



ARE WE THERE YET?

A SUMMER SERIES ON THE ROAD WITH JESUS

JULY 2026 RIVERSIDE REPORTER

Every summer, I think back to family vacations and childhood road trips. Most of my memories involve snacks, car games, and the folding maps (Mom called them "TripTiks") that took up the whole front seat. I also remember staring out the window and asking, "*Are we there yet?*"

It's a fitting question for our summer worship series. Throughout the Bible, God's people are often on the move. Abraham, Moses, the Israelites, Ruth, and the disciples all discover that **faith is less about arriving quickly and more about trusting the One who travels with us.** Jesus himself spent much of his ministry on the road, meeting people where they were and inviting them into a life of present grace and future hope.

As Christians, we *know* that we aren't 'there yet' and like any roadtrip, there are long stretches along the way, but also moments of joy, surprise, and grace that remind us we are getting somewhere. **God has not yet finished making all things new, but God is already at work.** **We have not yet reached the destination, but Christ walks beside us.** The world is not yet as it should be, but we are invited to participate in God's healing, justice, and love each day.

As I begin my renewal leave this summer, I am grateful for this season of rest and renewal in my own journey with God. I look forward to returning to worship with you on the second Sunday in August, refreshed for the next stretch of our ministry together. In the meantime, I invite you to warmly welcome our gifted guest preachers as they lead us in reflecting on the many roads of faith and the God who is always with us along the way.

Wherever this summer finds you, whether on the road, on vacation, or simply enjoying a slower pace, may you be reminded that God is faithful in every step of the journey.


Emily Knight

ARE WE THERE YET? NOT COMPLETELY;
STILL WE WALK BY FAITH EACH DAY
CHRIST BESIDE US, SPIRIT IN US,
LEAD US, LIFE AND TRUTH AND WAY
TIL AT LAST YOUR WORK IS FINISHED,
WHEN YOUR PEACE FILLS EARTH AND SEA,
WE SHALL JOIN THE SAINTS IN SINGING:
"LOVE HAS WON THE VICTORY."
(TUNE: "COME THOU FOUNT")

STAFF PASTOR RELATIONS COMMITTEE NEWS

Introducing: Chef Karen

SPRC is happy to introduce a new face in our Wednesday ministry kitchen: Chef Karen Caldwell. A graduate of the Sulzbacher Culinary Arts Program, Karen has lots of experience cooking for large groups. A kind, caring, warm spiritual person, Karen believes in strong values and caring for the community. She loves Food Network, Golden Girls and crime shows. And firmly believes that God puts you where you need to be.



Introducing Brandon Whitley:

Our church has a new team leader for AV! Brandon and his family worshipped with us for several Sundays before he applied for the tech position. A project manager and business trainer by day, Brandon has 5 years of experience running worship tech and empowering ministry teams at his previous church. We are happy to welcome Brandon, his wife Becca, and their two daughters to our RPUMC family!

Pastor Emily on Renewal Leave

Blessings to Pastor Emily as she takes her renewal leave June 24 - August 5.

This is a well-deserved break, and we look forward to her return, refreshed and ready to go!

This time away is set aside for rest, spiritual reflection, and quality time with family. During her leave, pastoral care and spiritual support will continue to be available through a team of pastors who have agreed to serve on call. Please call the church office if you have a pastoral care need.



WEDNESDAY NIGHT MINISTRIES

Items Needed:
Sunscreen
Bug Repellent



Summer is a time of struggle for our neighbors with the heat and thunderstorms. Summer is also a time WNM has more folks coming to our door. We continue to give gallons of lemonade and delicious dinners cooked by our new chef, Chef Karen. Importantly our volunteers give love, attention, and prayers to each neighbor.

Thank you all for your love, prayers, and support to WNM.

I was hungry,
you gave me
something to eat.
I was thirsty,
you gave me
something to drink.
I was a stranger,
you invited me in.
I needed clothes,
you clothed me.
Matthew 25:35-36

STORIES OF GENEROSITY

June 7th was National Cancer Survivors Day. During worship, one of our students drew this picture and their family delivered it to a local hospital where the nurses could choose someone to receive it.

To everyone who has fought or is fighting cancer: we honor your fight and your victory. And we stand with you. You are not alone!!!!



“Lord, Make generosity part of discipleship in our church.”

Several months ago, I was going from the Fellowship Hall, where I had enjoyed one of our Methodist Men’s Pancake Breakfasts, to the Choir Room when I encountered a man entering the McCord Building by the doors next to the elevator. He looked a little lost. I introduced myself and asked if I could help him. He asked if this was the church that fed people. Assuming he was hungry and looking for a meal, I explained that we do provide a meal for folks but only on Weekdays. I told him that this morning we happen to be serving breakfast downstairs and offered to escort him to the Fellowship Hall and help him get breakfast. He replied, “You miss understand, I’m not hungry. I was driving by on Wednesday and saw you all feeding people and wanted to stop in this morning and make a contribution to support what you are doing.” With that he stuck out his hand with a wad of cash. I thanked him for what he wanted to do and took him to Pastor Emily who spoke with him and received his contribution. Sometimes, we can be the beneficiaries of the generosity of complete strangers. – David Holladay

NEW MEMBER CLASS COMING SOON

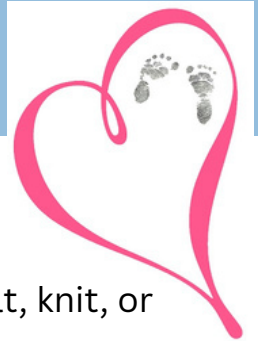
Our next class for new members will begin soon! We will begin with a church campus tour on Sunday, September 20 which will be led by Marc Julia. This tour is open to ALL. Pastor Emily will lead a series of classes for 3 Sunday mornings (October 4, 11 and 18), culminating with the reception of new members on Sunday, October 25. 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.

RPUMC CHURCH CAMPUS TOUR
SEPTEMBER 20 @ 10 A.M.
MEET AT THE SANCTUARY WELCOME TABLE

NEW MEMBER CLASSES
STARTING OCTOBER 4 AT 10 A.M.
3 SESSIONS (10/4, 10/11, AND 10/18)
FOR MORE INFO: MEMBERSHIP@RIVERSIDEPARKUMC.COM

MARGARET'S MEMORIES



Here is what has been going on: Memory boxes have been donated to Baptist Medical Center, UF Downtown & St. Vincent's Southside. A special thank you to the volunteers that have been able to quality control and deliver them!

If you have been trained to quality control --- I could use your help! If you quilt, knit, or crochet we need large blankets for boys & girls.

The Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance conference was a powerful conference. The topics were on point with current events and was a way for me to recharge and refocus on the needs of the families we serve. I have been blessed with a donations from The Amanda Bethany Strong Memorial foundation and a stipend form The Baptist Foundation that has covered conference fees, hotel, and travel expenses.

*Save
The
Date*

- **August TBA: Fall Bracelet Making**
- **September TBA: Box Making**
- **October 2 - 4: Loss Momma Wellness Retreat Camp Chowenwaw**
- **October 5: Make a memorial candle to use for the International Wave of Light - for loss parents/grandparents**

If you need more information on the events please contact 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 Face Book!

TRUSTEES UPDATE

During the first month of Park Thrive, the Trustees has received over \$1,000 in parking income. Remember, parking is always free for church activities including Sunday worship, Tai Chi classes, committee meetings, etc. You don't need to scan the code in the parking lot during those times, but if you do, you can validate your parking session by scanning the QR code on the bulletin board by the front door of the McCord building.

Thank you to Rick Bible, Woody Garner, Wyatt Snipes, Chris Western and Michael Whiteman for working hard around campus. Recently, the team laid stones near the chiller in an effort to protect the coils from dirt and grime, patched and painted some wall damage, and other minor repairs. Thank you, gentlemen!



MID-YEAR FINANCE UPDATE

RPUMC is on track for a strong financial year. Working within a \$2,500,000 budget, and after a period of temporarily borrowing from ourselves, we have now returned \$40,000 from our operating account back into savings. We give thanks for the faithful generosity that makes this possible and supports the ongoing ministry of the church.

Our church continues to do meaningful work in many areas of ministry, supported by 29 separate ministries with nearly \$100,000 in designated funds. These resources help sustain and extend the mission and outreach of RPUMC throughout the year.

As we move into the mid-year season, the Finance Team will be preparing for the launch of a new software system, reviewing policies and procedures, and beginning the annual budget and audit process. We are grateful for all who serve in these important behind-the-scenes roles that help support the life of the church.

As summer approaches, we also give thanks for continued, faithful generosity during a season when routines and travel often shift. Your ongoing support remains essential in sustaining the ministries and mission of RPUMC throughout the year.

Thank you for the many ways you support RPUMC and the ministries we are able to share together.

FAMILY MINISTRY

VBS Sign Up
Here



The Kids Club team invites you on a “Walking on the Road with Jesus, a journey through the Bible”. Scan the QR code below so you can follow along each week and do the activities at home.

Walk with Us



RPUMC VBS ON THE ROAD with Jesus

Block Parties and the Bible



Join us for faith, fun & adventure,
Ages 5-12 | July 11 & 25
Location: A neighborhood near you!



VBS On the Road in June



THANK YOU TO THE YOUTH



I want to thank the RPUMC youth and Bobby Brazell for the generosity of their time in helping me get the leaves in my yard raked. While recovering from heart surgery I have to be careful about certain physical activity. I approached Bobby about the possibility of the church youth helping me with raking my yard in exchange for a financial contribution to assist with their projects or activities. Bobby said something to me that I greatly appreciate. He said, “I don’t know if the youth will be interested in doing that, but one way or another, someone in this church will get it done for you. We have your back.” I am so glad to be part of a church like that, where we truly take care of one another. If I can ever do anything to have your back, you have only to let me know. The youth raked 47 bags of leaves. Thank you again for your generous service.

--David Holladay

WALKING — ON THE — ROAD WITH JESUS

A Journey Through the Bible

We are on a
journey with God!
As you learn each
story, check it off
and keep walking
on the road
with Jesus!



START
(GOD CALLS
PEOPLE!)

1 Adam & Eve
in the Garden
Genesis 3:8-9

2 Abraham's
Journey
Genesis 12:4

3 Joseph's
Journey to
Egypt
Genesis 50:20-21

4 Moses Leads
the Exodus
Exodus 13:20-21

5 Moses on
Mount Sinai
Exodus 19:3-4

6 Ruth's Journey
to Bethlehem
Ruth 1:16

NEXT STOP:
WALKING
WITH JESUS!

7 Mary and
Joseph's Journey
to Jerusalem
Luke 2:48-49

8 Jesus Calls
the Disciples
Mark 1:16-17
Matthew 9:9

9 Jesus Sends Out
the 72
Luke 10:2

10 The Good
Samaritan
Luke 10:36-37

11 Zacchaeus
Luke 19:9-10

12 Bartimaeus
Mark 10:51-52

KEEP
GOING!

13 The Road to
Damascus
Acts 9:15

14 The Road to
Emmaus
Luke 24:30-32

15 Jesus Walks
With Us Today
Matthew 28:19-20

I CAN WALK
WITH JESUS
EVERY DAY!

YOU DID IT!

This map belongs to: _____



Thank you to John Larsen, the Chancel Choir, the Chancel Ringers, Mary Holladay, Brenda Scott, the hospitality team, and the youth servers for the wonderful concert and “sold-out” dinner in May.



Pastor Emily with Kit & Corky Thomas at Annual Conference

A BUSY SUMMER AT RPUMC!

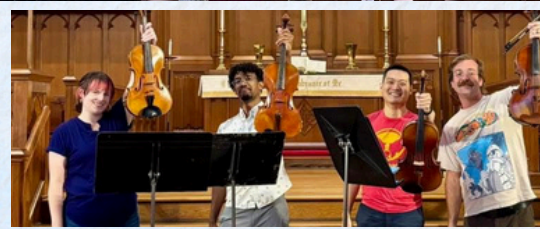
YMCA Summer Camp



Prelude Camp



The Mental Health & Wholeness Group learning about Music Therapy.



The NE District Zoe Empowers Group in Rwanda



MENTAL HEALTH AND WHOLENESS

Next Gathering:
July 10 @ Noon

SECOND FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH
IN THE CHURCH OFFICE.

FREEDOM, FOOD, AND FUN COOKOUT

NEW DATE

SUNDAY, JULY 26TH
@ 4PM
FELLOWSHIP HALL

CHURCH-WIDE FUN
HOSTED BY OUR
HOSPITALITY TEAM
(DINNER BY
DONATION)



SEND
US YOUR
STORIES OF GENEROSITY



Generosity@
riversideparkumc.com

SAVE THE DATE

09.18.2026



PAUL FEY, ORGANIST
RIVERSIDE PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Fuel the Mission

Give Online:

RPUMC.mywell.org

(Please select ACH transfers
for lower processing fees.)

—or—

Text "RPUMC" to 40101



Thank you!

RIVER CITY CHORUS MUSIC CONCERT

SUNDAY, JULY 19TH @ 3PM



RPUMC SANCTUARY

Wednesday Ministries:

food, clothing & hygiene items

3,415 free meals served
since January 1st

BE A HERO IN WORSHIP!
JOIN THE
TECH TEAM!



HELP NEEDED WITH SLIDES
OR SOUND OR LIVE STREAM

SIGN UP TODAY VIA
CONNECT CARD!



Our RPUMC Mission:

**"To empower
others to live
life abundantly
in Christ."**





1st Doug Matthews
2nd Keith Hall
3rd Carly Gunby
Amanda Springer
4th Teresa Meyer
EJ Waters
5th Henley Gunby
Susan Stone
6th Jennie Bibb
Tucker Griffith
Rafael Julia
9th Joye Hampton
10th Tim Riechmann
12th Caden Bridges
Bonnie Dudley
13th Blake Griffith
16th Matt Hemphill
19th Penelope Diao
20th John Cogburn
22nd Meghan Waters
23rd Chuck Pickren
25th Mia Anderson
Alex Anderson
27th Ashley Alston
29th Amelia Alvarado
Sara Fenwick
30th David Morcom

**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**

**There will be no committee
meetings in July.**

SPR Committee
August 4 at 6:00 p.m.

Board of Trustees
August 17 at 6:00 p.m.

Finance Committee
August 18 at 4:00 p.m.

Church Council
August 18 at 6:00 p.m.

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

† **Jennie Bibb**
† **Emory Cook**
† **Jo Herron**
† **Sandy Murphy**
† **Carole Rooks**
† **Wanda Smith**
† **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

The YMCA Summer Camp will be on campus from June 1—August 8.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 5:15 pm Free Dinners	2 7 pm Tai Chi	3 OFFICE CLOSED	4 Independence Day
5 COMMUNION Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Sunday School/Groups	6	7 10:30 am Tai Chi	8 5:15 pm Free Dinners	9 7 pm Tai Chi	10 12 pm Mental Health & Wholeness	11
12 Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Sunday School/Groups	13	14 10:30 am Tai Chi	15 5:15 pm Free Dinners	16 7 pm Tai Chi	17 Newsletter Deadline	18
19 Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Sunday School/Groups 3:00 River City Chorus Concert	20	21 10:30 am Tai Chi	22 5:15 pm Free Dinners	23 7 pm Tai Chi	24	25
26 Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am 10 am Sunday School/Groups 4:00 pm Freedom, Food, & Fun Cook-Out	27	28 10:30 am Tai Chi	29 5:15 pm Free Dinners	30 7 pm Tai Chi	31	



RIVERSIDE PARK

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"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

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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

