



ORTEGA
CHURCH



MARCH 2024
THE SPIRE

The Hope of Eternal Life

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by God's great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. - I Peter 1:3-4

Ortega Church Shares Thoughtful Worship Experiences in Lent Culminating with Holy Week Observances and Joyful Easter Sunday Celebration

Encounters with Jesus – Sundays in March

Sunday Worship in Lent explores first-person presentation by several familiar characters in Scripture who shared special encounters and special gifts with Jesus in the last week of his life. New insights are gained with the creative telling of our sacred story.

Palm Sunday Worship – March 24 – 10:30am

Holy Week Observances begin as we join the joyful crowds on Palm Sunday to sing, “Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord!” Gifts we can receive and gifts we can share are the focus of our Sunday message: *The Gifts of Lent*.

Easter Eggs-Travaganza! – Sunday, March 24 11:30am – 1:00pm

The Ortega Church Family is invited to invite family, friends and neighbors to join you for Worship followed by Dinner on the Grounds, crafts, games and Egg Hunts! Join us immediately after worship in the Ortega Life Center. See back cover for more details!

Maundy Thursday Observance – March 28 – 6:30pm

A reflective 45-minute Observance to remember “*The night in which Jesus gave himself for us.*”

Good Friday Observance – March 29 – 6:30pm

A reflective 45-minute Observance to walk in the footsteps of Jesus’ journey to the cross.

Easter Sunday Worship – March 31 – 10:30am

Ortega Church joyfully celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ with Easter Sunday Worship featuring time-honored traditional hymns and modern music selections.

Please Note: The Community Sunrise Service will be shared at 6:30am in Stockton Park.

Connecting to Our Community, Growing in Christ, Serving the World.
Ortega Church Mission Statement



Our Staff:

Rev. Art McClellan

Pastor

ArtMcClellan@ortegachurch.org

Liz Holmes

Administrative/Financial
Coordinator

Liz@ortegachurch.org

Melissa Millican

Director of Recreational Ministry
& Ortega Youth

Melissa@ortegachurch.org

Shannon Jennings

Director of Family Ministry

Shannon@ortegachurch.org

Nora Cash-Davie

Director of Communications

Nora@ortegachurch.org

Scott Coleman

Director of Contemporary Music

Scott@ortegachurch.org

Charlie Mann

Organist/Pianist

Charlie@ortegachurch.org

Gayle Runion

Director Ortega Playschool

ortegaplayschool@gmail.com

Kelly Stone

Assistant Director

Ortega Playschool

ortegaplayschool@gmail.com

Jonathan Jennings

Audio Visual

jonj@ortegachurch.org

Wyatt Cleland

Maintenance Coordinator

Alison Shriner

Hospitality/Housekeeping



Leave Your Baggage

A few years ago I had a training meeting in North Carolina. I left right after church one Sunday for a 2:30 flight out of Tampa. When I got to the check-in counter I was told I had 30 seconds before the flight closed out. I was really cutting it close! They also said that they would not guarantee the baggage I was checking would make it on to the flight. I was relieved to be on the plane and more relieved to look out the window and spot my baggage being loaded on the plane.

It is pretty amazing when every day millions of bags make it to their final destinations and are successfully retrieved by their owners. In the grand scheme, lost baggage is quite rare. 99.5% of all checked baggage is picked up by their owners, and of the ½ of 1% that does go missing, 95% of that baggage makes it home within 5 days.

There is the rare exception. Despite the exhaustive efforts of the airline some few bags remain unclaimed. That baggage goes to the Unclaimed Baggage Center. Yes, it's a real place where hopelessly lost baggage ends up. The Unclaimed Baggage Center purchases and unpacks your baggage, reselling each lost item on the shelves of its 50,000 square foot retail store.

In this Season of Lent, we can make a comparison between the literal baggage we carry while flying and the traveling we do with the

"baggage" of our burdens, brokenness, and sin – the baggage we carry as we crisscross through life and are called to reflect upon in the Season of Lent. Both the literal bags and the figurative baggage are with us largely through our own packing. Both are heavy and burdensome. Both are things that we tend to hold on to, afraid of how we'll make sense of life without the essentials inside. It is essential for us to understand the burden of these so-called essentials we bear.

Lent is God's invitation to drop your baggage into God's mercy and grace, where it is bought by someone else. That is what Jesus came to do. Jesus paid for that lost, unclaimed baggage – he paid a pretty high price for it too – so high that it will cover the cost of every sin-stuffed suitcase you want to bring. God in Jesus Christ gave his life in exchange for every single piece of baggage that's been breaking your back, your heart, and your spirit. Jesus is the one person who can own it, claim it, carry it, and not be crushed by it.

We are invited in Lent to take inventory of all that stuff you're carrying. Let's use this reflective season to bend our backs (and knees), to bow our hearts, and lift our spirits as we say to God in prayer, "I will not lug this around anymore. I will lose it. I will abandon it. I will give it to someone who can handle it." By the way, God accepts this baggage all year round, not just in the season of Lent.



FINANCES

Year-End Report January 31, 2024 Revenue and Expenses

**Actual
Revenue:**
\$104,725

Thank you for
your financial
support of the
ministries of
Ortega Church!

**Actual
Expenses:**
\$54,550

The Ortega Church Endowment Fund

Established in 2007, the Endowment Fund was created with the intention of providing members and friends of the Church with the opportunity to make charitable gifts and bequests, providing Ortega Church with a perpetual source of financial support. The income earned on these investments will directly benefit the Church's programs and ministries that are not typically funded through the annual operating budget.



Call or email the Church Office with questions or concerns: 389-5556 x118 or financeoffice@ortegachurch.org.

ORTEGA LIFE CENTER



Ortega Sports



Melissa Millican
Director of Recreational
Ministry & Ortega Youth
melissa@ortegachurch.org

JOIN A FITNESS CLASS

M W F

Morning Fit- 7:00am

M W F

Circuit Fitness - 8:00am

M W

Circuit Fitness (Silver) - 9:00am

TUES, SAT

Yoga- 6:00pm/9:00am

TUES

Chair Yoga- 9:00am

THURS

Gentle Restore Yoga- 6:00pm

ORTEGASPORTS.COM



Adult Coed Volley Ball Open Gym:

Thursday, March 21
from 6pm-9pm.

Learn more at
www.ortegasports.com.



Spring Adult VB League:

Begins March 28,
Ages 15 and up.

Sign up now at
www.ortegasports.com.



Coed Youth Volleyball:

Sign-ups have begun!
The league begins March 16
for 2nd-9th Grade.

Sign up today at
www.ortegasports.com.

ADULT MINISTRIES

Connect | Grow | Serve



Altar Flowers

The Altar Flower Calendar is in the Narthex. Reserve your Special Sunday.

The Cost is \$90.

Current Weekly Class Offerings:

Open Door Class (Room 4 - Education Building)
Sundays at 9:30am

Renovate Class (Parlor) Sundays at 9:30am

Bible Believers (Room 7 - Education Building)
Sundays at 9:30am

Rediscovery Class (Parlor) Wednesdays at 6:00pm

Men's Bible Study (Room 4) Wednesdays at 7:00pm,
(Parlor) Thursday mornings at 6:45am

Womens Bible Study (Fellowship Hall) Mondays at 1:00pm, (Parlor) Tuesdays at 1:00pm.

Life Groups



If you're interested in joining a Life Group
contact the church office at 389-5556.

Monday Evening Life Group

Meets from 6:30-8:00pm. Led by Tom and Gretchen Lynch.
March 4 and 18. Contact Gretchen Lynch.

Tuesday Evening Life Group

Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00pm (March 5 & 19).
Led by Lee and Susan Norville, meeting in their home.

Parents on the Run Life Group

Meets the first Sunday of every month; March 3 at the Robert's home; April 7 TBD; May 5 in the home of Timothy and Lydia Snyder.

Women's Prayer Group Thursdays at 10:30 AM

March 14, 28; Meets every other Thursday at 10:30am in the Education Building.

www.rightnowmedia.org

Check out our
Ortega Church
Channel under
the library section
of Rightnow Media.

There you can explore
the studies we hope
you will enjoy!

Suggested for March:
HEART OF GOD



What God Says About Himself

What thoughts come to mind when you think of God? Do you wonder what he's like, what he thinks about you, or what he wants for you? The good news is that we don't have to go far to find answers. God tells us all we need to know about who he is and what he's like—about his heart—and why that matters for our lives. In this six-session series, author Francis Chan takes you on a journey of discovery to the heart of God. Walk away knowing God better and loving him more.

Don't have a login?

Contact the church office for this free service and we will help you sign up.

Women's Bible Study - Mondays

1pm in Fellowship Hall.



10-sessions, Exodus 19-40: Journey through the story of how God shepherds His children into an understanding of what their freedom means. Discover how the God who created you and made a covenant with you will deliver you from death to life, for His name and renown.

Women's Bible Study - Tuesdays

1pm in the Parlor.



8 Episodes, Season 1: We will be watching *The Chosen* together starting February 27. In this first season, see Jesus through the eyes of those who met Him. We will watch one episode per week with discussion and prayer to follow. No book needed.

ADULT MINISTRIES



Prayers & Praises



How Can We Pray For You?

We invite you to share prayer requests by calling the church office, 389-5556 x118, sending an email to prayer@ortegachurch.org, or completing the prayer request form at www.ortegachurch.org.

Would you like to join
our prayer ministry team?
Contact prayer@ortegachurch.org

Ortega Methodist Women

The Ortega Methodist Women's Board will meet Tuesday, March 5 at 10:00am in the Parlor.

The Ruth-Elizabeth Circle will meet Monday, March 11 at 11:00am in the Parlor.

The Lydia Circle will meet Tuesday, March 12 at 10:00am at the home of Kathy Nipper, 3199 River Road, Green Cove Springs. We will carpool from the church leaving promptly at 9:30am.

Spring Forward March 10



MISSIONS AND OUTREACH

SERVE



COMMUNITY HEALTH
OUTREACH

Baby Luv

During the month of March we will be collecting size one through four diapers, wipes and formula for the Baby Luv program with our mission partner, Community Health Outreach. Donations can be dropped off in the Narthex or the Church Office. This program assists parents of young children with essential baby products.



On Sunday, February 18, Ortega Church worshippers lifted a prayer of blessing both for our missionaries traveling to Placetas, Cuba, and for the gifts they will share, including three suitcases of OTC medicines, 200 pairs of reading glasses and a donation to cover the cost of building a worship space for our new Sister Church – Iglesia Metodista Las Placetas.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

NURSERY

6 weeks - 4 years (Prek3)
10:15-11:45; Room 19

KID'S CHURCH

10:30: Worship in Sanctuary with Family

10:45: Dismissal to Kid's Church in the Education Building

PREK 4 - 1ST
Room
2

2ND-4TH
Room
3

5TH-6TH
Crew56
2nd Floor

11:45: Pick up in Education Building

WHAT'S HAPPENING

ORTEGA KID'S CHOIR

Meets Every Wednesday
4:30pm-5:30pm

Choir will be singing March 3
and March 31 (Easter Sunday)

Crew56: Meets every Sunday, 5:30pm-7pm.
(5th & 6th Grade, Fellowship Hall)

JOIN US FOR THE **Easter** **Eggs-Travelanza**



SUNDAY, MARCH 24

following the 10:30 Service
(in the OLC)

CHURCH - WIDE FRIED CHICKEN LUNCH

\$5 per person
(fried chicken & 2 sides)
\$25 max per family.

CRAFTS & GAMES IN OLC

Children's Egg Hunts following lunch.
(Don't forget your baskets!)

DEADLINE TO RSVP & PAY:
Sunday, March 17

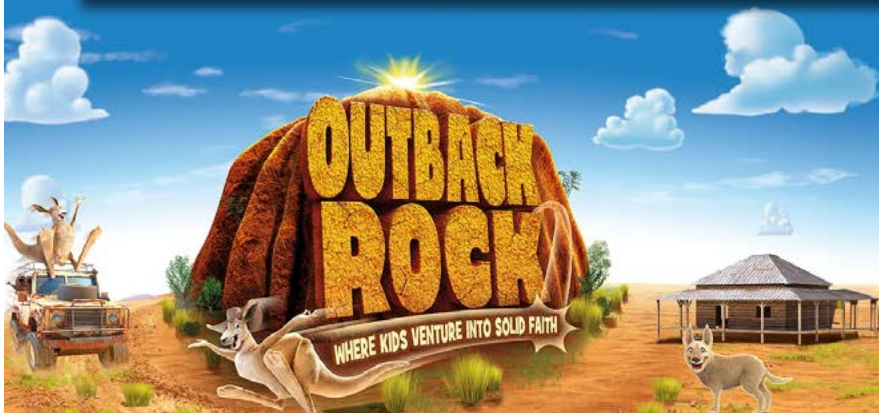


SCAN TO RSVP



SAVE THE DATE

A NEW WEEKEND VBS! COMING JUNE 14-16



Jump into the most exciting weekend down under! Kids will embark on an adventure, discovering the immense love of God and learning about building an unwavering faith.

Registration for Church Members
and Volunteers will begin in March!

YOUTH MINISTRY



SUNDAY MORNINGS: THE GLAZE

DROP OFF: 10:00am

Come hang out and enjoy breakfast (donuts, bagels, etc) in the Youth Room at 10am!



SUNDAY EVENINGS: ENFUEGO

DROP OFF: 5:30pm

PICK UP: 7:00pm



This is classic Youth Group Night in the Youth Room. Snacks, Fun Games, Worship and a Message.

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS: THE MIX

DROP OFF: 6:00pm

PICK UP: 7:00pm

Meet us in the Youth Room this month and join us for a game/activity and a short devotional.

We will "mix" it up every week with activities like ice cream, dodge ball, basketball, etc.



MARCH 17

WIFFLEBALL
NIGHT

5:30-7 PM
MEET IN GYM

NO YOUTH GROUP
SUNDAY, MARCH 31ST
HAPPY EASTER!

WELCOME TO ORTEGA CHURCH!



Please join us in welcoming **Liz Holmes** as our Finance and Administrative

Coordinator. Liz is known to many of you, having resided in the Ortega neighborhood her whole life. Liz brings great skills from her business background to be an effective and courteous partner of our ministry team.



We are also pleased to introduce **Alison Shriner** as our Hospitality/Housekeeping team

member. Alison quickly and quietly moves throughout the entire campus receiving accolades, "Things have never been cleaner!" Take a moment to interrupt her attentive work – you'll be rewarded by her gracious smile!

MARCH 2024



4807 Roosevelt Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL 32210

Church Office: 904-389-5556
Playschool: 904-387-0749

Email: communications@ortegachurch.org
www.ortegachurch.org

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SCAN
TO RSVP