

RIVERSIDE REPORTER

September 2025



The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections.

This new guiding vision, released by the United Methodist Council of Bishops, is being embraced by congregations around the world—including here at Riverside Park UMC.

While this vision brings focus to missions around the world, we also need to live it here in Jacksonville. What does it look like to love boldly on Park Street? To serve joyfully in Ortega and Southside? To lead courageously in the places we live, work, and worship?

Throughout September, we'll explore how God is calling us to grow as disciples, develop Christ-like leaders, stand with the vulnerable, and seek health and wholeness for all of creation.

So come ready to be challenged, encouraged, and sent out in the name of Jesus. Let's discover together how we're being called to love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously—together.

Love Boldly: We passionately love God and, like Jesus, embrace and include people of every age, nation, race, gender, and walk of life. (Matthew 22:37-39, John 13:34-35)

Serve Joyfully: With the heart of Christ, we journey alongside the most vulnerable among us, offering care and compassion with joy. (Psalm 100:1, Nehemiah 8:10, John 13:14-15, 1 Peter 4:10)

Lead Courageously: Following Jesus' example, we strive for peace, justice, and reconciliation. (Joshua 1:9, Ephesians 6:10)

Love Boldly
Serve Joyfully
Lead Courageously



ResourceUMC.org/Vision
[#LoveServeLeadUMC](https://twitter.com/LoveServeLeadUMC)

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

OFFICE IS CLOSED FOR
LABOR DAY
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

FIRST FRIDAY FRIENDS



Following a break for the summer, our senior adults will start right back where they left off:

Friday, Sept. 5th

Show up at @11:00 a.m. for coffee, chatting, and a performance by the River City Dulcimer Group
Lunch @Noon

RPUMC FELLOWSHIP HALL



TAI CHI OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday, September 2nd
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

or

Thursday, September 4th
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

RPUMC Fellowship Hall
Come meet the instructors and learn about Tai Chi.

Mental Health & Wholeness

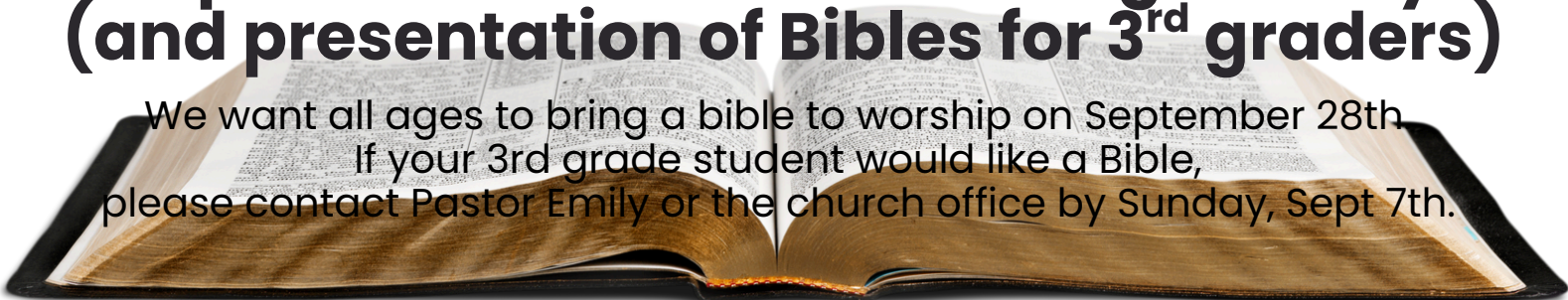


Lunch Friday:
Sept. 12 @ Noon
Church Library
(2nd Floor McCord Bldg)

Bring your lunch and hold space for mental health and wholeness.

September 28th: Bible Blessing Sunday (and presentation of Bibles for 3rd graders)

We want all ages to bring a bible to worship on September 28th.
If your 3rd grade student would like a Bible,
please contact Pastor Emily or the church office by Sunday, Sept 7th.



WOMEN IN MISSION

Tues., Sept. 9
Tues., Oct. 14
Sisters of Service
7 p.m.
Parlor

Thurs., Sept. 11
Thurs., Oct. 9
Circle of Hope
11 a.m.
Fellowship Hall

Wed., Sept. 17
Wed., Oct. 15
Circle of Joy & Peace
11 a.m.
Fellowship Hall

We have three groups (sometimes called 'circles') of women who meet monthly for prayer, connection and service/mission projects. These groups are always open for new participants, but this is a perfect time to jump in since they're 're-starting' for the year. Sisters of Service met last month for a day of self-care and they supported BabyLuv and a local school supply ministry.



United Methodist Men
Sat., September 20th
9:00 a.m. Parlor
(1st floor McCord building)

The United Methodist Men are building connections and serving God! In August, they had a blast bowling, kicking off with the prayer: "Lord, let us have fun and not break any bones!" They also hosted a free 5th Sunday pancake breakfast, where they collected donations for the UMC children's home, Residing Hope. On top of that, some members took on handyman projects, lending a helping hand at the church and at the Riverside Park Apartments. Next meeting is Sept 20th --new faces welcome.

Family Promise supports families with children experiencing homelessness, working to help them achieve sustainable independence through community-based support. A few times each year, we partner with them by providing groceries and meals, allowing families to focus on their most immediate needs.

Family Promise

We are hosting meals
September 14-20

Sign-Up here to help

A QR code with a small lightbulb icon in the center, used for sign-up information.



American Guild of
ORGANISTS

Organ Concert

The Jacksonville Chapter of the American Guild of Organists (AGO) will present an organ recital at the **Riverside Presbyterian Church on Sunday, September 14 at 3:00 p.m.** featuring our own **Mary Holladay** with other organists from the Jacksonville area. They will be playing the church's Colby-Walker organ, the harpsichord, and the piano.

The recital is free and open to the public. There will be a reception following the concert.

All are welcome!

RPUMC LEADERS

Feeling called to serve or lead at RPUMC? **We're currently considering leaders for 2026 in areas like finance, trustees, building upkeep, HR, staff support, note-taking, and representing us at annual conference.** Interested? Reach out to David Holladay, Larry Figart, Kit Thomas, Nancy Schubiger, or Pastor Emily on the nominations team.

RPUMC YOUTH

Our **youth group (for students 6th-12th grade)** meets **Sunday mornings @10am between services.**

They had a service day and beach day in August. Big events in the future include a November youth retreat at Epworth (November 21st through November 23rd) and a Rock the Universe trip in January.

Contact Bobby Brazell with questions: youth@riversideparkumc.com

RPUMC KIDS

We need all kids (nursery through 5th grade) registered for the 2025-2026 ministry year. Look for the link in church bulletin's & Friday emails.

RPUMC Kids ministry offers 'kids choir' at 10am and 'kids club' at 10:30am each Sunday (and nursery during worship). Kids choir sings in church on Sept 21st and 3rd graders will receive Bibles on Sept 28th. We also encourage families to attend the neighborhood FUNK-y Friday event in Five Points (see to the right) →

FUNKy Fridays
September 5th
& October 3rd
4-8PM

Sidewalk festival with live music, street performers, food, drinks, fun, and games.

~in 5 Points~

5 POINTS ASSOCIATION
FUN*ky FRIDAYS
Presented by
RadiFi CREDIT UNION



Wednesday Night Ministry

Our main focus on Wednesday is the supper that we serve to our neighbors in the name of Jesus. As in Matthew 25:35-36, we also give clothing to our neighbors who need socks, t-shirts, pants... the list is long. George Ridge has volunteered to bring order to chaos cataloging names and sizes and an active list of needs and specific requests. Our neighbors truly are no longer strangers. We know their names and we know their needs. Thank you for your prayers and your support for WNM. Donations are always appreciated.



Committee Meetings:

Committee meetings typically begin at 6 p.m. and are held in the church office library.

Finance/SPR Committee Second Tuesdays:

September 9
October 14

Board of Trustees Third Mondays:

September 15
October 20

Church Council Third Tuesdays:

September 16
October 21

Racial Justice Team



The RPUMC Racial Justice Team invites you to join an event series hosted by the Jewish Community Alliance and First Coast YMCA, titled "Together Against Hate: Promoting Unity in Our Community." This initiative aims to educate and foster inclusivity in Northeast Florida. Events will cover topics such as Jew-hatred, hate crime reporting, military challenges, immigration, and the Muslim-Jewish relationship.

For the event schedule and registration, visit fcymca.org/together-against-hate

FINANCIAL AUDIT



As part of our commitment to maintaining transparency and improving our financial processes, we recently conducted a thorough audit, which included a review of our financial records, work processes, systems, and procedures. The audit uncovered a few key details that previous reviews had missed.

In terms of areas for improvement, the main concern identified was that the interest for the FLUM Foundation loan balance was not set up correctly. However, this has already been addressed and corrected in this year's ledger, with clear notes to explain the change.

The audit also offered several valuable process recommendations to help us move toward best practices. Some of these recommendations include updating the church's accounting software to a more cost-effective and user-friendly option, and revising our asset and liability statements for better clarity.

In response, Finance and SPRC have created an Audit Action Team to lead the implementation of these improvements. If you're interested in participating in future audits or would like more details about the Audit Action Team, please feel free to reach out to our financial secretary, Beth Joyner.

GIFTS IN LOVING *memory*

In Memory of Michael Bibb

Karen & Wayne Bailey
Elizabeth Coley
Beth Joyner

In Memory of Ann Ingham

Beth Joyner

*In Memory of Mitchell &
Everett Patch*

Beth Joyner

In Memory of Shirley Early

Pam & Ruben Allen
Liz Alsobrook & Casey Knight
Jennie Bibb
Karen Fleming
H. Phillip Hancock
Emily Rehberg

Congratulations



to Brenda Scott, our co-organist for receiving the Roll of Distinction Award from the Florida Vocal Association .



**FLORIDA VOCAL
ASSOCIATION**

A PRAYER FOR OUR NEIGHBORS

Renovation construction is underway for our neighbors at the Riverside Park Apartments. The work is needed, but the process of getting there is noisy and disruptive for the residents and discombobulating for the staff.

A Prayer for the Riverside Park Apartments:

Lord, as work continues at Riverside Park Apartments, please be with the residents and staff. Help them stay patient through the noise and mess, and bring moments of calm in the middle of it all. We hope this project really does lead to better homes and a stronger community. We trust You to be with us through each step.
Amen.

Dignity[®]
MEMORIAL

A BLESSING FROM OUR NEIGHBORS

Dignity Memorial (pictured here with their team at Hardage-Giddens Oaklawn) has supported our free community meals since we began them in 2020. This month, their generosity continues—enabling us to continue offering food to those who need it!



TRUSTEES NOTE: PARKING LOT PROPOSAL IN DISCUSSION

Our Trustees are exploring the idea of renting out our parking lot during unused times to generate income and serve a growing community need—especially with the new concert venue in Five Points increasing demand for parking. This would be a shift from seeing the lot purely as hospitality to also seeing it as a stewardship opportunity.

The concept is not entirely new: we currently have a parking agreement with the construction workers for the renovations at the Riverside Park Apartments and we have a history of allowing various groups to use our parking lot during events and functions. Trustees are currently looking into Park Thrive, a company that works with many United Methodist churches, with no upfront cost or contract.

Sunday parking will remain free, and free options will be available for members and guests during church events. Nothing is decided yet—the idea was shared with Church Council, and discussion was thoughtful and mixed. Stay tuned for updates!



Youth Beach Trip & Cleanup



Back to School Blessing 2025



Hosting St. Vincents & Free Physicals



Final Kids Chapel of the Summer



Final Parables & Play



Adult Study: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's The Cost of Discipleship

THE AMANDA BETHANY STRONG MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



With deep gratitude, we share that the Strong family has generously entrusted the remaining funds from *The Amanda Bethany Strong Memorial Scholarship* to support the work of Margaret's Memories. Amanda's legacy will continue to offer comfort and hope, helping other families navigate the tender path of grief. We give thanks for the meaningful impact this scholarship has made, and we hold the memory of Amanda Bethany Strong with deep love and reverence.

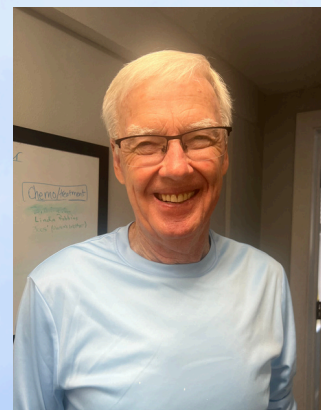


A Special Note of Thanks:

Thank you to our summer soloists and to the Chancel Choir, acolytes, and crucifers who now return to worship this fall.

We're grateful to Karen Bailey for her altar arrangements (her new purple altar flowers are beautiful). Thank you to Chris Western and others for their fix-it work across campus, and to the Prelude Chamber Music for coordinating the donation of a beautiful new piano for the Fellowship Hall (and thank you to David Holladay for repurposing the old one).

To all who serve in worship and behind the scenes—thank you for helping us welcome one another and giving glory God!



OCTOBER EVENTS

new **DIRECTORY**

It's time for an updated church directory. Volunteer photographers will be taking photos during September and October. Look for appointment sign-ups soon!

Margaret's Memories Box Making



Sunday, October 4
Drop-in between 10 -1
Rhames Fellowship Hall

Help assemble bereavement boxes for local hospitals.

October Meetings & Small Groups

- 3: First Friday Friends
- 9: Circle of Hope
- 10: Mental Health & Wholeness
- 14: SPR/Finance Committee
Sisters of Service
- 15: Circle of Joy & Peace
- 18: United Methodist Men
- 20: Turstees Meeting
- 21: Church Council

2025

CHARGE CONFERENCE

October 19th at 3:00 p.m.
RPUMC Sanctuary

This is a cluster conference with several other churches.
All are invited to attend.

TACO TUESDAY

*Church-Wide Gathering
for Food and Fellowship*

OCTOBER 28TH @ 5:30 P.M.
RHAMES FELLOWSHIP HALL

SAVE THE DATE

Our October calendar is full, so we're taking a rain check on our usual "Trunk or Treat." But fear not! We've got a mastermind lined up to plot next year's event (so we are taking names for next year's team!).

Meanwhile, grab a friend and show up for the community! The Five Points merchants are hosting "Funky Fridays" (10/3 from 4-8pm) and our Presbyterian neighbors have their "Shiver at the River" carnival on Friday, October 17 from 5:30 to 7 PM.

NOTE: Our October newsletter will be *posted online* instead of mailed out as usual.



RPUMC CAMPUS TOUR

October 19th between services

RPUMC Church Campus Tour on October 19 — All Are Welcome!

On Sunday, October 19, join us for a guided tour of Riverside Park UMC led by Marc Julia. Whether you're new to our church or have been attending for a while, this is a great opportunity to learn more about our building, history, and ministries. Everyone is welcome! Wear comfortable shoes and meet at the welcome table between services.

RPUMC NEW MEMBER CLASSES COMING SOON.... Pastor Emily will also lead a series of classes (November 2, 9 and 16), culminating with the reception of new members on Sunday, November 23. If you have been attending Riverside Park UMC and feel that God is calling you to make a commitment to this as your church home please feel free to join us. If you are curious about the history of our denomination, and/or of our local church, as well as the structure and teachings of the United Methodist Church, these classes will be very informative. It's also a great way to meet others who have been attending RPUMC alongside of you! If you are interested in participating in these classes, or have any questions please call the church office (904-355-5491) or email membership@riversideparkumc.com.



You're Invited: Seeds for the Future

A Conversation about Legacy & Planned Giving

Join us for a special presentation with Rev. Ed New, President of **the Florida United Methodist Foundation** as we explore faithful planning and legacy stewardship. Whether you're curious about how planned giving works, wondering if **your investments can support ministries you love**, or simply want to hear how others are making a lasting difference — this session is for you.

We'll talk about **practical, tax-wise ways to give through wills, appreciated stock, real estate, retirement plans, life insurance, and more**. You'll also learn how the Florida United Methodist Foundation partners with individuals and churches to provide **trusted guidance on charitable giving**.

Light refreshments will be served.

Come with your questions and discover the power of leaving a legacy rooted in faith.

Sunday, October 26th
10:00 AM & 12:00 PM
(following both services)
RPUMC Fellowship Hall



Rev. Ed. New



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 and YouTube Live on Sundays

@9am Contemporary @11am Traditional

facebook.com/RiversideParkUMC

youtube.com/@riversideparkumc2015



Church Office: (904) 355-5491 www.riversideparkumc.com

Church Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 9-3:30, Friday 9-1

Jacksonville, FL 32204

819 Park Street

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- 5th Carol Stelly
- 7th Emily Hodges
Cory Lek
- 8th April Joos
Sharon Prescott
Cathy Salzer
Tiffany Wascom
- 9th Max Cogburn
Linda Rooks
- 10th Linda Robbins
- 12th Kevin Crowell
Jane Hazlett
Albert Sloan
- 13th Ruben Allen
Xavier Diao
- 14th Ed Fleming
- 15th Emily Matthews
- 16th James Wilson
- 17th Bill Graessle
- 18th Kimberly Julia
- 20th Shep Riechmann
Misty Weisman
- 21st Debbie Colbert
- 22nd Sandra Campbell
- 23rd Krissy Nettles
Charlie Schubiger
- 24th Jo Herron
Kit Thomas
- 25th Micheal Bone
- 28th Amber Brockel

- 3rd Caleb Diao
Reid Dupries
- 9th Chase Cogburn
DJ Flagler
Evan Ruffino
Bella McCorkle
- 10th Evan Ruffino
- 11th Jennifer Cogburn
Jeff Cornett
Leigh DiSalvo
JoAnn Goodwin
- 12th Rick Bible
- 13th Kate Riechmann
- 14th Diane Take
- 15th Billy Kimbell
- 16th Melissa Matthews
Ron Richardson
- 17th Peggy Greco-Ridge
- 18th Larry Figart
Radley Remo
- 19th David Holladay
- 21st Rebecca Garner
- 23rd Pastor Emily
- 25th Mariah Cope
- 27th Emory Cook
Julie Hemphill
- 28th Andy Carrigg
- 29th Trevor Cope
Tony Wilbourne
- 30th Alletha Boling
Tessa McCorkle
Emily Popp
- 31st Scott Laflash
Mark Lemmenes

**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 to
update your information,
(904) 355-5491**

**May God's love
surround our
members on the
home care list:**

- † Jennie Bibb
- † Emory Cook
- † Jo Herron
- † Steven Jarvis
- † Carol Stelly
- † Jim Todd



All worship services are streamed live on Facebook and YouTube. Please check the website or the RPUMC Family group on Facebook for any updates.



September

Office Hours

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

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 LABOR DAY OFFICE CLOSED	2 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Karate	3 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	4	5 11 am First Friday Friends	6 3 pm Karate
7 COMMUNION 9 am Contemporary Worship 10 am Sunday School/Groups 11 am Traditional Worship 5 pm Chancel Ringers	8	9 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Karate 6 pm SPR/Finance 7 pm Sisters of Service	10 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	11 11 am Circle of Hope 5:30 pm Karate 7 pm Tai Chi	12 12:00 pm Mental Wellness & Con- nection	13 3 pm Karate
14 9 am Contemporary Worship 10 am Sunday School/Groups 11 am Traditional Worship 3 pm Organ Concert at RPC 5 pm Chancel Ringers	15 6 pm Trustees	16 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Karate 6 pm Church Council	17 Newsletter Deadline 11 am Circle of Joy & Peace 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	18 5:30 pm Karate 7 pm Tai Chi	19	20 9 am United Methodist Men 3 pm Karate
Family Promise Week						
21 9 am Contemporary Worship 10 am Sunday School/Groups 11 am Traditional Worship 5 pm Chancel Ringers	22	23 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Karate	24 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	25 5:30 pm Karate 7 pm Tai Chi	26	27 3 pm Karate
28 Bible Blessing 9 am Contemporary Worship 10 am Sunday School/Groups 11 am Traditional Worship 5 pm Chancel Ringers	29	30 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Karate				