

RIVERSIDE REPORTER: DECEMBER 2022

"Prepare the Way of the Lord"

This is a classic phrase for Advent. We read it in Isaiah 40 and hear it echoed by John the Baptist who told people that Jesus was coming. And this is definitely a season with a lot to prepare. So my pastoral prayer for us (for our church and for you) is this:

1) Prepare your hearts. Pray *as* you decorate or bake or whatever beloved tradition warms your heart. Invite God into that time (and consider what might need to be cleaned out so that you have room for the hope, peace, joy, and love of Christ).

2) Look for signs along the way. In the ever-green abundant life of a Christmas tree, in the lights that shine in darkness, in the very symbols that surround us (especially the ornaments on our sanctuary tree): consider what they proclaim about God and God's presence with us. Make sure to get one of our Advent devotionals.

3) Prepare the way for others to meet Christ, too.

This is a season of guests, so let's do everything we can to make smooth their path to worship. Say hello and even after: thank people for coming. Park further away so that a weary guest might have a shorter distance. Be ready to point out the bathrooms and nursery. Greeters are important, but what will make a lasting and loving impression is the demonstration of grace and caring by the people in the pews who share the journey.

Rev. Emily Knight

Christmas Eve Services: Saturday, Dec. 24th
4:30pm Contemporary & 7pm Traditional
(nursery care available at the 7pm service)

December Events



Kids Choir for the Cantata:

Kids singing in the cantata *must* attend the rehearsal on Saturday, December 10th @10am (kids will practice first and then leave)--*and* at least one of the Sunday morning rehearsals: 11/20 or 12/4

Ways to Serve this Month:

- Help light Luminaries in front of the church (setup is @6pm 12/11)
- Assemble poinsettias on the Sanctuary altar. 12/22. Contact Bridget Anderson or the church office
- Serve Communion or pass out bulletins on Christmas Eve
- Help serve Wednesday night dinners to the community
- Send Christmas cards to our homebound church members Contact JoAnn Goodwin and the care team

2nd

11am: First Friday Friends meet in the Fellowship Hall for food & fellowship for senior adults

3rd

9:30am: Women In Mission Brunch at Beau Rivage, 2970 St. Johns Av. RSVP with your circle leader.

4th

10am: Family Ministry Advent Party in the Fellowship Hall

12pm: Youth Lunch & Serve- Caroling - all ages are invited

11th

10:30am: One Worship Service Christmas Cantata with Chancel Choir, Praise Team, Kids' Choir, and Orchestra

12th

9am: Deadline to order Poinsettias Order forms are available online.

15th

6:30pm: United Methodist Men Cookout Meet in the Fellowship Hall

21st

6:30pm: Blue Christmas Service Chapel - 3rd Floor McCord Bldg.

24th

4:30pm: Contemporary Christmas Eve Service

7pm: Traditional Christmas Eve Service

25th

10:30am: One Worship Service on Christmas Day - Kids wear pajamas.

Comfort and Joy Tree - throughout December



Christmas is a time to give to others as God gave his gift of Jesus to us. RPUMC will have a Comfort and Joy Tree with specific items to shop for that will provide comfort and joy to those who come to our door on Wednesday evenings. Please continue to bring needed items as the weather is cooler now. Thank you for all your love and prayers in support of our Wednesday Night Ministry.

Family Ministry Advent Party - December 4th

All families are invited to participate in the Family Ministry Advent Party on Dec. 4th at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. This will include things like the introduction of a Family Advent Prayer, a take-home activity related to Chrismon ornaments and what they mean, and a Nativity Photo with the RPUMC Kiddos in costume.

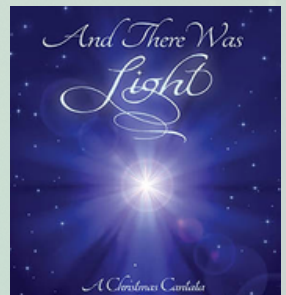


A'caroling we will go - December 4th

Everyone is invited to join the youth for caroling on Sunday, December 4th following the traditional service. Meet in the Fellowship Hall for a quick lunch and then go caroling and bring joy to the neighborhood.

Christmas Cantata - One Worship Service - December 11th

Join us on December 11th for our Christmas cantata, "And There Was Light". We will have one service at 10:30 a.m. with music from our chancel choir, praise team, children's choir and orchestra.



Blue Christmas Service - December 21st

Holidays can be hard. If you're feeling the weight of the season or grieving a loved one, consider coming to our blue Christmas service on Wednesday, Dec. 21st at 6:30 p.m. We will gather in the chapel (on the 3rd floor of the McCord bldg.) to hear scripture, name burdens, and remember God's presence in the midst of loss. We will also light candles and hang ornaments in honor of those who have died -- giving thanks to God for the gift of their presence in this world.

We joyfully welcome RPUMC's newest church members:



Karen & Wayne
Bailey



Andy Scully



Sharry & Rick Bible



The Wright Family:
Makenzie, Billy, Caroline
Kristen and baby Paisley

We also give thanks for church members who have faithfully offered leadership through our committees, ministry areas, and church council. Thank you!

It is Biblical to have seasons of rest and we are continually working to empower others to grow into their leadership gifts, so our teams and committees rotate. Thus, the following individuals have offered incredible leadership and participation (for several years) and will step down at the end of this year--making way for new leaders to follow. We honor your work, leadership, dedication, and thank God for your presence in our church. Thank you!

- **Susan Bush:** faithfully acted as treasurer for the Trustees Committee.
- **Brenna Dupries:** served as the church's youth representative on church council
- **Rich Goodwin:** Faithful member of the finance/staff parish relations committee
- **Joye Hampton:** will continue to work in the church office, but she steps down from her role as church council secretary
- **Jesse Manalo:** led and served as chair of the finance/staff parish relations committee
- **Frances Mathews:** Served as secretary of the finance/staff parish relations committee
- **Jane Riechmann:** Co-chaired the outreach committee (coordinating Rockin' Back to School and many other ministries)
- **Tim Riechmann:** served faithfully on the finance/staff parish relations committee
- **Chris Schmitz:** Served as dedicated member and previous chair of Trustees and member of the nominating committee
- **Bridget Ware:** Served as chair of worship committee
- **Tim Ware:** chair of hospitality, minister of nametags, and member of finance/SPRC

A note From Trustees

The church's renovation and repairs project continues to progress. The Church Council approved the Board of Trustees recommendation that Johnson Controls be selected as the contractor. The Board of Trustees are currently reviewing the Johnson Controls final draft of the scope of work, where the final cost will be \$ 801,256.92 (which has been consistent). The church's bathroom renovation project continues, Johnson Controls estimate is still in progress, but it appears the cost will be approximately \$122K. The church's Task Team is identifying finance options, and to date we have examined Vystar financing and Johnson Controls financing; and will examine UMC financing shortly. Once funding has been finalized, the church will analyze fund raising options. The Board of Trustees approved \$477,000 from the foundation trust to help fund the cost of the renovation and repairs (leaving \$100,000 funds still in the foundation trust).

As of now the projected start date for renovation and repairs will be in January 2023, and we are anticipating 6 to 8 months to complete the work. The Board of Trustees and the Task Team will continue to provide updates; we are committed to full transparency and welcome the church's input/questions.

A note From SPR/Finance



While our Loaves and Fishes stewardship campaign is over, we are still collecting Commitment cards. If you haven't turned yours in, please send it to the church office, drop it in the offering plate, or complete the online form using the QR code below. **If you have sent in your commitment card, Thank You!** The SPR/Finance committee relies on the commitments from the congregation to prepare the annual budget. As of the middle of November we have received 68 pledges totaling \$254,720. We know that non-pledge receipts and miscellaneous gifts help us in our attempts to balance the budget, but it is faith that really helps us in our budgeting process; faith that God will look at the work we are doing here at Riverside Park to glorify His name and He will bless us.

Scan here for our online pledge card:





IT'S BACK! THREESQUARE DINNER SHARE!

Want to meet new people in the church? Participate in three square! Three teams of people (they can be couples or just friends) each hosts a meal or picks a restaurant and they invite a fourth team of guests to join them for that one. Host one. Eat three. Meet a total of twelve people.

Contact Jane Riechmann or the church office by December 18th. Meal teams will be assigned and you get to schedule them for the new year.

Women's Advent Brunch

All circles will meet for an Advent Brunch at Beau Rivage, 2970 St. John's Ave, 32205 on Saturday, December, 3 at 9:30 a.m. Come hungry for food, fellowship and anticipation. RSVP to your circle leader. Please park in a visitor space only on the ramp or ground level. Please do not park in the garage.

Circle of Hope is reminded to bring a pair of pajamas for the PACE girls if you'd like!

Sisters of Service Second Tuesday

Sisters of Service is the name of the new women's group led by Pam Pearsall. This group meets at 7pm on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at varying locations. The next meeting will be Jan. 10th. Call the church office for more information.



Circle of Hope Second Thursday

The Circle of Hope is changing its meeting DAY and TIME! We will meet every 2nd THURSDAY of the month at 11 a.m. in the Rhames Fellowship Hall. Each member is asked to bring her own sandwich for lunch. Tea and water will be available plus a dessert prepared by the hostess of the month.

Circle of Joy & Peace

Third Wednesday

The next meeting is at 11am on Jan. 18th. Circle members are reminded to bring a lunch and their mission gift for Hubbard House. Dessert will be provided.



2023 Chili Sale



Plan now to order your chili for Super Bowl Sunday. This year our 'souper bowl' chili will be available on Sunday, February 12 ONLY as preorders. Thanks for supporting the Circle of Hope with its missions: Bayview Elementary, City Rescue Mission and Pace School for Girls!

MEMORIAL GIFTS

The act of remembrance is a Holy task—to thank God for cherished memories of loved ones and to look forward, in hope, to their presence as part of the Communion of Saints in Christ.

We are grateful for these memorial gifts and the saints they honor.

in memory of **Frances Williams** by Zada Stroble

in memory of **Sally Alston** by Pam and Ruben Allen

in memory of **Betty Nolen** by Barbara Hiers

in memory of **Betty Nolen** by Bill Hiers and family



NOW INTRODUCING AND CELEBRATING: THE AMANDA BETHANY STRONG MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



Remembrance is sacred work—especially when it turns outward to bless and empowers others in the name of Christ. Thus we are honored to announce the creation of the Amanda Bethany Strong Memorial Scholarship. Amanda Bethany Strong was called to enter heaven after only six months in the womb, so in the spirit of Isaiah 61 (which promises beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for all who mourn) Amanda's parents wanted to celebrate her life through an act of blessing for others.

"As parents, we know that her life, if continued on Earth, would have been beautiful, vibrant, and strong in Christ. We wish to continue that memory with a scholarship in memory of our daughter through those parents whose child receives this scholarship."

~Ty and Colleen Strong

The Amanda Bethany Strong Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to a Riverside United Methodist student who plans to attend or attends an accredited college, university, or trade school. Applications and more information will be shared in January.



PHISHING

Beware of Email Scams

Over the year, a few people have reported strange emails that appear to be sent from Pastor Emily. Please know that messages can be sent from fake or fraudulent accounts--even if they LOOK like they come from the right sender (if you click on the "sent from" name, you might see something other than @riversideparkumc.com). Please note that **Pastor Emily and our staff will NEVER ask you to send emergency gift cards. In fact: NEVER SEND GIFT CARDS VIA EMAIL.** If you are ever in doubt about a suspicious contact (especially if it relates to money), feel free to call the church office or wait and speak with pastor Emily in person.

Welcome back, Rich!

If you haven't noticed, Rich Lewis has returned to our sanctuary organ! We give thanks and praise to God that his surgery was successful and the treatment is working. Rich also thanks you, church, for your prayers and cards and support. Brenda Scott and Mary Holladay did wonderful work filling in during Rich's leave. Thank you!

NEW in Grace Gallery Student Artist: Emily Matthews



Grace Gallery's newest installation features work by Emily Matthews who grew up in our church, graduated this past spring, and is currently in her freshman year at UCF.

Looking to 2023...

- January 1st: ONE COMBINED service @10:30am
- January 15th @10am Greeter and Hospitality meeting
- January 28th 11am-3pm Church Council Leadership Retreat
- January 31st 6:30pm Race Card Discussion @Riverside Presbyterian Church



Save the date: The next Race Cards Discussion will be held on Tuesday, January 31, 2023 from 6:30-8 at Riverside Presbyterian Church in Bitteringer Hall. The goal of Race Cards is to facilitate, honest, authentic discussion around race in a way that is safe and respectful of everyone. Participants gather in small groups with a trained facilitator to discuss questions from an actual deck of Race Cards created by 904Ward. Questions span participants' personal experiences, the current state of justice and race relations in our communities, etc. Please register soon as space is limited and we received so many positive comments about our June event.



Every year we decorate our altar area with poinsettias at Christmas. The flowers are purchased by members and friends to remember special people in their lives.

The poinsettias will be displayed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. They can be after the worship service on Christmas Day or the following week, Tuesday – Friday.

If you would like to purchase one or more poinsettia, please use this form and return to the church office with your payment no later than Monday, December 12th. The poinsettias are \$17 each.



PLACED BY: _____ PHONE #: _____

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A BOOKLET MAILED TO YOU PLEASE CHECK HERE _____ and PROVIDE ADDRESS BELOW::

Please circle in Memory of or in Honor of:

IN MEMORY OF or IN HONOR OF: _____

IN MEMORY OF or IN HONOR OF: _____

IN MEMORY OF or IN HONOR OF: _____

IN MEMORY OF or IN HONOR OF: _____

IN MEMORY OF or IN HONOR OF: _____

IN MEMORY OF or IN HONOR OF: _____



PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SECTION

NO. OF POINSETTIAS AT \$17.00 each _____

TOTAL \$ _____

CHECK # _____ **CASH** _____

All worship services will be in-person and streamed live on Facebook. Please check the website or the RPUMC Family group on Facebook for any updates. Worship service videos will be posted on YouTube and the church website the following business day.



Office Hours
9 am—3:30 pm
Monday-Thursday
9 am—1 pm
Friday

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2 11am Yoga 11am First Friday Friends	3 9:30am Women's Brunch
4 COMMUNION 9am Contemporary Worship 10am Sunday School/Groups 10am Family Ministry Advent Party 11am Traditional Worship 12pm Youth Lunch & Serve Carolings- All ages welcome. 5pm Bell Choir	5 6pm Yoga	6	7 11am Yoga 5:30pm Free Dinners 7:30pm Chancel Choir	8	9 11am Yoga	10
11 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am One Worship Service Christmas Cantata 5pm Bell Choir	12 6pm Yoga 6pm Board of Trustees	13 6pm SPR/Finance Committee Meeting	14 11am Yoga 5:30pm Free Dinners 7:30pm Chancel Choir	15 6:30 Men's Cookout	16 11am Yoga	17
18 9am Contemporary Worship 10am Sunday School/Groups 11am Traditional Worship 5pm Bell Choir	19 6pm Yoga	20	21 11am Yoga 5:30pm Free Dinners 6:30pm Blue Christmas Service 7:30pm Chancel Choir	22	23 11am Yoga	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 4:30pm Contemporary Christmas Eve Service 7:00pm Traditional Christmas Eve Service
25 CHRISTMAS 10:30am One Worship Service	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27	28 11am Yoga 5:30pm Free Dinners 7:30pm Chancel Choir	29	30 11am Yoga	31



- 1st Bryan Davis
- 2nd Tennison Drewry
- 5th Lilah Manalo
- 6th Quinn Mathis
Tripp Murray
Bob Pope
- 8th Rich Lewis
- 9th Byron Alvarado
Nancy Newman
Eden Santa Lucia
- 10th Rick Devine
Crystal Hough
- 11th Bobby Brazell
Tom Cashman
- 12th Joe DiSalvo
Julianne Kirchain
- 13th Mark Mathews
- 14th Brian Doran
Kim Renne
- 18th Kyle Litwin
- 23rd Jim Allen
- 26th Susan Russell
- 27th Gordon Middleton
- 29th April Laflash

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://rpumc.mywell.org>

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 10/31/2022

	Actual	Budget
Contributions	\$372,252	\$373,879
Expenses	\$412,277	\$406,866
Surplus/Deficit	-\$40,025	-\$32,987

Thank You

May God's love surround...

Home

- † Emory Cook
- † Joe Dorsie
- † Shirley Early
- † Jo Herron
- † Steven & Teresa Jarvis
- † Jim Todd
- † Carol Stelly



College Students

- Zachary Bradley
- Taylor Bohannon
- James Cashman
- Tommy Cashman
- Frankie Crowell
- Tre Devine
- Brenna DuPries
- Gavin Grady
- Lindsey Grady
- Isabella Laffy
- Hogan Litwin
- Emily Matthews
- Emily Merton
- Kaden Neufeld
- Kyle Neufeld
- Emily Popp
- Matthew Popp
- Dallas Renne
- Hannah Stomps



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 Contemporary
@11am Traditional**

**We will have one service at
10:30am on 12/11, 12/25, & 1/1**

Church Office: (904) 355-5491

www.riversideparkumc.com

Church Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 9-3:30

Friday 9-1

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

Gealean Roeters, Family Ministry Administrator
families@riversideparkumc.com

Rich Lewis, Organist
r.lewis@riversideparkumc.com

Jack Barnard, Bookkeeper
j.barnard@riversideparkumc.com

Britt Scott, Tech Team Leader
techer@riversideparkumc.com

Nancy Schubiger, Membership Secretary
membership@riversideparkumc.com

Tre Devine, Custodian
t.devine@riversideparkumc.com

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RIVERSIDE PARK
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



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