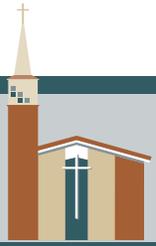


May 2020

ORTEGA  
— UNITED METHODIST —  
CHURCH



# The Spire

## ORTEGA CHURCH

### “Worshipping Together... Safer- At-Home”

Let us not neglect our meeting together, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of Christ return is drawing near. – Hebrews 10:25

Over the last month and a half, Ortega Church, along with our whole world, has been greatly affected from our being gathered together due to the COVID-19 virus. In keeping a social distance from one another, Ortega Church has creatively redirected our ministries to continue to live into our **Connect—Grow—Serve** mission statement.

**Connect** – Ortega Church has gathered together for Sunday Worship delivered through our capacity to stream services online at [www.ortegaumc.org](http://www.ortegaumc.org) while our leadership teams and some small groups have continued to gather together through online meeting services. Other means of connecting with our church family include member check-in phone calls, weekly video messaging, Easter’s Egg Drop, and “Door Dash” home delivery communion.

**Grow** – With providential foresight, Ortega Church began a new online curriculum in January through RightNow Media, allowing us to continue to deliver a vast amount of study resources for all ages. Miss Audra and Kirby have utilized social media to stay in touch and share studies with children and youth in their care.

**Serve** – Ortega Church continues to share our hearts and gifts through our community outreach. During the crisis, and to support a critical shortage, the church hosted a blood drive, projected to serve 43 persons in need of blood. The church also delivered an amazing donation of Grocery Gift Cards in support of families in need at Methodist Children’s Village. Our latest initiative supports Feeding Northeast Florida through their “Virtual Food Drive.” (See page 4)

We greatly appreciate all our member support and encouragement shared as we “gather together” throughout this crisis. In this issue, we celebrate the ministries that have continued and ways we can continued to Connect—Grow—Serve through the ministries of your church – Ortega Church.



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*Connecting every person, in every generation, in every place  
with the love of Jesus Christ.*

*Ortega UMC Mission Statement*

# Ministry in the Meantime

While our Ortega Church Family have been Safe-At-Home, Church Leaders and Ministry Staff have kept busy to bring weekly worship, member check-in calls, and weekly online Staff and Leadership Team meetings to lead us through this crisis and to be prepared for when we are gathered again. We share these pictures of some of the ministry celebrations that have taken place...in the meantime.



"You've Been Egged" Drive-By Easter Egg Hunt



Yard Signs

"Sunday Greeters" exchange socially distant smiles and waves with walkers, runners and bicyclists as they pass the church on Iroquois Avenue Sundays 8am-1pm.



## Youth Group Online Bible Study



## THANK YOU FOR GIVING!

Methodist Children's Village Grocery Gift Ca  
Blood Drive to meet critical shortages in Jacksonville



Church Leadership Team & Staff  
Conducting Online Meetings



# Volunteer Spotlight

## Spotlight on Media Volunteer George Birnbaum

### Thank You

Lyrics by Ben Fielding and Reuben Morgan  
Presented by Ortega Praise Team

Thank You for Your kindness  
Thank You for Your mercy  
Thank You for the cross  
Thank You for the price You paid

Thank You for salvation  
Thank You for unending grace  
Thank You for Your hope  
Thank You for this life You give

Thank You for Your promise  
Thank You for Your favor  
Thank You for Your love  
Everything You've done for me

To Your Name we give all the glory  
To Your Name we give all the praise  
You're alive our God everlasting  
Let Your face shine on us

Now well into our second month of production, we are grateful for the talent, gifts, and time (and equipment!) George Birnbaum brings to produce our Sunday Morning Worship services for online streaming. George, along with Gemstone Media videographer Tristan Mourhous, capture and edit the components of our Sunday Worship for posting on our website and Facebook Live. George's humble reply to our gratitude during this time of social distancing, "I'm just glad I'm able to share."



Thank you George Birnbaum!

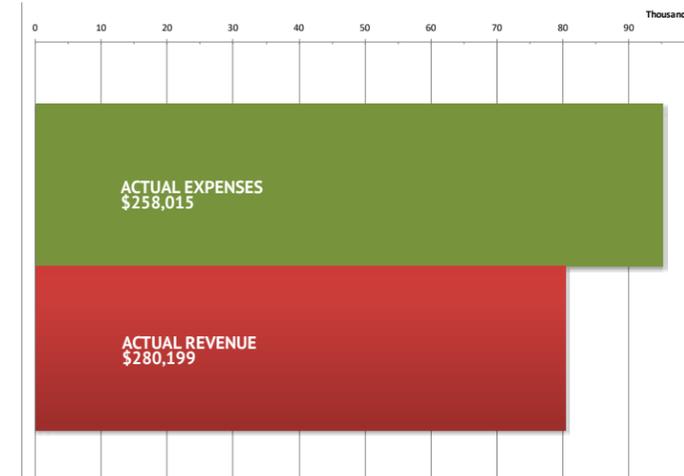
# Church Finances

## To Use Our Text Giving Method

To securely make a gift, text your gift amount (e.g. \$100) to (904) 990-5556. If this is your first time texting this number, you will be asked to register with a credit/debit card. Save this number to your smart phone for future giving.

## Year-To-Date As of April 20, 2020

### Revenue and Expenses



Thank You Ortega Church for Giving! We are grateful for the ongoing financial gifting received during these challenging times. Your gifts allow Ortega Church to creatively continue ministry during these times of social distancing and isolation with worship, spiritual growth, and service opportunities. Our program ministries are also looking forward as we develop "reopen" strategies. Your financial gifts today help ensure we will hit the ground running when we are able to gather again.

### To Give Online:

Visit our website, [ortegaumc.org](http://ortegaumc.org).  
Click the "Give Online" link!



# Missions & Outreach



The need for food assistance and the services Feeding Northeast Florida provides has never been more critical. Over the last few weeks their operations shifted to solely focus on COVID-19 crisis management. People affected by workplace and school closures, many unable to leave their homes, and those who are experiencing reduced hours at work, are looking to Feeding Northeast Florida for their next meal.

During these uncertain times, many individuals are being forced to make impossible choices between buying food or paying for other vital resources like housing, medication, utilities and childcare. Because the health and safety of our clients, staff, and community is our first priority, we invite you to join us to address this need by participating in our **Virtual Food Drive**.

**Ortega Church can partner in this outreach in three different ways:**

- Participating in our Ortega Church Virtual Food Drive [\[CLICK HERE\]](#)
- Donate by check (noting Feeding NE FL) and send to the church office and we will be your "personal shopper!"
- Drop off non-perishable food items in the collection bin outside the church office.



**Where do the homeless "self-isolate?"**

**Family Promise Host Week May 17-24**

Ortega Church will provide overnight lodging to Family Promise clients who are adhering to safe guidelines. Without congregational support, Family Promise would be forced to provide hotel accommodations. Social Distancing is maintained for overnight hosts as well for those who provide Evening Meals – Simply drop off your food and the families will serve themselves.

If you can provide a meal or serve as an overnight host, please contact Susan Norville: [susan@ortegaumc.org](mailto:susan@ortegaumc.org); 904.389.5556, ext 113



**rightnow MEDIA**  
Check out our **Ortega Church Channel** under the library section of Rightnow Media.  
Click on Ortega United Methodist channel explore the studies we think you will enjoy.

**New Four-Week Study – The Art of Neighboring**  
In this four-session series based on their book *The Art of Neighboring*, Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon help us focus on the people in our neighborhood as we learn more about what it means to be a good neighbor. The study discusses 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 your neighbor as ourselves" seriously?

# OUMC Children's Ministry



We are looking forward to gathering soon with all our children and their families. In the Meantime:

**Join the conversation and the fun online.**



Weekly topics can be found on Facebook as well as the church website at [www.ortegaumc.org](http://www.ortegaumc.org). Each week you receive a lesson outline, questions to discuss with your child(ren) and an activity.  
Facebook Children: Ortega UMC Children's Ministry  
Facebook Crew 56: OUMC Crew 56  
Facebook Private Group: Ortega Church Children\*

\* If you are not receiving e-mails from Ortega Church Children's Ministry, please contact Audra Bancroft at [audra@ortegaumc.org](mailto:audra@ortegaumc.org) \*

**Let's Zoom!**  
Crew 56 meets 2x each week via Zoom – Wednesdays @ 6:30pm and Saturdays @ 8:00am  
Children are invited to meet on Sunday's @ 10:00 via Zoom\*  
  
\*Zoom ID's can be obtained in the private Facebook group or through e-mail.

# Youth Group



# Ortega Life Center

With gym activities closed at this time, we encourage you to get outdoors, go for a walk, a bike ride or even a game of golf!

Bent Creek Golf Course has offered our church a discount. Just call 904-779-0800 to reserve a tee time & mention Ortega Church rates!

[\[CLICK HERE\]](#) to get more info on our Facebook Page



# Ministry in the Meantime

## Door Dash Home Delivery

In a creative Connect-Grow-Serve expression, Ortega Church's Leadership Team, Staff and several members who "just want something to do for the church during this time," canvassed our community to deliver communion to 220 homes of our Ortega Church families. This joyful outreach was made to connect our socially distant church family so we could celebrate the grace of Holy Communion together. Our invitation: "Christ, our Lord, invites to his table all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin, and seek to live in peace with God and with one another." The congregation was invited to share the sacred meal "together" from their own homes while worshipping at 10:00am Sunday, May 3.



## Volunteers and Staff Spruce Up Ortega Church

While we are away, Margie Fox and her team shared their time and talent to clean up and to refresh the Prayer Garden Courtyard in preparation for our return to Ortega Church for worship and fellowship. Clearing out flower and shrubbery beds of the things that weren't meant to be growing and replacing with flowers that bring a brightness to this lovely and reflective space of our campus. An Oak tree was also installed in the courtyard – dedicated to the church from the estate of Barney and Anis Daley. Also while we are away, Dale Pridgen and Maria Washington have been busy tackling deep cleaning projects that are more difficult during our usual busy and bustling program ministry. Pews are polished, pew cushions vacuumed, carpets are cleaned, floors are buffed, and every classroom space has been sanitized – welcoming us back to Worship, Spiritual Growth gatherings and for our Service to God, our community of faith, and the community we hope to influence for God's glory.

[\[CLICK HERE\]](#) to submit your prayer requests or call the church office at 904-389-5556, x 118.

