

January 2026
Riverside Reporter

Peace

a fresh start for a new year

*Do not be anxious about anything,
but in everything by prayer and
supplication with thanksgiving let
your requests be made known to God.*

*And the peace of God,
which surpasses all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your
minds in Christ Jesus.*

--Philippians 4:6-7

January always feels like a reset.
New calendars. New goals. New expectations.

But for many of us, it also brings familiar questions:
How do I slow down?
How do I not repeat the same patterns?
How do I actually feel at peace this year?

This January, our church begins the year with
a simple but powerful invitation: start with peace.

In Scripture, peace—shalom—means more than calm. It means **wholeness, restoration, and life ordered around God's presence.**

Jesus promises a peace the world cannot give or take away, a peace that guards our hearts and minds even in uncertainty (John 14:27; Philippians 4:6-7).

Throughout the month, we'll explore how to:

- Receive peace as a gift, not an achievement
- Release burdens in order to protect our inner lives
- Practice peace in relationships and community
- Create rhythms and boundaries that bless our homes

We're also inviting everyone to memorize Philippians 4:6-7 and what spiritual practices ("peace practices") might be a small, faithful step toward a more grounded life in Christ.

Maybe this year isn't about doing more. Maybe it's about becoming whole in Christ.
Join us this January for "Protect Your Peace" and start fresh in God's grace.

Rev. Emily Knight

A huge thank you to everyone who made the December/Christmas season possible! We are grateful for our office volunteers; the poinsettia team (led by Karen Bailey); Communion stewards (Jeff, Sharon, and April Joos); Leigh DiSalvo for Blue Christmas setup; Corey McCorkle for cantata photos; our money counters, liturgists, ushers, greeters, tech team, proofreaders, Communion servers, and musicians.

Thanks to Nicole Remo for updating First Aid kits; Nancy Schubiger for welcoming new guests and members; our staff; Judy Marks and Pam Pearsall for coordinating hot cocoa welcome gifts; the Garners for extra sprucing of the planters; those who hung the greens and set up luminaries; the women who hosted a luncheon; and special thanks to Nicholle Griffith, Marc Julia, and Rick Bible for their work on the Nonprofit Security Grant application.





Church Leadership Updates for 2026:

We end 2025 with warm thanks for the leaders who kept us focused and faithful throughout the year! We especially give thanks for those who finish their term and roll off:

- **Jesse Manalo**, Church Council Chair (Thank you for keeping meetings fun AND focused)
- **Bill Hodges**, Chair of SPRC/Finance (Thank you for leading BOTH teams as one)
- **Vinny SantaLucia**, rolling off of finance and investments (Thanks for passion and heart)
- **Beth Joyner**, RPUMC representative to Annual Conference and Financial Secretary (Between this and prior roles, Beth has been on our finance committee for 15 years and, especially this year, generously helped with our bookkeeping transition—huge thanks for her dedication to this vital ministry!)

This year also welcomes new leaders and new committee members (especially as we split back to finance and SPRC as two separate groups):

Our 2026 Board of Trustees: Pam Pearsall, Joe DiSalvo, Frank Morreale, Jonathan Smith, Marc Julia, Alletha Boling, Brooks Andrews, Woody Garner

Our 2026 Staff/Parish Relations Committee: Kit Thomas (chair), Rick Bible, Quinton White, Brandy Henderson (also includes Larry Figart as Layleader and input from Corky Thomas, our rep. to annual conference)

Our 2026 Finance Committee: Joe Springer (chair), Mark Mathews (Treasurer), Jo Ann Stephens (Financial Secretary), Charlie Schubiger, David Boor (also includes Larry Figart and Corky Thomas, with reps from Trustees and Church Council)

Our 2026 Church Council:

- Lay Leader: Larry Figart
- Council Chair: Ian Charleton
- Vice Chair: David Holladay
- Rep to Annual Conference: Corky Thomas
- Treasurer: Mark Mathews
- First Friday Friends: Susan Russell
- Membership Secretary: Nancy Schubiger
- Margaret's Memories: Nicole Remo
- Racial Justice: Linda LaBell
- Women's Ministry Rep: elected by circles in Jan.
- Family Ministry Rep: Bobby Brazell
- SPRC Chair: Kit Thomas
- Care Team: Yvonne Sloan
- Prayer Team: Frances Mathews
- Trustees Chair: elected in Jan. per Book of Discipline
- UMM President: Stan Stokes
- Wednesday Night Ministry team: Bonnie Dudley
- Spiritual Growth & Education: Kevin Round
- Family Promise Coordinator: Brenda Chapman
- Grace Gallery: Cathy Salzer
- Recording Secretary: Laura Whiteman

Loving God, we thank You for the gifts and dedication that you have placed in our church. Bless these leaders with wisdom, patience, and joy as they lead and care for our community. Strengthen their faith, guide their decisions, and fill their work with love so that all they do glorifies You and holds us faithful in mission and growth. Amen.

Margaret's Memories

Here is what has been going on:

Memory boxes have been donated to St. Vincent's Southside. A special thank you to the pastoral care team at St. V's for picking up the memory boxes.

If you have been trained to quality control --- I could use your help! I need to get the last of the memory boxes ready for delivery from the fall box making.

Join us for a last hurrah before school returns for the Winter Wonderland Family Dance. Games. Sweets. Treats. Selfie Stations. Funds collected from this event will help defray the cost of a Caring Cradle for UF Flagler. Advance tickets are \$5 a person or \$20 for family. Please use RPUMC giving platform My Well for pre-purchase (Note in the memo line for MM dance). Cost at door will be \$10 a person or \$40 pre family.

I will be assisting at Baptist Health as a co-instructor in February for Resolve Through Sharing Bereavement Training: Perinatal Death. The class provides important information for caregivers that work with families of loss.

If you quilt, knit, or crochet we need large blankets for boys & girls.

Save The Date:

January 2, 2025 Winter Wonderland Family Dance – A fun filled family dance.
6:30 PM to 8 PM in the Fellowship Hall

January 25, 2026 Bracelet Making in Honor and Memory of Amanda Bethany Strong
10 AM to 1 PM in the Fellowship Hall

TBA Spring Box Making

If you need more information on the events please contact me! 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!



Princess & Pirates Family Dance
Friday Jan 2, 2026 | 6:30-8 PM

RPUMC Fellowship Hall
\$5/person or \$20/family (advance)
\$10/person or \$40/family (door)
Help Margaret's Memories purchase
a "Caring Cradle" for UF Flagler

First Friday Friends

HAPPY NEW YEAR !

We will gather on January 2nd to share some fun information about our past. To make it more interesting there will be prizes for people to who are willing to sit at a table where they do not usually sit and with people they don't know. We will learn more about each other that way.

We will have a good lunch from Elizabeth and her crew of helpers as usual. See you on January 2nd at 11:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall.

Questions ? Call the Church Office at 904-355-5491



Groups & Gatherings

WOMEN IN MISSION

Thurs., Jan. 8 Circle of Hope 11 a.m. Fellowship Hall

Tues., Jan. 13 Sisters of Service 6:30 p.m. in Parlor

Wed., Jan. 21 Circle of Joy & Peace 11 a.m. Fellowship Hall

Mental Health & Wholeness Lunch

Friday, January 9th at Noon

Bring your lunch and hold space for mental health discussion & connection.



January is a great time to connect with a new group! EACH of these groups would welcome new participants! All are welcome!

We also have youth ministry for 6th-12th grade Sundays at 10:10am. And kids ministries at the same time.

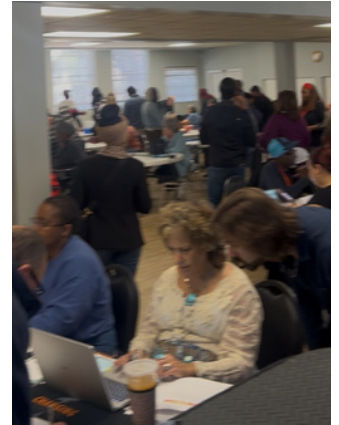


United Methodist Men

Saturday, January 17
9 a.m. Parlor



New “Life Group” starting for parents!
Join us for January Sundays @10:10 (while kids and youth have programming, too) for some discussions about peace (*even while parenting*). This group will start in the Church Office Library where there is coffee.



We were delighted to host Changing Homelessness in our Fellowship Hall for their December “Home for the Holidays” landlord event. Unhoused veterans met with local landlords and service providers from across the city. Bells rang throughout the day as applications were accepted and new homes were found!



Grace Gallery
2nd floor, McCord blag.

Now Showing:
“Holy Disruption”
a collaboration
from artists in our
congregation



Come visit grace gallery! Each piece reflects different interpretations of holy disruption and hope--from a charred vase that survived a house fire, to poems and paintings that envision longing or waiting, to furniture and lamps that give new purpose to retired piano and organ parts.

Please explore, reflect, and be inspired. (and feel free to take poems home)



zoe empowers[®]

We are excited to present the Dukore “Work Together” empowerment group in Mwendo, Rwanda. This group of youth is on a three-year journey to overcome extreme poverty and achieve self-sufficiency. Our church collaborates with other United Methodist Churches in Northeast Florida to support their efforts. Through Zoe’s holistic approach, participants receive training in various areas, including health, agriculture, and business skills, and are starting small income-generating activities with assistance from grants and resource partners. Visit the district website for each of their names: www.flumc.org/northeast

Peace & Stewardship for 2026

This year, our estimated giving campaign takes place in January, inviting you to prayerfully reflect on how your gifts can support God’s mission in the coming year. Instead of pledging in the fall, we hope this new timing gives you space to make your decision with peace and intention as the new year begins.

Estimated giving simply means thinking ahead about what you plan to give in 2026, not as a contract, but a prayerful estimate of your support for our church’s ministries, outreach, and worship. **Having these estimates helps our leaders plan a faithful and sustainable budget for the year ahead.**

We hope you’ll see this as a meaningful way to join in the work of Christ through all we do together. Your participation matters greatly and helps sustain the ministries we share.

**Watch for pledge materials coming soon:
in the mail, in Sunday bulletins, or online via the QR code below.**

We invite you to prayerfully complete your estimated giving card and bring it to worship, place it in the offering plate, mail it to the office, or drop it by the church during January. At the end of the month, we will gather all of the cards and celebrate them in a special blessing during worship.



2026
Estimated Giving



Wednesday Night Ministries

6,743
Meals served in 2025

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I needed clothes and you clothed me. Matthew 25:35

This year let's resolve to love one another and to serve each other. Let's resolve to express gratitude, compassion, and kindness.

A neighbor calls us the "Giving Out Church", a wonderful description of the giving ministries of RPUMC. Another neighbor, Bill, and his daughter Rebecca shared terrific news that they have their very own home. Moving recently from a tent to a house is an answer to many prayers. As you can imagine their household needs are great so we'll get a list out soon. Greet them at church. They are usually at the 11:00 service in the back.

Our "Love All Serve All" Christmas party was fabulous. Neighbors were welcomed in to music, a sit-down dinner, "stockings" filled with snacks and essentials, and hoodies with our RPUMC name on them. A delicious catered dinner with lemonade, hot chocolate, coffee and for dessert cupcakes and homemade cookies. So many helped under the leadership of Jill Walker, giving their time and financial support and gifts. There are too many to name.

WNM is blessed with such an abundance of love for our neighbors. Thank you always for your prayers, love, support.



Save the Date!

Please join us as we host a **spiritual retreat on February 7, 2026**, during which we will contemplate and meditate on God's beauty revealed around us. We will partner with Memorial UMC of Fernandina Beach. Gathered together, we will practice contemplation on the divine images revealed to us in art, movement, prayer practices, writing poetry, meditation, breathing, hearing music, and in viewing Creation. The retreat will last from mid-morning through the afternoon with lunch and snacks. Cost is \$10 for our lunch. Please contact the church office with further questions.



Part-time Accountant Needed

The church is looking for a **part-time Accountant (25-30 hours/month)** to handle month-end closes, reconciliations and preparation of financial statements. Knowledge of church accounting practices, nonprofit accounting standards, including tax-exempt regulations is a plus.

Interested parties may contact Pastor Emily or Beth Joyner at Finance@riversideparkumc.com for more information.

Welcome

We officially welcome and celebrate these new RPUMC members: Kate Levitz, Susan Raguse, Kathy Fenwick, Bill & Carolyn Sherman





- 1st Barbara Hittell
- 2nd Justin Wilson
- 7th Astin Linden
- 8th Susan Ridge
- 9th Kim Moseley
- 11th Laura Whiteman
- 12th Nora Riechmann
- 20th Tadd Manning
- 21st Red Earp
Robin Lee
- 22nd Kaitlyn Fuller
Rich Goodwin
- 23rd Owen Lek
Henry Lek
- 27th Emily Charleton
- 28th Ron Rehberg
- 29th Shirley Davis
- 31st Andy Scully

**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR**

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

January Committee Meetings:

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

SPR Committee

Sunday, January 11 at 10:10 a.m.

Finance Committee

Tuesday, January 13 at 6:00 p.m.

Board of Trustees

Monday, January 19 at 6:00 p.m.

Church Council

Tuesday, January 20 at 6:00 p.m.

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

- † Jennie Bibb
- † Emory Cook
- † Jo Herron
- † Steven Jarvis
- † Carole Rooks
- † Fred Russell
- † Carol Stelly





JANUARY

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

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| | | | | 1 NEW YEARS DAY Office Closed | 2 | 3 |
| 4 COMMUNION SUNDAY Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Sunday School/Groups 5 pm Chancel Ringers | 5 | 6 10:30 am Tai Chi 5 pm Girl Scouts | 7 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir | 8 11 am Circle of Hope 7 pm Tai Chi | 9 12 pm Mental Health & Wholeness | 10 |
| 11 Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Sunday School/Groups 10:10 am SPR Meeting 5 pm Chancel Ringers | 12 | 13 10:30 am Tai Chi 6 pm Finance Meeting 7 pm Sisters of Service | 14 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir | 15 7 pm Tai Chi | 16 | 17 Newsletter Deadline 9 am UMM Meeting |
| 18 Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Sunday School/Groups 5 pm Chancel Ringers | 19 MLK, Jr. Day OFFICE CLOSED 6 pm Trustees Meeting | 20 10:30 am Tai Chi 5 pm Girl Scouts 6 pm Church Council | 21 11 am Circle of Joy & Peace 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir | 22 7 pm Tai Chi | 23 | 24 |
| 25 Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Sunday School/Groups 5 pm Chancel Ringers | 26 | 27 10:30 am Tai Chi | 28 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir | 29 7 pm Tai Chi | 30 | 31 |



"Empowering others to live life abundantly in Christ."



Sunday Mornings in the Sanctuary:
@9am Contemporary
@11am Traditional
Nursery care available.
Sunday school @10am

Worship with Us!



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

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