



**ORTEGA**  
CHURCH

MARCH 2025  
**THE SPIRE**



**The Season of Lent**  
**March 5 – April 20**

**Join Ortega Church for a reverent and reflective Season of Lent exploring the “I AM” statements of Jesus found in the Gospel of John.**

**Sunday Worship:** Each Sunday in Lent we will discover the meaning and intent of Jesus’ message: I Am the Bread; I Am the Light; I Am the Door; I Am the Good Shepherd; I Am the Resurrection; I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life; and, I Am the Vine.

**Daily Devotional:** The purpose of the Season of Lent is to rededicate ourselves to reflect on who Jesus is and what Jesus has done for us as we use our P.R.A.I.S.E. method of listening to God: **P**ray, **R**ead scripture, **A**sk questions, **I**nterpret and **S**ummarize what we are hearing so to be more **E**ngaged by and with God.

Our daily devotionals will guide us through a reading of the Gospel of John. The Apostle John states his purpose for the book: “These words are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31).

We pray your Lenten journey is a great blessing for you personally and for the community of faith who gathers together for God’s Worship and the study of God’s Holy Word. We hope to see you Sunday for Worship at Ortega Church!

#### **Lenten Devotional**

Ortega Church households will receive our Lenten Devotional in their mail. The devotional will also be available to guests who wish to share the Lenten journey. Devotionals are available in the entry of the Sanctuary and in the Church Office.

#### **Ash Wednesday Worship**

The Season of Lent begins Ash Wednesday, March 5. Ortega Church will host our Ash Wednesday Worship in Boyd Chapel at 6:30pm. A 30-minute reflection of sacred story and sacred song will guide us into a sacred season of Christ’s sacrificial love.

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



# PASTOR'S POST by Rev. Art McClellan

## Why Are You Here?

### Our Staff:

**Rev. Art McClellan**  
Pastor  
ArtMcClellan@ortegachurch.org

**Liz Holmes**  
Administrative/Financial  
Coordinator  
Liz@ortegachurch.org

**Grace Hambrick**  
Director of Ministry  
Grace@ortegachurch.org

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

**Shannon Jennings**  
Director of Children's 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

**Casey Sharp**  
Ortega Playschool  
Director of Education  
ortegaplayschool@gmail.com

**Abby Steedley**  
Ortega Playschool Director of  
Finance & Communication  
ortegaplayschool@gmail.com

**Jonathan Jennings**  
Audio Visual  
jonj@ortegachurch.org

**Wyatt Cleland**  
Maintenance Coordinator

**Alison Shriner**  
Hospitality/Housekeeping



On Friday, February 14, members of Ortega Church Missions Team flew into Santa Clara, Cuba. As we deplaned we were directed to "Controle de Pasaportes" (Passport Control). With passports and Visas in hand we queued up to be interviewed by Cuban authorities. Of course, the same will happen when we return to the United States. In both places we are asked, "Who are you?" and "What is your purpose here?" Basically, "Why are you here?"

These authorities are very serious. This is not a time for conversation, or quips, or humor – just answer the questions. But I was thinking, if I were to ask a question of the immigration officer, it might be, "Can I come here every morning and have you ask me the same question – 'Who are you and what is your purpose?'"

I asked myself the same question as we began our descent over the Cuban countryside. With thoughts of all the busy things left undone at work and at home, why was I here at a place called "Placetras?" My thoughts became my

prayer to God, "Why am I here?" The answer, "Because I need you here." Left to interpret the answer, I discerned God needing me in Placetras had less to do with what the missions team had come to give the people of Placetras and more of what gifts the mission to Placetras would bring to us.

On Saturday, we traveled to the new mission Iglesia de Placetras has planted in the poorest area of their city, known as Cumbre. There the pastor of Placetras asked, "Why are we here?" The same question generated the same answer, "Because I need you." There are gifts Placetras will share with Cumbre – the people of Cumbre need the people of Placetras to show the love of Christ in a place no other church has dared to serve.

In my Sunday morning greeting, I encouraged the people of Placetras to be prepared to also receive gifts from their mission, as I was from my mission with them. I shared that I was less their missionary than they were mine. I thanked the people of Placetras for being my missionaries, for showing me the love Christ as they served "the least of these" in Placetras and in Cumbre. I asked, "Why am I here?" And I told the people of Placetras... "Because I need you." I Invite each of you to allow God to ask you the same questions: "Why are you here... and what is your purpose?"

See the Mission Team's report in morning worship on February 23 at <https://ortegachurch.org/livestream/>



# FINANCES

Year-End Report  
JANUARY 31, 2025

## Revenue and Expenses

**Actual  
Revenue:**  
**\$58,828**

**Actual  
Expenses:**  
**\$66,943**

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

## The Restoration and Renewal of the Sanctuary Narthex

Special Gifts Campaign and Matching Gift Opportunity

The Leadership of Ortega Methodist Church has approved a limited funding campaign for the renovation of the Narthex entry to the Ortega Church Sanctuary. A matching gift incentive allows your gift to be doubled in value. The campaign began on Christmas 2024 and is expected to conclude on Easter Sunday 2025. Please contact Liz Holmes in the church office at 904/389.5556, x118 for a Campaign Giving Brochure, or use the QR Code to the right access our Online Giving. Please ensure your online gift is designated "Narthex Renewal Campaign." Thank you!

SCAN FOR GIVING PAGE



Call or email the Church Office with questions or concerns: 389-5556 x118 or [financeoffice@ortegachurch.org](mailto:financeoffice@ortegachurch.org).

# ORTEGA LIFE CENTER



Melissa Millican  
Director of Recreational  
Ministry & Ortega Youth  
[Melissa@ortegachurch.org](mailto:Melissa@ortegachurch.org)



[ortegasports.com](http://ortegasports.com)



[ortegasports.jax](https://www.instagram.com/ortegasports.jax)



[ortega.sports](https://www.facebook.com/ortega.sports)

## YOUTH Volleyball LEAGUE

Registration is going on now!

League begins March 15

4th - 9th grades

Register Online at  
[www.ortegasports.com](http://www.ortegasports.com)

## ADULT VOLLEYBALL SPRING SEASON



REGISTER NOW  
[ORTEGASPORTS.COM](http://ORTEGASPORTS.COM)

## SAVE THE DATE: Mega Sports Camp - June 23-26

This year we are trading VBS for our exciting **MSC!**

Get ready for Faith Exploration, Sportsmanship & Adventure!



# ADULT MINISTRIES



## Connect | Grow | Serve



Grace Hambrick  
Director of Ministry  
[Grace@ortegachurch.org](mailto:Grace@ortegachurch.org)

### 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

**Mens Bible Study** (Room 4) Wednesdays at 7:00pm



#### **Men Alive! Bible Study** (Parlor)

Thursday mornings at 6:45am

"C.S. Lewis on Christianity"

Started February 6

6 week session

A Hillsdale College Online Course  
with Professor Michael Ward

#### **Women's Prayer Group Thursdays at 10:30 AM**

March 6 & 20; Meets every other Thursday at 10:30am in the Education Building.

## Life Groups

**Lenten Devotional** - Join us for our 46-day reading guide through the Gospel of John. We will continue to use the P.R.A.I.S.E. model for this study from Ash Wednesday to Easter. This will connect with our Sunday Worship time as we walk through the "I AM" statements found in John. You will receive this devotional in the mail along with a keychain flashlight to serve as a reminder of our devotion during this time. If you did not receive it, please pick it up in the Narthex.

#### **Monday Evening Life Group**

Held the 1st and 3rd Mondays (through April). March 3 and 17. Led by Tom and Gretchen Lynch. Contact Gretchen for more information and location at [t-lynch@comcast.net](mailto:t-lynch@comcast.net)

#### **Tuesday Evening Life Group**

Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00pm (March 4 and 18). Led by Lee and Susan Norville, meeting in their home.

#### **Parents on the Run Life Group**

Meets from 5:30-7:30 each month. Child Care Provided at the Church; March 9 in the home of Christie and Trey Martin. The next session will be April 13 at the home of Talley and Ronnie Roberts.

Page 4 **If you're interested in joining a Life Group contact the church office at 389-5556.**

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

Suggested for  
MARCH



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

Explore the studies we hope you will enjoy!

### The Gospel of John: Part 1 with Tony Evans

Where do you turn when the world around you grows dark? In this study of the Gospel of John, Dr. Tony Evans encourages us to turn to Christ by reminding us of the two purposes for the beloved disciple's book—that we would believe in Jesus and find life in his name. Despite what our culture may argue, there is only one hope that is truly trustworthy and that is our savior, Jesus Christ. So join Tony for this twelve-session series that will draw you back to the essential truths of our faith and the life found in our king.

#### **Don't have a login?**

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



#### **Womens Bible Study** (Fellowship Hall)

Mondays at 1:00pm

Heaven. Who goes there? Where is it? Dispel myths and media-influenced images to gain a biblical understanding of this essential truth. Jennifer Rothschild takes a deeper look at what God has prepared for his children, transforming wonder into excitement and peace.



#### **Womens Bible Study** (Parlor)

Mondays at 1:00pm

Heaven by Randy Alcorn is a fascinating, easy-to-read study that will help every believer in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord find an anchor for present faithfulness, celebrate the loving provisions God has made for His children, and convey to others a love for God and His home.



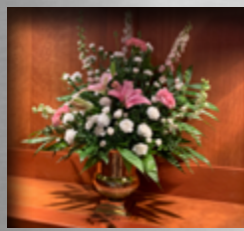
# ADULT MINISTRIES

## 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](mailto:prayer@ortegachurch.org), or completing the prayer request form at [www.ortegachurch.org](http://www.ortegachurch.org).

Would you like to join our Prayer Ministry Team?  
Contact [prayer@ortegachurch.org](mailto:prayer@ortegachurch.org)



### Altar Flowers

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

The Cost is \$90.



### Ortega Methodist Women

We invite all the women of the church to join one of our circles. Contact Nancy Schwanbeck at 904-384-5940.

**The Ortega Methodist Women's Board** will meet Tuesday, March 4 at 10:00am in the Parlor.

**The Ruth - Elisabeth Circle** will meet Monday, March 10 at 11:00am in the Parlor.

**The Lydia Circle** will have a brunch on Tuesday, March 11 at 10:30am at the home of Kathy Nipper, 3199 River Road, Green Cove Springs. We will car pool from the church leaving promptly at 10:00am.



# MISSIONS AND OUTREACH

SERVE



### Community Health Outreach

Mission Team members with Ortega Youth and youth counselors served 350 customers of CHO's The Lord's Pantry on Saturday, February 1.



### A Letter to Family Promise

*We would like to say, "Thank you" for everything! You have helped us in ways we never imagined. It started when I lost my job due to car problems. Shortly after, my wife and I along with our two children were homeless. Family Promise welcomed us with lots of joy and love. They gave us shelter, provided food, transportation, clothes and more. They helped us with supplies for school and even gifts for Christmas.*

*Now we are at the end of this roller coaster ride and its time to say our, "Goodbyes." We so appreciate Family Promise. This was such a big blessing. I graduated from my job training, our children didn't miss school, my wife has started school and I am in a position to provide for my family again. – A Family Promise Graduate*

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Shannon Jennings  
Director of  
Children's Ministry  
[Shannon@ortegachurch.org](mailto:Shannon@ortegachurch.org)



## Sunday School Teachers Needed

If you would be interested in sharing your gifts by teaching just once a month, contact [Shannon@ortegachurch.org](mailto:Shannon@ortegachurch.org) or visit the QR Code below to sign up.



(Scan or Click Online)

## What's Happening

**Easter  
Egg-Stravaganza!**

**APRIL 13, 2025**

**FRIED CHICKEN LUNCH**

RSVP Online by  
Sunday, April 6

\$8 per person,  
\$35 max per family.



Ortega Kids  
[ortegachurch.org/ortega-kids](http://ortegachurch.org/ortega-kids)



For the Month of March  
**Ortega Kids Choir**  
will practice during  
Sunday Morning  
Children's Church

## Save the Date

THIS YEAR WE ARE TRADING VBS FOR OUR EXCITING MSC!



## MEGA SPORTS CAMP!

**JUNE 23-26**

Faith Exploration,  
Sportsmanship & Adventure!



**KID'S CHURCH: 10:30:** Sanctuary with Family | **10:45:** Dismissal to Kid's Church in the Ed. Building

**PK 3 AND PK 4**

NURSERY  
(corner door to  
left of flag pole)

**K - 1ST**

ROOM 2  
(1st room on left  
in Ed. Building)

**2ND-3RD**

ROOM 3  
(2nd room on left  
in Ed. Building)

**4TH - 5TH**

ROOM 8  
(1st room on right,  
upstairs, Ed. Building)

K-5th Pick up in Education Building

**NURSERY: 6 weeks - 4 years (Prek4) | 10:15 - 11:45; Room 19**



# YOUTH MINISTRY



Melissa Millican  
Director of Recreational  
Ministry & Ortega Youth  
[Melissa@ortegachurch.org](mailto:Melissa@ortegachurch.org)

## Youth Winter Retreat 2025



### THE GLAZE

Sunday Mornings  
10am - 11:30am  
March 2, 9, 16, 23 (Students in Service March 29)



### ENFUEGO - YOUTH NIGHT

Sunday Night  
5:30pm - 7:30pm  
March 9



### THE MIX

Wednesday Nights  
6:45pm - 8pm  
March 5, 12, 19, 26

# Member News

## Sacrament of Infant Baptism

**Bennett Ford Yazdiya**, Baptized in worship on Sunday, February 9, 2025. Proud Parents are David and Mary Kate Yazdiya, with Dean.



## Welcome New Members



Diana and William "Kip" Ryan joined Ortega Church on Sunday, January 26. Kip and Diana moved to Jacksonville from Cape Coral in Southwest Florida. They are interested in the church's missions and outreach and small group ministry. Please welcome the Ryans to the Ortega Church Family as we worship and serve together.

**MARCH 2025**



4807 Roosevelt Blvd.  
Jacksonville, FL 32210

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

Email: [communications@ortegachurch.org](mailto:communications@ortegachurch.org)  
[www.ortegachurch.org](http://www.ortegachurch.org)

NON PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Jacksonville, FL  
PERMIT NO.  
1928

## A Scout is Reverent

Ortega Church acknowledge the ministry of scouting on February 16. Three Scout groups meet each Monday evening on our campus: Cub Pack 522, Scout Troop 522, and Scout Troup 9465. Scouts led the congregation in liturgy that shares the Scout Oath and Promise with reference to their rootedness in Scripture. Seven Scouts were acknowledged for receiving the rank of Eagle this past year.

