



ORTEGA
CHURCH

AUGUST 2025
THE SPIRE

August Hosts Exciting “Back to Church” Opportunities for Worship, Study and Service

The month of August is traditionally a time of transitioning from special summer activity to the bustle of fall pursuits and interests. August also celebrates several “Back to Church” worship, study and service opportunities at Ortega Church! Check out our schedule of upcoming activities below and in the following pages of this month’s Spire!

August 3 – Christians in the Holy Land – We will share Ministry Moments with volunteers from Bethlehem in the Holy Land who support Christian families living in the Holy Land by sharing their story and sharing the cooperative’s handmade olivewood products available for supporting the mission.

August 10 – Back to School Sunday and “Blessing of the Backpacks” – We welcome our children and families Back to Church on the Eve of Back to School as we share a Prayer of Blessing over the children, their backpacks and their families.

August 17 – Hospitality Sunday – In anticipation of the completion of the Narthex Renewal, our Hospitality Team will share plans and opportunities to extend our welcome in the renewed space with our renewed spirit of Christian hospitality.

August 24 – Youth Sunday – Come encourage our Ortega Youth as we celebrate their transitions from summer to fall and more importantly, for the testimony of faith we share together in this exciting and oftentimes challenging transition of life.



Welcome to Ortega Church!

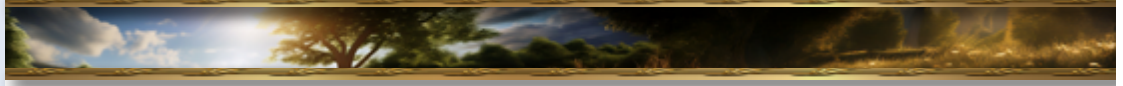
Did You Know: 60% of people moving are moving right now! Between June and August of last year over 3.1 million people moved during the summer. Now is the time to invite these new neighbors to church! When these new faces show up at church, let’s receive them with a smile and a “Welcome to Ortega Church!”

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



PASTOR'S POST by Rev. Art McClellan

The Wonder of Summer Psalm 139



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Summer is a season many of us look forward to all year for things like going to the beach, going on vacation, spending time outside in nature, taking trips to see family, or hosting family coming to visit us. Summer is also a season of life we enjoy – a season of creation when things are new and fresh and growing – when we say "Life is good!"

The challenging thing about the summer season of life for many of us on our faith journey is that it is easy to often overlook God in the good times. In the winter seasons of life – in seasons of trial, it can be more obvious that we need God – God's love, God's grace, God's guidance.

When we start to come out of the winters and into the springs of life, we get this feeling of relief, we thank God for creatively bringing us into this new, fresh, growing season. Psalm 139 speaks of rejoicing in the joy of life and the new life of finding and abiding in God – the springs that leads into the summer seasons of life.

Psalm 139:1-24 paints a beautiful picture of God and God's attributes. If we're going to stay mindful of and recognize God during the good times, during the summers of our life, then starting with the attributes of God is one of the best ways we can abide with God. Psalm 139 is not an exhaustive list by any means, but it is a truly wonderful depiction of who God is, nonetheless.

In Worship on Sunday, July 27, I shared a few of the attributes outlined in this Psalm to share three Assurances we can come to know and rejoice over in all seasons of life:

God Knows Me Intimately – "O Lord, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways."
– Psalm 139:1-3

God is with Me Constantly – "Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me."
– Psalm 139:7-10

God Made Me Wonderfully – "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you."
– Psalm 139:13-14;17-18

In light of the fact that God knows me, God is with me, and God made me, may we join the psalmist to close the passage saying, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life."
– Psalm 139:23-24

FINANCES

Year-To-Date

June 30, 2025

Revenue and Expenses

Actual

Revenue:

\$418,810

Actual

Expenses:

\$437,495

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.

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.

ORTEGA LIFE CENTER



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



ortegasports.com



[ortegasportsjax](https://www.instagram.com/ortegasportsjax)



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

LEARN MORE ONLINE AT ORTEGASPORTS.COM



The Ortega Life Center offers a variety of sports & fitness opportunities for all ages. From small group fitness classes, yoga and wiffleball, to pickleball, basketball, soccer and volleyball. Visit us online to sign up today! Fall Leagues begin in September.

ADULT MINISTRIES

Connect | Grow | Serve

For more information on weekly class offerings and Life Groups contact the Church Office at
904-389-5556

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

Womens Bible Study (Fellowship Hall & Parlor)
Mondays at 1:00pm

Women's Prayer Group Thursdays at 10:30am

August 7 & 21; Meets every other Thursday at 10:30am in the Education Building.

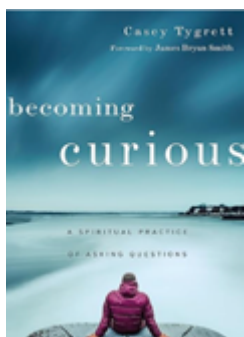
Life Groups

Doing Life Together

Life Groups will Resume in the Fall.

Women's Bible Study (Parlor) Mondays at 1:00pm, September 8.

Becoming Curious: A Spiritual Practice of Asking Questions - By Casey Tygett



Curiosity is essential to growth. A little curiosity moves us deeper into the lives of the people around us. A little curiosity, if focused on Jesus, will make us more like him. When we make curiosity a spiritual practice, we open up to new ways of knowing God and knowing ourselves as well. Come and discover the power of asking questions.

Women's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall) Mondays at 1:00pm.

*Will return in the Fall on September 8.

Page 4



www.rightnowmedia.org

The Art of
Neighboring

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

Explore the studies we hope you will enjoy!

THE ART OF NEIGHBORING
with DAVE RUNYON & JAY PATHAK

What comes to mind when you think about your neighbors? Maybe you don't know them very well or, if you're honest, maybe you think the lady across the street is a bit weird. For many of us, it can be tempting to keep our distance and mind our own business in our neighborhood. But is that really how God wants us to live?

As followers of Jesus, we've been called to love both God and our neighbors. It's easier said than done, but if we push past the fear, time barriers, and pride that can keep us from engaging with others, we can build deep connections with the people in our neighborhood and, most importantly, please God.

In this four-session series based on their book 'The Art of Neighboring', Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon help us focus on the people within our neighborhood and learn what it means to be a good neighbor. They discuss the importance of pushing through the uncomfortable feelings that come with communicating, investing in, and caring for the people who live near us. What would our communities look like if we took Jesus's command to love our neighbors as ourselves seriously?

For additional free resources, including a 3-week sermon series, visit www.artofneighboring.com.

Don't have a login?

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

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?



Altar Flowers

The Altar Flower Calendar is in the Narthex. Reserve your Special Sunday. The Cost is \$90.



Ortega Methodist Women

We will not be meeting during June, July, or August.
Don't forget our Little Church Pantry during the summer - bring your items to the Church Office.

LAY LEADER'S REPORT

SERVE



Florida Global Methodist Church Hosts Annual Conference by Josh Sale



Josh Sale, Ortega Church Lay Leader and Council Chair, recently represented Ortega Methodist Church by attending the Florida Annual Conference of the Global Methodist Church June 13–14 in Clermont, Florida. Josh shares this brief synopsis of the Conference:

"I'm pleased to share that the Florida Annual Conference was filled with energy and enthusiasm about the future of the Global Methodist Church in our state and around the world. The Florida Conference leadership has been working diligently to advance the mission of the GMC, with strong strategies in place for continued growth and presence.

I was especially encouraged to learn about the impactful work being done by the GMC's ministry partners, such as Faith Responders—particularly in hurricane relief efforts here in Florida. Their dedication gives me hope and excitement for the future of the GMC."

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Shannon Jennings
Director of
Children's Ministry
Shannon@ortegachurch.org



Ortega Kids
ortegachurch.org/ortega-kids

Save the Date

BACK TO SCHOOL SUNDAY

Back to School Sunday will be held
August 10 at the 10:30 Service.
Bring your Backpack!



2ND GRADE BIBLES: September



2nd Grade Bibles will be
presented in September. Please
contact Shannon Jennings via
shannon@ortegachurch.org
with your child's name as you
want it printed on their Bible.



Sunday School Teachers Needed

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



(Scan or Click Online)

KID'S CHURCH: 10:30: Sanctuary with Family | 10:45: Dismissal to the Education Building

PK 3 AND PK 4
ROOM 15
Preschool Building

K - 2ND
ROOM 2
Education Building
(1st room on left)

3RD-5TH
ROOM 3
Education Building
(2nd room on left)

K-5th Pick up in Education Building

YOUTH MINISTRY



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



PARENT'S MEETING

Please come to this mandatory parent's meeting where we will pass out calendars, medical forms, and all the information for the upcoming fall! Join us in the Chapel at 9am!

AUGUST 17



BACK TO SCHOOL BASH

Join us as we kick off the new school year with inflatables & food in the gym! Prize for who brings the most friends! Held from 5:30pm-7:30pm.

AUGUST 17



SAVE THE PUMPKIN DATES

On October 4th and 18th we will need EVERYONE to help us get the pumpkins unloaded off of the truck.

OCT 4 & OCT 18



MEMBER NEWS

Sacrament of Infant Baptism

Jude Dailey Markwalter, Baptized in worship on Sunday, July 13, 2025. Proud Parents are Preston and Vann Markwalter.



In Memoriam

Jean Bastine Harrell

May God's peace be with those who mourn.

We lift prayers for Jean's children Mike Harrell, Lynn McClow, and Betsy DeBose, and their families, as well as Jean's many friends.



AUGUST 2025



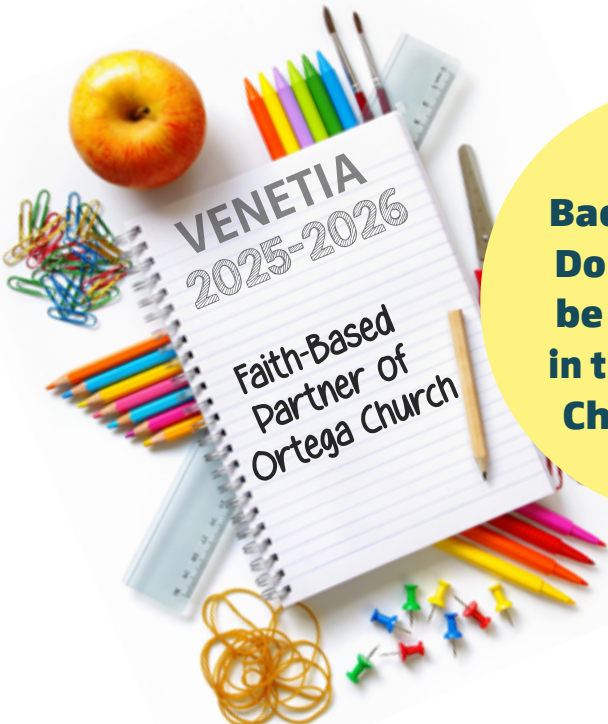
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Playschool: 904-387-0749

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

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SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE – VENETIA ELEMENTARY



**Your
Back-to-School
Donations can
be dropped off
in the Narthex or
Church Office.**

- Headphones (no ear buds)
- Large Erasers
- Hand Sanitizer
- Copy Paper
- Elmer's Glue Sticks
- Wide Rule Composition Books
- #2 Pencils
- Colored Pencils
- Post-It Notes
- Page Protectors
- Boxes of Kleenex
- Gallon Ziploc Bags
- Highlighters