

THE SPARK

March 2024

Embodying Love - Demanding Justice - Transforming the World



Congregation Assessment Tool (CAT)

WE WANT TO KNOW YOUR STORY!

Riviera Presbyterian Church is moving forward with HolyCow! Consulting to help us plan our future. This is a key part of Riviera's path to calling a permanent Pastor. This first step is to conduct a congregational assessment. This assessment will provide a clear picture of who Riviera is as a church and what directions are most important for our future. The tool we'll use is the Congregation Assessment Tool (CAT) which will provide key indicators of our congregational health along with areas of challenge and potential growth. The CAT survey will help us to collect and understand the range of views that exist at Riviera Presbyterian Church and the possibilities, willingness, capacity and energy for moving our ministry into the future.

On the morning of March 3, members and friends of Riviera will receive an email with a unique web link to complete the assessment online. At our First Sunday Lunch on March 3, we'll have computers and helpers available in the Library to answer questions. The link will be available to access the survey for two weeks from Sunday, March 3 through Sunday, March 17.

Riviera's Session has been working with the Rev. Geoff McLean, Associate General Presbyter at the Presbytery of Tropical Florida on this project. Geoff works directly with congregations' ministers and leaders to grow their vibrancy. He will lead Riviera in helping interpret the data collected once the assessment is completed.



MELANIE'S MESSAGE

March 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

Connect with us on social media

@RivieraChurch

All The People
Ministers

Rev. Melanie Marsh
Pastor

Rev.melanie.marsh@gmail.com

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rivierapresmusic@gmail.com

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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,

We are in the midst of the Lenten season, and this year, our focus is on the Creative Spirit of God in the midst of the journey. We're partnering with our friends at Miami Shores Presbyterian to bring you three special creative worship experiences in our pilot worship endeavor, Creative Spirits.

Rev. Kim Robles and I have been dreaming of this project, together and in our own hearts, for a long time. We are excited to try it for the first time during Lent with all of you. The hope is not that we will all become brilliant or professional artists, musicians, performers, etc., but that each of us, in our own unique way, will develop a spiritual practice of creativity, imagination, and wonder that mirrors the infinite creativity of The Divine. This is especially important as we all navigate the waters of life in our ever-changing and rapidly evolving world. We need creativity and community more now than ever.

This season, we are starting small and simple, with three opportunities for us to worship creatively together. We hope you'll join us for one - or more! - of these worship experiences.

Wednesday, February 28, 7 pm

Taize Worship at Miami Shores Presbyterian Church Chapel

This is a contemplative service of silent meditation, scripture, prayer, and song inspired by the worship community of Taize in France. All are welcome. Feel free to bring a dessert to share.

Sunday, March 10, 3 pm

Creative Movement worship at Riviera Presbyterian Church Sanctuary

"Movement is Life, and Life is Movement."

During this time, we will connect to our spirits by moving our bodies and exploring our relationship to God in space, in ourselves, and in one another. People of all ages, body types, and experience levels are welcome, whether your movement style is gentle or bold, quick or relaxed, big or small. Worship will be held inside our church sanctuary. Wear your most comfortable clothes. Bring a friend! Shoes are optional.

Sunday, March 17, 3 pm

Poetry, Prayer, and Psalms worship at Kendall Indian Hammocks Park, Shelter 5

Join us for an afternoon of ancient and modern psalms of praise, joy, and lament in the shade of the hammocks in Kendall. Bring a picnic potluck dish and your favorite piece of poetry to share: Something you've written yourself, a psalm from the bible, or something from your favorite modern-day poet/psalmist

Many Blessings for the Lenten season,
Melanie



CONGREGATION CARE

March 2024

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Happy Birthday

Anna R - March 2

Alejandra R - March 5

Carol T - March 5

Robbie Adams - March 6

Matthew S - March 6

Lisa T - March 7

Lena B - March 9

Fabian C - March 15

Raymond K - March 23



Here at Riviera Church, we are committed to reaching out and offering tools and resources to assist people going through challenging times.

One of the roles that sometimes get overlooked is the role of a caregiver. Whether they're dealing with someone with an illness, an elderly parent or spouse, or someone with special needs, these caregivers can easily feel overwhelmed and isolated.

We are putting out feelers to see if anyone would be interested in a support group that would meet online to establish connections and provide support for each other.

If this is something you might be interested in, please contact Karen Collier at kc33134@aol.com or rivierachurch@gmail.com.

Thank you.

Karen Collier

Chair of Congregational Care

MISSION

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One Great Hour of Sharing 2024 goal is \$300

For 75 years, One Great Hour of Sharing has provided Presbyterians a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world. In a world of disaster, hunger, and oppression, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity.

The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work differently to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope. Please donate to help others. www.rivierachurch.org/give

Thank you to all who donated to the 2024 Souper Bowl of Caring #Tackle Hunger. You donated \$540.76



Stay tuned for a separate mailing detailing the work being done with the Food Pantry, LEAP and other ministries.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION-ADULTS

New Adult Education Class Coming Soon

Congregational Care Committee and Adult Christian Education Committee are joining forces to offer those interested in a grieving class.

Forged from author Kenneth C. Haugk's own experiences of suffering, the book draws on extensive research with more than 4,200 people who have experienced various kinds of suffering in their lives, offering key insights and suggestions of what to say and do—and what not to say or do—when people are hurting.

With its biblical foundation, compassionate approach, and concrete ideas, Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart will help you bring God's loving presence to hurting people when they need it most.

DATES WILL BE 4/7, 4/21, 5/5 AND 5/19 AND WE WILL BE USING THE BOOK - DON'T SING SONGS TO A HEAVY HEART BY KENNETH C. HAUGK, PH.D.

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 March 21 at 7:30 pm via Zoom.

Meeting ID: 886-2278-6373 Passcode: 757192. New members welcome.

Theology Uncorked

Sunday, March 10 at 5:00 pm at Unseen Creatures Brewing and Blending located at 4178 SW 74th Ct, Miami, 33155

FELLOW SHIP

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Join the First Sunday Potluck Lunch following worship on March 3.

The gathering is casual, and we invite you to come as you are, with or without a dish. There's always plenty of food to go around.

If you are going to donate blood, you are encouraged to eat first, then donate.

**DONATE BLOOD
LET'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

Sunday, March 3

12:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Appointments still available

Register at

oneblood.org/donate-now

use sponsor code 1738

The Florida Grand Opera staff has offered free or reduced tickets to Riviera Members and Friends to attend the last performance of the season of Songfest on March 15 at 7:30 pm in our sanctuary. If you are interested in attending, please see below the various ways to obtain tickets.

If you have friends you would like to invite - they can use promo code Riviera10 for \$10 a ticket. Call the FGO Ticket Office at (800) 741-1010 or email sales@fgo.org to reserve tickets.

OR

They can bring three canned items for the Riviera Food Pantry per person and get a free ticket per person. Donations to the food pantry must be made before the event - names are needed ahead of time to reserve the tickets. Deadline: March 13. Contact the church office to add names to the list: rivierachurch@gmail.com.

I have included information on the program below. Broadway Musicals Without Microphones revisits the Golden Age of Broadway when stars belted their best without using microphones. Featuring classics like "The Impossible Dream" from Man of La Mancha and "I'm in Love with a Wonderful Guy" from South Pacific, the Florida Grand Opera Studio Artists will serenade with classic Broadway songs and scenes as they were intended to be heard—unamplified, unaugmented, and unbelievable.

Please tell your friends and family. It will be nice to fill up the sanctuary.

S.P.F. STEWARDSHIP, FINANCE & PROPERTY

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In February, we started progress on our 10-year Miami-Dade County re-certification for the building, which should be completed by mid-April.

Many thanks to Diana Florez for organizing the many tasks of repairs needed all over the property and finding the right people to do it!!

Also, thanks to Butch, John, Rey, and all those who have helped with time and talents in painting, etc.

One thing more: it's still not too late to submit your stewardship pledge for this year's budget. Our goal is 100% participation, and we always appreciate any donations throughout the year.

It has been a long time coming, but Monday, February 12, was the Groundbreaking Ceremony for Coral Gables Fire House 4. Pastor Melanie did the Invocation. We are looking forward to welcoming our new neighbors.





WORSHIP & MARKETING


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As we prepare our hearts and minds in a time of reflection this Season of Lent, we invite all of you to join us in worship on Sunday, March 3, 2024 at 11 am for our Lenten Cantata On the Passion of Christ by David H. Williams.

This beautiful and stirring musical rendition of Christ's Passion is in three parts, The Last Supper, The Betrayal, and The Crucifixion. Musically it spans the gamut from majestic to haunting to sombre, but most of all allows the listener to truly reflect on the sacrifice God made for us.

Arranged for mixed voices with Soprano, Tenor and Baritone Solos, the work will feature some of RPC's best choral voices and will be sure to bring you closer to God through the gift of music.

On behalf of the RPC Music Ministry Team, we thank you for your support and look forward to seeing you there.



**We look forward to seeing you during Holy Week:
Palm Sunday, March 24 – Worship at 11:00 am**

**Maundy Thursday, March 28 - Meal at 6:30 pm,
Tenebrae Service with Communion at 7:00 pm.**

**Good Friday, March 29, at 12:00 noon at
Coral Gables United Church of Christ.**

**Easter Sunday, March 31st - Worship at 11:00 am.
We invite families of all ages to join us for an Easter Egg Hunt
immediately following worship in our courtyard!**