Greetings to each one of you in the Awesome Name of Our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ.

In response to a number of your thoughts and questions, with regards to the very unfortunate recent situation in our beloved United Methodist Denomination, I humbly and prayerfully offer the following summary reflection!

On Wednesday, July 13, 2016 - Rev. Karen Oliveto, a pastor of an UMC in San Francisco, California - was nominated and elected Bishop by the Delegates of the Western Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church. The Rev. Oliveto is an openly gay woman who is married to her wife, which by Church Law in The Book of Discipline should disqualify her from serving as a pastor in the UMC - and, much more - serving as a Bishop! By her own admission, she has willfully performed over fifty ceremonies celebrating same-sex unions - once again a chargeable violation of our Book of Discipline. Rev. Oliveto did not make a “secret” of this when she stood for election, and was elected by the regional body - The Western Jurisdiction - as a deliberate and willful act of defiance and rebellion against the polity of our beloved UMC!

Sisters and Brothers, this is a “pledge” of Non-Conformity to the order, polity, and integrity of our denomination. I agree with a brother in Christ who likens this to “someone who is married to an “unfaithful” spouse who has absolutely no intention to stop their rebellious infidelity!”

Friends, these schismatic actions have ruptured the unity and harmony of the UMC. I’m concerned that without swift and decisive action by our Judicial Council (the “Supreme Court” of the UMC) it might be impossible to properly and effectively restore order and unity in the denomination!

This rebellious behavior ignores the adoption of legislation at General Conference, which concluded less than three months ago, that called for a “Pause” in all legislative solutions regarding the Church’s historic position on human sexuality and marriage in order to make “space” for a “Special Commission” to be appointed by our Bishop’s to consider the “best way forward” for the UMC.

Here are some thoughts that many have expressed to meaningfully respond to this very divisive issue:

1. The Judicial Council to issue a statement rejecting Rev. Karen Oliveto’s Election as Bishop, and asking her to resign the Office of Bishop for the sake of the unity of the UMC.

2. The Council of Bishops to act swiftly in establishing the “Special Commission on Human Sexuality and Marriage, and directing this Commission to complete their work within 12-18 months, and to effectively present 2 options:

   1. A plan that will resolve our differences over the Church’s teachings on same-sex marriages and same-sex clergy.

   2. A plan for the fair and equitable separation of the Church that will allow Traditionalists (conservatives) and Progressives (liberals) to be faithful to the grace and truth of God as they embrace and understand them.

3. A Special “Called Session” of the General Conference to be held by Oct. 31, 2018 to proactively, prayerfully, and faithfully consider the proposals of the “Special Commission” on human sexuality and marriage.

4. That Evangelical, Traditionalist’s, and Orthodoxy Wesleyan’s can come together in the Newly formed Wesleyan Covenant Association (WCA) in order to promote faithful Wesleyan Scriptural Christianity in response to whatever recommendations come forth from the Bishop’s Special Commission.

Friends, I pray and hope the above will help each of you to gain some understanding of this very difficult situation that all of us as United Methodists find ourselves in at this juncture of our faith journey together.

So, for Now...Let us Pray - Be Patient - and Persevere - in the Name of the Father the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen and Amen!

In His Service, Pastor Merritt ~Matthew 6: 33-34~
Welcome to First United Methodist Church of Riverview, RUMC for short.

We are a congregation with deep roots in Florida history and United Methodism. Our church began in 1846 not far from where it is located, today. For 170 years our congregation has been worshipping God and serving the Riverview community.

Our mission statement reads, “Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of Riverview and Beyond” That means we are focused on encouraging one another to serve Jesus Christ in personal and unique ways. At RUMC we have groups and ministries for all ages:

Worship is the central and most important act of a Christian. On Sunday mornings we offer three distinct worship services:

Faith Groups: 9:00 - 9:55 a.m.
Relationships and Refreshments (R&R): 10:00-10:25
Worship Celebration: 10:30 a.m.
Hispanic Service: 12:00 Noon
1st & 3rd Sunday’s: Traditional / Choir-led
2nd & 4th Sunday’s: Contemporary /Praise Band
5th Sunday’s: Youth Praise Team
Noon Hispanic Worship Service
*Children’s Church Is Offered
The Celebration of the Lord’s Supper is observed the First Sunday of each month.

There are classes for all ages, cradle to walker. In addition to our Faith Groups, we have a women’s Bible study group that meet every Monday, at 11:30 until 12:30 and on Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. Pastor’s Bible Study Group on Wednesday evenings at 6:45 p.m. Our Hispanic Bible Study also meets at 6:45 p.m.

Prior to these groups we have “Wonderful Wednesday’s” fellowship potluck supper, bring your favorite dish and join in. Other groups include: The Youth group, who also meet on Wednesday evenings at 6:45, We also have Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts; United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men; Riverview Ringers (bells); and a Chancel Choir. Hispanic Worship Practice is on Friday evenings at 7:00 p.m.

It Takes All God’s People To Do God’s Work! Won’t You Join Us

For all those needing God’s Love and healing. If you or a loved one needs Prayer or comfort
You may contact:

Bev Plett: 813-349-9000
Email: mplett@ix.netcom.com

You May Call / Email Riverview United Methodist Church Office: 813.677.5995 / rrvviewumc@tampabay.rr.com

All Submitted Bulletin information (Bulletin information, must be Church related) and must be in the Church Office No Later Than Wednesday of each week.

The Bell Newsletter information must be in the Church Office no later than the 15th of each month.

Please email all Bulletin and Bell Newsletter information to this email: rrvviewumc@tampabay.rr.com

Follow us on the Web! United Methodist Church on the Church Website: www.riverviewflumc.org

Please like our Facebook page if you are on Facebook and invite your family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors to do the same.
It's All Good

The Apostle Paul once said: “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those that love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28. This scripture can be a very hard one to take to heart when bad things are happening to good people.

Especially when those bad things are deliberate acts of hatred and evil meant to cause great harm and damage to innocent people. This may never have been more evident than fifteen years ago, the morning of September 11th, 2001. Perhaps the question that comes to mind persistently is: “How could a good and loving God allow such an act of evil to happen?”

We have asked this question many more times in the last fifteen years as those committed to carrying out this type of violence have continued to lash out without conscience or remorse. We know that countless prayers have been raised up to God for compassion and peace to prevail on this earth, and it might be tempting for us to even blame God for not stepping in and eliminating all evil once and for all.

There are two problems with that pattern of thought. We are all capable of great evil, and as the Bible tells us, no one is righteous, not even one. To eliminate evil would involve the extinction of the human race, bringing to mind the Great Flood, and Noah’s Ark. We are simply not capable of being entirely good, or one hundred percent evil either. We are in a constant struggle against our own human nature and emotions, striving to define the boundaries of right and wrong as we live and learn from our mistakes.

The second problem with God stepping in and saving the day on a regular basis is that it goes against His greatest gift to us, and His greatest hope for our souls to turn to Him; our free will. God will not force any of us to accept His will against our will, it has to be a choice we freely make out of our great love for Him. Our actions towards our fellow human companions on this planet should accurately reflect our truest feelings and commitment to the mercy of God’s nature that He has already shown so perfectly through Christ on the cross.

It means nothing to God if we come to him out of duty or obligation or fear or force. He wants us to choose to walk with Him out of our great love and devotion after all that He has already done for us even when we have surely not deserved it. So just how does God work all things for good? How does He take that which is undeniably bad, and make something beautiful from it? We would first have to try to look at our lives through the long-range eyes of God, the eyes that see forever on into eternity.

God’s sight is more like a telescope than a microscope, and if we try to use God’s eyes to focus on the present state of our own lives, it is like trying to use a telescope to analyze a biopsy slide, or a microscope to study the stars.

Nothing will be in focus, and the result will be less understanding, and an unclear vision of God’s will for our lives. But to see clearly just how God works all things for the good of all those who believe in Him, we need to look no further than the old rugged cross. Jesus was subjected to every evil imaginable, suffered the penalty of sin even though He was the only sinless person to ever live.

Surely Christ was the epitome of the worst of bad things happening to the most innocent of good people. And yet, from this darkest moment of human history, the day the Son of God was put to death, from what looked like a triumph of evil over good, God brings about the greatest and most lasting good that has ever existed since He created the universe from nothing but His imagination.

This eternal promise of life without end through Christ is the “good” that God is working to fashion all things into. Our salvation and redemption through Christ is unchanging and unstoppable even when attacked by the darkest forces from the depths of sin.

We sometimes wonder when God will step in and save the world. We sometimes forget, He already has. God is good, All the time... It’s All good.

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Hispanic Lay Pastor
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Restore Food Pantry & Thrift Store
Karen Moore, Director
813.741.2222

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johmanda@tampabay.rr.com

Pianist / Accompanist
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Softpiano2@gmail.com
813.671.1379

RUMC Nursery
Susan Bonner
813.671.3435

Custodial Services
Joe Cornell
plainoljoe1957@yahoo.com

Please Remember Our Home Bound!

Please take the time to send a card, make a phone call, or better yet, make a visit! A little thought goes along way! Please continue to keep the homebound and their caregivers in your prayers!

Rudy Rattman
6509 Reed Dr.
Riverview, FL 33578
813.677.1750

Johnny Jones: 13220 Balm Boyette Rd.
Riverview, FL 33578
813.689.7604

Sandra Sprang
12406 Tocci Lane
Riverview, FL 33579
813.310.4130

Helen Sutherland
Hawthorne Rehab. Facility Room #109 B
851 Lumsden Rd. Brandon, FL 33511
813.681.5889

Dusty Franz

Manage Your Giving Online or by Phone
Riverview First United Methodist Church is excited to announce that you can now manage your giving online! Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions and view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the Internet. Or you can enter one-time contributions from the internet or by smart phone.

To get started, simply follow these easy steps:
1. Visit the church website at www.riverviewflumc.org
2. Click on the Online Giving button,
3. Click on the Create Profile button, then
4. Follow the onscreen instructions to create an online profile and to schedule your recurring or one-time contributions.

We also offer a mobile app version of our online giving page. Now, you can give anytime using your smart phone or tablet. Simply scan the image below using your device’s QR code reader.

Living The United Methodist Way
Radical Hospitality
Passionate Worship
Intentional Discipline
Salty Service
Extravagant Generosity
Another Thought  By: Harmon Robinson

You can reach any goal
if you know what the goal is.

If you really want it,
if it is a good goal.

If you work to achieve it
if you think positively!

Have A Great Day Every Day!

Author: Norman Vincent Peale

Changing Sunday Service Times

The Church Council, along with our Pastor, have approved the following changes to our Sunday morning schedule >> Beginning Sunday, Sept. 4th, 2016:

Faith Groups: 9:00 -9:55 a.m.

Relationships and Refreshments (R&R): 10:00 - 10:25 a.m.

Worship Celebration: 10:30 a.m.

Hispanic Service: 12:00 Noon

Tell Your Friends and Family Members!
Please Come and Join Us!

THE RUMC HISPANIC MINISTRY WILL BE SHOWING THE WAR ROOM MOVIE POPCORN & SODAS WILL BE SERVED ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2016 IN BILL CRICHTON HALL AT 7:00 PM
We all want to welcome new visitors. Our brand promise – “Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.” – is our commitment to maintain a welcoming lifestyle in our churches. However, there is a fine line between being friendly and solicitous and invading newcomers’ space. Here are some ways to reach out and some dos and don’ts when welcoming visitors.

**DON’T assume one communication method fits all.** Posting the potluck dinner only on Facebook may mean people who rarely check their Facebook account won’t see it. On the other hand, someone constantly hooked up to technology may just toss a printed envelope.

**DO ask visitors** how they prefer to receive information about events and news. Encourage them to follow your Twitter feed and like your Facebook page. Ask them if they like to get text announcements.

**DON’T assume** a visitor who may not be a regular churchgoer knows terms like Advent. Also, don’t assume a visitor even understands what it means when United Methodists say that Holy Communion is open to everyone.

**DO make it easy** for newcomers to find answers to questions. For instance, instead of saying, “Your daughter might enjoy UMYF;” say “Your daughter might enjoy our Sunday evening youth fellowship, which we call UMYF.”

**DON’T take it personally** if a family visits for weeks or even months without joining. You don’t know what is happening in their lives and their faith journey, so don’t be pushy.

**DO understand** that part of being a welcoming congregation means being patient. Be friendly and helpful. Let visitors know they are welcome at the level of involvement where they are most comfortable.

**DON’T assume** that one welcoming method fits all. Some visitors — especially older ones — might enjoy a phone call, while a busy family might consider it a nuisance.

**DO announce in church** that your congregation likes to reach out to visitors. Ask them to note on the registration pad if they prefer phone calls to home visits or email to snail mail. Reassure visitors from the pulpit that you do not intend to drop by unannounced.

**DON’T put all the responsibility** on the shoulders of the head greeter.

**DO enlist your congregants’ help** in making visitors feel welcome through handshakes, smiles and light conversation in the pew.

Remember that welcoming visitors is the responsibility of the entire congregation. All members need to embrace welcoming strategies and behaviors. and minds are truly open.

Source: United Methodist Communications
**September 2016 Birthday’s**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marti Reed</td>
<td>9/1</td>
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<td>Marilyn Kriewald</td>
<td>9/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logan Dodson</td>
<td>9/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annabel Lennard</td>
<td>9/5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gary Floyd</td>
<td>9/8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Moore</td>
<td>9/10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leanne Huff</td>
<td>9/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gary Moore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kylee Moore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Velma Albritton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marion Watson</td>
<td>9/16</td>
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<td>Zach Fox</td>
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<td>Sawyer Russell</td>
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<td>Betty Ford</td>
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<td>Janet Forshey</td>
<td>9/23</td>
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<td>Dewey Brown</td>
<td>9/23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amy Yost</td>
<td>9/30</td>
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**September 2016 Anniversary’s**

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jed &amp; Helga Duell</td>
<td>9/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob &amp; Carole Bradley</td>
<td>9/13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill &amp; Karen Moore</td>
<td>9/21</td>
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</tbody>
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**ATTENTION**

**NEW MEMBERS AND OTHER’S**

*Please Note: If you do not see Your Birthday Or Anniversary listed, please let us know, we may not have you in our Church Office Database.*

Also, please let us know if you need to Update your personal information, which can include removing old information.

**Thank You,**

Betty Pace

RUMC Administrative Assistant

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**Designer, & Publisher:**

Betty Pace