

# MARCH 2024 RIVERSIDE REPORTER

## Join us for special Services in March



**March 3rd:**  
Holy Communion



**March 24th:** ONE  
Service @10:30am  
Palm Sunday



**March 28th:**  
Maundy Thursday  
(Last Supper)



**March 29th:**  
Good Friday



**March 31:**  
EASTER SUNDAY!

This month, we finish the season of Lent. We walk through Holy Week—following the footsteps of Jesus who leads us to the cross and the grave and into the resurrection story of Easter Sunday.

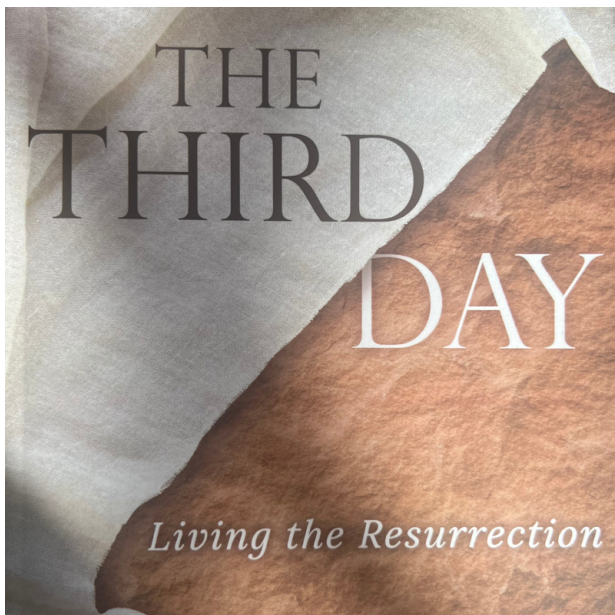
For me: it's the resurrection that takes the sting out of death. It's the promise of Christ's victory that silences the fear of failure or uncertainty. When I remember that we ARE resurrection people, I'm more confident in spaces that need hope ("The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you." —Romans 8:11). Because Jesus walked out of the grave that first Easter morning (*when it was still dark*), I am able to trust and cry out to God whenever I'm grieving now.

*Because he lives, I can face tomorrow.  
Because he lives, all fear is gone.  
Because I know he holds the future,  
Life is worth the living just because he lives.*

I hope that each of you will share your own reflection:

**How does the resurrection of Jesus impact your life? How has your life been resurrected (transformed) because of Christ's resurrection?** Answers can be anonymous. Our hope is to send everyone home on Easter Sunday with a devotional from these responses, so send your thoughts to the church office by Palm Sunday, March 24th.

*Rev. Emily Knight*



Our mission:  
“Empowering others to abundant life in Christ.”



# Help Needed during Holy Week

To sign- up , scan the QR code  
or call the church office at (904) 355-5491

**Palm Sunday:** help set-up drinks & food before the luncheon; help clean-up after the luncheon

**During the week:** help set-up for Stations of the Cross

**Maundy Thursday service:** greeters; communion servers; and stripping the altar

**Good Friday:** fold bulletins; greet visitors to Stations of the Cross; and set-up Easter flowers around the altar



## EASTER LILIES AND HYDRANGEAS

Every year for Easter Sunday, we decorate our altar area with Easter lilies and hydrangeas. The flowers are purchased by members and friends to remember special people in their lives.

If you would like to purchase a lily or hydrangea plant, please use this form and return to the church office with your payment no later than Wednesday, March 25th. Lilies are \$20 and hydrangeas are \$20. Please pick up your plants after the traditional Easter service.

Lilies and hydrangeas are pre-ordered and available on a first come, first served basis.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

IN ☐ MEMORY or ☐ HONOR OF: \_\_\_\_\_

IN ☐ MEMORY or ☐ HONOR OF: \_\_\_\_\_

IN ☐ MEMORY or ☐ HONOR OF: \_\_\_\_\_

IN ☐ MEMORY or ☐ HONOR OF: \_\_\_\_\_

IN ☐ MEMORY or ☐ HONOR OF: \_\_\_\_\_

IN ☐ MEMORY or ☐ HONOR OF: \_\_\_\_\_

# of lilies \_\_\_\_\_ x \$20 = \_\_\_\_\_  
# of hydrangeas \_\_\_\_\_ X \$20 = \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Check #: \_\_\_\_\_



# HOLY WEEK

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Sunday, March 24th  
Sunday School at 9:30 a.m.  
One Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.  
Potluck Luncheon at 11:30 a.m.  
Easter Egg Hunt

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Thursday, March 28th  
Communion and Special Music  
Worship Service at 6:30 p.m.  
RPUMC Sanctuary

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Friday, March 29th  
Stations of the Cross  
9 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
Enter through the breezeway doors to visit a series of multi-sensory prayer stations that walk-through details of the Good Friday story from Gethsemane to the grave.

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Sunday, March 31st  
9 a.m. Contemporary  
10 a.m. Sunday School  
11 a.m. Traditional  
Bring flowers for the flower cross. Post your pictures on Facebook in the RPUMC Family group.

# Join us for Easter Sunday

Worship with us on Sunday, March 31st  
9am Contemporary & 11am Traditional

Bring a flower from your yard to cover  
the cross in signs of life!  
Invite friends to join us, too.



## Tips For Inviting Friends

Easter and Palm Sunday are great excuses to invite others to worship God with us. (To be fair: every Sunday is a good time, but special occasions).

How to invite someone to church:

1. Pray about it first. Ask God to help you find the words and notice the opportunity. (Even just confessing to God that it might feel awkward is a great prayer!) Pray that any invite would be genuine—out of care for the person and love for Jesus.
2. Be relational. Don't yell at random people from the side of the road. The means should match the message, so DO invite people who know that you care about them. And DO allow people to say 'no' without judgment.
3. Ask if they would like to go WITH you. Don't throw out a vague and open invite. Offer specifics: "I'll meet you just inside the main doors on Park Street" or—even better—offer to meet before or after for a meal or coffee.
4. Share what you love about our church. (I usually say that the music is great and the people are warm—or if they have kids, I tell them that kids are genuinely welcome.)
5. Answer questions (or check in to see if they have questions). What to wear, where to park, what to bring, what to expect—these can all be overwhelming for a first experience. Part of hospitality is taking away as much of the unknown as possible.

In all things, remember that the goal is to invite people into the love of Christ, not just the Church.



### 3 Ways to Welcome:

1. **Make room in the parking lot. Park further away than you would normally park.**
2. **Expect guests. Look for them. Say hi to a new person before saying hi to your friends.**
3. **Say goodbye after the service, also.**



# First Friday Friends

*ministry for senior adults*

Meets in the Fellowship Hall on the First Friday.

11:00 a.m. Coffee & Chat

12:00 p.m. Lunch



**March 1st:** Game Day/Matching Games  
Wear something green!

**April 5th:** Speaker from BabyLuv



**May 3rd:** Picnic/Cook-Out Sharing fun  
memories & stories

## NEW MEMBER CLASSES

**STARTING MARCH 3RD - 3 SESSIONS  
10 A.M. IN THE PARLOR (1ST FLOOR)**

**Learn more about our Methodist roots,  
our core values, and our missions here  
at RPUMC. The classes run for three  
weeks (3/3, 3/10, 3/17) and new  
members will join on Palm Sunday 3/24.**



Tea House by Terrie Lee

## Grace Gallery

The new installation in Grace Gallery features the needlework (cross stitch) artistry of RPUMC and chancel choir member Terrie Lee. Also, gallery team member Cathy Salzer had one of her paintings chosen for display in the Jacksonville Watercolor Society Spring Show. You can see her work and that of other artists at the St. Augustine Art Association South Gallery. It is located at 22 Marine Street in St. Augustine and is open Tuesday - Sunday from 12 - 4 PM.

## ANTI-RACISM TEAM

*An Evening without Labels: Ramadan Dinner*

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

The Jesse Ball DuPont Center

6:00 p.m.

RSVP: [904ward.org](http://904ward.org)

*Intro to Racial Discussions Part 1 & 2*

April 8 & 15

6:00-8:00 p.m.

Register: [904ward.org](http://904ward.org)



**Box Assembly Event  
March 9th @ 10 a.m.  
Rhames Fellowship Hall**





# DEEPER SPIRITUAL PURPOSE: ROCK THE UNIVERSE TRIP

by Ava Manalo,  
Co-youth delegate to Church Council



This year, one of the values we're looking to cultivate as a church is deeper spiritual growth. Spiritual growth is a pivotal element in every person's walk with Christ, as it allows us to mature in our faith and deepen our relationship with God. But how do we measure it? Growth looks different for everyone. So, we decided to have some conversations with individuals about how they've experienced growth and we're sharing their stories through monthly reflections in the newsletter.

In these reflections, we can find evidence of what walking with God looks like for different people. Hopefully, this encourages and inspires you to examine your spiritual life and look for opportunities to grow in love.

In January, our youth group took a trip to Universal to partake in their annual Christian music festival "Rock the Universe." For most, it was their first time attending, and they came back with stories to tell. Here's what a few of them had to say:

➤ 18-year-old Anthony Strong enjoyed his time at Rock the Universe. He had a lot of fun on the trip, especially through getting to "hang out with the other youth." For him, one of the most impactful moments at Rock the Universe was seeing the sheer volume of people there; hundreds and hundreds of Christians gathered in one place. "To see that many Christians in one place was powerful," he said. "Definitely a powerful thing to experience." While Anthony didn't feel any major shift in faith, he agreed this was a moment that helped him connect to God, as he waits for the Lord to move in his life.

➤ 13-year-old Kara Manning had a somewhat different experience that both strengthened her bond with her friends in youth and helped draw her closer to the Lord. She said, "That trip made me realize that you really can include God in everything you do." This newfound attitude is something she is beginning to embrace in her day-to-day life. Previously, she said she had been "too scared to talk about God with my friends at school," but this is something she's working to change. She noted a conversation she recently had with a friend about the value of faith: "Sometimes it's hard to believe [in God], but we both still do anyways." Now that she knows just how present the Lord is in the world around her, she is working on "trying to see the best thing in every single situation" as a Lenten discipline.

## "Deeper Spiritual Purpose" Reflections

Each month, we will ask for "deeper spiritual purpose" reflections. This can be anything—"the deeper spiritual purpose of purple during Lent" or "the deeper spiritual purpose of using your blinker while driving." The whole point is to seek spiritual depth in our ordinary actions ("Seek and you shall find."—Matthew 7:7-8) and share it with others—so that all of us can grow ("As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." Proverbs 27:17). If you HAVE a reflection to share (or a person/topic to recommend)—contact the church office.



# Conference News Updates

by Beth Joyner, Lay Member to Annual Conference

In April of this year, the General Conference will meet in Charlotte, NC. Normally, the General Council meets every four years, however, due to COVID, the 2020 General Conference was postponed and will now meet from April 23 – May 3. The following bullet points provide information about the General Conference as well as information about some of the impacts of disaffiliation to the Florida Annual Conference.

## Upcoming dates to remember:

- General Conference: 4/23 – 5/3; Charlotte, NC; the theme: *...and KNOW that I am GOD*
- Annual Conference: 6/6 – 6/8; Lakeland, FL; the theme: *Come, Holy Spirit, Come*

## District Updates:

- Retirement Celebration: 5/18, Our District Superintendent, Rev. Durwood Foshee will be retiring and RPUMC will be hosting his retirement celebration. Please save the date and find out how you can help.
- District Realignment: districts will be reduced from eight to six.
- Conference Budget Realignment: Conference Ministries will be impacted due to cuts in the conference budget. Local and District support for these ministries is encouraged.

## General Conference Background and News

- There are 1,100 valid petitions for consideration at the General Conference this year.
- Most legislation brought before the General Conference requires only a simple majority of delegates to pass; however, amendments to the constitution requires a two-thirds vote followed by a two-thirds vote of the lay and clergy members present at annual conferences.
- One of the key legislation pieces being considered is Regionalization, restructuring of the world-wide structure of the church.
- Legislation approved by the General Conference and ratified by the Annual Conferences will take effect January 1, 2025, unless otherwise specified. However, amendments to the constitution only take effect after the Council of Bishops certifies their ratification. In practice, that means any new amendment will not take effect until the bishops meet in Spring 2026.
- A pre-conference zoom meeting on 4/2 at 6:00 p.m. and a post-conference meeting on 5/7 at 6 p.m. will be held to share General Conference information.



Matthew 25:35-36 is the verse that our ministry is founded on and we quote often. Another verse found in every gospel and elsewhere in the New Testament because it is a commandment from Jesus:

“.....You shall love your neighbor as yourself “  
Matthew 22:37-39.

As we continue our Lenten journey throughout the month of March to our glorious celebration of Easter on the 31st, Wednesday Night Ministry continues the work of Jesus as we give hope and love through our prayers and our dinners to our neighbors.

Thank you all for your overwhelming support and your kindness and your prayers.

## ITEMS NEEDED







The Board of Trustees has been working for several years on much needed renovations and repairs to our campus. On Sunday, April 7th, 2024 we will bless our buildings and celebrate the completion of our most recent projects. This same Sunday will also kick off our generosity campaign that we are calling, "Forward in Faith, Growing with Christ".

Trustees faced some hard decisions and had considered deferring maintenance on the project. With the rising costs of materials and labor and the continued deterioration of the building, the Trustees stepped out in faith and moved to act. Now we are enjoying the beautifully renovated restrooms, newly carpeted floors, freshly painted walls, safely sealed and waterproofed buildings, and new AC units.

Please be looking for more information coming soon on how you can be a part of our generosity campaign and help RPUMC honor past generations and **move forward in faith** for generations to come.

## Family Promise Week

### March 31 - April 7

Congregation, It's Family Promise time for RPUMC. Our first week of the year is March 31- April 7, 2024. We will provide dinners each night and breakfast, lunch, and dinner on Saturday, April 6th. We will also have breakfast and lunch on the Sunday, April 7th. Scan the QR code to sign-up to help.

#### Reminders

1. We need to plan activities for the families when we take the meals. They can be as simple as reading a short book, a small craft project, Easter baskets for the children.
2. Please remember to initiate a blessing before eating. If older children are present, they could lead the blessing, if willing. Please consider staying when you drop off a meal and eat with the families. (Wear your name tag, it's helpful to the families.)
3. Before signing up for a meal, please be advised that Family Promise has requested NO Casseroles.

Any questions please contact me, Ty\_colleen@hotmail.com or (904) 903-0566.

Colleen Strong

RPUMC Family Promise Host Congregation Coordinator

"Supporting families, Changing Futures. Changing Homelessness."





# RPUMC FAMILY MINISTRIES

- March 24th: No Kids Club for Palm Sunday. (Combined service, potluck, & Easter egg hunt instead). Kids Choir will sing in worship. All kids are invited to wave palms and participate in the Palm Sunday processional.
- March 29th: ALL ages: Stations of the Cross (open 9am-7pm); Youth will walk through the stations during the youth lock-in that evening.
- March 31st: Extended Kids Club for Easter Sunday (no Kids Choir)
- Camp registration for 4th-12th graders open now.



SAVE THE DATE



**VBS**

**June 24-28  
9am-noon**

**“Kids of the Kingdom”  
Vacation Bible School 2024**

**Bible stories about KIDS (like Miriam,  
David, and others) who serve God and  
make a big difference!**



**Parents need to register separately  
(registration is open now), but we will  
provide transportation.  
[www.wwumccc.org](http://www.wwumccc.org)**



# MARCH



1st	Karen Bailey Brenna Dupries
2nd	Jonathan Smith
3rd	Nylah Carter
7th	Jo An Stephens
12th	Diana Laforty Jake Manalo
13th	Julie Pickren
16th	Amanda Figart Alicia Frank Andrew Strong
18th	Brooks Stone
20th	Sharry Bible
21st	John Larsen
23rd	Brandea Doran
25th	Josi Devine
27th	Mary Louise Burner Joe Lek
28th	Maegan Alvarado Charlie Morreale Jackson Morreale Henry Morreale
29th	Alma Quails Joe Springer
30th	Andre Varunok

## Committee Meetings:

Finance/SPR Committee  
Tuesday, March 12th at 6:00 p.m.

Board of Trustees  
Monday, March 18th at 6:00 p.m.

Church Council  
Tuesday, March 19th at 6:00 p.m.

If we miss your birthday,  
please let us know.

If you move, please let us know.

Do you get our newsletter in the  
mail? How about the weekly RPUMC  
Updates sent by email on Fridays?

Call the church office at  
(904) 355-5491  
to update your information.

## May God's love surround...

### Home

† Emory Cook  
† Ted DiSalvo  
† Joe Dorsie  
† Shirley Early  
† Jo Herron  
† Steven Jarvis  
† Carol Stelly  
† Jim Todd  
† Gordon Rehberg  
† Mary Lou Roberts

### College Students

- Cooper Crowell
- Frankie Crowell
- Tre Devine
- Brenna DuPries
- Isabella Laffy
- Hogan Litwin
- Emily Matthews
- Kaden Neufeld
- Kyle Neufeld
- Emily Popp
- Matthew Popp
- Dallas Renne



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



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

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 11 am First Friday Friends	2
3 <b>COMMUNION</b> 9 am Contemporary Worship 10 am <b>New Member Class</b> 10 am Sunday School/Groups 11 am Traditional Worship 5 pm Chancel Ringers	4 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm <b>Girl Scouts</b> 7 pm Tai Chi	5 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm <b>Girl Scouts</b> 7 pm Tai Chi	6 3 pm Yoga 5:30 pm Free Dinners 6 pm Praise Team 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	7	8	9 10 am—12 pm <b>Box Assembly for Margaret's Memories</b>
10 9 am Contemporary Worship 10 am <b>New Member Class</b> 10 am Sunday School/Groups 11 am Traditional Worship 5 pm Chancel Ringers	11 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm <b>Girl Scouts</b> 6 pm <b>SPR/Finance</b> 7 pm <b>Sisters of Service</b> 7 pm Tai Chi	12 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm <b>Girl Scouts</b> 6 pm <b>SPR/Finance</b> 7 pm <b>Sisters of Service</b> 7 pm Tai Chi	13 3 pm Yoga 5:30 pm Free Dinners 6 pm Praise Team 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	14 11 am <b>Circle of Hope</b>	15	16
17 9 am Contemporary Worship 10 am <b>New Member Class</b> 10 am Sunday School/Groups 11 am Traditional Worship	18 6 pm <b>Board of Trustees</b>	19 10:30 am Tai Chi 6 pm <b>Church Council</b> 7 pm Tai Chi	20 11 am <b>Circle of Joy &amp; Peace</b> 3 pm Yoga 5:30 pm Free Dinners 6 pm Praise Team 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	21	22	23
24 <b>PALM SUNDAY</b> 9:30 am Sunday School/Groups 10:30 am <b>Worship Service</b> 11:30 am <b>Potluck Luncheon, Egg Hunt</b> 5 pm Chancel Ringers	25	26 10:30 am Tai Chi 7 pm Tai Chi	27 3 pm Yoga 5:30 pm Free Dinners 6 pm Praise Team	28 6:30 pm Maundy Thursday Worship Service 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	29 9 am—7pm Stations of the Cross <b>Youth Lock-In</b>	30
31 <b>EASTER SUNDAY</b> 9 am Contemporary Worship 10 am Sunday School/Groups 11 am Traditional Worship						





# RIVERSIDE PARK

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"Empowering others to live life abundantly in Christ."



*Worship with Us!*



**Sunday Mornings  
in the Sanctuary:**  
**@9am Contemporary**  
**@11am Traditional**

**Nursery care available**  
**Sunday school @10am**

**Worship Online:**  
**Facebook & YouTube Live**  
**Sundays**  
**@9am Contemporary**  
**@11am Traditional**

**facebook.com/RiversideParkUMC**  
**tinyurl.com/YouTube-RPUMC**

**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  
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Millie Hudson, Director of Contemporary Worship  
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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

