



The Spark

Ignite the Possibilities: Be the Light of God

January 2017

BEING THE LIGHT OF GOD

2017!



**Celebrate New Year's Eve
At Riviera Presbyterian Church**

December 31st from 6-9pm!

**Please RSVP
and Sign-up to bring a dish to share!**

**Please RSVP to Ellen Anderson at
schatzie49@att.net**

Epiphany Sunday

**January 1, 2017
11:00am Worship**

Riviera Presbyterian Church

#IgniteThePossibilities

**5275 Sunset Drive | Miami, FL 33143
305-666-8586-office
www.rivierachurch.org**



January 2017

Dear Riviera Family,

A New Year! We greet it with open arms and big dreams: New Hope! New Promise! New Beginnings! A New Year! We also greet it with fear: Insecurities, uncertainty, and unrest.... within a change in the social and political climate in our world....

How does the church respond???? As it always has... with love.

We don't know what the future will bring. Is the world really changing?

There are plenty of news articles warning us of growing prejudice, of increasing closed mindedness to people who are outside the norm, of an intolerance to the outsider and the stranger among us, and an indifference to those without power and prestige.

But there are growing numbers of people who are standing up to this change in ethos. Movements have started. Women frightened by losing the rights they have gained in the past half century are convening in Washington DC January 21st. Members of the LGBTQ community are not going back into the shadows of society after gaining equal rights and acceptance these past few years. People in our country are realizing there is indeed a reason for the Black Lives Movement in our country. People are voicing that the immigrants among us are to be valued as important to our country and society. And people are coming to realize the importance of the fact that we are all God's children whether we call God's name Father, Mother, Yahweh, or Allah.

And Riviera Church will continue to respond with love as it has in the past. We who take Jesus' commandment to love God and others as ourselves must lead by example as we always have. God calls us to combat hatred, and to work to change fear of strangers and the marginalization of people. There has never been a more important time for us to live out and share the message of love with those who come into our doors, those who are our neighbors in Miami, our country, and our world.

May God equip us for the ministry that is given to us in 2017. Amen.

In Love and In Christ,

Missy



“Short term and Long term Mission”

I was sitting at my desk at working reflecting on the relationships I have made in these last 4 months in Miami. Relationships that took time to cultivate and were sometimes challenging, but ultimately these are the relationships that I can not see myself living without. And I thought, a year of mission is just that-- a year that allows you to live out your own mission and create relationships of solidarity, faith, understanding, chaos, intentionality, confusion, love, community, and to be challenged as to what all of those words mean.

Could I have discovered this if I had only served in Miami for one week? My answer: No!

The terms "short-term mission" and "long-term mission" are used to describe the length of time at which individuals and groups of people (college groups or youth groups) serve with a community. For the purpose of this blog, "Short-term mission", to me, would be a week or weekend whereas "long-term mission" would be a year-long commitment (like YAV or JVCs) or a long-term partnership. I believe these terms differ in many ways, but they fundamentally differ in how building relationships are lived out.

I have been on many short-term trips and have enjoyed each and every one of them. However, I noticed that by only spending a week with a community I tended to compartmentalize them; only thinking of the people I met in terms of their role in the soup kitchen we served in or only remembering them for teaching my group how to paint a house. After a mission trip it is a common question to ask, "How do we bring this week back to where we came from before?" I always said I did not want to forget the people I had met. But did I truly met them? Did I really even know them? Looking back I wish I knew more about them and remember them for the people that there are and not were in that short week I spent with them.

There is some potential for harm here. By not fully understanding where someone is coming from it is easy to make judgements about their way of life. It takes time and a willingness to understand someone's values, culture, language, socioeconomic differences and overall worldview. This challenge can be avoided though on short-term mission. Despite this, these challenge can be avoided on short-term mission. By preparing for a mission experience groups and individuals can take time to learn about the geographic, economic and social structures about the place they are serving. They can send letters to hosts and begin a dialogue to initiate the building of relationships. With these tools, I believe, short-term mission could be more successful and impactful.

A year long mission allows me to do just that. Experiencing the good days and the bad with my placements and community has allowed me to see the full scope of who the people I love so much truly are. I've learned about their passions, quirks, and what pushes their buttons. So far my year of mission as exposed me to experiencing emotions of empathy, grief, and celebration. In turn, the community I have built here in Miami have seen the person that I am too, but have gone a step further, and have pushed me to consider things I never thought possible and have give me the tools to be my best self.

-JG

-- Jillian Gardner, Young Adult Volunteer PCUSA

Christian Education News



Sunday School will resume on Sunday, January 8th at 11:15am.



Youth Group will resume on Sunday, January 8th at 11:15am.



Theology Over Morning Java will resume on Sunday, January 8th at 9:30am.

The Women's Study group will meet on Thursday, January 12 at 7:00pm in the church library.



THEOLOGY
uncorked

2nd Sunday | Monthly | 5 - 7pm | Titanic Restaurant & Brewery
5813 Ponce De Leon Blvd, Coral Gables



Theology Uncorked will resume Sunday, January 8th at 5pm at Titanic Restaurant and Brewery.

Fellowship & Community News

happy
birthday
to you!

January Birthdays

Karen Moyer—6

Mary Harrison—12

Carolina Friedhoff—18

Michael Zubizarreta—26

Potluck!

Sunday
after
church

Sunday, January 1—First Sunday Potluck Luncheon after worship. Please bring a dish to share.

11:00am Worship



50+ Luncheon

January 25th at Noon

Please RSVP to Gerry at 305-509-0229
Or Bonnie at 305-323-7678

CABARET

February 25th

Riviera Presbyterian Church

is open to all who want to be part of a community of faith seeking to being the light of God.
God makes no distinction among people and neither do we.

Mission Statement

Riviera Presbyterian Church is a spiritual community engaged in joyful worship, transformative education, and active service being the light of God.

Riviera Presbyterian Church Presents

PacMan & Maestro: “The” Concert



Friday, January 20 — 7:00pm — 9:00pm

Here is the perfect way to end the week —

Listening to favorite songs, having a little nosh and drink.

Riviera Presbyterian
Church

5275 Sunset Drive
Miami, FL 33143

Phone: 305-666-8586
Email:
rivierachurch@bellsouth.net



**Performing Bryan Page (Pacman)
Accompanied by Warren Broome on
piano**

Mission News



We are honored to host another GATE Graduation Dinner on Thursday, January 26 from 6-9pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Please RSVP to Mimi Sutherland at 786-466-8400



Riviera's Earth Care Team encourages everyone to practice the 3 r's (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) You may drop off your old electronic items that have a plug or take batteries. The electronic bin is located on the South side of Fellowship Hall.

Session News

Annual Congregational Meeting

The Session of Riviera Presbyterian Church calls the congregation on Sunday, January 22, 2017 after worship for the annual congregational meeting.

2017 PER CAPITA

One of the great strengths of our denomination is its connectionism. Presbyterians in the Presbytery of Tropical Florida are tied to the larger church in ministry. One concrete form of that connection is through our per-capita. Every Presbyterian church in the country is required to pay a certain amount for each active member on its rolls. This money goes to support the work and ministry of our church throughout the country. **For the year 2017, our per-capita apportionment is \$33**, which is split for the work of the Presbytery of Tropical Florida, the Synod of South Atlantic and our General Assembly. Please help Riviera pay the per capita by sending in \$33 per active church member in your family. Thank you.

Worship News



Sundays at 11:00am

Sunday, January 1—Epiphany & Communion Sunday—Resolved in 2017 :To Become a Radiant Person—Rev. Martha Shiverick

Sunday, January 8—Baptism of the Lord—Rev. Rosemary Welton

Sunday, January 15—2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday, January 22—3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday, January 29—Blessing of the Animals

Blessing of the Animals



You are invited to bring your pet/s to be blessed on Sunday, January 29th. Please tell your friends and family.

**Riviera Presbyterian Church
5275 Sunset Drive
Miami, FL 33143
(305) 666-8586
11:00am Sunday
Service**

**rivierachurch@bellsouth.net
Visit us on the web at**

Did you hear?

Church attendance is correlated with longer life and a sense of meaning. Read the article in USA Today:

<http://usat.ly/2eCspv5>