

THE SPARK

April 2026 Embodying Love - Demanding Justice - Transforming the World

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

9:00am Sunday Worship Service
Office Hours M - R 9:30-5:30 pm
www.rivierachurch.org
Connect with us on social media
@RivieraChurch

All The People
Ministers

Rev. Kim Robles
Temporary Bridge Pastor
pastor@ppcusa.org

Dr. Walter Busse
Director of Music
rivierapresmusic@gmail.com

Emma Cottrell
Faith Formation & Outreach Director
rivierapresfaithformation@gmail.com

Barbara Prieto, CCA
Certified Church Administrator
rivierachurch@gmail.com

Clerk of Session
Kathy Stults

Session Members
Gerardo Avitia
Kyle Dettloff
Laura Fothergill
Angela Galbreath
Amparo Hernandez
Michele Ready
Cris Sweeny
Carol Thompson



Easter Sunday
April 5th
Worship Service at 9AM
— Followed by an —
Easter Egg Hunt & Fellowship Time

Riviera invites you to bring an object
that represents something GOOD or THE
GOOD NEWS to you

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION-FAITH FORMATION & FELLOWSHIP

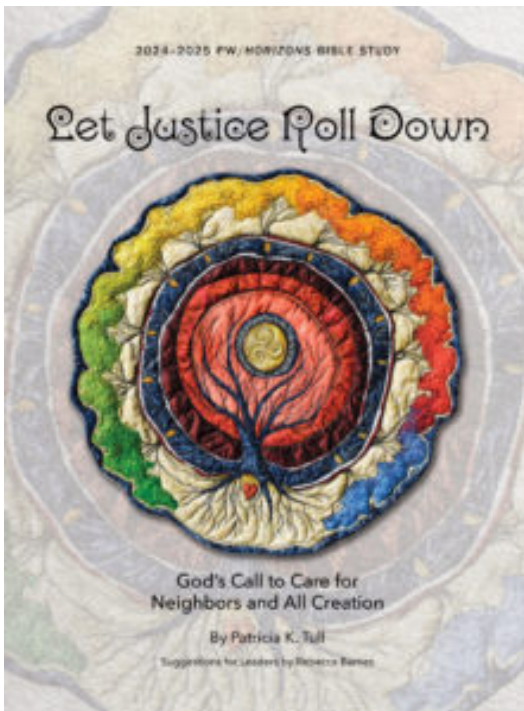


Hi friends!

One of my favorite days of the week is Wednesday, because that is storytime day! It has been such a blessing to hang out with our friends from the CCC and share stories about love, kindness, gratitude, and sometimes just silly ones! We have recently read stories like “I Am Love” by Susan Verde, “Thank You, Day!” by Charlie Hopper, “The Book With No Pictures” by B.J. Novak, and “It’s Not Easy Being A Leprechaun” by Marilyn Sadler. In addition to loving books, the kids and I have learned we have a shared love of stickers! If you are interested in spending your Wednesday morning reading, smiling, and giggling with our preschool friends, please email me at rivierapresfaithformation@gmail.com. We would love to have you pick a Wednesday to join our group!

This is also a friendly reminder that we have an awesome library full of books for all ages! We hope you will check it out on a Sunday morning and find something enjoyable to read for yourself or your family!

In Peace,
Emma Cottrell



Riviera’s Women’s Study Group is truly enjoying the 2026 Presbyterian Women’s study, God’s Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation. The conversations have been thoughtful, engaging, and full of meaningful connections. If you are interested in joining this group, we would love to welcome you.

Please reach out to Karen Collier (kc33134@aol.com) for more information. The group meets via Zoom on the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm.



Sunday, April 12, at 5:30pm

THEOLOGY
uncorked
Conversations for Inquiring Minds

Join the conversation at
Berries in the Grove
2884 SW 27 AVE

This April at Theology Uncorked, we're leaning into a question many of us carry:

What do we do with troubling texts in the Bible?

Rather than avoiding the hard passages, we'll make space to wrestle with them together—with honesty, curiosity, and openness. Bring your questions, your perspectives, and even your doubts. There's room for every voice as we explore what these texts mean for our faith today.

Zoom Information

Meeting ID: 894-7650-2156

Passcode: 333227

SUNDAY MORNING

HYBRID BIBLE STUDY @ 10:15 AM

FELLOWSHIP



Holy Grounds on Easter Sunday – Bring a Favorite Treat to Share

On Easter Sunday, our Holy Grounds Refreshment Time takes on a slightly festive touch. As our children enjoy the Easter egg hunt, we invite the congregation to linger, visit, and celebrate together.

If you are able, please consider bringing a favorite snack to share—perhaps something a bit special for the occasion. Sweet or savory, homemade or store-bought, all are welcome. These shared treats help create a warm and joyful time of fellowship as we celebrate the morning together.

Thank you for helping make this Easter tradition both welcoming and delicious.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE



The Congregational Care Committee is dedicated to providing care, support, and prayer for individuals and families in all stages and circumstances of life. Rooted in a spirit of community and service, this ministry fosters meaningful connections and ensures that no one walks alone. Through thoughtful systems of support, we seek to nurture, encourage, and care for every generation of our church family—coming together as siblings in Christ to love our neighbors as ourselves.

If you have a concern, need support, or would like someone to pray with you, please reach out to Karen (kc33134@aol.com) or Bonnie (bfah@me.com).

LIVING OUR MISSION .. HUNGER



On Monday, March 16, Emma and Ellen visited Frances Tucker Elementary to share a small but meaningful act of care. Together, they distributed 20 Aldi gift cards (valued at \$25 each) to children who were identified as being from food-insecure families.

Because of your generosity, these students and their families had extra support heading into Spring Break—a time when access to regular school meals can be uncertain.

Thank you to everyone who gave, supported, and helped make this outreach possible. Your compassion continues to make a real difference in the lives of our neighbors.



As we enter Holy Week, we find ourselves in the final stretch of our One Great Hour of Sharing offering.


Our goal is \$1,000, and so far, we have received \$300. While the original conclusion was Easter Sunday, we will be extending the offering through the end of April in hopes that, together, we can reach our goal.

This offering supports ministries that make a real difference—responding to disasters, creating access to safe and sustainable housing, advocating for fair labor practices, and offering hope to communities facing hardship both near and far.

If each of member and friend contributes \$20, we can meet—and even surpass—our goal.

As you pass by the net in the Narthex, still waiting to be filled, consider how your gift can help carry this effort forward. Each fish added is a reminder that what we do together has real impact.

There is still time. Let's continue the work. Let's fill the net. Thank you for your generosity and your commitment to sharing God's love in tangible ways.



How You Can Give

- PEW ENVELOPE**
You may place your donation in the pew envelope, don't forget to write your name & address www.rivierachurch.org
- 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

LIVING OUR MISSION ... EARTH CARE



PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM *certifies*

Riviera Presbyterian Church

as an

EARTH CARE CONGREGATION

on this

15th+ year of certification

for its outstanding environmental stewardship achievements in worship, education, facilities and outreach in the life of the church.

Through February, 2027

Signature *Jessica Mandolin* Date 3/13/2026
Associate for Sustainable Living and Earth Care Concerns

Riviera Presbyterian Church has been recognized as an Earth Care Congregation by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through February 2027, continuing a commitment it has upheld since 2011.

This certification reflects Riviera's ongoing dedication to caring for God's creation through all areas of church life—worship, education, facilities, and community outreach. The Earth Care Congregation program highlights churches that actively live out this calling, integrating environmental stewardship into both their ministry and daily practices.

Riviera's long-standing participation demonstrates a deep, sustained commitment to environmental care, shaping both the congregation's culture and its impact in the wider community.

LIVING OUR MISSION...LEAP

Riviera Presbyterian Church

EASTERTIDE DRIVE

As we celebrate the gift of new life, help women in our community with a new start! To support our friends at LEAP, we will be collecting the following items:

- Full-size shampoo, conditioner, and body wash
- Loofahs and washcloths
- Full-size lotion
- Hair ties and brushes
- Full-size deodorant
- Toothbrushes and toothpaste
- Pads and Tampons
- Body wipes and baby wipes
- Sunscreen
- Hand sanitizer
- Bras, socks, and underwear (S/M/L/XL)



LIVING OUR MISSION...LEAP



This March, two women entered transitional housing at LEAP.

Thanks to your support, each received a \$50 Target gift card to help them take their first steps forward with dignity and care.

LIVING OUR MISSION...OPENING OUR DOORS



Let us introduce you to Miami Sound Space Threshold Singers.

For the past several years, this nonprofit group has been gathering weekly here at Riviera, quietly carrying out a ministry of compassion through music. As part of the Threshold Singers network, they offer gentle, bedside singing for those nearing the end of life—bringing comfort, peace, and a sense of presence through simple, heartfelt harmonies.

While much of their work happens beyond our walls, their connection to Riviera is an important part of their story. The space we provide becomes a place where their songs are practiced, their community is nurtured, and their ministry is sustained.

It is a meaningful reminder that being part of Riviera extends beyond what we experience ourselves. Through your support of this church, you help make room for ministries like this to exist and flourish—reaching into our wider community with care, dignity, and love.

In ways both seen and unseen, your presence here helps carry peace into the lives of others.

March 11, 2026

Dear Members of Session and RPC Members,

I would like to share a brief reflection after attending the YES Institute 30th Anniversary Gala on February 28 at their kind invitation.

Throughout the evening, as I mingled with guests and introduced myself as the Church Administrator at Riviera Presbyterian Church, I was met with an outpouring of appreciation and admiration for Riviera. Many people spoke warmly about the openness and acceptance our church has shown toward the LGBTQIA+ community over the years. It was clear that Riviera's commitment to inclusion has reached far beyond our walls.

There were approximately 175 people in attendance, and many were familiar with Riviera's history of opening its doors to the idea of Project YES in 1996. Both founders of the YES Institute, Connie Barden (a former Riviera member who now lives in California) and Martha Fugate, took time to speak with me personally. They shared how deeply grateful they remain for Riviera's willingness, all those years ago, to step forward and embrace the vision of Project YES when it was just beginning.

Hearing these reflections was a meaningful reminder that the impact of Riviera's ministry extends well beyond those who gather in the pews on Sunday morning. Through the partnerships and ministries that have grown here, our congregation has helped create spaces of belonging, support, and hope for many people in our wider community.

I hope this serves as encouragement to the Session that Riviera Presbyterian Church's faithfulness continues to make a difference in the lives of others in ways we may not always see.

Peace and Gratitude,
Barbara Prieto
Church Administrator



Congratulations to the YES Institute
on the Occasion of Its 30th Anniversary!

With gratitude and admiration, Riviera Presbyterian Church celebrates 30 years of the YES Institute's compassionate leadership—creating understanding, preventing harm, and transforming our community through education, courage, and love.



5275 Sunset Drive, Coral Gables FL 33143 • Tel. 305-666-8586



Opening Our Doors to the Community

Riviera's Fellowship Hall and The Spirit Center recently came alive with creativity, confidence, and a touch of theatrical flair as local Girl Scouts partnered with the Young Patronesses of the Opera for a unique, arts-centered experience.

Through this collaboration, the girls were introduced to the world of opera—sorry, Timothy Chalamet, but this was live performance at its finest. They enjoyed engaging productions of *Daisy*, a piece honoring the founder of the Girl Scouts, and a lively rendition of *Little Red Riding Hood*, each bringing storytelling, music, and imagination together in memorable ways.

Beyond the performances, the program created space for the girls to grow in confidence and self-expression. Through interactive activities designed to build self-esteem and encourage a positive mindset, participants were invited not just to watch, but to discover their own voices.

It was a joyful reminder that when community partnerships and the arts come together, they create something powerful—an environment where young people can explore, connect, and flourish.



LIVING OUR MISSION...COMMUNITY NEWS

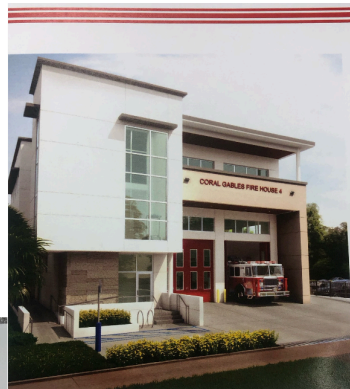
A New Chapter: Firehouse #4 at Riviera

Several months before the pandemic, the City of Coral Gables approached Riviera with a thoughtful request: the possibility of purchasing a portion of our parking lot to build a new firehouse that would help reduce emergency response times in the South Miami/Coral Gables area.

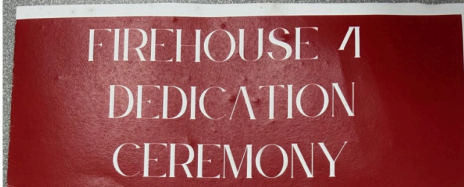
After prayerful discernment, Riviera's Session embraced the opportunity to support the well-being of our wider community. Rev. Missy Shiverick, along with Session members Barbara Overton, Karen Picciano, and Michele Ready, were entrusted to begin negotiations during the early days of the pandemic—a season that also included the closing of the sale of property in Michele's backyard.

On February 12, 2024, we gathered for the groundbreaking ceremony, marking the beginning of this new partnership. Most recently, on March 27, 2026, Riviera members and staff, along with CCC staff, came together again to witness the dedication of the completed Firehouse #4. Bridge Pastor Kim Robles offered the invocation, grounding the moment in gratitude and hope.

We celebrate this shared commitment and look forward to partnering with the crews of Firehouse #4 in ways that serve, protect, and strengthen the well-being of our entire community.



**Welcome to
the
neighborhood
Firehouse #4**



COME ONE, COME ALL

**CHILD CARE CENTER'S
3RD ANNUAL SPRING
CARNIVAL**

April 24, 2026 | 4 PM to 8 PM

ENJOY BOUNCE HOUSES, FACE PAINTING,
FOOD, MUSIC, AND MORE!

**\$25 PER PERSON (INCLUDES 4 RED TICKETS,
1 BLUE TICKET, AND FACE PAINTING)**

***RED TICKETS ARE REDEEMABLE FOR
EITHER A DRINK, POPCORN, COTTON
CANDY, OR SNOW CONE**

***BLUE TICKETS ARE REDEEMABLE FOR A
HOT DOG OR SLICE OF PIZZA**

ALL ACTIVITIES FREE WITH ADMISSION



PRICING AND BUNDLES

\$25 BUNDLE INCLUDES:
ADMISSION
4 RED TICKETS
1 BLUE TICKET
FACE PAINTING

**\$1 RED TICKET (REDEEMABLE FOR
DRINK, COTTON CANDY, POPCORN,
OR SNOW CONE)**

**\$3 BLUE TICKET (REDEEMABLE FOR
ONE HOT DOG OR SLICE OF PIZZA)**



The Child Care Center at RPC invites Riviera members to attend the annual Spring Carnival.

THE CHILD CARE CENTER PRESENTS



Spring Carnival

Please join us on Friday, April 24th from 4 - 8pm in the courtyard

Event Tickets

\$25 Bundle - Admission, 4 Red Tickets, 1 Blue Ticket, and Face Painting

\$1 Red Ticket (Redeemable for drink, cotton candy, popcorn, or snow cone)

\$3 Blue Ticket (Redeemable for one hot dog or a slice of pizza)

If you are not able to attend, please consider sponsoring an attraction or making a donation

Name of Child	
Number of Bundles	
Number of Additional \$1 Red Ticket	
Number of Additional \$3 Blue Ticket	
Sponsorship/Donation	
Total	

- Charge my credit card on file**
- Attached is a check**
- Cash**

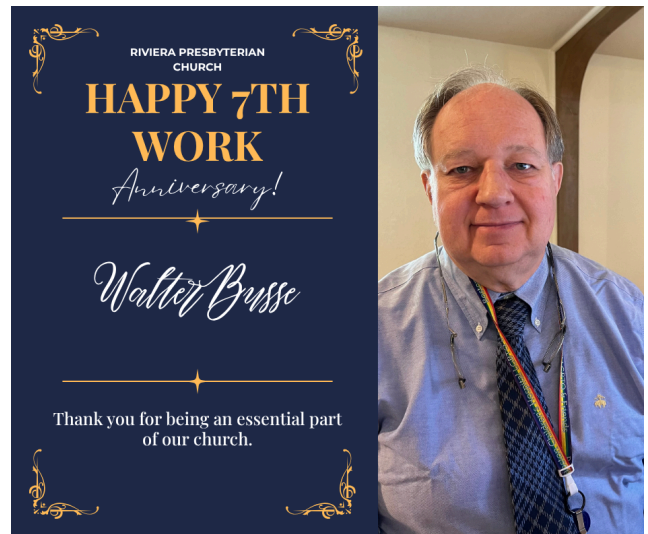
If you have any questions please email them to childcarecenter@bellsouth.net

SESSION

The Session would like to share with the congregation that, after lengthy and deliberate debate and discernment, the difficult decision was made to reduce staffing hours so that our church staff is right-sized for the needs of our current congregation and Sunday worship attendance. This decision was made prayerfully by the entire Session, together with our pastor, and with the support and guidance of Presbytery leadership.

We love and deeply appreciate our staff and the remarkable dedication they bring to their ministries and responsibilities within the church. We are especially grateful for the grace, openness, and understanding they have shown in accepting the realities of the church's current season. It is our sincere hope that they will remain in their roles and continue to bless this church for many years to come. With gratitude, the Personnel Committee and Session thank our staff for their faithful service.

SPF - STEWARDSHIP, PROPERTY, FINANCE



Committee News:

- With gratitude to Rey for guiding and overseeing the installation of new and updated lighting and electrical improvements throughout the church.
- If you are interested in joining this committee, our meetings are on the 2nd Monday of the month at 6:30 pm via Zoom – contact Kathy if you are interested kstultspt@mac.com

WORSHIP

Good Friday at High Noon

Up to Golgotha: Where Love Does Not Turn Away

New Covenant Presbyterian Church invites our neighbors in faith, the members and friends of Rivera Presbyterian Church, to join us for a contemplative Good Friday service as we journey from the mountain to Golgotha and remember the love of Christ that does not turn away.

- Three Movements • Three Reflections • Prayer & Silence

Friday, April 3, 2026 • 12:00 Noon

New Covenant Presbyterian Church
4300 NW 12th Ave, Miami, FL 33127

Come and keep watch with Christ with us at noon on Good Friday.

Easter Sunday

April 5th

Worship Service at 9AM

— Followed by an —

Easter Egg Hunt
& Fellowship Time

Riviera invites you to bring an object that represents something GOOD or THE GOOD NEWS to you.