

# THE SPARK

A large, bright sparkler with many golden sparks radiating outwards, set against a dark background.

January 2024

Embodying Love - Demanding Justice - Transforming the World

*Happy*  
**NEW YEAR**  
2024

A dark blue background with swirling purple and blue patterns, accented with numerous small, bright golden stars and sparkles.

Join us for Worship at 11am  
followed by First Sunday  
Lunch on January 7

Bring a dish to share!





# MELANIE'S MESSAGE

January 2024    Embodying Love   -   Demanding Justice   -   Transforming the World

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

11:00am Sunday Worship Service

Office Hours M - R 9:30-6:30

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

Connect with us on social media  
[@RivieraChurch](#)

All The People  
Ministers

Rev. Melanie Marsh  
Pastor

[Rev.melanie.marsh@gmail.com](mailto:Rev.melanie.marsh@gmail.com)

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  
Rey Prieto  
Alejandra Rondon  
Butch Sorenson  
Kathy Stults  
Cris Sweeny  
Lisa Torchut

"Beloved Friends,

Following a Star Into the New Year - It's around this time every year, as we celebrate Jesus, Mary, and Joseph being visited by the Magi, that communities of faith hand out star words.

You may have noticed this tradition in our church or others over the past several years. Sometime in the first week or two of January, during worship, the congregation is encouraged to choose a paper star, with a word written on it. In some traditions, we're meant to close our eyes, stick our hands into the basket or pile of stars, and select one at random, letting the Universe decide what word comes our way. In others, we examine each star, looking through the words carefully, and choose one that is speaking to our spirit in the moment. However, we get our star word; the idea is that this word is meant to guide us through the year to come.

As I think about the New Year ahead, I'm reflecting on some of the words and phrases that have come to me on a star in recent years:

Adventure - the year we moved from Ohio back to Florida  
Let Go - The first year of the pandemic - what a year of letting go that was..  
Intuition - COVID year two, and life was changing so fast around us.  
Inspiration - Our first full year in Miami, and inspiration has been everywhere!

Sometimes we don't even realize how the star words we receive have shaped our lives, until we look back and realize how much we really have grown, or stretched, or learned, or read, or traveled... all because somewhere in the back of our minds, that little word was there reminding us that no matter what the year before has brought us, no matter how old, or young, or tired, or distracted we may feel, there is always more to be loved and explored in this life.

Wishing you all a beautiful start to the New Year, and I hope you will join us in worship on Sunday, January 7th, when we'll be receiving our new Star Words for 2024!

Many Blessings,  
Rev. Melanie

# CONGREGATION CARE

January 2024

Embodying Love - Demanding Justice - Transforming the World



## January Birthdays

Karen M. - 6  
Carolina F. - 18  
Melanie M. - 22  
Luke F. - 29

If we missed your birthday this year, please let us know by emailing the church office at [rivierachurch@gmail.com](mailto:rivierachurch@gmail.com)



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION-ADULTS

January 2024    Embodying Love - Demanding Justice - Transforming the World

## Bible study @ 10 am

Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study is the best way to explore the day's scripture, ask questions, and connect with new and old friends. You do not have to be a member of the church to join this small group class. We offer the class in person and via Zoom. Child care is also available.

Meeting ID: 894-7650-2156 Passcode: 333227

## Women's Study Group

"The group resumes this month, on January 17th at 7:30 pm via Zoom.


Meeting ID: 886-2278-6373 Passcode: 757192

## Theology Uncorked

Is back on Sunday, January 15 at 5:30 pm same location - Unseen Creatures.


**THEOLOGY**  
**uncorked**

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14  
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



UNSEEN CREATURES  
BREWING & BLENDING • MIAMI, FL

JOIN US AT:  
4178 SW 74TH CT, MIAMI,



RIVIERA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
@rivierachurch

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





# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION-KIDS

**January 2024**

**Embodying Love - Demanding Justice - Transforming the World**

Dear Riviera Kiddos!

I hope this note finds you all full of joy!

I wanted to share with you a little about Epiphany! Epiphany is a time when Christians remember the visit of the three Wise Men (Los 3 Reyes Magos). According to the Bible, these Wise Men followed a bright star that led them to the place where Jesus was born. They brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to honor and celebrate the birth of Jesus. Christians all over the world celebrate this day on January 6th!

One way Christians celebrate Epiphany is by blessing their homes. So I have a blessing by the Reverend Jan Richardson that you can use to bless your home on January 6th! You can read it together as a family on that day! I am going to bless my home too and then we can talk about it at our following Sunday School class!

Have a great January!

Anna



The Year as a House: A Blessing  
Think of the year as a house: door flung wide in welcome,  
threshold swept and waiting, a graced spaciousness  
opening and offering itself to you.

Let it be blessed in every room.

Let it be hallowed in every corner.

Let every nook be a refuge  
and every object set to holy use.

Let it be here that safety will rest.

Let it be here that health will make its home.

Let it be here that peace will show its face.

Let it be here that love will find its way.

Here let the weary come

let the aching come

let the lost come

let the sorrowing come.

Here let them find their rest

and let them find their soothing

and let them find their place

and let them find their delight.

And may it be in this house of a year

that the seasons will spin in beauty,

and may it be in these turning days

that time will spiral with joy.

And may it be that its rooms will fill

with ordinary grace

and light spill from every window

to welcome the stranger home.

Wherever you make your home, may it be blessed, and may you  
enter this Epiphany and the coming year in peace.

<https://www.janrichardson.com/rivi>



# FELLOWSHIP

January 2024    Embodying Love - Demanding Justice - Transforming the World

## First Sunday Lunch Sunday, January 7th.

Let's kick off the new year with a potluck lunch immediately following the worship service. Please bring a dish to share, if you are able. We are looking forward to catching up with everyone.

### THEOLOGY **uncorked**

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14  
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



JOIN US AT:

4178 SW 74TH CT, MIAMI,



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

Stay tuned for topic  
of discussion.



# S.P.F. STEWARDSHIP, FINANCE & PROPERTY

January 2024

Embodying Love - Demanding Justice - Transforming the World

## PER CAPITA 2024

Reminder: Per Capita for 2024 is \$37 per active adult member. To donate, please go to our website, [www.rivierachurch.org/give](http://www.rivierachurch.org/give) or use the blue Per Capita Envelopes located on the Welcome Area/Nathex table.

## STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN - WHY WE GIVE

Thanks to all who have submitted their pledge for 2024. It's never too late to pledge or drop your spare change in the offering plate.

The SPF (Stewardship, Property, Finance) meets every 2nd Wednesday via zoom at 5:30.

Please join us any time. Zoom link available by contacting the church office or Kathy Stults, Chair.



### DIGITAL PAYMENT



Cash App



venmo

@rivierachurch5275

# 305-666-8586

## How You Can Give



### ACH

You may set up online payment via your bank bill pay program.



### VANCO MOBILE

You may download the free Vanco app (iOS & Android)



### MAIL CHECK TO US

Riviera Presbyterian Church 5275 Sunset Drive, Miami, FL 33143

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

# WORSHIP RPC MUSIC NEWS

January 2024

Embodying Love - Demanding Justice - Transforming the World

