

Lifeline.
Heartbeat. Pulse.

Riverside Reporter

May 2021

These things bring us to the core of who we are and the rhythm that gives us life.

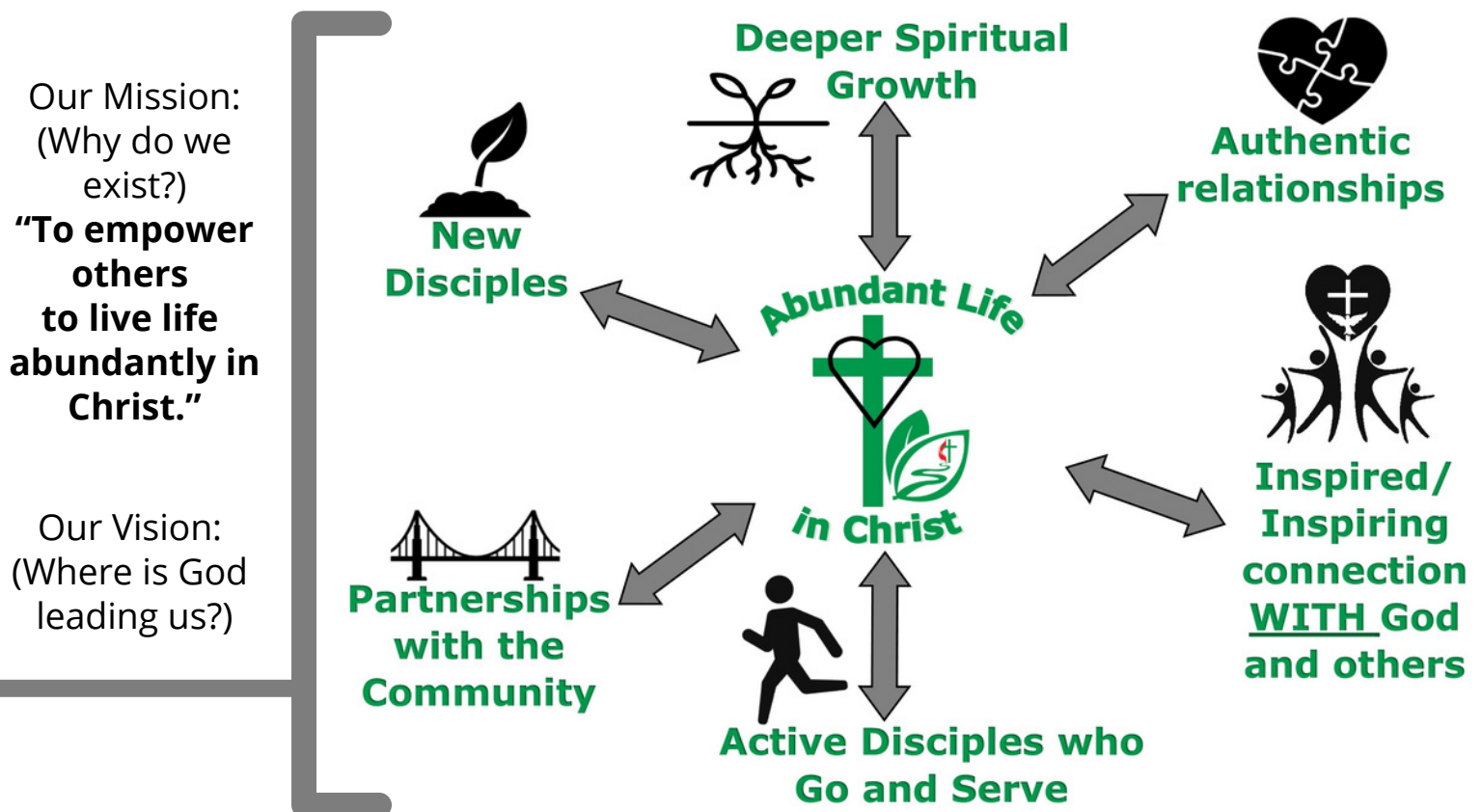
A heartbeat gives flow to the whole system—sending new, fresh, waves out to organs that are already at work and calling back the streams of life that have been away (and, thus, need to be revitalized and refreshed).



This “lifeline” sermon series has been calling me back to the core—the core of who I am as a person, a pastor, and the core of who we are as Riverside Park UMC. As always, I want to be faithful to where God is calling us to grow and focused in the things we do (and especially why we do them). We gather for worship so that we connect to God and one another. We read Scripture so that we can grow deeper in faith.

You’ll notice that articles in this newsletter will connect with pieces of our church vision (shown below). With every precious way that we use energy and resources, I want to keep coming back to why we do things: to connect to abundant life in Christ.

My prayer is that each person, each group, each mission would know the ebb and flow of the Holy Spirit who speaks through scripture to send us out and call us back—for the purpose of life abundant in Christ. May it be so for this season and the future. ♥

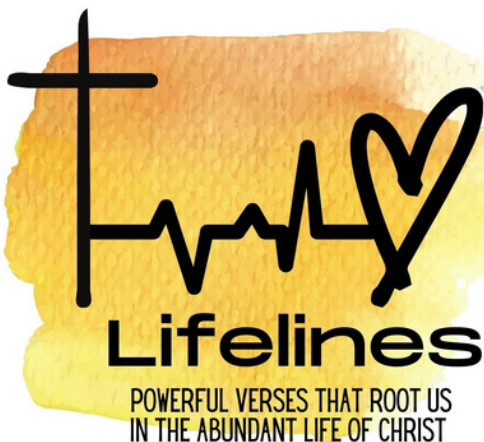




**Inspired
Connection**
(WITH God & others)

Special Sunday Services in May.

- **May 2nd:** Communion (*Have your bread and juice ready at home or contact the church office to pick some up*)
- **May 9th:** Mother's Day (join us as we honor all women)
- **May 16th:** Graduate & Senior Sunday
- **If you know of a graduate who is connected to RPUMC, we want to celebrate this milestone with them! Email Joye at j.hampton@riversideparkumc.com**
- **May 23rd:** Pentecost & Confirmation Sunday (Wear fiery colors to celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit and join us as we bless and confirm the 2021 Confirmation Class and renew our commitment to Christ)
- **May 30th:** 5th Sunday Children's Home Offering



***Current Sermon Series: LifeLines
powerful verses that root us in
the abundant life of Christ
(see the scripture-a-day challenge
for more life verses)***

***Wear FIERY colors on Pentecost
Sunday! May 23rd 2020***



Meanwhile, during worship online...

Bill Graessle has participated in online worship (where the Holy Spirit is also at work in unique ways). One Sunday, *as he was listening to music which spoke about stars* he looked down and noticed this in his breakfast:



Have YOU experienced a unique worship moment outside of the sanctuary? Share your story! Email pastoremily@riversideparkumc.com

"My Epiphany" by Joe DiSalvo

(pictured here with his grandson, Isaac aka 'Ike')



It was mid-June 2005, and I was the commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. My Brigade's nickname was the "Spartan Brigade" and our motto was "Send Me," based on Isaiah 6:8 (*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send Me!"*).

We were deployed to East Baghdad, Iraq where during Saddam's reign, over 2.2 million Shiites living in slum like conditions were discriminated against by the minority Sunnis who were in power. Our area of responsibility included cities like Sadr City, a 4 mile by 4-mile urban block that was crammed with 1.2 million people living in squalid conditions that made the environment ripe for anti-US violence. The Brigade was 5 months into a 12- month combat tour.

My Brigade was going through a rough patch, we had lost seven Soldiers and one civilian over a 2-week span. Homicide attacks (I refuse to call them "suicide attacks" because that implies the individual only intended to kill himself) were starting to spike, where innocent adults and children were being killed). As a commander, you must ensure your Soldiers stay mission focused and maintain trust and confidence that the commander (me) is doing everything possible to minimize casualties and successfully accomplish the mission especially during rough patches. This is a challenging burden that is all part of being in charge.

Our Brigade Chaplain always made sure I had a "Our Daily Bread" booklet on hand (each booklet covered a 3- month period of daily readings that contained a Bible reading with a brief one-page narrative, and always ended in a brief salutation comprised of a one sentence quote). I read these daily passages every morning before my morning command update.

On June 14th I was feeling a little overwhelmed with the rough patch we were going through and the timing could not have been better--- the reading revolved around Joshua 1:5 "I will not leave you nor forsake you." The accompanying narrative explained basically how it's perfectly ok to ask for God's help and God is here to share and assume our burdens. This daily reading ended with the quote "The Christian finds safety not in the absence of danger but in the presence of God." I know this may sound a little over the top, but I immediately had a tremendous feeling of relief combined with renewed faith and energy. This renewed faith and energy propelled me throughout the rest of the combat tour.

The power of faith and the ability to ask for and get God's help is amazing. Best of all it is there for our taking; all we must do is ask.

Eight years later I went to see my parents, where my Mother was dying of cancer. Behind the main sanctuary of the church my parents attended was a 4-foot statue of Mary. My Dad told me he and my Mother would stop by and pray after going to the daily service. This statue was engraved with the quote "Be strong be courageous, do not be afraid. For the Lord our God will always be with you, he will neither fail you nor forsake you." I immediately thought of Joshua 1:5, and surmised my parents were staying strong and persevering because they had the wisdom and faith "to ask."

I'm pretty sure there will be more rough patches ahead in my life, but I thank God for having the presence of mind to "ask."



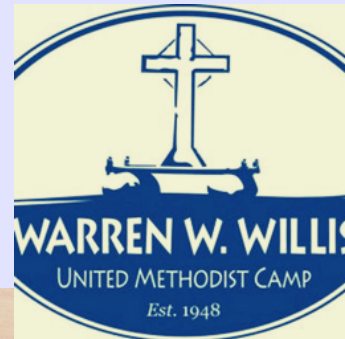
KIDS' ZOOM GAME NIGHT

May 16th & 23rd @ 6:30 pm

EMAIL MS. DAKOTA FOR THE LINK:
DAKOTA.STORMLEWIS@GMAIL.COM

This month, we will gather a 'Family Discipleship Dream Team' to finish mapping our big picture vision for RPUMC family ministry. If you are passionate about this project and want to take part, email Dakota.stormlewis@gmail.com

Summer dates and gatherings are coming soon for all ages (including VBS) but if you plan to send your student to Warren Willis Camp this summer, we recommend the week of July 19-24. Your student can register for any week of summer camp, but Pastor Emily will be there July 19-24. Let us know if you feel limited by funds or transportation.



THANK YOU, KATHI!

Dear RPUMC Family,

I wanted to let you know that I have resigned from the position of Minister of Family Discipleship.

I have enjoyed my time serving at the church. From having the opportunity to mentor an intern, to creating a Family Ministry Team, to building relationships with church members, leading a High School small group, supporting RiverKids and giving the Children's Message, I have learned how highly I value working in community and the transformational power of relationships.

I need to create the space in my life to pursue different skills and gifts. I am currently taking two classes, Introductory to Wisdom School through Center for Action and Contemplation and Faith 4 Justice Community of Praxis through Faith 4 Justice Asheville. I want to continue my professional training and I am exploring the options of becoming a Spiritual Director or Life Coach.

Thank you for the ways you have cared for my family and me over the past six months. I have enjoyed the relationships I have developed while being a part of this church family. I have included my personal information below. I would like to stay in touch.

Thank you for being vulnerable and creating the space for us to walk alongside each other for a season. I look forward to hearing, seeing and experiencing what will unfold next, in all of our lives.



Grace,
Kathi Vodenicker



Scripture-A-Day for May



Daily "life verses" from folks at
RPUMC—Scriptures that root us
in the abundant life of Christ

1. **2 Timothy 1:7** (Larry Figart) *Don't fret. God is still in control.*
2. **Philippians 4:13** (Andre V. & Jennie Bibb & Tammi Crowell)
3. **Psalm 46:10** (Julie Pickren: *It is my bedtime mantra when I can't rest* (Sharon Joos: *When I had cancer, I would say it over and over. I still say it today when I need comfort.*)
4. **Micah 6:8** (Terri Lee: *It strikes me how simple the 'rules of order' really are. We've been told the stories, shown what is good, and we have been given guidelines which have been reduced to their simplest form. Love. Period.*)
5. **Lamentations 3:22-23** (Lara Manalo: *We get to start fresh every morning*)
6. **Matthew 6:34-36** (Maegan Alvarado & Caroline Jennings: *Stop worrying. Trust. I need that reminder quite often.*)
7. **Isaiah 40:30-31** (Beth Joyner: *No matter the circumstance, God is there.*)
8. **2 Corinthians 3:18** (Kevin Round: *It has a mystical element--I picture someone looking at a mirror and seeing Christ.*)
9. **Hebrews 12:1** (Tami Crowell)
10. **Colossians 3:12** (Joye Hampton)
11. **Joshua 1:5** (Joe DiSalvo -see full devotional in the church newsletter)
12. **Psalm 104:33.** (Mark Matthews: *That's it. Sing. That's my verse.*)
13. **John 10:27-28** (Frank Leese)
14. **Hebrews 12:11** (Kaitlyn F.)
15. **2 Corinthians 9:7** (Kevin Crowell: *I have to give with the right frame of heart (whether it's time or service—not just gifts). God's work isn't a chore when it's a purposeful calling.*)
16. **Jeremiah 29:11** (Christine Grady, Lara Manalo: *In the midst of life's craziness and setbacks, God has good plans for us; Kim Renne: I adopted this verse when I was diagnosed with cancer at 33*)
17. **Psalms 4:4** (Cynthia Round: *Definitely something I need to learn*)
18. **Romans 8:28** (Britt Scott)
19. **John 10:7-11** (especially verse 10) RPUMC's Life-verse for all our missions: "life abundant in Christ"
20. **Proverbs 3:5** (Frances Matthews: *difficult times can help build trust in God*)
21. **Ephesians 3:20** (Denise Brennan: *Just love this verse. God IS able.*)
22. **Philippians 4:6-7** (Tami Crowell) *Pentecost Sunday*
23. ***Acts 2:46-47*** (Life-verse for early church missions)
24. **Romans 8:38-39** (Kaitlyn F)
25. **1 Corinthians 12:4-11** (Matthew Hemphill) "I find it comforting to know that I don't have to be perfect at everything (because different people are good at different things)."
26. **Isaiah 6:8** (Pastor Emily's call to ministry verse and Joe DiSalvo's brigade motto)
27. **Colossians 3:23** (Tre Devine: *This was the first verse I ever memorized.*)
28. **John 3:16** (Terry Williamson)
29. **Psalms 139:14** (Maddie Knight: *Whenever we read this verse, she lifts her hands and says "Praise!"*)
30. **Joshua 1:9** (Leigh DiSalvo: *during the uncertainty of deployments, this verse has been a comfort*)
31. **Philippians 1:21** (Luke Renne)



Active Disciples Who Go and Serve



Memory Box Assembly Day was Saturday, April 17, 2021. We had a successful day and were able to make 170 memory boxes. Several community members attended. Susan Hatcher from a crochet group, "Playing HOOKie", donated blankets. Journals were also donated from Malachi's Miracle Foundation. Several moms in attendance received memory boxes from us in the past, they shared what the saved memories meant to their families. We closed with a prayer of blessing around the memory boxes. I felt very moved by the prayer that a mom of loss gave. Margaret's Memories helps people in ways we will never truly know the depths of—God's hand is at work here!

For more information email Nicole at margaretsmemories@hotmail.com or call the church office at 904-355-5491. You can also visit us on the web at www.margaretsmemories.org and "like" us on Facebook!

Thank you to everyone who makes this mission possible through your service, time, talents, and PRAYERS. **Together we are Saving Memories One Footprint AT A Time...**

Nicole Remo



170
MEMORY
BOXES



**Help Family
Promise to end
homelessness
one family at a
time**

**There's nothing like
a great meal with
family and friends!**



How it works

For your \$50 donation, you will receive a \$25 gift card either to the Metro Diner or to The Loop.

The choice is yours! Both have multiple locations in Jacksonville and in the Southeast.

Ends June 13, 2021

***Great Gift
Idea***

- *Mother's Day*
- *Father's Day*
- *Graduation*
- *Summer Fun!*



Women's Gathering: Saturday, May 22nd 10am in the Courtyard

The **Racial Justice Group's** next meeting is July 18th at 3 p.m. Beth Joyner, our delegate to the Florida Conference, will present information from the following workshops offered at the Annual Conference in June: *Justice, Reconciliation and Me*, *Embrace the Journey*, and *Racial Wealth Gap*.

In the meantime, here are some of the books members are reading:

- How to be an Anti Racist by Ibram Kendi
- Jesus and John Wayne by Kristen Kobe du Mez
- BlackOut by Candace Owens

Contact Linda Labell (LSLABELL@yahoo.com) for more information or to share any worthwhile books that *you* are reading.

The **College Age and Young Adults group (ages 18-35)** will be meeting this summer to serve and socialize (socially distant/in-person). Activities will include Wednesday Night Dinners (5/12, 6/9, 7/14, 8/11), Brunch picnic on May 16th, park cleanup with picnic, campfire social, and a pool/beach day. Details will be announced soon. Contact Kaitlyn.Fuller@outlook.com or (352) 484-8087.

The **Becomers class** is meeting on Sundays between services. Join them in the Fellowship Hall or online. Contact Mark Mathews: mamathews10@gmail.com

Women's Group- On Saturday mornings, a women's group meets online for a book study. Contact Tami Crowell for more information at tcrwll@comcast.net

The **Covenant class** meets in-person in room 204 on Sundays between services. Contact Kevin Crowell for more information at kevin.f.crowell@gsk.com

Spiritual Growth Group: Celebrate and lift one another in prayer. Every/other Saturday morning @ 9:30am during via zoom. Contact Pastor Emily: pastoremily@riversideparkumc.com

New Members Class: Coming soon. Contact Pastor Emily for more information.

FIFTH SUNDAY OFFERING MAY 30th



- 1st Darren Nettles
Maisie Remo
- 4th Emily Murphy
- 5th Brian Hough
- 6th Kyle Neufeld
- 10th Judy Marks
- 12th Tony Quails
- 14th Kevin Round
- 17th Michael Hodgkin
- 19th Tommy Cashman
Rachel Murray
- 20th Susan Bush
Hudson Gunby
- 21st Quinton Scott
- 22nd David Hannah
- 23rd Debra Whitaker
- 29th Brian Alvarado
Earl Carlson
Brooke Lawrence
Matthew Popp
- 30th Mike Litwin
Anthony Owens

Meetings in May:

- Circle of Hope (Zoom)
Tuesday, May 4 @ 7:00 pm
- Finance/SPR Committee (Zoom)
Tuesday, May 11 @ 6:00 pm
- Board of Trustees (Zoom & In-Person)
Monday, May 17 @ 6:00 pm
- Church Council (Zoom)
Tuesday, May 18 @ 6:00 pm

Stewardship & Generosity

Give your gifts and tithes online:
Set up one-time or recurring giving through your bank's
bill pay service. Or visit <https://tinyurl.com/RP-Give>

Give your gifts and tithes by check:
you can bring or mail them to
Riverside Park UMC
819 Park St. Jacksonville, FL 32204

Operating Fund Year-to-Date as of 3/31/2021

	Actual	Budget
Contributions	\$69,747	\$85,511
Expenses	\$101,511	\$121,132
Deficit/Surplus	- \$31,763	- \$32,620

May God's love surround...

Home

- † Betty Nolen
- † Emory Cook
- † Shirley Early
- † Jo Herron
- † Steven & Theresa Jarvis
- † Geneva Rentz
- † Connie Skinner
- † Jim Todd

Army Boot Camp

- † Kevin Jensen

College Students

- Sandy Allen
- Isabella Array
- Taylor Bohannon
- Tommy Cashman
- Topher Cogburn
- Tre Devine
- Hogan Litwin
- Kyle Litwin
- Allison Matthews
- Emily Merton
- Kaden Neufeld
- Kyle Neufeld
- Matthew Popp
- Dallas Renne
- Kylie Rodriguez
- Dakota Storm-Lewis

Riverside Connections



**Active Disciples
Who Go and Serve**

What are your gifts to share?

SUNDAY MORNING

READER/LITURGIST

Lend your voice!
Read scripture and other
pieces for Sunday worship.
Could be recorded from home

Sundays (occasional)

DURING THE WEEK

NEWSLETTER HELP

Lend a hand!
Fold and place labels on
the monthly newsletter

Once a month

OCCASIONAL OR ONE-TIME

WOMEN'S GATHERING HOST

Lend your dishes!
Set a table or bring a
snack to the women's
gathering this month.

Saturday, May 22

TECH TEAM

Connect folks to the
words of worship.
Britt will train you.

once a month

OFFICE VOLUNTEER

Answer phones, greet
visitors, help with
administrative tasks.

once a week (or less)

HAUL PINE STRAW

We need someone with a
truck to pick up and
deliver pine straw for the
church garden beds.

once or twice a year

GREET/HOSPITALITY TEAM

Help people feel welcome in
worship. Stand by the
welcome table and offer
warm presence.

once a month

WEDNESDAY DINNERS

Feed God's sheep.
Several positions available
(boxer, runner, greeter, deliver)

**Wednesdays ~5-6:30pm
once a month**

SHARE YOUR STORY!

Encourage others by
sharing a time when you
wrestled with or grew in
faith. Write it. Record it. Or
tell it live. Up to you.

just once

RIVERKIDS GUIDE

Go with Dakota and the kids
as they head off for age-
specific activities related to
the day's scripture.

once a month

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP DREAM TEAM

Passionate folks (not just
parents) to pray and vision the
"big picture" needs for
Family Ministry.

temporary team

DECORATE BULLETIN BOARDS

Are you crafty and creative?
We need one or two folks
to bring new life to bulletin
boards around the church.

one-time project



As of April 25, we have 33 donors and 12 recurring schedules on our new online giving platform, My Well Ministry.



Easy Online Giving

Get the My Well Ministry Giving app today!

5 Ways to Give

- Go to www.mywell.org/give/rpumc
- Text rpumc to 40101
- Download the My Well Ministry app
- Go to riversideparkumc.com & click on Give
- Scan the QR code with your phone's camera or code reader



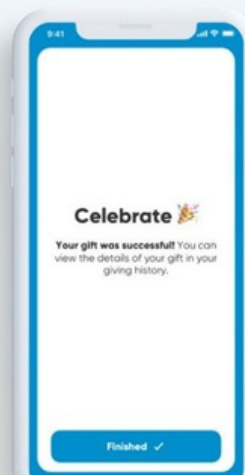
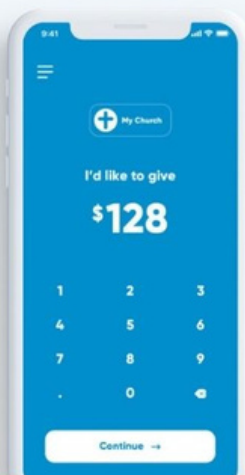
My Well is a nonprofit ministry that provides online giving at significantly lower costs than our previous provider. By using this new platform, we're able to put more of your tithe dollars to more ministry. Set-up an online account today for scheduled (recurring) giving or a one time donation.

Easy Online Giving 1..2..3!

1 Select Amount

2 Confirm Details

3 Review & Give!





RIVERSIDE PARK

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"Empowering others to live life abundantly in Christ."



Worship with Us!



Worship Online:

**Facebook live Sundays
@9am Contemporary
@11am Traditional**

facebook.com/RiversideParkUMC
(the service is also uploaded to
Youtube on Monday mornings)

Worship in Person:

**in the Sanctuary
Sundays @9am & @11am**

*(everyone wears masks,
designated pews are 6 feet apart,
and hand sanitizer is at all
entrances)*

Church Office: (904) 355-5491

www.riversideparkumc.com

Temporary Church Office Hours:

Monday - Friday 9-12 or by appointment

Rev. Emily Knight, Pastor
pastoremily@riversideparkumc.com

Joye Hampton, Office Manager
j.hampton@riversideparkumc.com

John Larsen, Director of Traditional Worship
j.larsen@riversideparkumc.com

Millie Hudson, Director of Contemporary Worship
m.hudson@riversideparkumc.com

Jack Barnard, Bookkeeper
j.barnard@riversideparkumc.com

Dorsey-Ann Rhames, Membership Secretary
membership@riversideparkumc.com

Tre Devine, Custodian
t.devine@riversideparkumc.com

Dakota Storm-Lewis, Family Discipleship Intern
kids@riversideparkumc.com

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