



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
451 Riviera Drive NE • Palm Bay, FL • 32905

*“Thinking Openly, Believing Passionately, Serving Boldly”*



FEBRUARY 2011

## THE MESSENGER

WWW.RIVIERAUCC.ORG

### What is Stewardship?

At Riviera United Church of Christ, we believe that good stewardship is about the wise use of church resources to the benefit of members and guests of the church, as well as using these resources in the community to improve the lives of other people and show responsibility for the natural resources of the world. In short, it is about taking care, education and showing love.

### Who is RUCC’s Stewardship team?

The Stewardship Committee of Paul and Pat Lucas, Nancy and David Cook, and Amy Lewis normally meet on the last Tuesday of each month at 5:30 PM to discuss ways to raise funds for RUCC, and create good communication with RUCC members, enabling us to show care and love to all. This is a voluntary committee not appointed by the congregation, so if you would like to suggest a fundraiser or become part of this committee, just contact one of us.

### How often does Stewardship happen?

The Stewardship Committee works all year to manage the church’s per capita (member fee) drive and the annual pledge drive. The team also manages the four nationally sanctioned UCC funds; **One Great Hour of Sharing in April** impacts over 80 countries, offering hope by working with international partners to provide health, education, refugee, and emergency relief initiatives. **Strengthen our Church in June** helps fund new church starts, nurtures lay leadership and builds church ministries. **Neighbors in Need in October** supports justice initiatives, advocacy efforts and service projects of the United Church of Christ. The **Christmas Fund in December** goes directly to assist retired, ill, disabled, and unemployed clergy.

### Where does the money go?

Locally, RUCC’s **Annual Pledge Drive** is for the general operating fund (“**Ministry & Missions**”) that pays staff, utility bills, and other expenses that keep our doors open, the **Building Fund** pays the church’s mortgage, and the **Shepherd’s Fund** is a special fund administered by the pastor to help those in need. **Per Capita** is a member fee required from each church by the national office. **Save our Savings** (previously Close-the-Gap) strives to supplement these drives in order to eliminate the use of our savings at the end of the year. *All donations are optional, but provide funding for the ongoing work of Riviera UCC.* The four special offerings are sanctioned and approved by the national boards of the UCC and all funds collected are forwarded to the appropriate national office. *While an appeal for donations is made for each fund, gifts to these funds are optional.*

### OUR MISSION

Welcoming and accepting all people.  
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Encouraging freedom and responsibility to explore our lives of faith by studying and worshipping together.  
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Sharing the love of God found in the teachings of Jesus.  
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Working for justice for all people, striving to demonstrate God’s love for all creation.  
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Building a family of believers where people are nurtured and equipped for ministry.



### Church Council Members

Moderator: George ‘Butch’ Litteral

Vice-Moderator: Dick Rhinehart

Vice-Moderator: Billy Lane

Clerk: Kathy Nilan

Treasurer: Paul Lucas

Assistant Treasurer: Joni Isaman

Financial Secretary: Nancy Cook

Asst. Financial Secretary: Bonnie Hankins

Asst. Financial Secretary: Patricia Lawson

Financial Minister: Michael Ross

Finance Minister: Lisa Leslie

Finance Minister: Nancy Marsh

Teaching Minister: Carol Robinson

Teaching Minister: Kathy Hufford

Teaching Minister: Cathy Carnes

Spiritual Minister: Wesley Main

Spiritual Minister: Phyllis Yanis

Spiritual Minister: Margaret Ann Eisenmenger

## From Our Pastor

The Reverend Scott Elliott

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I cannot believe I am already writing a February newsletter for 2011. Didn't we just finish the summer 2010 Shakespeare play? Which reminds me it has been more than three years since I started serving here as the sole pastor, and four and a half years since I first arrived as the assistant pastor. Where did the time go? Time is kinda funny that way. It goes by fast when you enjoy what you do.

For me time is the measurement of a parts of a day and series of days, basically the linear distance between intervals of creation's existence. I have from time to time tried to understand time from a more sophisticated and scientific view, things like string theory and folding space and Einstein's special theory of relativity. But I just cannot seem to understand these more complicated ideas of time. I see time as notches on a circle (like a clock) or days in month (like a calendar) or years in history (like a time line).

The authors of the books of the Bible seem to have understood time as I do. The most famous time verse is probably Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.

*For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.*

This is where the text is usually ended. But it is interesting to read further. In verse 9 the author asks,

"What gain have the workers from their toil?" and then answers that question in the verses that follow: "I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. He has made everything suitable for its time;

moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end." This literally means that all that God has made is suitable as it is right now and that no matter how hard we try we cannot figure why things have happen or what will happen.

That is quite interesting, but there's an unheralded part of Ecclesiastes 3 that I want to especially hold up in this letter. At verse 12 and 13 the author writes, "I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil." I hold this up because as the pastor at this church I feel that I have received the "nothing better for them" part of this text. Serving, even toiling, as the pastor Riviera United Church of Christ has made me happy and I find that I am enjoying myself here. The past three years have gone by so quickly for me because you are all so great to be around, and the work that I do I take great pleasure in.

Thank you for that!

Finally, I note that verse 13 indicates that, "it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil." And I want to thank you all for working to help others experience God's gift to all, by providing care for those in need through the church. People get to eat and drink because of your generosity year in and year out. Riviera UCC is helping to bring this gift of God's to as many as we can. And God bless all of you for your efforts to do so.

Your Brother in Christ,

**Rev. Scott Elliott**



### Lent Study Series

Join us in our weekly lent studies each Tuesday beginning March 15th. Chili will be served at 6:30 PM and discussions around the book, "Remedial Christianity" will run through April 19th. Led by Rev. Elliott & Nancy Cook.



## General Synod News

Following is a letter from the General Synod about an exciting contest:

Friends,

The idea is to invite local churches to submit an idea or vision that they "imagined" and then worked to make possible. It could be a mission project, a new worship service, a new way of working with youth, something that challenged the congregation in a new way and then the congregation stepped out and worked for and they look back now and are both thankful and amazed that they pulled it off! You may all know of such stories among your congregations. Well, the Program and Planning Committee knows these "good news" stories are out there and is inviting churches to share them.. There will be a winning church from each region and the pastor and a lay person from the six winners will be given an expense paid trip to General Synod where they will be honored. My request to you today is that you share the news of this contest with your local churches in your electronic newsletters or however you communicate with your churches. The link with the details is <http://www.ucc.org/synod/contest.html>.

This is an effort to not only highlight and encourage innovation and imagination but to also share good news and good ministry being done across the life of the church and to connect local churches to the Synod experience. I hope you will help us spread the word so that many of our churches will participate. I think the link will provide all of the information needed, but please let me know if you have questions.

Edith Guffey  
Associate General Minister  
United Church of Christ

### ***Volunteers needed!***

The Florida Conference is hosting General Synod in Tampa, July 1-5. Synod meets every two years and is a gathering of people delegated by our 38 Conferences to represent the United Church of Christ and to address important matters relating to the church.

Be a part of this as a Synod volunteer. Volunteers are asked to commit to one or more four-hour shifts. Everyone who attends Synod must register and pay a registration fee. The fee for a volunteer is \$100 (50% of the regular registration fee and entitles you to attend all activities and events, except those that are only open to delegates).

Here are some of the ways Synod volunteers will assist:

- Staff information booth at the Convention Center and hotels
- Assist Registrar of General Synod at the registration area
- Floor Stewards assist in floor management of Synod sessions
- Youth Stewards (14 – 18 years old) help during all plenary sessions
- Assist participants with special needs to fully participate in the activities of Synod
- Children's Program and Child Care volunteers provide child care for infants through 5<sup>th</sup> graders
- Worship Ushers



Thousands of cookies will also be needed and churches will be receiving information about how they can share the love by baking cookies! A sign-up form is available on the non-profit board near the front office.

How do I volunteer? To begin the process, go to the Florida Conference website, [www.uccfla.org/uccfla/General\\_Synod\\_2011.html](http://www.uccfla.org/uccfla/General_Synod_2011.html) or call Jo Pritchett, Synod Volunteer Coordinator, at 386-626-3378.



## RUCC Financial Health Report:

The financial report for RUCC through the end of December 2010 is as follows:

Year to Date Actual Income:	<b>\$199,426.02</b>	YTD Budgeted Income:	<b>\$192,687.50</b>
Year to Date Actual Expenses:	<b>\$223,259.02</b>	YTD Budgeted Expense:	<b>\$226,778.90</b>
Per Capita Collected:	\$1,539.00	YTD Per Capita Required:	\$2,247.00

Close the Gap Collected as of December 2010: **\$14,705.21**

After twelve full months of 2010 the actual income is \$6,738.52 higher than the budgeted income. Also, the actual expenses are \$3,519.88 lower than the budgeted expenses. The 2010 gap between the actual income vs expenses is now \$24,036.85.

Pledges for the 2011 drive to cover general operations are still being received. The results of the 2011 Pledge Campaign as of the completion of December are 58 pledges for \$126,700.00. The projected budget for 2011 is over \$220,000. The pledges make up 75% of the church's income. The goal this year is to obtain 68 pledges for a total of \$136,000.00. If you would like to pledge or change your pledge, please submit your pledge card anytime at the office or on any Sunday by placing your pledge card in the offering plate. You may also give the pledge card to Nancy Cook, Bonnie Hankins, or Pat Lawson. Pledge cards are available at the office or near the sound booth in the Sanctuary. Remember, you can change your pledge at any time during the year.

The Council has developed the 2011 budget which was presented at the January 30th Congregational meeting. The total from the pledges, along with the projected income from other sources, subtracted from the projected budget, provides the 2011 gap that is filled from reserves.

Everyone deserves special thanks for the great effort to minimize use of the reserves in 2010. Please continue your efforts on into 2011.

Paul Lucas  
RUCC Treasurer

Treasurer's

Corner

## Notes from the Financial Secretary

From the  
Financial  
Secretary



**Electronic giving:** An electronic giving option is available for all church members. It's an easy way to automatically keep your pledges current. Riviera United Church of Christ (RUCC) contracts with Vanco Services, a company recommended by the United Church of Christ, to securely provide electronic withdrawal services for a reasonable fee (paid by the church) to RUCC. The church offers the option of one or two withdrawal(s) from your account per month. Withdrawals occur on the 1<sup>st</sup> and on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

I, personally, use this option to pay my pledge and have found it very convenient for keeping my finances and pledges on schedule. If you are interested in electronic giving, contact Nancy Cook at [ndcook963@bellsouth.net](mailto:ndcook963@bellsouth.net) or by telephone at (321) 409-8231.

**Per capita:** Each year, Riviera United Church of Christ (RUCC) is assessed \$14.50 by the national UCC office for each member. That \$14.50 per person assessment is called *per capita*. The council of RUCC requests that each member pay that assessment fee themselves. RUCC owes that money to national regardless of whether you pay your per capita or not; any per capita amounts not collected from members, are paid from our "Ministry & Mission" operating funds. The money collected for per capita is used to support the national church and our Florida Conference.

**Envelopes:** All who requested and used weekly giving envelopes in 2010 were provided envelopes for the 2011 giving year. If you no longer want envelopes, please return them to Nancy Cook, Bonnie Hankins, or Pat Lawson. I still have several boxes of 2011 envelopes.

Submitted by Nancy Cook



# FEBRUARY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Bible Study 12:00 Noon "Green" Team 6:30 PM Choir 7 - 8:30 PM	3 Youth Group 4 PM - 6 PM	4	5  HomeBase 6-9 PM
6 <u>Worship Services:</u> Traditional - 9 AM Photo Appointments Adult Seminar - 10 :10 Contemporary - 11 AM Kids' Sun School 11:10 Photo Appointments RIC 3 PM	7  Finance Mtg 7 PM  HomeBase 6-9 PM	8	9 Justice Ministry Meeting 10 AM  Bible Study 12:00 Noon  Choir 7 - 8:30 PM	10  Youth Group 4 PM - 6 PM	11  Mateh Chaim 7PM	12 Pastoral Relations 10:30 AM  HomeBase 6-9 PM
13 <u>Worship Services:</u> Traditional - 9 AM Photo Appointments Adult Seminar - 10 :10 Contemporary - 11 AM Kids' Sun School 11:10 Photo Appointments Council 1 PM RIC 3 PM	14  HomeBase 6-9 PM	15	16 Bible Study 12:00 Noon  Choir 7 - 8:30 PM	17  Youth Group 4 PM - 6 PM	18 ACLU Town Hall Meeting 6-9 PM	19 Men's BFast @ Checmarks 9 AM ACLU Training 8 AM - 2 PM  HomeBase 6-9 PM
20 <u>Worship Services:</u> Traditional - 9 AM Photo Appointments Adult Seminar - 10 :10 Contemporary - 11 AM Kids' Sun School 11:10 Photo Appointments ByLaws Mtg 1 PM RIC 3 PM	21 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> Ladies Evening Group 6:30PM  HomeBase 6-9 PM <i>President's Day</i>	22 MESSENGER Article Deadline  Riviera Key Home-owners 7 PM	23 Bible Study 12:00 Noon Youth Group 4 PM - 6 PM Choir 7 - 8:30 PM	24  Youth Group 4 PM - 6 PM	25  Mateh Chaim 7PM	26  HomeBase 6-9 PM
27 <u>Worship Services:</u> Traditional - 9 AM Photo Appointments Adult Seminar - 10 :10 Contemporary - 11 AM Kids' Sun School 11:10 Photo Appointments New Member Mtg 12 RIC 3 PM	28 Daily Bread 10A-2P  PFLAG 6:00 PM  HomeBase 6-9 PM	9:00 AM - Traditional Worship 10:10 AM - Adult Sunday School 11:00 AM - Contemporary Worship 11:10 AM - Kids' Sunday School				

*Want to learn more about the United Church of Christ? Have questions about Riviera UCC membership? Join us...*

**NEW MEMBER INFO MEETING**  
*Sunday, February 27th*  
 Directly after the 11 AM Worship Service.

Available appointment times for our 2011 Member Photo Directory portraits are directly after each service, with make-ups by appointment only. You do not need to be an RUCC member to have your photo in the directory, and any family wishing to submit their own photo may do so. A sign-up sheet is on the information counter in the narthex.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

*Ash Wednesday*

There will be two services of worship on **Wednesday, March 9th.**

**Noon and 7:00 PM**

**RUCC Youth Group**

The weekly meeting has changed to Thursday. Currently, we are discussing the history and social customs of King Arthur's Knights. Our next night out will be on the 17th, and we will be meeting at the movies. All youth ages 13-18 are welcome to join us!





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[www.rivieraucc.org](http://www.rivieraucc.org)



The **MESSENGER Newsletter** is a monthly publication of Riviera United Church of Christ in Palm Bay, Florida and is also available online:

[www.rivieraucc.org/Newsletter](http://www.rivieraucc.org/Newsletter)

**Deadline** for material to be published is the **third Monday** of each month. All items are subject to approval and editorial changes. Articles or information may be submitted to the church office in hard copy form or by email: [arlewis@rivieraucc.org](mailto:arlewis@rivieraucc.org)

To receive **The MESSENGER Newsletter** by mail, please send your written request to the church front office. Please include \$15 (or whatever you can afford) to cover costs for the year.

**OUR VISION**

Thinking Openly

Believing Passionately

Serving Boldly



**Church Office:** 451 Riviera Drive NE  
 Palm Bay, FL 32905

**Website:** [www.rivieraucc.org](http://www.rivieraucc.org)

**Phone:** (321) 723-3963

**Fax:** (321) 723-1281

**Email:** [rivieraucc@rivieraucc.org](mailto:rivieraucc@rivieraucc.org)

**Hours:** 9 AM to 1 PM, Monday-Thursday  
 9 AM to 12 PM, Friday

**SUNDAY WORSHIP**

Traditional Service  
 9:00 AM

Adult Sunday School  
 10:10 AM

Contemporary Service  
 11:00 AM

Kid's Sunday School  
 11:10 AM

*Our pastor, Rev. Scott Elliott generally schedules himself to be at the church from 9 AM to 5 PM Saturday through Wednesday. He works many more hours, however, coming in early and staying late (and working at home too). If you need to contact Scott, please contact him at the church or make an appointment to see him. When possible, please avoid calling Scott at home for church matters unless an emergency arises. Scott's email is:*

[selliott@rivieraucc.org](mailto:selliott@rivieraucc.org)