



**Presbyterian Church
Cocoa Beach, FL**



The Mission Study Team respectfully submitted its work to the Session on February 17, 2026

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**RIVERSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2026 MISSION STUDY**

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1) Preamble: A Framework of Hope and Joy

“The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.” Psalms 123:3

What data and strategy alone often fail to capture is the essential role of hope and joy in the life of the church. Riverside Presbyterian Church’s sustainability is not fundamentally about how to replace aging members, nor is it primarily about managing decline through pastoral care alone. It is about whether the church embodies a visible joy for the gospel and for God’s Kingdom—right now, in this place, among the people God has already gathered. Faithfulness is not measured by demographic balance sheets, but by whether the life of Christ is made tangible through love, welcome, beauty, and purpose across generations.

A church does not need many children or youth to be faithful to children and youth; it needs *intentional love, protection, delight, and investment* in those who are present. Riverside Presbyterian Church already demonstrates love of children and youth through concrete actions: sponsoring youth for Christian music festivals, sending children to Cedar Kirk summer camp, hosting Trunk-or-Treat events, offering concerts that gather families and neighbors, and creating spaces where young people are welcomed rather than overlooked. These ministries are not peripheral—they are signs of resurrection life, proclaiming that children and youth matter not because they will “save the church,” but because they are already beloved by God.

Early and Mid-career adults are often in a compressed season of life, building careers, raising families, less discretionary time and navigating financial pressures. Their joy does not usually come from the volume of involvement—it comes from belonging, trust, and being taken seriously. Their role in the church is not to “fill-in behind” older generations or to be a bridge to numerical growth, but to be translators of faith, joy, and hope into everyday life.

Equally important is the energy, capacity, and joy of adults in their 50s, 60s, and 70s who are living in a healthy, active, beachside environment. Many in this life stage bring discretionary time, financial flexibility, professional wisdom, and deep spiritual grounding. Their “transition” is not necessarily “slowing down”—they are re-allocating purpose. They are not merely recipients of care; they are the engine of generosity, creativity, mentoring, hospitality, and mission. These late-career and early-retirement adults are the authors of its next faithful season. The church’s task is to name this season as vocation, not retirement.

The future hope of Riverside is not found in chasing the next generation. It is found in releasing the present congregation into its fullest calling.

It is about creating a church culture where joy is visible, faith is shared across generations, and people of every age feel safe, accepted, and genuinely glad to belong.

- Children and youth are not a growth strategy...

...***they are a gift and a calling.***

- Early and Mid-career adults are not the next committee replacements...

... ***they are translators of faith into the middle of everyday life.***

- Late-career and early-retirement adults are not an untapped resource...

...***they are the authors of its next faithful season.***

- Older adults are not an ending...

...they are ***the stewards of hope.***

2) Executive Summary

a) Purpose of the Mission Study

The Mission Study Team asked the Holy Spirit to guide Riverside's next faithful steps—not for growth measured only in numbers, but for neighbors loved, and Christ made visible in this community. The Mission Study Team did not produce a “how to” book, but a type of strategic document for Riverside Presbyterian Church (RPC). It is intended to provide information to the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) who will search for a new pastor to lead the church. It will assist the PNC who will develop the Ministry Discernment Profile (MDF) that serves as the official announcement of Riverside's search for a pastor – by describing the church, the community and the characteristics of a pastor the church is seeking. This is to help ensure that both the congregation and new pastor are aligned in their expectations and plans.

This Mission Study consists of a Mission Statement, Statement of Faith, a qualitative and quantitative Vision, a description of the current state of the congregation and a description of the surrounding community. It is informed by input from the congregation, via a survey, local demographics and through discernment of the Holy Spirit sought through prayer by the team members.

The congregational survey is found in Appendix V and was used to help identify congregational needs and desires.

The demographics for the Mission Study considered the geographic areas of two beachside communities, Cocoa Beach, Cape Canaveral and to some extent Merritt Island, Florida. The demographics of the study area using PC(USA) INSITE data clearly indicate that early retirees represent an area of potential membership growth. See Chapter 6, Characteristics of Local Community for demographics.

RPC'S Vision was approved by the Session on February 18, 2020. The Mission Statement, found in the Riverside Presbyterian Church Bylaws, was approved by the congregation on February 23, 2025

The Mission Study Team believes the Vision and Mission are still appropriate and relevant today.

b) Summary of Analysis and Summary Actions

In summary, the Mission Study has identified actions to serve both the community and the congregation needs, while also, identifying pastor leadership

characteristics. The good news is that Riverside does not need to become something else to be faithful. The work for Riverside is to become more fully who God is already calling us to be.

Serving the Community

The community around Riverside is a coastal community shaped by an older, highly educated population, with significant seasonal fluctuation, high residential density, and a constant presence of tourists. Rather than relying on generic or family-centered church growth models, the church is called to function as a “Spiritual Harbor Church”—a trusted, visible, and hospitable presence offering depth, beauty, and low-barrier engagement for people navigating life transitions, including retirees, widows, seasonal residents, spiritually curious adults, and visitors.

Summary of Example Actions to Serve the Community

Riverside Presbyterian Church can deepen its engagement with the surrounding community by meeting people where they are and offering accessible, welcoming spaces for connection, learning, and service. Intentional outreach to nearby condominium residents will focus on bringing programs directly into their spaces, promoting church events in visible ways, and offering intellectually engaging opportunities that integrate faith with lived experience, including conversations led by retired professionals and community leaders. The church can strengthen its role as a “third safe space” by opening its Fellowship Hall for daytime activities such as card games, book groups, art exhibits, wellness and chair-exercise classes, and educational seminars, while remaining mindful of mobility and evening travel concerns. Riverside can continue to embody active, visible hospitality through partnerships with local conservation organizations, participation in community events near the church campus, welcoming gestures for visitors and tourists, quarterly public gatherings such as movie nights, and ongoing outdoor worship experiences including sunrise beach services. Together, these actions reflect a commitment to being a joyful, present, and outward-facing congregation, grounded in faith and responsive to the rhythms of its coastal community. (See Chapter 9 (a))

Riverside Presbyterian Church grows by becoming a trusted and intellectually honest, and service-oriented spiritual home for people in the community who are navigating life transitions—while remaining visibly open to those just passing through by creating an environment of being part of a larger “family” is essential for sustainable engagement and growth.

Serving the Congregation

Riverside Presbyterian Church is a faithful, mature, and relationally strong congregation whose members have invested decades of worship, service, and leadership in the life of the church; as the congregation ages, however, many members are quietly asking what faithful discipleship looks like in later seasons of life and whether their presence and gifts still matter.

Summary of Actions to Serve the Congregation

Riverside Presbyterian Church can strengthen congregational care and connection by nurturing relationships, honoring life transitions, and fostering a deep sense of belonging across generations. The congregation affirms pastoral care (i.e. consistent spiritual, emotional, and practical support) as a shared ministry, led by the pastor and strengthened through trained lay leaders. Regular pastoral and lay visits will be normalized as expressions of relationship and belonging, not reserved only for times of crisis. Special attention should be given to adults navigating illness, grief, caregiving, relocation, aging and other life transitions. Riverside can actively support the needs of congregation by having gathering spaces, holding well-supported worship experiences, including high-quality live-stream participation—and have visible recognition of significant milestones and transitions. Across congregational life, Riverside can visibly affirm youth and older adults and sustain commitments to youth and community events as faithful expressions of care, joy, and mutual support within the body of Christ. Through these practices, the church seeks to ensure that every member, whether attending in person or online, young or older - remains known, valued, and accompanied in all seasons of life. (See Chapter 9 (b))

The simple truth is this: the church does not need to become something else to be faithful. It is already a place where the Spirit is at work. What is needed is greater intentionality in nurturing joy, naming purpose, and caring well for those who have already given it their lives—while remaining an open and welcome home for all generations God continues to send.

Characteristics of a Pastor Need to Facilitate Future of Riverside

At this stage in the life of the church, the congregation seeks a Teaching Elder whose leadership is not defined by programmatic expansion, numerical growth, or managerial skill, but by pastoral depth, theological maturity, and the capacity to nurture a future marked by hope and visible joy—a church where people of every generation know they belong. The pastor is called to help the congregation trust that it does not need to become something else to be faithful, but to become more intentional in living out its calling with clarity, purpose, and gladness.

The ideal pastor embodies the identity of Pastor–Theologian–Host who values thoughtful worship, meaningful connection, and faithful presence, and who understands pastoral care not as a supporting function but as core ministry. This pastor brings a deep pastoral heart and genuine care for those going through life’s challenges, including grief, illness, aging, while also holding an open, welcoming posture toward children, youth, families, visitors, and those at the edges of faith.

The congregation values leadership marked by emotional intelligence, humility, strong listening skills, collaboration, and the ability to guide thoughtful, gradual change without anxiety or urgency. In preaching and teaching, the pastor offers theologically grounded, accessible, and honest engagement with Scripture and life—respecting the congregation’s intelligence, addressing real questions of loss and hope and lifelong faith formation across generations. Worship leadership that honors Presbyterian tradition while making space for beauty, joy, and participation is essential.

Natural hospitality, appreciation for music and the arts, and comfort representing the church in civic and community settings are critical, as is a strong grounding in PC(USA) polity and collaborative governance. Finally, the pastor must bring legacy sensitivity and transitional wisdom—honoring the faithfulness of those who have given the church their lives, while helping the congregation speak clearly and confidently about a future shaped by hope, joy, and God’s ongoing call.

3) Mission Statement

a) Current Vision for the Future

“A Christian Community gathered to Glorify God and Be Disciples of Christ.”

The Riverside Presbyterian Church Vision, as approved by the Session on February 18, 2020.

b) Current Statement of Purpose or Mission

Statement of Purpose or Mission

The Christian Church believes that the way and will of God, the Creator, are made known through the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; and that he revealed Himself through Jesus Christ, by whose life, death, and resurrection we are saved from sin and death and sealed to His service by His present Spirit. The mission of the Church is to implement this faith. The Church is to manifest the "Beloved Community" of Christ; beyond itself it is to influence the world by word and works, as a "servant people" so that "The kingdom of the world may become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ". To that dual joy and obligation to Riverside Presbyterian Church in Cocoa Beach, Florida.

This is found in the Riverside Presbyterian Church Bylaws approved by the congregation on February 23, 2025

The Mission Study Team believes the Vision and Mission are still appropriate and relevant today.

4) History of the Church

A Brief History of Riverside Presbyterian Church Cocoa Beach, Florida

Riverside Presbyterian Church has been blessed from its beginning in 1956 with dedicated and talented parishioners and church leaders.

Sixteen members and three guests met in the home of Helen Trabue on January 23, 1956, to organize Women's Circle #8 of the Rockledge Presbyterian Church and were informed of plans to establish a church in Cocoa Beach. These women worked with the Synod of Florida on plans for such proposed church. Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Hillsboro, Illinois, (1st) The Reverend Charles W. Pfeiffer, was invited by the Synod of Florida to visit Cocoa Beach. He and Mrs. Pfeiffer arrived on April 23rd to meet with the local group. Arrangements were then made to hold worship services at St. David's By-the-Sea Episcopal Church. A worship service was conducted at St. David's on April 29, 1956, followed by an informal meeting to determine the possibility of an arrangement between the group and Reverend Pfeiffer to begin such work of establishing a new Presbyterian Church at Cocoa Beach.

The first regular worship service was held on June 3rd at St. David's. The congregation voted on July 18 to purchase land on HWY A-1-A 120 feet wide, extending west to the Banana River, at a purchase price of \$16,000. The Church was not yet organized and was called a Presbyterian Fellowship, governed by a steering committee. The committee met on September 19th to draw up a petition for the organization of such Church, along with a slate of elders and trustees which was proposed and ratified by the congregation. The service of Organization was held on October 7th at the Community Church in Cocoa Beach. By official act of the Presbytery, Riverside Presbyterian Church was declared duly organized. Six elders were elected, ordained, and installed, and three trustees were installed, creating the bi-cameral form of government under which Riverside operated for the next 40 years. Seventy-eight people signed the original charter before the close of 1956.

Ground-breaking for the first unit of construction (now known as Knox Hall) was held in March of 1957. Cost was \$30,000.00. Worship services meanwhile had been moved to an upper room in the Minella Building, except for an Easter Sunday when services were held in Jake's Bowl-A Rama to accommodate a larger attendance. The first worship service and Sunday School were held in the new building on June 23, 1957, but the completed building was dedicated on October 6, 1957. The building included six classrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, nursery, and a large room used for worship. The "Down by the Riverside" newsletter was

created in 1961. During that time the Astronaut John Glenn and his family attended Riverside whenever they were in the area, and there was much media attention.

In 1963, the congregation approved plans for a 2700 square foot sanctuary to seat 300, at an estimated cost of \$ 75,000.00. The ground-breaking was held September 22, 1963, and the first worship service in the new sanctuary (known then as the Chapel) was held Palm Sunday 1964, and the dedication service was held on May 17, 1964. Church membership was then at 307. The worship services were held in the Chapel for the next 30 years.

The Rev. Pfeiffer served as a stated supply pastor until February 1960, when the congregation voted to call him as pastor. He was installed on May 9, 1960, and served until his retirement in the spring of 1964. He was Pastor Emeritus until his death in 1984.

The (2nd) Reverend Nicholas B. Bosworth served as pastor from April 1964 until 1968. The Board of Deacons was established in 1965. The first pictorial Directory was published in 1967 following the first 10 years.

Glenn Arnold was named Organist and Choirmaster, effective September 1967. The position of Wedding Coordinator was formally established, and the Junior High Fellowship created the first "Chrismons" for the Christmas tree in the sanctuary.

In 1967 the congregation approved plans for a Christian Education building, plus general improvements of the existing facilities, at a cost of \$60 000.00. The new building was to be called Calvin Hall and was dedicated on January 21, 1968. Church membership was now up to 517. That same year the Women's Association created a wedding reception committee, and they published a "best seller"- the Riverside cookbook (A second cookbook was made available in October of 1980).

Following the resignation of Rev. Bosworth in November of 1968 and prior to his successor's installation, Dr. George Buttrick, a retired minister, served as Visiting Pastor for four months in 1969. Dr. Buttrick was a noted theologian and author, and an editor of the "Interpreter's Bible."

The (3rd) Rev. Dr. Robert Lowry served as pastor from April 1969 to September 1975. Dr. Lowry brought a special interest on Christian Education and teacher training.

The Rev Earl B. Stewart served as assistant pastor from July 1975 through August 1976.

The (4th) Rev L. Rex Pedlow served as pastor from October 1976 until his retirement April 2, 1986, and remained Pastor Emeritus until his death. Rev. Pedlow brought his Irish brogue and his love of music featuring "Hymn Sings"

instituted along with Great Evenings at Riverside (GEAR Nights). Land along the north property line was purchased during this time at a cost of 75 000. Rev. m Rex helped guide through the 20th and 30th Anniversary times.

The congregation approved the construction of the Fellowship Hall to be built at a cost of \$275 000. Ground-breaking was held in July 1983. The Fellowship Hall and the Pfeiffer Conference room were dedicated on March 4, 1984. Church membership was at 536.

Effective January 1, 1985, Riverside became a part of the new Central Florida Presbytery, created by combining the former St. Johns Presbytery, U.S., and part of the Northeast Florida Presbytery, of which Riverside had been a member.

Following the retirement of Rev Pedlow, the Rev. James B. Hatch served as interim pastor for one year beginning in May 1986. Rev. Hatch brought emphasis on "What Presbyterians Believe."

In the spring of 1987 (5th) Rev. Allen Brindisi was called to become the fifth pastor of Riverside. During his tenure he helped organize the first Spring Family Carnival, sponsored the first CROP Walk in Cocoa Beach, created a Memorial Garden in 1991 as final resting place church members, and organized the Mariners in 1994. A Long-Range Planning Committee proposed, and the congregation approved a new sanctuary building that would seat up to 500 people at a cost of \$800,000.00 with the first service held there in 1994. 590 members then.

In addition to guiding the congregation through the building project, Rev. Brindisi completed his Doctor of Ministry Degree, served on the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry, and in 1996 as Moderator of Central Florida Presbytery. He supervised three seminary student interns at Riverside calling for an Associate Pastor.

One of Riverside's pastoral interns, The Rev. Jane Nicholas, returned to become Associate Pastor on September 1, 1993. Her two likeable puppets were favorites of the congregation.

The congregation, in 1996 adopted a unicameral form of government used by most churches in this presbytery. In January 1, 1997, the Board of Trustees was dissolved, and its responsibilities were absorbed by the Session. Session was increased to 15 members. Riverside's 40th Anniversary celebration was held for forty days in the Fall of 1996. As part of Project 2000, Riverside joined with three other Presbyterian Churches to build a home in Cocoa with Space Coast Habitat for Humanity. The home was dedicated in March of 2000. Rev. Allen Brindisi left Riverside in December of 2000 to become senior pastor at Davidson College Presbyterian Church in Davidson, North Carolina.

It was our privilege to have Rev Ernst H. Flaniken to serve as Interim Pastor for the year of 2001. A Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) was formed in January 2001. Re. Nicholas continued to serve Associate Pastor and youth coordinator. Rev. Robert Palmer came as interim from January 2002 until the arrival of the newly selected Pastor, (6th) Rev. Dr. Daniel D. Robinson and his wife Karin and their daughters in June 2002. Two of the accomplishments in 2002 included retiring the debt on the sanctuary and helping to build a house for the Habitat for Humanity. Riverside also adopted a "Commission" structure of the administration and life of the church in 2003. The Commissions included Stewardship & Finance, Property Management, Personnel, Education, Outreach Evangelism & Missions, Worship & Sacraments, Fellowship, and Care & Support. In 2004, the Vision Team was established and was charged to develop a vision and strategies for the future of Riverside. Plans included moving toward a Contemporary Worship Service. The year of 2005 saw the departure of Rev. Jane Nicholas due to the dissolution of the Associate Pastor position. The Vision Team set goals which included starting a Sunday School class for special needs children and saw the initiation of the Contemporary Worship Service on September 18, 2005.

On Sunday October 1, 2006, Riverside celebrated "50 Years of Christian Joy" with a special communion worship service followed by a Reception in the Fellowship Hall. The City of Cocoa Beach, by Proclamation, declared the Sunday to be a "Riverside Presbyterian Church Day!" The following Sunday, October 8th, a premiere of "Appalachian Gospel" with Old Time gospel singing. Pickin' and Fiddlin' by the choir and gospel story telling by the Deacons was presented in recognition of the 50th Anniversary!

A Spring Praise Fest debuted on May 12, 2007, in the front parking lot. This event was followed in November of 2008 with the first season of Dr. Vernon Boushell Concert series leading the way for Riverside to be known as the Music Church.

During 2008-2010, Carillons on the Chapel were restored, the Manse was placed on sale, the One Room School House was established, the exterior of the Sanctuary and Knox exterior bathroom were refurbished. In 2011 a total of \$ 27,000 was given to Riverside causes and charities. A Riverside Gallery was completed and hung on the east wall of the Sanctuary Narthex as a historical record of the Pastors who helped build its stature in the community. In 2012 a new roof was put on the sanctuary; a new electronic sign was donated; a new sound system and speakers were installed; a new pulpit and communion table were purchased for the Chapel; and a new handrail was installed from the Sanctuary to the Fellowship Hall. In 2013, after 5 years of dedicated work, a chronological record of Riverside's first 50 years was completed and presented in a two volume Scrapbook and a DVD. In December 2013, Riverside hosted for the first time "Family Promise of Brevard", a

program which provided shelter and service for homeless families.

In 2014, emphasis was placed on maintaining and growing our Church. An Acoustic Video System with A/V screens were installed in the Sanctuary and beginning April 20th the Contemporary Service moved to the Sanctuary from the Chapel. And in 2014, after forty-seven and a half years, Glenn Arnold retired as Organist and Choir Director. Two committees were formed: Riverside Older Adult Ministry and Ambassadors.

Pastor Dan Robinson retired effective August 1, 2015, with July 19 as his last day in the pulpit. The Contemporary and Traditional Service were combined beginning in May. Supply ministers and lay leader George Spaeth filled in during the time until Pastor Melanie Ruta became Interim Pastor in November of 2015. Under Pastor Melanie's guidance the Church focused on calling new leadership, formation of a Pulpit Nominating Committee and re-examining goals and direction of the Church. In October of 2016 Riverside marked its 60th Anniversary with a month-long celebration of its history which included "60 Works for Riverside's 60th Anniversary"; a special "Kirkin' O' Tartans" worship service was held on October 2, 2016, to honor our Presbyterian Scottish heritage. A reception featuring historical displays and a special program titled "Gimme that Old Time Religion" were held during the day. A few days later hurricane Matthew gave us the opportunity to put our emergency preparedness plan into action.

On November 13, 2016, the (7th) Reverend Michael Hafele was nominated to become the next Pastor of Riverside. Pastor Melanie Ruta bid our congregation her goodbye on November 28th following a year of guidance and service. Rev. Michael Hafele began as Pastor December 15, 2016, as Riverside's seventh minister in the Church's 60-year history. He was joined with his wife Claudia and children Nikolas (11 yrs) and Carina (10 yrs). During Rev. Michael's tenure the Chapel was removed due to health concerns and costs to renovate. Reverend Michael Hafele served until 2019 as he accepted position at another church. Membership for December 2018 was 247 Active and 26 Affiliate members.

Supply ministers filled the Pulpit until nomination of Rev. Dr. J. Roy Sharpe as Interim Pastor to Riverside in September 2019. Rev Roy was accompanied by his wife Haroryn, where she played a part in several services and was a presenter at one of the First Tuesday Dinners. Rev. Roy provided sound guidance during the search for a new minister. Resonating in the minds of many of the congregation members was Rev Roy's Benedictions to "Dig a Little Deeper!"

Riverside Presbyterian Church installed (8th) Rev. Chris Carson as its new Pastor in 2021. Chris's family (wife Becky, daughter Katelyn, sons Cleigh and Mac) moved to Brevard County and became a part of church activities. Pastor Chris's enthusiasm

and involvement kept our shrinking membership moving forward with purpose. Then on July 12, 2024, the untimely death of Pastor Chris, due to a massive heart attack, sent a shock through the congregation. A celebration of Chris's life was held on August 5th in the Riverside Sanctuary, and his remains were placed in the Church's Memorial Garden. During the last six months of 2024, 20 different ministers occupied the Sunday morning pulpit and/or served as Moderator of Session.

Programs and projects Pastor Chris had supported have continued: Children's Hunger Project, a Classic Car Show which raised \$1,900 for their benefit; Back to School Gift Cards for Cape View Elementary totaling \$1,950; "Trunk of Treat"; support of the Salvation Army's "Stuff A Stocking" project; "Chris Carson's Cruisin for Kids" raising funds for 30 Bikes, helmets, and locks in memory of Pastor Chris. Membership roll as of December 2024 was 165 Active and O Affiliate members.

On February 1, 2025, Rev. Dr. William C. Teng became Interim Pastor. 2026, Rev. Bill Teng has been serving as Interim Pastor. The Session approved Rev. Jane Wessen as Parish Associate Position to focus on pastoral care, assistance during worship and occasionally pulpit supply. Riverside is also planning for the 2026 "70th Anniversary of Riverside". Rev. Bill and his wife Karen have been very supportive of these activities' continuance of most important projects and history. A Mission Study Team was appointed by the Session in November 2025 and submitted their final Mission Study Report to the Session in February 2026. Membership roll as of December 2025 was 166 Active members.

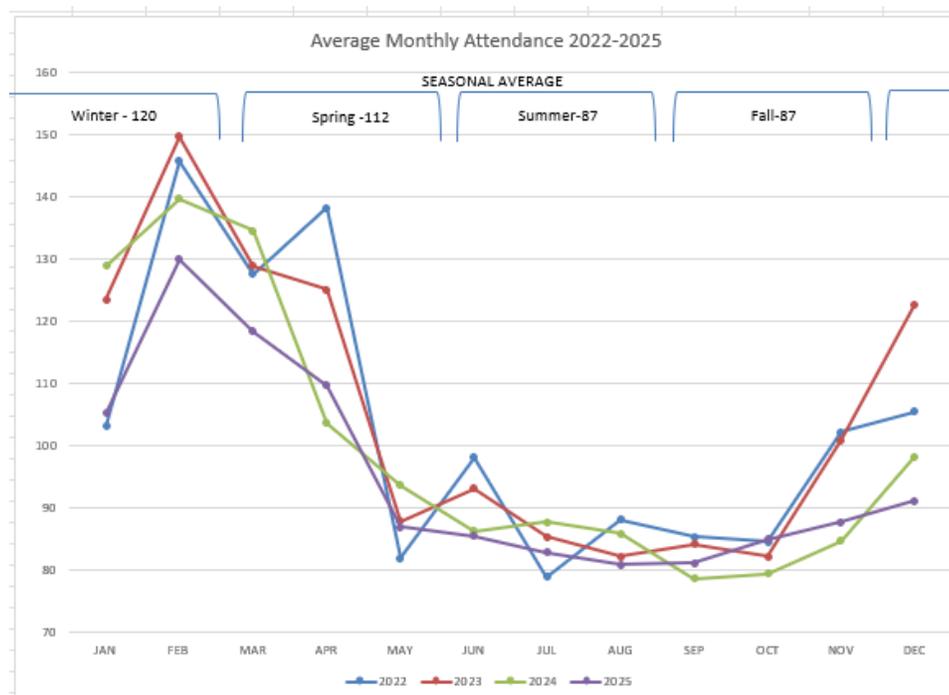
{To gain a deeper source of the History of the Riverside Presbyterian Church, look for the Church Historian's Report in each year's Annual Report- written by Marilyn Grigsby, Historian! Thanks goes to her for all her resourceful information!

Website - Riversidepresbyterianchurch.org

5) Demographics of Church Attendance

Riverside Presbyterian combines traditional and contemporary worship styles into a single service, held at 10:00 AM on Sundays. The service is also streamed online through the church website for people to watch from home. The service is led by the pastor and follows typical Presbyterian service structure with 2-3 hymns accompanied by the organist on a pipe organ and led by the chancel choir. The choir also sings an offertory or anthem accompanied by the piano. The service opens and closes with music from the worship band led by a singer/guitar player, a bassist, drums, a keyboard, and 2-3 backup singers. There is also a sermonette for children. Members of the congregation volunteer to participate in the service through greeting, scripture readings, passing the offering tray, or giving the sermonette to the children. Services generally last 60-75 minutes. Following each service, many of the attendees gather in the Fellowship Hall for coffee and light snacks.

Riverside Presbyterian Church had 166 members in 2025. We are an aging congregation with an average age of 70. Of the 166 members, 70% are over the age of 70, with just 5% of people below the age of 55, and 3% under the age of 18. Membership is down from 178 in 2024 with five members passing and seven new members in 2025. The single worship service has a regular in-person attendance of about 100 people each and an estimated 10-20 people stream the worship service online weekly. There are typically more attendees in the winter due to the snowbirds that reside in the condominiums surrounding the church. The graph below demonstrates the attendance fluctuation for the years 2022-2025. Attendance peaking in February and lowest in the summer months.



We are a well-educated congregation made up of 98% Caucasians with 53% females and 47% males. Though our average age is twelve years older than the Cocoa Beach average age, the other demographics of the congregation are very consistent with the local cities and the surrounding Brevard County area.

The church faces a significant challenge bringing in a younger generation of members due to the combination of an aging surrounding community, a lack of young families moving to the area, and a sharp decline in church attendance among Mainline Protestants. With 70% of the congregation over 70 years old, the church must ensure ongoing vitality by welcoming new members of all ages over the next 15 years.

On a positive note, the church could tap into the rich snowbird population with the goal of keeping them as regular attendees/members throughout the year by streaming the service online after they return home. Additionally, the tourism industry in Cocoa Beach presents an opportunity to be a temporary church home for 2.5 million tourists that visit Cocoa Beach each year. Proper signage and advertising could enable the church to capitalize on its advantageous location as it resides directly on heavily travelled Highway A1A.

6) Church Financial Overview

a. Financial Overview and Assessment (2021–2025)

Over the past five years, Riverside Presbyterian Church has demonstrated steady financial commitment from its congregation and careful stewardship of resources while navigating several transitional and external challenges. Core operating income has remained relatively stable, averaging approximately \$354,000 annually, with pledged giving showing resilience and recent growth. In 2026 the number of pledging units and the average per unit were the highest in over a decade. After several flat years, pledged giving increased meaningfully in 2025 to nearly \$320,000. In 2026, the “faith promise” (pledged) giving exceeded the 2025 year by \$83,000, reflecting renewed congregational confidence and engagement. Loose offerings and rental income provide modest supplemental support, while interest income from designated funds and endowments contributes reliably to annual operations. Federal COVID relief funds in 2021 and 2023 provided temporary income support but were non-recurring and are appropriately treated as transitional assistance rather than ongoing revenue.

Operating expenses have remained controlled overall, with personnel and property costs comprising the largest and most consistent portions of the budget. Notably, personnel expenses declined in 2024 during a period of staffing transition, helping to narrow the operating deficit that year to near break-even. In most years, however, Riverside has operated with a modest structural deficit, averaging under \$20,000 annually, reflecting the tension between sustaining ministry breadth and a largely fixed cost structure. These deficits have been manageable and intentional, supported by accumulated reserves rather than debt.

Riverside’s balance sheet reflects significant financial strength. As of 2025, the church holds approximately \$1.1 million in assets, largely composed of special endowments, designated funds, and cash reserves. These assets are fully matched by corresponding liabilities, indicating that funds are appropriately restricted and carefully accounted for. The presence of multiple long-standing endowments provides long-term stability and investment income, though most assets are not available for unrestricted operating use. (See following page for spreadsheet of Five-Year Financials)

Overall, Riverside Presbyterian Church is financially stable, well-governed, and solvent, with strong reserves and consistent congregational support. At the same time, the pattern of small operating deficits underscores the need for thoughtful alignment of staffing, mission priorities, and revenue growth as the church looks to the future. Riverside enters its next season not in crisis, but at a discernment point: financially healthy enough to be faithful and courageous, while called to steward its resources strategically to support sustainable ministry and future leadership.

b. Riverside's Five-Year Financial Summary Spreadsheet

RIVERSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FINANCES 2021-2025						
INCOME	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 BUDG
Pledged Giving	\$288,052	\$286,420	\$286,223	\$287,469	\$319,997	338,000
Loose Collection	\$22,149	\$35,859	\$30,185	\$25,179	\$25,592	27,000
Subtotal	\$310,201	\$322,279	\$316,408	\$312,648	\$345,589	365,000
Facility Rental	\$3,390	\$2,775	\$1,035	\$730	\$3,610	1,000
Interest Income	\$17	\$1,357	\$1,904	\$1,807	\$1,108	750
Interest Income from Manse Funds	\$6,701	\$7,392	\$10,193	\$12,542	\$13,798	11,000
Interest Income from Bookbinder	\$5,838	\$5,838	\$5,838	\$5,838	\$5,837	5,900
SBA-Paycheck Protection Program (Fed Govt COVID)	\$33,300					
IRS-Employee Rertention Credit (Fed. Govt COVID)			\$33,152			
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	\$359,447	\$339,641	\$368,530	\$333,564	\$369,943	383,650
EXPENSES						
Mission Team	30,233	26,630	13,564	14,625	\$14,965	15,030
Fellowship Commission Team	3,520	4,499	4,886	4,179	\$3,577	4,150
Community Engagement			528	1,087	\$1,107	1,900
Communications Team			1,043	2,948	\$2,184	3,510
Worship Team	1,237	2,194	1,969	1,600	\$1,268	3,200
Education	-78	3,087	222	1,056	\$816	2,300
Property and Operations	134,781	117,894	134,493	132,331	\$145,298	159,700
Personnel/Staff Resources	206,051	212,509	221,861	176,528	\$219,617	250,882
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	375,744	366,812	378,566	334,353	\$388,833	440,672
NET OPERATING INCOME	(\$16,298)	(\$27,172)	(\$10,036)	(\$789)	(\$18,889)	(\$57,022)
ASSETS (including Cash, Special Endowments, Special Funds, excluding property and tangibles)						
Truist Checking					\$83,041	
Truist Tithe.ly/paypal Checking					\$9,987	
Vanguard Money Mkt					\$1,975	
Vanguard Bonds					\$268,732	
Utility & Misc Deposits					\$80	
Space Coast Credit Union Savings					\$2,068	
Suntrust Money Mkt (Special Endowment)					\$26,234	
Vanguard Wellesely (Special Endowment)					\$249,504	
Vanguard Wellington (Special Endowment)					\$367,083	
Boardman Endowment (Special Endowment)					\$100,331	
TOTAL ASSETS					\$1,109,039	
LIABILITIES (Obligations against Assets)						
Special Funds (Designated Giving)					\$1,108,689	
Mission Gift Payable					\$2,642	
Men's Bible Study Payable					\$2,335	
Christmas Joy Offering					\$525	
Misc Liabilities (e.g. Copier Lease Buyout)					\$967	
Deferred Income Pledge					\$11,960	
Blance Sheet Operational Income					\$808	
Current Year's Earnings					-\$18,889	
TOTAL LIABILITIES					\$1,109,039	

7) Summary of Congregational/Church Survey

Summary of the Congregational Survey

A survey was provided to the congregation and posted on the church website for several weeks in January 2026. The purpose of the survey was, in part, to collect demographics data to validate the data provided by the church office. Primarily, however, the survey was intended to capture the views and opinions of the congregation to better understand what the congregation desires and expects of the church and what they would like the church to look like in the next 5-10 years.

For an average church attendance of 100 people, a desired confidence level of 95%, and a margin of error of 10%, a minimum of 50 survey responses were needed. A total of 54 surveys were completed and returned, making the data statistically significant. Though 54 surveys were returned, not all questions were answered on every survey. Furthermore, very few surveys were completed by those who stream the service online so there is little information to draw from our online attendees.

Several consistent themes appeared in the survey responses, both in terms of the demographics and the opinions of the church congregation.

Demographically, approximately 75% of the survey responders were over the age of 65. This is very consistent with both the church and the Cocoa Beach community's age demographic numbers presented earlier in this report. Not surprisingly given the age of the congregation, 63% of the respondents have been attending Riverside for 25 years or more, indicating they are well invested in the church and have seen it evolve over the years to where it is today.

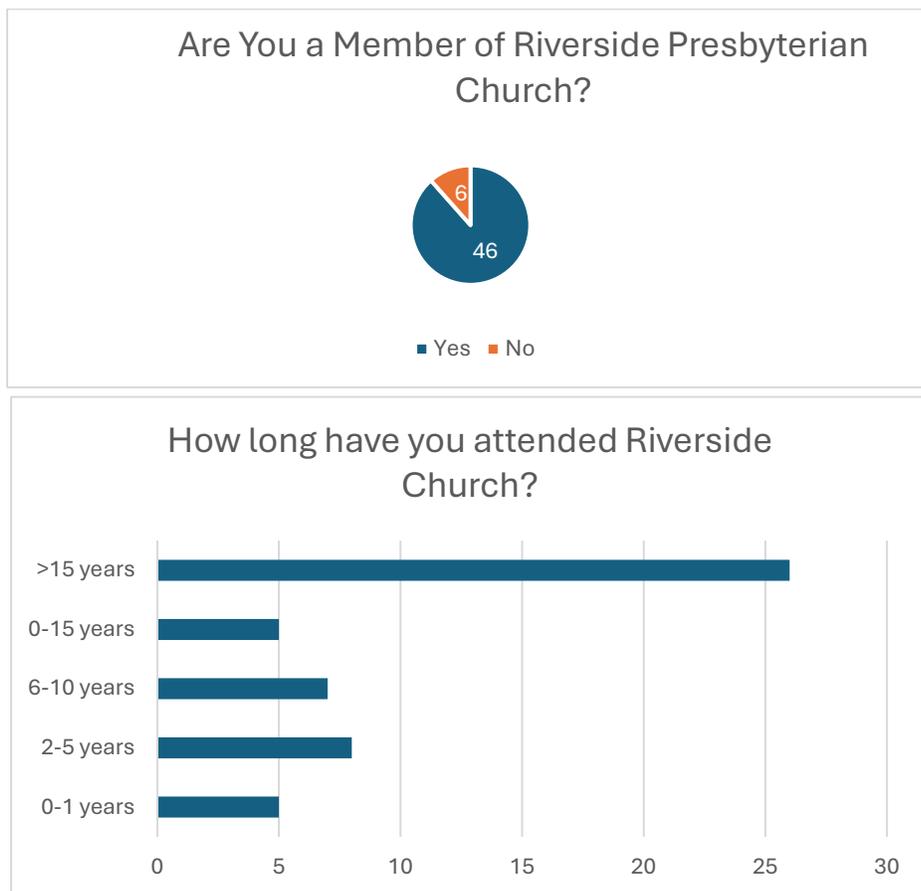
In terms of opinions, the following themes are of note:

- 1) Most of the people have either maintained the same level of participation in the church over the last year or have increased their participation. This is important considering the church lost both Pastor Carson and the leader of their worship band in the last 18 months and has been undergoing change since then.
- 2) Most respondents believe that the church is a friendly church. They feel welcome and enjoy the friendships and relationships they have developed in the church.
- 3) People like the format of the service and the music and do not want to see major changes. This is significant given that there is only one service and it combines both contemporary worship music, choir music, hymns, and organ/piano all in a single service. While some prefer hymns and others prefer contemporary music, the vast majority seem happy with the combination of the two styles.

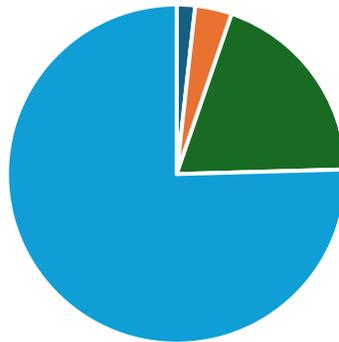
- 4) A very clear message that came from the survey responses is that people want to see more youth in the congregation. They want to see young families in the community attend. They want a church that all ages can relate to and be comfortable in.
- 5) Perhaps the strongest message from the surveys is that people want to see the congregation grow. They see an older congregation with slowly declining membership and want to see it infused with new, younger members.
- 6) Finally, there was a consistent call for more community outreach in the church, not just to gain new members but to serve the community as well.

Overall, we found the survey to be very insightful and useful in understanding the demographics and the needs of the church. The demographics data was very consistent with that reported over the last few years by the church. Additionally, the consistency of the opinions in the surveys painted a good picture of what the congregation desires and needs and what they want to see in the church moving forward.

The Congregational Survey was conducted between January 4-11, 2026. (See Appendix V for Survey)

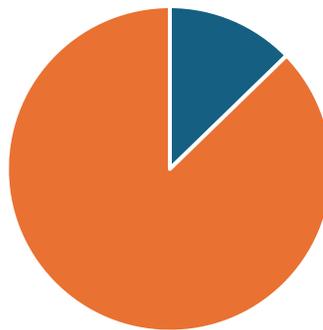


Aged Group



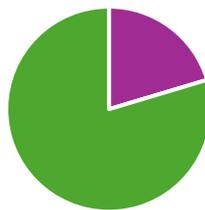
■ Under 12 yrs ■ 12-20 yrs ■ 50-60 yrs ■ 65 yrs+

Are you a Seasonal Resident, Full Time, Visitor?



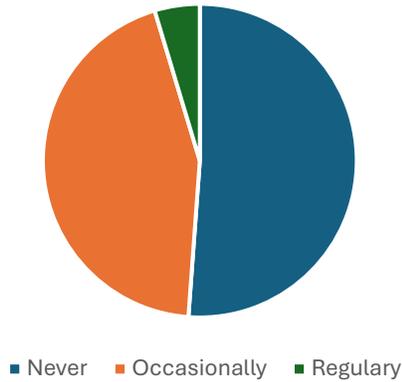
■ Seasonal Resident ■ Full Time Resident ■ Other

On average, how many times did you attend Sunday Worship Service in this congregation in the past year?

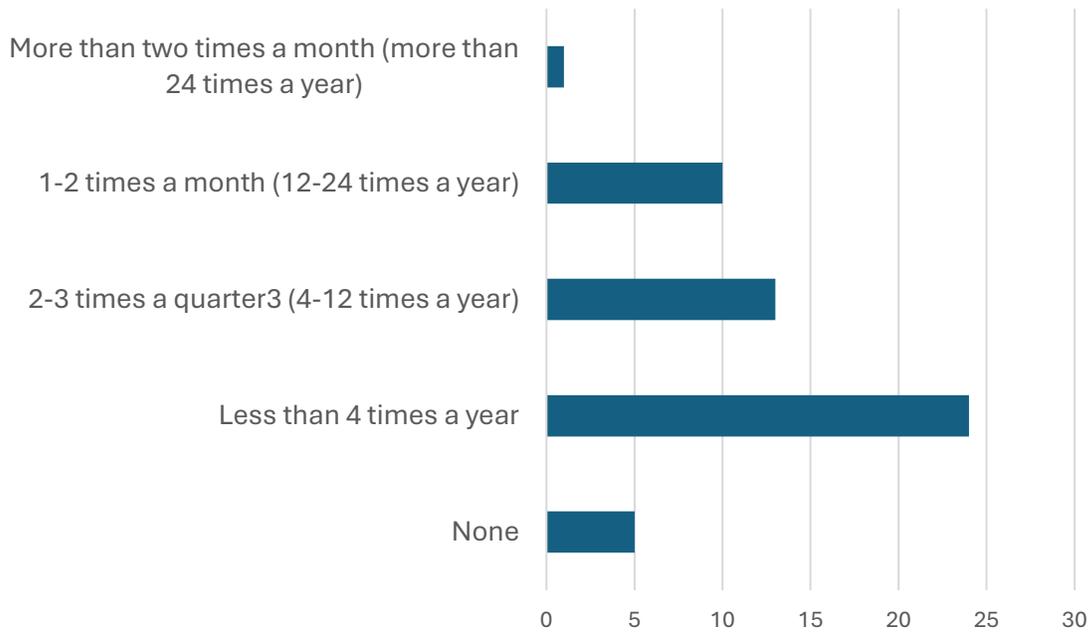


■ Once ■ Less than 6 Times
■ About once every 2 months ■ About once-a-month
■ Two to three times monthly ■ Four or more times a month

Do you attend Riverside Church online (using the internet)? If so, how often?

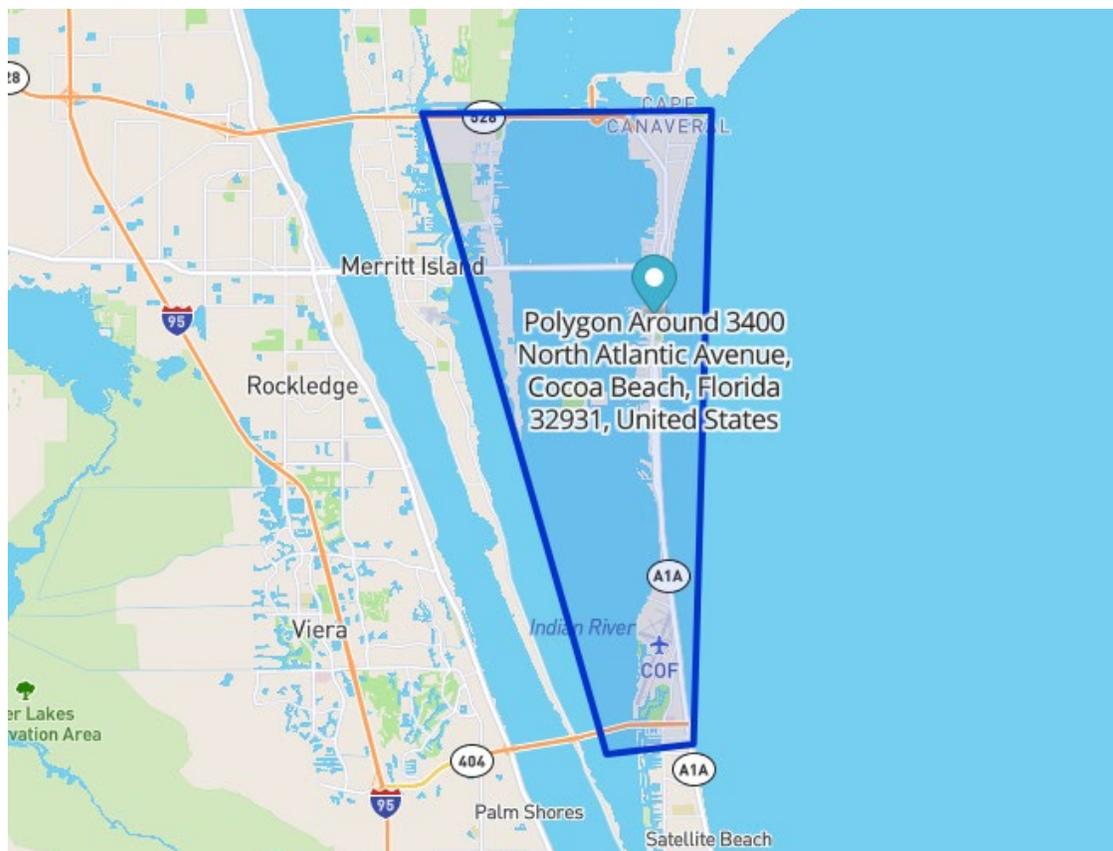


On the average, how much did you participate in Christian Education (church school, on-going small group, short term studies, special events typically in a year (not including Sunday Worship Service)?



8) Characteristics of the Local Community

Riverside Presbyterian Church resides in Brevard County, Florida, specifically in the north end of Cocoa Beach. The geographic areas served include Cocoa Beach, Cape Canaveral and, to a smaller extent, Merritt Island, Florida.



Cocoa Beach, Florida

Cocoa Beach consists of a narrow 12-mile strip of land surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the East and the Banana River to the West. The population of Cocoa Beach is 11,400 people as of 2025. Cocoa Beach was borne out of the dawn of the United States space program in the middle 1950's. It had a population of just 300 people in 1956, but quickly grew to a population of 10,000 over the next ten years as NASA launched the Apollo Program in the early 1960's. The population is very closely tied to local space and tourism industry. It peaked at 12,500 between 1990 and 2000 at the height of the Space Shuttle program and dropped to 11,000 as the program drew to an end in 2010. It increased slightly between 2015 and 2020 with the boom of the commercial space industry in the area. Since 2015, the population has remained relatively steady at around 11,000 people with a growth rate of just 0.33% since 2020, far below the Brevard County rate, which has increased by 23.2% since 2010.

Mosaic (See Appendix IV), a consumer classification tool by Experian, classifies Brevard County as older married couples on fixed retirement incomes, highly educated, and homeowners. While Brevard County is 75% Caucasian with an average income of \$46,000 per year, Cocoa Beach is 90% Caucasian with an average income of \$52,000 per year. The average age in Brevard County is 47 years, while Cocoa Beach is significantly older with an average age of 57 years. Two thirds of the Cocoa Beach population are over 50 years old.

Due to the narrow strip of land surrounded by water on either side, Cocoa Beach has virtually no land to build new neighborhoods or housing developments. Cocoa Beach has 2,504 people per square mile, compared to the national average of just 91 people and the population density is 511% higher than the state average. The south end of Cocoa Beach is where the majority of the houses reside. Most houses were built in the 1960s. Younger families moving to the area to work in the commercial space industry (SpaceX, Blue Origin, etc.) are primarily choosing to live in newer homes across the river in Viera or Titusville. The north end of Cocoa Beach, where the church resides, has very few houses but is densely populated with condominiums that are home to older residents.

Since the 1980's, however, Cocoa Beach has become a popular destination for tourists and seasonal residents. Throughout the space program, Cocoa Beach has enjoyed hundreds of thousands of American and international tourists to the area to see space launches, relax on our beaches, and visit Disney and other theme parks in the nearby Orlando area. The growth of the commercial space industry over the last ten years, the continued popularity of the Orlando theme parks, and the recent boom of the cruise ship industry at Port Canaveral, just 3 miles north of Cocoa Beach has resulted in a steady increase in tourists each year. Port Canaveral is now the busiest cruise port in the world welcoming over 8.5 million travelers in 2025 alone. While many of these passengers fly into Orlando's airport and stay in hotels in Port Canaveral or Cocoa Beach before their cruises, most are transient and do not spend much time in Cocoa Beach itself. However, they add a great deal to the local economy on a year-round basis.

In addition to the tourists, the population of Cocoa Beach increases significantly in the winter months due to our seasonal guests from the north. Between the months of January to April, the population of Cocoa Beach grows from approximately 10,000 people to as much as 25,000. These seasonal residents, affectionately known as "snowbirds", live primarily in condominiums in the north end of Cocoa Beach. They come from Canada, the Midwest, and Northeast. Some own property in Cocoa Beach and only use it in the winter, while others rent condominiums for the winter.

From a religious perspective, the three largest populations in Brevard County between 1980 and 2020 were Evangelical Protestants, Catholics, and Mainline Protestants. In 1980, each represented 10-15% of the county's population with all other religions

being in the 1-3% range. However, by 2020 Catholics represented 18% and Evangelical Protestants represented 15%, while Mainline Protestants (which includes Presbyterian Church U.S.A.) steadily declined to just over 3%. Although the religious population is much larger at the national level, the trends are the same. In the same period (1980-2020), Catholics have slightly decreased from 21% to 19%. Evangelical Protestants have increased slightly from 13% to 16%, while Mainline Protestants have significantly decreased from 13% to just 5%. All other religions were well under 3%.

With the City of Cocoa Beach focused primarily on continuing to grow the tourist industry and no plans for building new housing communities or schools, it appears that the growing age trend will continue in Cocoa Beach for the foreseeable future making it difficult to bring younger families into the community.

Cape Canaveral, Florida

Cape Canaveral, a small coastal city in Brevard County, Florida, has an estimated population of about 9,976 to 10,014 residents as of recent U.S. Census estimates.

The city has a significantly older population, with a median age around 59.5 years, which is well above the state and national medians and reflects a large proportion of retirees and older adults in the community. The racial and ethnic makeup of Cape Canaveral is predominantly White (non-Hispanic), accounting for roughly 86–89% of the population. Smaller portions of the population include Hispanic or Latino residents (around 6–9%), individuals identifying with two or more races, and very small percentages of Black or African American and Asian residents.

There are approximately 5,900 households, and the average household size is smaller than national averages—around 1.7 to 1.8 persons per household—reflecting a community with many single-person or couple-only homes rather than large families. Median household income in Cape Canaveral is in the low-to-mid \$70,000 range, which is comparable to or slightly above broader regional figures. Per-capita income is also higher than the county average, reflecting relative economic stability, though some variation exists across age cohorts. Approximately half of the population is male and half female, with a slight male majority in some recent estimates.

Cape Canaveral is a small, predominantly White, older-skewing coastal city with a high median age and a household composition that favors older couples or individuals. The community is economically stable, with household income levels near or above regional averages, and reflects typical characteristics of a coastal retirement-oriented city. These demographic features are important for ministries, community engagement strategies, and organizational planning, especially for organizations seeking to serve aging populations or engage with seasonal residents.

9) Conclusions – Future Direction of the Church

a) Serving the Community

This mission strategy is intentionally shaped to the unique geography, demographics, and religious realities of Cocoa Beach. Rather than adopting generic models of church growth or family-centered programming, it responds directly to a coastal community defined by an older, highly educated population, significant seasonal fluctuation, high residential density, and a steady flow of tourists. The guiding vision is for the church to function as a “*Spiritual Harbor Church*”—a trusted, visible, thoughtful, and hospitable presence for people navigating life transitions such as retirement, widowhood, and relocation; for seasonal residents and repeat visitors; for spiritually curious adults who may be wary of institutional religion; and for those seeking meaning and connection more than membership pressure. This model emphasizes high-quality ministry, intellectual and spiritual depth, and low barriers to participation, allowing individuals to engage authentically at their own pace.

Given that older, educated, empty-nester adults constitute the largest permanent population in Cocoa Beach, ministry efforts should prioritize faith-and-thought engagement that respects intellectual curiosity and lived experience. Forums and short-term discussion groups that explore theology in conversation with science, ethics, environmental stewardship, aging, and life transitions provide credibility and relevance. Book and film discussions, along with guest speakers drawn from the community’s rich professional backgrounds such as retired engineers, physicians, educators, and scientists—position the church as a place of thoughtful dialogue and mature faith. These approaches align naturally with Mainline Presbyterian strengths and attract individuals who might not otherwise attend traditional worship.

In addition, arts, music, and beauty serve as powerful and non-threatening entry points in an affluent coastal setting. Concert series, art exhibits, poetry and storytelling events, and candlelight or sunset services create welcoming spaces where spiritual reflection can occur organically. These offerings extend the church’s reach beyond Sunday worship, strengthen its reputation within the community, and often lead tourists and seasonal residents to become repeat attenders during subsequent visits.

The church’s coastal geography and dense condominium living environment further shape its ministry opportunities. Environmental stewardship initiatives—such as beach cleanups paired with prayer and reflection, partnerships with marine conservation organizations, educational programs on coastal resilience, and

worship themes focused on care for creation—allow faith to be expressed through action rather than argument. These efforts resonate deeply with local values, build public trust, and make the church visibly relevant to the city’s priorities. At the same time, condo-based relational ministry addresses the paradox of high density and social isolation by bringing small groups, coffee gatherings, lectures, and care teams directly into residential spaces. Transportation assistance and companionship ministries for aging residents further lower barriers to participation and foster meaningful micro-community.

Seasonal residents, or “snowbirds,” represent one of the church’s greatest untapped assets. By offering small winter groups, welcome events, short-term volunteer opportunities, and robust livestream and digital engagement, the church can cultivate lasting relationships that extend beyond the winter months. Many snowbirds, when meaningfully connected, become consistent seasonal participants, financial supporters, and enthusiastic ambassadors for the church year after year.

Tourists, while unlikely to join formally, are nonetheless an important ministry audience. Sunrise beach services, midweek contemplative prayer, hospitality tables offering simple care such as water, sunscreen, and prayer, and blessings for safe travel reinforce the church’s identity as open, gracious, and present. These interactions shape the church’s reputation far beyond Cocoa Beach and align well with the transient nature of the local population.

Recognizing the limited presence of young families and the lack of new housing development, this strategy intentionally avoids defining success by youth numbers or program expansion. Instead, it emphasizes intergenerational worship moments, short and meaningful service opportunities, regional partnerships for youth programming, and visible blessing of children and young adults by elders. This approach prevents burnout, maintains realistic expectations, and honors the people the church currently serves.

In summary, meaningful growth in Cocoa Beach will most likely come from adults’ transition journeys, late in career, retired and widowed adults seeking purpose, seasonal residents looking for a spiritual home, educated professionals relocating later in life, and visitors who return year after year and gradually deepen their connection. It will not primarily come from program-heavy models aimed at young families or from competing with large Evangelical churches.

Examples of Actions to Implement “Serving the Community”

1. Get the church more engaged with condominium (“condo”) residents, such as bringing an event to them for them, ensuring that topics and fellowship are relevant to their intellect and faith stage.
2. Promote/market/post church events and opportunities within condo spaces.
3. Invite retired professionals and community leaders to share expertise alongside theological reflection.
4. Invite the community (including condo residents) to the church’s public open activities, utilizing the Fellowship Hall, for routine/scheduled card games, traveling art show, book clubs, chair exercise, health seminars, etc. (avoid night travel). By creating a “third safe space” that is a place where individuals can engage in social interaction outside of the home and work.
5. Partner with local conservation organizations for beach/lagoon cleanup days. Clearly identify Riverside’s participation (e.g. shirts?)
6. Identify meaningful hospitality for tourists, such as a welcome package to remember the church (e.g. sunscreen, sunglasses, lip balm, Riverside logo item, etc.)
7. Increase visibility and engagement with local events that pass by the church (e.g. 5K runs, Surf competitions, parades, etc.) – have something in parking lot, hospitality tables, offer water, sponsorship, etc.
8. Consider “Movie Night” or other activities once a quarter for the public (popcorn/drinks for sale)
9. Continue sunrise beach services.

Conclusion – Serving the Community

Finally, the overall tone of ministry must reflect the broader religious landscape, marked by declining Mainline Protestant affiliation and lower institutional trust. An invitational posture—characterized by welcome without pressure, faith expressed through presence, acceptance, service, grace and joy. Riverside Presbyterian Church grows by becoming a trusted, beautiful, intellectually honest, and service-oriented spiritual home for people navigating life transitions—while remaining visibly open to those just passing through. In other words, to offer an environment of being part of a larger “family” is essential for sustainable engagement and growth.

b) Serving the Congregation

Riverside Presbyterian Church is a faithful, mature, generous, and relationally strong congregation. Many members have invested decades of worship, service, and leadership in the life of the church. At the same time, as the congregation ages, there are unspoken but deeply felt questions emerging among its members: *How long will I still matter here? What does faithful discipleship look like in my later years? Am I still needed, or am I simply maintaining what once was?* Serving the congregation well in the coming years requires naming these questions honestly and responding to them with clarity, care, and purpose.

A key shift needed going forward is not a change in identity, but a change in self-understanding. Rather than viewing itself as a church trying to “hold on,” the congregation is called to see itself as a community accompanying one another through life’s transitional moments and later seasons of faith—with intention, courage, and hope. This reframing reduces anxiety, affirms vocation in later life, and allows honest future conversations without fear.

In worship, the church’s existing strengths should be preserved and gently refined. Blended worship, strong music ministry, Presbyterian liturgy, congregational participation, and post-worship fellowship are all deeply valued and should remain central. At the same time, small congregation-aware adjustments can significantly enhance accessibility and hospitality, such as maintaining a predictable worship length, ensuring excellent sound quality and assistive listening, offering large-print materials, and simplifying services when needed. These adjustments are not concessions, but expressions of care for the people who gather.

Preaching and teaching should continue to emphasize theological depth delivered in a human and accessible way. Congregational feedback confirms a desire for substance rather than performance—sermons that are grounded in Scripture, conversational in tone, clearly structured, and honest about transitions in life, loss, unanswered prayer, and yet full of hope and joy. Educational opportunities are best offered in short-term discussion and small group formats that integrate belonging and faith with real-life concerns such as ethics, science, grief, and legacy, and that allow space for dialogue and questions.

As members age, the church must also reframe what it means to “serve.” Many are tired of energy-intensive roles but still long for meaningful contribution. Shifting from committee-heavy structures to wisdom-based participation allows members to remain engaged through prayer ministries, mentoring, story-sharing, discernment roles, and care teams.

However, late-career and early retirees are redefining their purpose and where to direct their energy. These late-career and early-retirement adults bring skills, expertise, creativity, and the desire to do something meaningful, while establishing new connections and relationships. They are the next faithful season of the church.

Pastoral care must be understood as a core mission. Proactive pastoral presence—regular check-ins, ongoing grief support, spiritual companionship, and faithful conversations—communicates clearly to members that they are seen, valued, and accompanied.

Fellowship should remain simple, predictable, and relational, fostering belonging without exhaustion. It is important to look at smaller group fellowships as another way to build a “belonging” environment. Fewer events, held at accessible times and centered on conversation, food, and prayer, foster belonging without exhaustion or pressure to perform. In the same spirit, expectations around youth and families must remain realistic. With very few children, success should not be measured by youth numbers, but by intergenerational relationships, visible blessing across generations, and strategic partnerships beyond the congregation.

Finally, the congregation benefits from calm, transparent communication about the future. As an educated and financially secure community, members value clarity about budgets, mission impact, planned giving, and long-term sustainability. Language that honors past faithfulness while affirming its ongoing power to shape what comes next helps release legacy into mission rather than nostalgia.

Examples of Actions to Implement “Serving the Congregation”

- Evaluate how to enhance pastoral care (i.e. support spiritually, emotionally and practically). Such care is not solely provided by the pastor (or Parrish Associate) but with trained lay people from the congregation.
- Normalize pastoral visits as routine relationship nurturing, not a crisis response only.
- Consider establishing or expanding small groups around a topic or activity to increase the “family” feeling of belonging and strengthen ties to one another.
- Cultivate spaces where people can come together – small and larger groups – comfortable sofa-chair settings (like Pfeiffer room), as well as other spaces with several tables and chairs (like Fellowship Hall).
- Encourage greeters to recognize and acknowledge visitors (had welcome bag – see actions under Community ideas)
- Offer brief blessings for retirement, relocation, caregiving, widowhood, and significant birthdays (70, 80, 90+) during worship.
- Continue personalized birthday card recognitions.

- Commit annually to funding youth camp scholarships, festival sponsorships, and Trunk-or-Treat as core expressions the church caring for youth, not for growth.
- Celebrate youth participation visibly—music/choir, readings, assisting in worship.
- Maintain a predictable worship length and structure while continuing to improve sound quality, visibility, and accessibility...including quality of live worship service broadcasting.
- Designate a rotating Live Stream Companion Host each Sunday whose sole role is to engage people attending church online in real time. They would log in early and welcome worshipers, by name (if possible) “We’re glad you’re worshipping with us from wherever you are today.” Remain online 5-10 minutes after the benediction to answer questions, greet people, etc.

Conclusion Serving the Congregation

The simple truth is this: the church does not need to become something else to be faithful. The church does not need more programs, faster growth, or a different identity. It is already a place where the Spirit is at work. What it needs now is a renewed confidence in its calling—a future marked by hope and visible joy, where people of every generation know they belong. This means deeper pastoral care, a clear and honored sense of vocation for aging members, legacy that is celebrated and language that blesses both continuity and faithful change.

c) Characteristics of a Teaching Elder/Head Solo Pastor

At this stage in the life of the church, effective pastoral leadership is defined less by programmatic innovation or organizational expansion and more by relational depth, theological maturity, and the ability to accompany people faithfully through later seasons of life while remaining open and welcoming to the surrounding community. The core identity sought in a new head solo pastor is that of *Pastor–Theologian–Host*: a relational shepherd who holds depth, dignity, and hospitality together. This role is distinct from that of a CEO or program builder and reflects the church’s commitment to thoughtful worship, meaningful connection, and faithful presence.

A deep pastoral heart is non-negotiable. The congregation will thrive under a pastor who genuinely enjoys older adults and is comfortable walking with people through grief, illness, cognitive decline, and end-of-life conversations. Pastoral care must be understood as core ministry rather than delegated responsibility, with the pastor

present in homes, hospitals, and quiet moments of transition. A leader who views accompaniment as holy work will be well suited to this congregation's needs, while discomfort with visitation or an overemphasis on administration would signal poor fit.

Equally essential is emotional intelligence and a calm leadership temperament. The church values trust over speed, clarity over charisma, and collaboration over authority. The pastor must demonstrate steady presence, strong listening skills, humility, and the ability to hold differing perspectives while guiding thoughtful, gradual change. A grounded, transparent, and unflappable leader will earn the confidence of a congregation shaped by long-term relationships and shared history.

In preaching and teaching, the congregation seeks theological richness delivered in a human and accessible way. Effective preaching will be grounded in Scripture, respectful of the congregation's intelligence, and honest about suffering, loss, unanswered prayer, and hope that avoids sentimentality. Sermons should be clearly structured, purposeful, and of reasonable length, offering words that can be carried into daily life. In education, the pastor should enjoy dialogue and lifelong faith formation, integrating theology with ethics, science, history, and current issues, and welcoming questions without defensiveness.

To serve the wider Cocoa Beach community, the pastor must embody natural hospitality and a comfortable public presence. This includes being welcoming to visitors, tourists, and seasonal residents; understanding drop-in worship patterns; and blessing people without demanding commitment. The pastor should be at ease representing the church in civic, cultural, and community settings, recognizing that even brief encounters can be meaningful expressions of ministry.

Given the church's strong music and arts ministries, appreciation for worship excellence and the arts as spiritual entry points are also important. While artistic talent is not required, genuine respect for musicians, artists, and cultural partners is essential, as these ministries play a key role in community engagement and hospitality.

The pastor must also be well grounded in Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) polity and collaborative governance. Thriving in a Session-led environment, explaining decisions clearly, avoiding surprises, respecting institutional memory, and leading with transparency are critical for maintaining trust and shared leadership.

Legacy sensitivity and transitional wisdom are particularly important. Many members have served faithfully for decades and carry deep emotional investment in the church. The pastor must honor the past without idolizing it, speak respectfully of previous leaders, and frame the future as faithful continuation rather than

correction. Helping the congregation release legacy into mission, rather than nostalgia, will be central to healthy leadership.

Conclusion:

Finally, while age itself is not determinative, life-stage awareness matters. Often the best fit will be a mid-career or later-career pastor who understands aging, loss, and transition personally and who may view this call as a meaningful season of ministry rather than a stepping stone. The guiding discernment question for candidates—*“What gives you the most joy in pastoral ministry at this stage of your life?”*—helps reveal whether a pastor’s sense of call aligns with the heart, pace, and purpose of this congregation.

Together, these characteristics define a pastor capable of serving the congregation with depth and care, engaging the community with grace and credibility, and guiding the church faithfully into its next chapter.

10) Appendices

- I. Church Organization Chart
- II. Existing Programs and Missions (From Riverside 2025 Annual Report)
- III. Executive INSITE Data Summary
- IV. PC(USA) INSITE MOSAIC Analysis
- V. Congregational Survey Used
- VI. Church Campus Layout

RIVERSIDE PRESBYTERIAN ORG CHART: 2026

OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION: 2026

President: Bob Howard
Vice President: Carl Plaughter
Treasurer: Doug Kasimier

PASTOR:

Rev. William "Bill" Teng (Interim)

LEGEND:

*: Leader
 (D)/(E)/(PW): Deacon, Elder, or Presbyterian Women Representative
 (AL): At-Large (current volunteer member). (ALT): Alternate member

Music Director

Diana Amtower

PSALM 66 Praise Band

Keaton Belliveau

Sound/Video Team

*Karen Ward, Carl Plaughter
 Bob Howard, Richard Eastes

Admin Assistant

Betsie Germann

Church Treasurer

Doug Kasimier

Maintenance/Custodian

Chuck Torgler

SESSION

Teri Beeler '26
 Anda Ray '26
 Ann Stone '26

Bob Howard '27
 Meghan Johnson '27
 Paula Yost '27

Girard Middleton '28
 Carl Plaughter (26)
 Tom White (26)

Clerk: Meghan Johnson

DIACONATE

Janice Eastes '26
 Carolyn Hattaway '26
 Tammy Ivan '26

Jorge Castillo '27

Martha Williams '28
 Fern Wolle '28
 Bob Yost '28
 Paula Yost, Liaison

TEAMS

COMMUNICATIONS

Meets 1st Sunday @11 AM

*Meghan Johnson (E)
 Mick Ray
 Bob Howard
 Carl Plaughter
 Tom White

PROPERTY

Meets 3rd Wednesday @10 AM

*Bob Howard (E)
 Mick Ray
 Carl Plaughter
 Chuck Torgler

STAFF RESOURCES

1st Wednesday @1 PM

*Girard Middleton (E)
 Anda Ray
 Ann Stone

WORSHIP & SACRAMENT

Meets 2nd Sunday @11 AM

*Ann Stone (E)
 Judy George
 Jeanne Kelly
 Keaton Belliveau
 Diana Amtower
 Kathy McCray
 Susan White
 Karen Ward

EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Meets 2nd Thu @7 PM

Zoom

*Teri Beeler (E)
K-5th Grade

6th-12th Grade
 Anda Ray
Adult Classes

Paula Yost
 Betty Peterson
 Jak Burton

CARE & SUPPORT

Meet 1st Wednesday 10:00AM

*Susan White
 Judy Howard
 Lee Bean
 Cliff Schmitt

Gail Marshall

JB Olds

Stephen Hoagland

Jen Fanning

Sue Colley

Kathy Cornelison

Teri Beeler

FELLOWSHIP

Meets as needed

Tammy Ivan
 Carolyn Hattaway
 Kathy Cornelison
 Linda Autry
 JB Olds
 Wanda Cook

SPECIAL GROUPS

Men's Bible Study (Education)

*Tom White / Larry Pals / Carl Plaughter

Women's Bible Study (Education)

*Paula Yost

Prayer Circle (Care & Support)

Meets Wednesday @10 AM

*Jane Lovett

Counters (Finance)

*Debbie Burleigh (E)

Paula Yost

Memorial Gardeners (Property)

*Penny Bernard

Steven Hoagland

Historian

*Marilyn Grigsby

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (2026)

Ann Stone (E)

Fern Wolle (D)

Anda Ray (E)

Chili Lindsay

Debbie Burleigh

Judy George

Jeanne Kelley

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN CIRCLES & LEADERS

Hannah/Ruth/Rebekah:

*Gail Marshall / Betty Peterson

Deborah: Judy George / Paula Yost

Treasurer: Kathy McCray

MISSIONS

Meets 4th Tuesday @7 PM

*Carl Plaughter (E)
 Gail Marshall
 Steve Hoagland

Rebecca Burns
 Betty Pederson
 Paula Yost

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

Meets 2nd Monday @10 AM

*Tom White (E)
 Gerry Harris
 Doug Kasimier

DR VERNON BOUSHELL CONCERT SERIES

Director: Stephen Hoagland
 Technology Dir: Karen Ward
 Concert Producers:
 Pam Weiger, John Kent
 Volunteers: Judy George

*CONCERTS

CHARITY CONCERTS

Director: Anda Ray
 Technical Dir: Karen Ward
 Volunteers: Judy George

*Coordination: Community Engagement Team

II. Existing Missions (From 2025 Riverside Presbyterian Church Annual Report)

2025 Mission Support

Boushell Concert Series (Self-Funded) - Donations Received from congregation and attendees to conduct the concerts	\$20,892
Riverside & Bookbinder Endowments	\$31,224
Children's Hunger Project - Cash Donations	\$1,445
Children's Hunger Project - Food Donations (In Kind) (~\$10/meal for 1900 packed meals)	\$19,000
Carson Cruisers for Kids (Cash donations)	\$4,480
Special Offerings -Pentecost, OGHS, Christmas Joy (Cash donations)	\$2,340
Other Mission Support (e.g. Annual Fall Benefit Concert, Children's Hunger Project, etc.) (Cash donations)	\$1,841
Total	\$79,777

Riverside Missions Funding Sources: In 2025, Riverside had a few different sources of funds to use in supporting missions:

- **Riverside Endowment Fund #1** — established in 1995, this fund allows members to leave a legacy gift. Half of the annual income from this fund is used for Mission Giving and half for Capital Improvements.
- **Bookbinder Endowment Fund #2** — established in May 2008 upon the deaths of Harold and Kathryn Bookbinder. Seventy-five percent of the annual income is to be used for social concerns programs (mission focused) and 25% goes to the church operating budget.
- **Special Offerings through PC(USA)** that support specific missions of the denomination. Part of two of these offerings stays locally—this year going to Called Out, an organization that helps human trafficking victims.
- **Children’s Hunger Project** – Children’s Hunger Project of Brevard fights child hunger by providing weekend meals, thereby ensuring children do not go without nor

come to school hungry. At Riverside, we partner with The Children's Hunger Project financially. We also collect, pack and deliver food to three schools, Cape View Elementary, Lewis Carroll Elementary and Roosevelt Elementary.

- **Carson Cruisers for Kids** – An annual project initiated in 2024 this year: Chris Carson Cruisers for Kids- enough funds were donated to purchase 30 bicycles with accompanying helmets and bike locks for three different organizations: Salvation Army, Family Partnership of Brevard, and Friends of Children of Brevard.
- **Other Mission Support:** Congregation members participate in getting gift cards and school supplies for Cape View Elementary School or purchase food and help pack bags for The Children's Hunger Project or volunteer to bring food or spend the night when Riverside provides housing for families through Family Promise of Brevard or put food in the grocery carts that is taken to St. Vincent de Paul to help those who are homeless and/or food-deprived or donate coats and jackets sent to Servant Partners (PA) or Matthew's Hope (Cocoa).

III. ExecutiveINSITE Data Summary

The Mission Study Team reviewed InSite data provided by Central Florida Presbytery **Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**. InSite is a demographic and congregational analysis tool provided by the Presbytery to assist congregations in faithful discernment during seasons of transition, including Mission Studies and pastoral searches. Its primary purpose is not to prescribe solutions or predict outcomes, but to help churches better understand their context—both internally and externally—so that ministry decisions are grounded in reality rather than assumption.

InSite data combines information from multiple sources, including U.S. Census data, community demographic profiles, religious affiliation trends, and congregational reporting. It offers congregations a clear picture of who lives in their surrounding mission field, how that population is changing over time, and how those trends compare to the current composition of the congregation. This allows churches to assess alignment—or misalignment—between their ministry practices and the people they are called to serve.

During a Mission Study, InSite is used to inform several key areas of discernment. First, it helps congregations understand their community context, **including** age distribution, household composition, education levels, income patterns, population growth or decline, and cultural characteristics. This information supports realistic conversations about whom the church can reasonably expect to reach and how ministry approaches may need to adapt to local realities rather than relying on generalized or outdated models of church growth.

The Mission Team reviewed multiple reports from the package on InSite Data including:

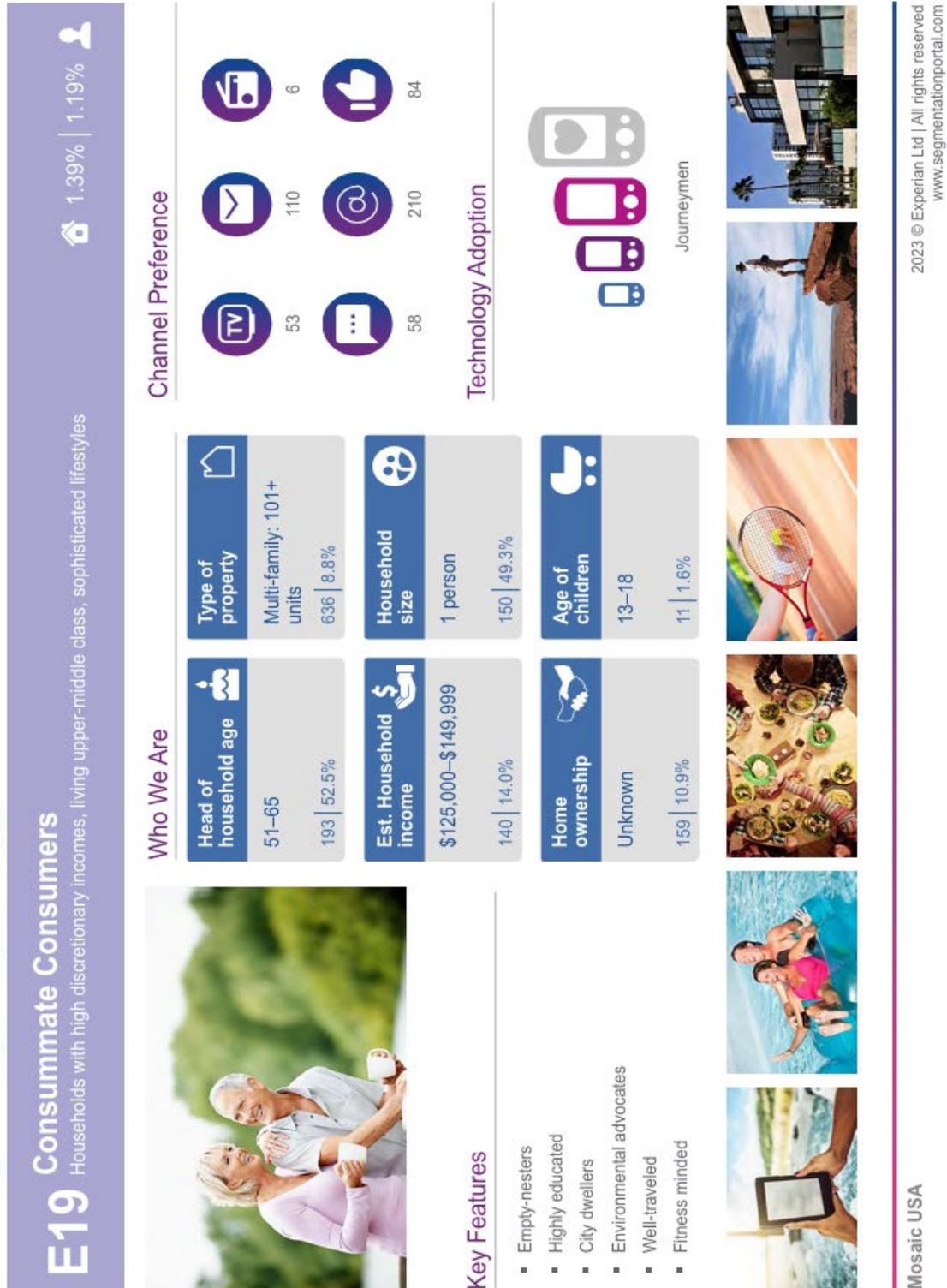
- Quick Insite
- Executive Insite
- Religious Insite
- Religious Insite Priorities
- Ministry Insite

In summary, InSite data serves as a foundational resource in PC(USA) Mission Studies by providing accurate context, supporting strategic clarity, guiding pastoral leadership discernment, and helping congregations align their ministry with God's call in their particular place and time.

NOTE: The Riverside InSite Reports that were published on September 24, 2025, and are available to the congregation upon request.

IV. PC(USA) InSite MOSAIC Analysis

The MOSAIC analysis within the **InSite** system is a community profiling tool that draws on consumer and lifestyle data developed by **Experian**. Rather than focusing only on age, income, or household size, MOSAIC groups people into distinct population segments based on **how they live, what they value, and how they tend to make decisions**. In the PC(USA) context, MOSAIC is used to help congregations better understand the character and motivations of the people in their surrounding mission field. Riverside is in a community that can generally be described as shown below.



V. Congregational Survey Used (January 4-11, 2026)

Riverside Presbyterian Church Cocoa Beach, Florida

2026 CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY

Please complete Sunday, January 11, 2026.

If you prefer to use the online version of the survey just scan the QR code above



Thank you for taking your time to provide valued input.
Riverside Presbyterian Church Mission Study Team

1. Email _____ (if you fill out online a copy of your response will be emailed to you)
2. Date this survey was filled out. _____
3. Are you a member of Riverside Presbyterian Church: YES ___ NO ___
4. How long have you attended this church?
0-1 years ___ 2-5 years ___ 6-10 years ___ 10-15 years ___ More than
15 years ___
5. Your Gender: Male ___ Female ___ Other or Prefer not to say ___
6. Marital Status: (you may check more than one)
Single ___ Married ___ Divorced/Separated ___ Widow/Widower

7. Age Group: Under 12yrs ___ 12-20yrs ___ 20-50yrs ___ 50-65yrs ___
65+yrs ___
8. What originally drew you to Riverside Presbyterian Church?
9. Are you a Seasonal Resident? ___ Full Time Resident?
Other? _____
10. On average, how many times did you attend Sunday Worship
in this congregation during the past year?
 - Once
 - Less than 6 times
 - About once every 2 months
 - About once-a-month
 - Two to three times monthly
 - Four or more times a month
11. Do you attend Riverside Church using the internet? If so, how often?
Never ___ Occasionally ___ Regularly _____
12. On the average, how much did you participate in Christian Education
(church school, on-going small group, short term studies, special
events)
 - None _____
 - Less than 4 times a year _____
 - About 2-3 times a quarter (4-12 times a year) _____
 - About 1-2 times a month (12-24 times a year) _____
 - More than two (2) times per month (more than 24 times a year) _____

13. What part(s) in the leadership of this church do you participate?

- Teacher/Co-Teacher**
- Officer/Elder/Deacon**
- Volunteer**
- Team/Committee member**
- Mission Trip Participant**
- Other**

14. Do you currently find this church to be warm and welcoming?

15. In the past year, my participation in the life of the church has:

- Increased**
- Decreased**
- Remained the same**

16. What do you especially like about Riverside Church?

17. What would you like to see changed at the church? (e.g. start, stop, revamp)?

18. What characteristics of Pastoral leadership do you feel our church needs in a new pastor that moves Riverside forward over the next 5 years?

19. What celebrations or concerns are important to you to communicate to the new Pastor?

20. What do you feel are some of the next steps for Riverside Presbyterian Church?

21. What programs at Riverside would you like to see developed to better serve the Kingdom of God in this church and in our community at-large?

22. Name Optional) _____

VI. Church Campus Layout

