address by contacting Barbie in the church office.

## From Congregational Care

For those of you who are new to Riviera, I wanted to let you know about our Prayer Request emails.

Any time there is a need for prayer, an email is sent to Bonnie Hannemann ([bfah@me.com](mailto:bfah@me.com)) and she sends it out to the members of the congregation for prayer.

If you would like to receive these emails please let us know.

You can send your request to Bonnie, Barbie Prieto - [rivierachurch@gmail.com](mailto:rivierachurch@gmail.com) or Karen Collier - [kc33134@aol.com](mailto:kc33134@aol.com).

We will make sure you are added to the list.

For those of you who have been members for a while, please confirm that you are on our list by sending us an email.

Blessings,  
Karen Collier  
Congregational Care committee





# Christian Education News...

**Hybrid Adult Bible Study** Sundays at 10 am Zoom Meeting ID: 894-7650-2156 Passcode: 333227

**Children's Sunday School** at 11:15 am in person

**Women's Bible Study Class** will be on May 17 at 7:30 pm via Zoom Meeting ID: 886-2278-6373 Passcode: 757192. Contact Karen C for details

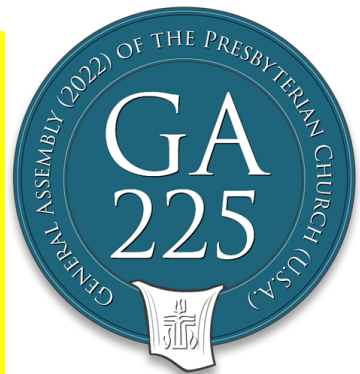
**Theology Uncorked** —May 21— Unseen Creatures - at 5:30, 4178 SW 74th Ct, Miami, FL 33155

**Spiritual Discipline Class**—May 24—7:00pm via Zoom—RSVP to Anna E. Rosas  
rivierapreschristianed@gmail.com

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY directed a study of the family. Can you help? The GA-MC-12 CHANGING FAMILIES survey is one for members of the congregation and staff alike. Go to this link and participate:

<https://surveys.pcusa.org/s3/Changing-Families-in-the-PC-USA>

This survey will remain open through May 31<sup>st</sup>.



Riviera's next beach cleanup day will be Saturday, June 10th, at 10:00 A.M. at Matheson Hammock Park. Meet at the picnic tables under the trees by the Atoll pool!

Church will provide the needed items for the cleanup.

For further information, speak with Anna.

# Session...

## Session April Bullets:

- The Session's April meeting commenced with a time for **Devotion – Vision – Discernment** with Pastor Melanie and Session Elders. Elders were encouraged to listen to a podcast before the meeting.

## Questions for reflection included:

### What did you hear in the podcasts that resonated with our congregational context?

- ◇ The honesty from real world problems, like divorce and cancer.
- ◇ There are no taboo subjects at Riviera.

### What were you inspired by?

- Individual who never gave up; persistence.
- Inspired by cancer survivor and her relationship with her mother.
- Sometimes we can't see where we are inspiring others.

### Where do we show up?

- ◇ Our member have many different outlets for advocacy.
- ◇ - We would like to do more with Trans Support
- ◇ Would like to encourage/consume new Prophetic Biblical Scholarship (Mary the Tower discovery)

Each month the Session will dedicated a large portion of their meeting to **Devotion – Vision – Discernment**.

## Reports from all Committees were received for information.

- **Congregational Care Committee:** will work on updating the prayer request email group and will work on updating the communication system.
- **Discipleship Committee:** Carol T has volunteered as a Sunday School Teacher on the 4th Sunday of each month. Riviera Game Night date to be announced. Beach clean up will be June 10th at Matheson Hammock Park at 10am.



Reminder Per Capita is \$37 per active adult member. To donate please go to our website [www.rivierachurch.org/give](http://www.rivierachurch.org/give)

# Mission News...



## The Food: Too Good to Waste Challenge

Reducing food waste in your house is a great way to save money and individually contribute to fighting climate change. Not only that, but reducing food waste helps fight community hunger. The Miami Rescue Mission, for instance, uses tons of donated excess food each year at its centers in Wynwood and Overtown. That's why the Mission Committee at RPC is sponsoring a food waste challenge. **The Food: Too Good to Waste Challenge** will help you figure out how much food is really going to waste in your home and what you can do to waste less. By making small changes in how you shop, prepare, and store food, you can save time and money, and keep the valuable resources used to produce and distribute food from going to waste!

Approximately one third of the food in the US is wasted, according to a 2010 US Dept of Agriculture survey. This amount of wasted food contains enough calories to feed more than 150 million people a year, far more than the 35 million food insecure Americans. Food waste is the single most common material landfilled and incinerated in the U.S., comprising 24 and 22 percent of landfilled and combusted municipal solid waste, respectively. Miami-Dade County is running out of landfill space; the County transports 15,000 tons of household waste a month to a landfill near Lake Okeechobee. Reducing and preventing food waste can increase food security, foster productivity and economic efficiency, promote resource and energy conservation, and address climate change.

Wasted food has other costs. The food has to be fertilized, fed, harvested or slaughtered, packaged, transported, and often refrigerated. When un-used food goes to the landfill, it emits methane, a greenhouse gas that is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Approximately 8 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions come from food waste, according to the EPA, which is more than the 5 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions contributed by the aviation industry.

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We'll supply work sheets for keeping track of food waste and we'll keep a running count of how much food we've all been saving. We'll also be sending out tips for reducing food waste every Wednesday.

Most of us don't realize how much food we throw out each year—an average of 1,000 pounds per family of four, at a cost of \$1,500! For us at RPC, this food waste challenge is a call to consider how to treat food as a precious gift from God — to be stewarded wisely, received gratefully, enjoyed in the company of others (we're very good at that!) and shared with the hungry (and good at that too!).



# One More Thing...



Thank you to our Riviera Family for your care to our family at the loss of Barbie's mother and Rey's dad.

We appreciate all the calls, texts, cards, meals and donations to the Riviera Endowment Fund in memory of Barbie's mom.

We are so blessed to have all of you in our life's.

—Rey, Barbie and Nicole

We encourage all members and friends to bring each week a small bag of rice and dry beans for the food pantry.



**Riviera Food Pantry Needs**  
**1 lb bag of rice**  
**1 bag of dry beans**