

March 2026 Riverside Reporter

"Let me tell you 'bout my Jesus..."
-Anne Wilson

"That's my King. ...Do you know him?"
-Dr. S. M. Lockridge

When I was a child, Jesus was someone I learned about—brought to life in felt boards and Sunday school lessons. Jesus gave a face and a name to the God who heard my bedtime prayers and songs. He was the simple, concrete center of my childlike faith.

During a season of grief in my family, Jesus was someone I turned to: begging for healing but still finding comfort when things didn't happen as planned. Jesus' story became more than words on a page—it was hope I desperately needed. I also experienced the people of Jesus: a community that loved us, wept with us, and reminded us that if Christ was alive in heaven, so was my dad.

In high school and college, Jesus became a leader and a guide for my life (the churchy word is "Lord"). I was trying to choose and practice Jesus' way of doing things. And especially as I found ways to use my gifts and serve others, my faith felt joyful and deeply rooted in love. There is a sweetness to this kind of connection to Jesus. And I *do* value the kind of world that Jesus preaches, proclaims, and makes possible through forgiveness.

When I look at Christ—His life, His teaching, His cross, His resurrection—I see the clearest picture of who God is.

*"Follow me. Sit with me. Feed my sheep.
Love your neighbor. Trust."*
-Jesus

As we continue to read through Luke and walk toward Holy Week, my prayer is simple: I want us to turn to Jesus and know him.

So keep reading. Keep walking toward the cross and the empty tomb of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Emily Knight

Join us for these Special Services



March 1st:
Holy Communion



March 29th: ONE
Service @10:30am
Palm Sunday



April 2: 6:30 p.m.
Maundy Thursday
(Last Supper)



April 3rd:
Good Friday/
Stations of the Cross



April 5th:
EASTER SUNDAY!



HOLY WEEK 2026

Holy Week leads us through Jesus' final days and into the first days of Easter resurrection



Palm Sunday March 29

- **ONE Combined Service: 10:30am**
- **Potluck Luncheon in the Fellowship Hall**
- **Egg Hunt for Kids on the Playground**



Maunder Thursday

**April 2nd
6:30pm Service
Holy Communion
Stripping the Altar**

**Volunteers
needed during
Holy Week.
Scan the QR
code below to
sign-up:**



Experience Jesus' journey from Gethsemane to the Grave

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Open Good Friday 4/3 9am-6pm

Visit a series of multi-sensory prayer stations that walk through details in the Good Friday story—from Gethsemane to the grave.

Look for the welcome table in front of the breezeway entrance off of Park St.

Join us for Easter Sunday

Sunday Morning: April 5th
9am Contemporary & 11am Traditional

**Bring a flower to cover the cross in signs of life!
(it's a great photo op)**



just Jesus.

LENT 2026

Gospel of Luke in 40 Days Reading Plan

- Sun, Mar 1: Sabbath / Catch-up
- Mon, Mar 2: Luke 5:1-16
- Tue, Mar 3: Luke 5:17-39
- Wed, Mar 4: Luke 6:1-26
- Thu, Mar 5: Luke 6:27-49
- Fri, Mar 6: Luke 7:1-30
- Sat, Mar 7: Luke 7:31-50
- Sun, Mar 8: Sabbath / Catch-up
- Mon, Mar 9: Luke 8:1-21
- Tue, Mar 10: Luke 8:22-39
- Wed, Mar 11: Luke 8:40-56
- Thu, Mar 12: Luke 9:1-27
- Fri, Mar 13: Luke 9:28-62
- Sat, Mar 14: Luke 10:1-24
- Sun, Mar 15: Sabbath / Catch-up
- Mon, Mar 16: Luke 10:25-42
- Tue, Mar 17: Luke 11:1-28

- Wed, Mar 18: Luke 11:29-54
- Thu, Mar 19: Luke 12:1-34
- Fri, Mar 20: Luke 12:35-59
- Sat, Mar 21: Luke 13:1-35
- Sun, Mar 22: Sabbath / Catch-up
- Mon, Mar 23: Luke 14:1-35
- Tue, Mar 24: Luke 15:1-32
- Wed, Mar 25: Luke 16:1-31
- Thu, Mar 26: Luke 17:1-37
- Fri, Mar 27: Luke 18:1-30
- Sat, Mar 28: Luke 18:31-43
- Sun, Mar 29: Sabbath / Catch-up
- Mon, Mar 30: Luke 19:1-48
- Tue, Mar 31: Luke 20:1-26
- Wed, Apr 1: Luke 20:27-21:38
- Maundy Thursday - Apr 2: Luke 22
- Good Friday - Apr 3: Luke 23
- Holy Saturday - Apr 4: Silence. Be still.
- Easter (Apr 5th): Luke 24:1-12 (in worship)
- Week of Easter: Luke 24:13-34
- Week of Easter: Luke 24:25-53



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 29th. 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 #: _____

New Member Class and Campus Tour

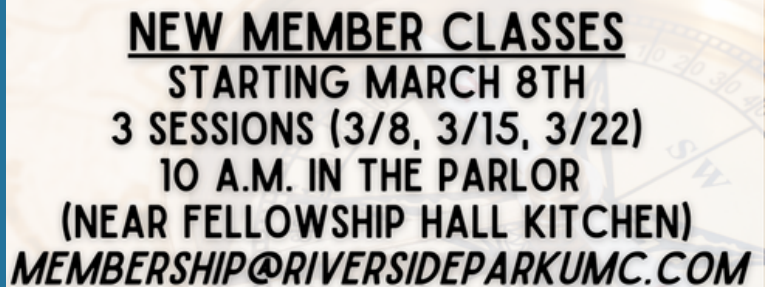
Our next class for new members will begin in March. We will begin with a church campus tour on Sunday, March 1. This tour is open to ALL. Pastor Emily will lead a series of classes the following 3 Sunday mornings, culminating with the reception of new members on Palm Sunday, March 29 at our combined (10:30) worship service.

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 UMC, 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 at (904) 355-5491 or email membership@riversideparkumc.com.



RPUMC CAMPUS TOUR
SUNDAY, MARCH 1ST @ 10 A.M.
MEET AT SANCTUARY WELCOME TABLE
WEAR COMFORTABLE SHOES



NEW MEMBER CLASSES
STARTING MARCH 8TH
3 SESSIONS (3/8, 3/15, 3/22)
10 A.M. IN THE PARLOR
(NEAR FELLOWSHIP HALL KITCHEN)
MEMBERSHIP@RIVERSIDEPARKUMC.COM

WORSHIP A/V TECH TRAINING

Saturday, March 7th at 10am

More info:

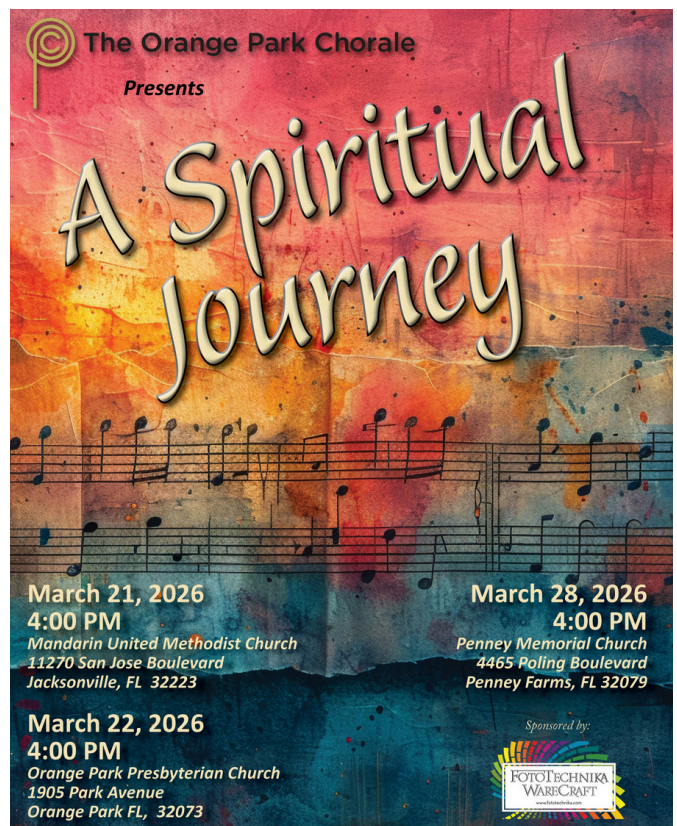
Tech@riversideparkumc.com

Now Hiring: A/V Team Leader

The Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) is searching for a new Tech Coordinator. If you are interested in applying for this part-time position, please email Pastor Emily at pastoremily@riversideparkumc.com

The Team Leader is responsible for the audio/visual components of worship and coordinating a team of volunteers to run the sound and computer systems for in-person and online worship.

Many of our church members sing (and direct) in this ensemble. Support music in the community.



The Orange Park Chorale
Presents
A Spiritual Journey

March 21, 2026
4:00 PM
Mandarin United Methodist Church
11270 San Jose Boulevard
Jacksonville, FL 32223

March 22, 2026
4:00 PM
Orange Park Presbyterian Church
1905 Park Avenue
Orange Park FL, 32073

March 28, 2026
4:00 PM
Penney Memorial Church
4465 Palling Boulevard
Penney Farms, FL 32079

Sponsored by:
FOTOTECHNIKA
WARECRAFT
www.fototechnika.com

**March
1st**

YOUNG ADULT LUNCH

JUST AFTER WORSHIP
(MEET AT THE SANCTUARY STEPS)

FLEMING RUTLEDGE

The
Seven
Last
Words
from
the
Cross

Sunday Study:

Rutledge's, The Seven Last
Words from the Cross

All welcome!

Sunday mornings 10-11am

Room #202

Led by Rev. David Holladay



FIRST FRIDAY FRIENDS

Lunch & Fellowship in the Fellowship Hall
Monthly senior gathering: March 6 at 11 a.m.



United Methodist Men

**Next Meeting:
Sat., March 21 at 9 a.m.**

RIVERSIDE PARK
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The New
Directories will be
available on
Sunday, March 8th.
Pick up yours
before or after
worship or contact
the church office.

2026 MEMBERSHIP
DIRECTORY

Book Study starts April 19th

What is Christian community? Why should Christians sing when together? Conversely, why is silence important and what is meditation? And why is confession important to the community? Many Christians are familiar with Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book *The Cost of Discipleship*. However, an equally important book is *Life Together*. As Professor Kerry Irish points out, "Dietrich Bonhoeffer's crusade, his life's purpose, was to combine faith in the real Christ with the equally important concept that Christian faith may only be lived in community with other Christians."

We will begin a five-week study of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Life Together* on Sunday, April 19th, in the Rhames Fellowship Hall at 6pm. If you are interested, please contact the church office to register. You will need to get a copy of *Life Together*, which is also available in digital media. Let us know if you can't afford a copy and we will get one for you. Also, we will be using a study guide prepared by Kerry Irish, Professor Emeritus of History, George Fox University, available at no charge by scanning the QR code.

This study also includes a very good overview of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life and his stand against German Naziism and the state church.



WOMEN IN MISSION

Tues. March 10
Sisters of Service
6:30 p.m. - Parlor

Thurs., March 12
Circle of Hope
11 a.m. - Fellowship Hall

Wed., March 18
Circle of Joy & Peace
11 a.m. - Fellowship Hall

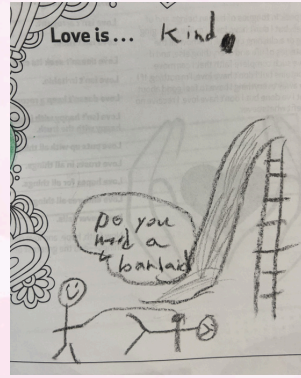
Mental Health & Wholeness
Lunch Friday: **March 13th @ Noon**

Church Library
(2nd Floor McCord Bldg)

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



Kids Ministry



KIDS CLUB
Sunday Mornings
@10:00-10:30
2nd room from nursery
Bible lessons & games
for pre-K to 5th grade.

KIDS CHOIR
Sunday Mornings
@10:30-11:00
3rd room from the nursery
Music & instruments
for pre-K to 5th grade.

6-12TH GRADE
SUNDAYS @10AM
IN THE YOUTH ROOM

EASTER
EGG HUNT

HEY KIDS:
Bring your
Easter Basket
for the Egg Hunt
on Palm Sunday.
(following the 10:30
worship service)

Friday, April 3rd
Ice Cream &
Stations of the Cross

Check with Bobby
for the meeting time.

NURSERY
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Miss April is looking for friendly folks to help out in the church nursery. Volunteers work Sunday mornings from 8:45-12:15 one Sunday a month, every other month. Contact the church office for more information.



The Florida Conference
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2026
**Regional
Gatherings**

North East
District

WITH BISHOP BERLIN
SUNDAY, MARCH 22 RPUMC
SANCTUARY 6:30PM

NE District Shared Mission:



zoe empowers



○ Information Meetings via ZOOM

Thursday, March 12th at 2pm & 7pm
*Learn about Zoe and the kids we
empower in Rwanda*

○ Virtual Trip to Rwanda via ZOOM

Meet our Group of Children & Youth

Tuesday, May 26th at 9am

Register here for the
Zoe info zoom link:



or visit
www.flumc.org/zoe-empowers-nedistrict

REGISTER
NOW

District Gathering: Becoming Beloved Community

April 18, 2026 • 9:30 AM–3:30 PM

at St. Paul UMC in Jacksonville

Cost: \$10 (includes lunch)



Theological reflection, practical tools, and guided dialogue to engage differences with grace, strengthen trust and courage in ministry, and foster reconciling, beloved communities in worship and daily life.

 Family Promise

We are scheduled to serve meals

April 5-11.

Scan the QR Code to sign-up.



Board of Trustees Update

Expanding Our Resources and Community Partnerships

The Trustees are pleased to share that progress continues on two important initiatives designed to strengthen both our campus and our community connections.

Park Thrive Partnership Plans are moving forward for our collaboration with Park Thrive, which will allow us to rent out our large parking lot. Signage is currently being designed, and operational details are being finalized. This partnership will provide a new stream of revenue while making better use of our existing space. Signage will be installed later in the month. A parking fee will not be assessed for Sunday mornings or during other church events. However, given the parking lot's use during events in Riverside Park, the skate park, the Riverside Arts Market and Five Poings, we are hopeful this revenue stream (to be used for RPUMC property maintenance) will replace revenue lost from the large commercial billboard that was removed. We look forward to sharing full details—including launch dates and how the program will operate—in the near future.



Kitchen Renovation & Certification Renovations in our kitchen are also well underway as we work toward achieving commercial-grade certification. These upgrades will not only modernize the space but will also enable us to partner with RAP for expanded use of the kitchen. This certification opens the door to new programming, community engagement, and potential rental opportunities that support our mission. Both projects reflect our ongoing commitment to stewarding our facilities wisely and creating opportunities that benefit our congregation and the wider community.



Wednesday Night Ministries

As we read the Gospel of Luke this Lenten season, 3:11 is John the Baptist's response to those who asked "what shall we do?" Care for others by feeding and clothing those in need. On Wednesdays your ministry cares for our neighbors; we feed and clothe them because you care. Your donations and financial support are so important and appreciated. In Luke 10:27, Jesus tells us to love the Lord your God....and love your neighbors as yourself. Thank you always for your love of our neighbors and your prayers and support for WNM.

CURRENT NEEDS: men's belts, athletic shoes, and tee shirts (blank or printed and preferably in dark colors)

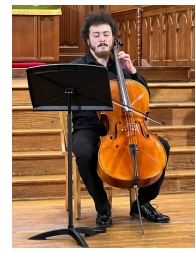


Spiritual Retreat



Beauty: Pathway to the Divine

Thank you to Kimberly Julia and the Spritual Retreat team for partnering with Memorial UMC of Fernandina Beach for a meaningful event held on February 7th.



Circle of Hope

The Circle of Hope ladies assembled and delivered "Welcome Home" gifts for our neighbors at the Riverside Park Apartments who have been uprooted during the apartment's renovation project.



Sisters of Service



The Sisters of Service kicked off February with a lively "Galentines" celebration hosted by Pam Pearsall. Members enjoyed Pam's delicious homemade chicken salad, along with fresh veggies and fruit salad. The evening was filled with laughter—especially during a spirited round of "The Cellophane Ball" game, which brought out plenty of hooting and hollering. It was such a success that another girls' night out is already in the works.

Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 10th, at 6:30 pm where we'll be hosting a special Craft Night. Together, we'll design handmade cards for our mission project, *Blessings in a Backpack*, supporting children in need within our community. If you've been searching for a welcoming women's group that blends fellowship, fun, and service, we would love for you to join us.

Circle of Joy & Peace



The ladies of the Circle of Joy and Peace made "Prayer Chains" where each color represented a different type of prayer: adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication.

First Friday Friends



MARCH

Birthdays

- 1st Karen Bailey
Brenna Dupries
- 2nd Jonathan Smith
- 3rd Nylah Carter
- 6th Yolanda Rodriguez
- 7th Roderick Jungbauer
Jo Ann Stephens
- 11th Eleanor Finch
- 12th Diana Laforty
Jake Manalo
- 13th Wes Cox
Julie Pickren
- 16th Alicia Frank
- 18th Vance Meyer
Brooks Stone
- 20th Sharry Bible
- 21st Don Gunderson
John Larsen
Barbara Merton
- 23rd Brandea Doran
- 25th Josi Devine
- 26th Amy Collier
- 27th Mary Louise Burner
Joe Lek
- 28th Maegan Alvarado
Charlie Morreale
Jackson Morreale
Henry Morreale
- 29th Joe Springer
Ellie Waters
- 30th Andre Varunok

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

March Committee Meetings:

SPR Committee
Tuesday, March 3 at 6:00 p.m.

Board of Trustees
Monday, March 16 at 6:00 p.m.

Finance Committee
Tuesday, March 17 at 4:00 p.m.

Church Council
Tuesday, March 17 at 6:00 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE: FINANCE COMMITTEES MEETINGS
HAVE CHANGED TO THE 3RD TUESDAY AT 4 PM.

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

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





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 COMMUNION SUNDAY Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Campus Tour 10 am Sunday School/Groups 12pm Young Adult Brunch 5 pm Chancel Ringers	2	3 10:30 am Tai Chi 5 pm Girl Scouts 6pm SPR Meeting	4 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	5 6:30 pm Zoom Bible Study 7 pm Tai Chi	6 11 am First Friday Friends	7 10 am Tech Training
8 Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Sunday School/Groups 10 am New Member Class 5 pm Chancel Ringers	9	10 10:30 am Tai Chi 5 pm Girl Scouts 6:30 pm Sisters of Service	11 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	12 11 am Circle of Hope 2 pm & 7pm Zoe Empowers Info Zoom 6:30 pm Zoom Bible Study 7 pm Tai Chi	13 12 pm Mental Health & Wholeness	14
15 Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Sunday School/Groups 10 am New Member Class 5 pm Chancel Ringers	16 6pm Trustees Meeting	17 Newsletter Deadline 10:30 am Tai Chi 4pm Finance Meeting 6 pm Church Council	18 11 am Circle of Joy & Peace 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	19 6:30 pm Zoom Bible Study 7 pm Tai Chi	20	21 9 am UMM Meeting 9-12 Local Park Cleanup Day
22 Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Sunday School/Groups 10 am New Member Class 6:30 pm Bishop's Gathering	23	24 10:30 am Tai Chi	25 5:15 pm Free Dinners 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	26 6:30 pm Zoom Bible Study 7 pm Tai Chi	27	28
29 PALM SUNDAY 9:30 am Sunday School/Groups 10:30 am ONE WORSHIP SERVICE 11:30 am Pot Luck Luncheon & Egg Hunt 5 pm Chancel Ringers	30	31 10:30 am Tai Chi				



"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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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

