

Second Union Church

Interdenominational worship in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico

2nd Thoughts

What Newspaper Are You Reading?

NY Times columnist Ross Douthat had a great article the other day about the differences between newspapers in England. Quoting a character from a popular British TV show, he noted that, "The Daily Mirror is read by people who think they run the country. The Guardian is read by people who think they ought to run the country. The Times is read by the people who actually do run the country. The Daily Mail is read by the wives of the people who run the country. The Financial Times is read by people who own the country. The Morning Star — a paper founded as a Communist organ — is read by people who think the country ought to be run by another country. And The Daily Telegraph is read by people who think it is."

I wonder what that commentator would say about the demographics who subscribe to the various newspapers in Puerto Rico? I do not think it would be very flattering. As a long-time reader of the NY Times, I used to believe it was the newspaper of record in the English language. Its signature motto, "all the news that's fit to print" seemed to fit the product. In fact, the newspaper was viewed by its owners, the Ochs Sulzberger family, as more of a public service than a source of revenue. But the Gray Lady has fallen on hard times. Not only is its readership way down, but they seem to have lost their way. Even NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg admits he is no fan of the Times as it too often uses the front page to make editorials rather than merely

reporting the news. I believe the same could be said of most newspapers in Puerto Rico.

Of course, I am reminded of Thomas Jefferson's famous advice, namely, if you can only afford one newspaper, read the opposition's. (Hence, in the age of the Internet, I have decided to read the opposition, but not pay for it.) But Jefferson's point is a good one, namely, if you only read the newspaper that you agree with, you will adopt and develop the same blind spots as your source material. In other words, truth is often best attained if we have a multiplicity of perspectives.

I certainly believe that this is true regarding truth with a capital "T", namely, God's Truth. Indeed, if we simply read and reread certain Bible verses or select passages or even favorite books, we will not be exposed to the multiplicity of perspectives offered in God's Word. Thus, I have been enjoying the discipline of reading the Bible through in a year as my appreciation of God's grace through Christ in the New Testament has been enhanced by my study of God's righteous law in the Old Testament. So too, the strivings of Job with a God who seems so unjust to him is a refreshing slap in the face as to what it means to struggle as a be-



Rev. Robert Zoba

SEPTEMBER
2013

Sunday Services
10:00 a.m.

Adult Sunday School
9:00am

Sunday School
PK-12
10:30am

Choir Practice
9am & 11:30am

Weekly Activities
Ladies Bible Study
Tuesdays 12-2

Small Group
@ the Rivera's
Tuesday 7pm

Men's Breakfast
Wednesday 7am

Women's Study
Wednesday 7pm

Youth Group
Thursday 7pm

Prayer Service
Thursday 7pm

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Rev. Robert Zoba

liever when God seems so far away. Likewise, if we only read the Gospels, we would miss the attitude of praise from the Psalmist, the amazing stories of the Patriarchs, the critical role of women throughout the Bible, the wisdom of the Proverbs, the tears of Jeremiah, and the laughter of a God who always gets the last laugh. Indeed, as Christians, we are called to consult the full council of God and that includes every jot and tittle, every word, every book, and yes, even those contained in the Old Testament.

So, transcend the profile of those who only read certain newspapers, or in this case, certain pet Bible passages, Instead, open yourself up to the whole gamut of God's truth and allow him to speak to you through the multiplicity of his witnesses in the Word. Thus, be more than an informed citizen of this age, instead, become an expert on this age and that age which is to come. God's Word promises just that, and so much more!

Pastor Bob

HELP WANTED

As most of you know, Second Union Church has published a special devotional for Advent for the past several years. I have had the honor of being the editor of that special booklet for most of those years. This year I will be unable to prepare the book as I have in past years. If Second Union is to have a devotional this Advent season, someone will need to step out and agree to be the editor.

I will be able to help the new editor with templates of past devotionals and suggestions about how to solicit contributors, edit the entries, and publish the final work. Please, if you feel called, or are curious enough to take the challenge, to edit this year's devotional, please let me know. Thank you and God bless you. John Alberts; sajenawi@hotmail.com; 787-286-2771.

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Christie Zoba

Recently Carlos and I were listening to a radio sermon and it got us thinking about how many hours a month each of us dedicates to working for the church. As we processed this we wondered how many hours a month churchgoers in general contribute to furthering the kingdom. We talked about how a pastor's dream must be to have everyone in their flock committed to many hours. That would certainly make their job much easier. In reality though, that may never be the case.

Therefore, the challenge. Will you accept the dare to offer up a minimum of 5 hours a month? We are calling this the 5/30 challenge. Literally, 5 hours for every 30 days. Are you wondering what this might look like for you and me? It's actually easy because you can create all sorts of combinations. Say you want to help out with ushering, fellowship and Sunday school. You could be an usher one Sunday, serve coffee another Sunday and be a substitute teacher yet another Sunday. But please allow us to make an observation about working on a committee. There are 10 committees that work behind the scenes to run the church. One hour a month is all you need to attend a committee meeting. You can use the other 4 hours in participating on that committee or mix those remaining hours up in any way you are lead.

If you need some help deciding on what best suits you please see any of the following committee chairpersons. We hope you are moved to take this challenge! It's a great adventure.

Blessings,
Debbie and Carlos Garcia
Membership and Nominating committee chairs

- Fellowship
 - Membership
 - Property
- Worship
 - Christian Education
 - Forward Planning
- Outreach
 - Finance
 - Nominating

Men's Walk to Emmaus # 47

The first walk to Emmaus took place a couple of thousand years ago.

Two "pilgrims" were walking a seven mile stretch of road from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus when a stranger appeared and inquired as to what they were discussing. They reviewed the events of the past days: a prophet, Jesus of Nazareth, was crucified unjustly by the Roman government and was laid in a tomb three days before. They had thought him to be the redeemer of Israel. However, now that he was dead, all hope was lost. Suddenly they realized they were being visited by the risen Christ. After he was gone they said, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked to us on the road?"



Ready for some heart burn of your own? Maybe you should take a walk to Emmaus.

That account of the first Walk to Emmaus was recorded by an ancient physician named Luke. (The Gospel of Luke, Chapter 24, verses 13-35.) The story ends with the pilgrims exclaiming, "The Lord is risen indeed..." Their experience led them to move from seeing Jesus as a mere prophet to being the risen Lord. Perhaps you would benefit from such a transforming experience and energized spiritual vision.

Do you want that kind of experience with Jesus? The choice is yours.

Upcoming Men's Walk to Emmaus: October 24-27

Application Forms are available in the church office.

For more information: contact Pastor Bob or Emmaus Walk Lay Director: Jeff Cherok: 939-940-8891
emmausmenswalk47@gmail.com

There are only 3 months till **Miky 'n Joellen** get married! Joellen writes, We finally have an apartment too! We are working on opening a deli/bar in September in San Juan, en la calle San Sebastian and San Justo. We are very excited about it and pray it will be a great success! Hope everyone can make sometime... stop by anytime. (They'll have a special 2UC section!)



Dennis Gonzalez is racing in the MG Midget car race in Lime Rock Connecticut with his lovely navigator, **Amarilis!**



On Sunday, August 18, Girl Scouts Troop 515 participated in the March of Dimes Walk and helped Raquel Robles surpass her team's goal?



Sarah (née **Candia**) and **Gabriel Larin**

were in San Juan for a week? Sarah came back to PR with her husband for a nostalgic visit and Pastor Bob (who officiated at Sarah and Gabo's wedding) and Christie were lucky enough to spend time with them.



Paloma writes: **Jose, Raulito and I** are off to Miami September 6th to the 26th on vacation to visit Jose's brother Carlos who just retired from the Army and his wife Glory, also we will visit my big sister Tami, her husband Jaime and my nieces and nephews Pablo, Carolina and Laura. She adds: "I finished my certification in Medical Secretary with Billing and Coding on August 23rd with a 4.0 GPA. THANK GOD! So I am officially looking for a job in this field and very positive and motivated to do so!!" . . . and: "On August 17 the Puerto Rico Multiple Sclerosis Foundation had its annual assembly in which I (Paloma) was nominated by the former board members and medical director for Secretary of the board of directors. I am happy to say I had the majority of the vote and got elected for the position! I will be working for the Foundation in my spare time to raise awareness and funds. Any ideas are welcome! (super excited about this one)



Jaime and my nieces and nephews Pablo, Carolina and Laura. She adds: "I finished my certification in Medical Secretary with Billing and Coding on August 23rd with a 4.0 GPA. THANK GOD! So I am officially looking for a job in this field and very positive and motivated to do so!!" . . . and: "On August 17 the Puerto Rico Multiple Sclerosis Foundation had its annual assembly in which I (Paloma) was nominated by the former board members and medical director for Secretary of the board of directors. I am happy to say I had the majority of the vote and got elected for the position! I will be working for the Foundation in my spare time to raise awareness and funds. Any ideas are welcome! (super excited about this one)

Alana Rodriguez Ramos, daughter of Angela and Cesar Rodriguez (and sister of Caleb) was baptized on August 18 at 2UC. Proud grandfather and pastor, Joe Ramos, assisted in the ceremony. The entire Ramos clan was present to witness this happy occasion.



Jannette Quiles and her brothers will be surprising their mom in Florida for her 70th birthday in three weeks. They hope to get the rest of the family from Florida there for a big celebration.

Bill Heffley was able to spend 10 days in South Florida on the Gulf Coast with family. The occasion was the marriage of Paul Vernon (Bill's oldest brother) and Carolyn Heffley's only granddaughter - Crista. The wedding took place at a Lutheran Church in their hometown of Sarasota.

Iamira Alvarez writes, "We miss you guys! We have been blessed to have a second home church here in Texas. I began services in the children ministry to cover for people. This year I was offered the position of kinder through second grade teacher; and I took it in a heart bit. Jovie and Leilani are doing well in both school and church. Leilani started 3rd grade today and Jovie (ivansito) had his first day in middle school! Super exciting. I have been blessed with a job at a healthcare facility and Ivan is doing well at his new unit. We Re loving Texas! We have gone to many places and have done a lot of outdoor activities. That's all for now. We love you guys and hope to see you next year as we would like to visit Puerto Rico by then."

Mayra and Carlos Chipi just celebrated our 37th wedding anniversary with our children and grandchildren. We are so very thankful for the many blessings in our lives. We'll be traveling to Niagara Falls in September for my mother's 89th birthday. It is to fulfill her wish of going back

Cheryl Virginia arrived in Florida just in time to spend Tuesday in the emergency room with their daughter-in-law. Baby is fine daughter-in-law in a lot of pain.

Joshua Estremera, Mabel's son, turns 13 on the 28 of August, He is been selected to play Volleyball for his school team, also his been selected to be the Quarterback of the Varsity Team for the Carolina Blitz and he is an 8 grader...Praise The Lord.

Pastor Bob, Christie, John, Dennis and Amarilis are learning Hebrew? In preparation for the upcoming 2UC trip to Israel, some members of the group are taking basic Hebrew. Though we certainly won't attain fluency, we will appreciate the language and learn some basic phrases: Slikha, ehfo hah sherooteem? (Where's the bathroom?) Shalom!

Yadira de Jesus is the new choir director of a nearby Baptist church?

Scott & Ana Woodward have purchased a house in Port Charlotte, Florida? They will be neighbors to the Virginia's in nearby Fort Myer.

Gill Williams was a college track star for the University of Illinois in Champaign, Urbana?

Isia, Jean & Ignacio Vilá will be moving to the Orlando area next month?

Ron & Raquel Seely will be relocating to the North-folk ,Virginia area where Ron will be working for the Coast Guard in various countries around the world?

Rodrigo Cordova was recently honored for achieving the level of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts? (Congrats!)

Joe Ramos will be ordained and installed at our sister church in Palmas del Mar? Congrats Joe!

Yashira Pizarro as a vision to start a new support group for young adults? We pray for its success!

Alexandra, daughter of **Derek and Suzanne Myles**, recently enrolled in the University of Edinburgh in Scotland?

Elsa Melendez recently made a trip up north to see her kids and grandchildren?

Cherish Lexvold is doing her student teaching at the elementary this semester?

The Goosen family recently traveled all the way to their home country of South Africa?

News woman **Brenda Gonzalez** was recently promoted to Kansas City, Missouri? Look for her as the next anchor of CBS News;-)

Matt Golley and his bride, **Piper**, have settled in to their new digs in Dallas, Texas where Matt will be pursuing a Masters degree at the Dallas Theological Seminary?

Joy Garcia recently donated racks of clothes which **Julio Rivera** distributed to the homeless? Thanks Joy!

Melissa Garcia has returned to Wooster College in Ohio where she is studying both Chinese and Japanese? Wow!

WM Team Leadership Retreat

Early in August the women's ministry team took time out from their summer break to go on a leadership retreat. We spent that time delving into God's word, praying and discussing practical ways to bring Jesus to all of us.

Big thank yous go out to Christie Zoba, who found a great inspirational teaching video by Priscilla Shirer entitled Stewarding the Presence of God. Powerful message and encouragement!

And to Mabel Varela for going above and beyond the call to prepare us for the weekend. Her vision and obedience to God's promptings had us ready to begin our retreat with gusto.



Please join us in praying for the different ministries of Second Union. We look forward to serving you all.

Anita Rodriguez for the WM Team

"Follow Me" Women's Mini Retreat Saturday, September 14 2pm-4pm



Everything moves so fast and there are so many demands on our time. It is hard for us to carve out time from our schedules to relax into God. Jesus' call to come and follow Him is not an echo from the past, but a vibrant timely call that resounds for each of us today.

Saturday, September 14 from 2pm to 4pm, we ask you do just that. Drop your "nets" on the shore of busyness and come away with Jesus.

We will provide your materials, the quiet space, notebooks, child-care, and a snack. You need only bring a willing heart [and your Bible, but if you don't have one, don't worry we have one for you!].

It's time to discover how deeply loved you are by God. You will be glad you chose to come!

Women's Ministry of Second Union Church
Equipping women with God's word to lead and serve.

March of Dimes

August 18th was a beautiful, sunny day. It was the kind of day that just calls to spent outdoors, enjoying the beauty of God's creation. It was also the day of the March of Dimes walk in Puerta de Tierra.

The walk started at Luis Munoz Rivera Park by Escambrom and followed the street overlooking the Atlantic Ocean up to San Augustin cathedral and school, Where it turned onto Ponce de Leon and continued back to the park.

A Big thank you to Raquel Robles and her team [which included 2UC's own GSUSA Troop 515], for their efforts in raising funds and awareness for this worthy cause!



Have you ever wondered if Judas Iscariot could have repented? . . . or, could have decided not to betray Jesus? Should you give money to the beggar standing in the middle of the road, when you KNOW he's going to buy drugs instead of food? Oh yes, and : How do you speak to your neighbor about Jesus?

These, and other weighty issues are discussed in the Adult Sunday School Class that Stanley Pinkerton and Lizzette Kelley lead on Sunday mornings.

Best kept secret at Second Union . . . Y'all come! (9:00 am, Room 3)

Neighborhood Prayer Walk

On Tuesday, August 27th a neighborhood prayer walk was held in the Bucaré urbanization. Twenty some 2UCers walked through the streets of the neighborhood serenading the homes and praying at different stops along the route. The final stop in the prayer walk was at the home of Joan and George McMurray who graciously provided a wonderful reception for the group.



Our thanks to Jeff Cherok and his wife, Jo Ann Medina for organizing the evening's event and to Freddy Becker for the musical accompaniment. And to all who participated.



We pray that it was a blessing to the community and an opportunity to share with them in prayer.

Small Groups

Do you wonder how you can fit a bible study into your hectic life?

We want to help you by offering a variety of times, days, and locations.

Tuesdays, from noon to 2pm, a group meets at 2UC in the fellowship hall. You may bring your own lunch or buy lunch from our in house cook. Child care is available!

Wednesday evenings there is a women's Bible study in the home of Anita Rodriguez. They will begin a new book on September 10.

Tuesday evenings at 7pm, Luis Alberto and Loraine Rivera host a bible study in their home that is open to both men and women.

Sunday mornings at 9am is the adult Sunday school class, it meets in room 3 at Second Union.

If you are interested in any of these classes, call the church office at 787-720-4423 or Anita Rodriguez at 787-994-0254, we'll be happy to help you find the class that best suits your needs.

"They love the Lord's teachings, and they think about those teachings day and night."

Psalm 1:2 [NCV]

When I was first approached about taking over the role of Worship Committee Chair, my first response was to panic. I've never been an active part of this committee. It's also a job that involves a lot of firmly held conflicting opinions among the committee members and the congregation.

It reminded me of an impromptu meeting I was involved in with Pastor Vern. Some of the church women were setting up for an event, and we were approached with concerns about Pastor Vern's safety walking in the neighborhood and were asked to talk to him. I wasn't sure I agreed, but went along anyway to hear what was discussed. As so often happens; the topic changed. Our conversation turned to the worship service. One woman didn't like responsive readings, since she couldn't read and 'hear' the message at the same time. One didn't like the organ music since the church she was raised in didn't have instruments at all. One didn't like the 'passing of the peace' because she found it changed the mood of the worship.

Pastor Vern listened patiently and then pointed out that there wouldn't be much left after all that was taken out, and that the parts of the service have been thoughtfully included for a purpose. As I am now leaving the island, I would like to thank the people who have helped and guided me in my learning process. Thank you for the opportunities for growth, leadership training, and even public speaking. Second Union has been a very nurturing environment for growing in the Lord.

Until Council appoints a new Worship Chair the following people will be responsible for the different areas of service. Please give them the support and understanding that you have shown to me.

- Thelma Rivera – Recruiting for Liturgist, Ushers, and Children's Message, and Flowers
- Joellen Ramos – Selecting Praise music and hymns. (If you have a favorite hymn, let her know and she will see if she can work it into the schedule.)
- Carlos Rivera, Maylie Colon, and Luis Gandia – Choir, Cantata, and practices.
- Julio Rivera – Altar Set Up

Also, choir practice will resume August 25. Please consider lending your support as several voices have moved away, and we need several more for the Christmas Cantata.

In His Service,
Cheryl Virginia

So Long, Farewell , Auf Wiedersehen, Goodbye



It is never fun to say goodbye to our church family. And there is no exception when it comes to saying goodbye to the Virginia's. So in true 2UC fashion we throw parties and serve lots of food.

The Women's Ministry hosted a small goodbye party for Cheryl Virginia, who has been a staunch supporter of all women's events in the many years she has been coming to Second Union. We have shared a few tears and lots of laughter. And we have forged friendships that are based o something solid. The love of Christ.

We are so sorry to see them leave. Butwe rejoice for their new chapter unfolding. It is our deepest desire for their new start be one flooded with God's favor and sweet love. And we pray for God to guide them to a new church.

We will miss you beyond imagining. God-speed!



We are pleased to announce that we are one month into our new Sunday school Bible curriculum, FaithWeaver NOW! We are very excited about this curriculum because it combines Sunday school with family ministry. Every week the children learn a new Scripture and they take home material on that Scripture so that the whole family can learn about that same Scripture each week. Another great benefit with this curriculum is that all grades are learning the same Scripture in its own age-appropriate way. This is a huge benefit for parents who may have two or more children in different Sunday school grades. Big thanks go out to our August & September teachers:



	August	September
Pre-K & K	Laurie Youst	Cherish Lexvold
1st & 2nd	Elsy Perez	Mabel Varela
3rd & 4th	Tina Woodruff	Debbie Garcia
5th & 6th	Christie Zoba	Manny Fernandez

The Christian Education Committee will soon be making an announcement regarding our plans to launch a special type of family ministry, so stay tuned!!

Blessings to all,
Elsy Perez

Conversando en español

English, Spanish, Spanglish? Many who move to Puerto Rico are somewhat surprised when they 'see' more English than Spanish. At the grocery store, the shelves are stocked with familiar brands: Heinz, Hellman's, Fiber One and Breyer's. A trip to the mall ushers us past Macy's, Pottery Barn and Banana Republic. Restaurants include Chili's, Wendy's, The Cheesecake Factory and soon, The Olive Garden! Why there's even a Target (well, not exactly!). Yet, our ears avail us to the fact that 'we aren't in Kansas any more'.

Language can be a barrier, but it can also be something that brings our cultures together. Showing a willingness to learn another language speaks volumes to those whose language you are trying to learn. Learning Spanish in Puerto Rico should be a given, right? Well, not exactly - especially in the San Juan metro area. There are many native Spanish speakers who speak English, thus it's not too difficult to 'get by' without learning the language. Combine that with the fact that the amiable nature of the Puerto Ricans make them unlikely to correct your mistakes. Though many Statesiders move to PR and take Spanish classes, they find that they really don't achieve fluency.



It is for this reason that we offer a Spanish conversation group. It provides two hours a week of opportunity to practice speaking Spanish in an atmosphere that is somewhat structured but relaxed and fun. The pedagogical basis for this group is 'communicative language teaching' or 'task-based objective' learning. The participants usually work in groups of two or three and they work collaboratively on specific tasks or assignments such as preparing a recipe or completing schedules. In addition there is usually some grammar focus as well as some music or reading tasks. If you've had some basic Spanish, then come to a session and give it a try - there is certainly nothing to lose.



Se habla español

There is no charge to attend, but a willingness to learn is required! We meet on Tuesdays from 10am to noon.



How did we get to 2UC? Many of you have always been members of this church. Others moved from different states in the U.S. But, how did this Puerto Rican get to 2UC and enjoy every single activity in church?

I am going to try explaining this as best as I can in English and hope you understand. In March 2010, Ron and I decided we needed to visit an English speaking church, so he googled and found 2UC. Since we used to live in Santa Clara about a mile from church we decided to give it a try. Some of you might not even know or remember that I was 7 months pregnant when we first arrived. Some weeks later, the worst day of our lives happened. We lost our first born Alexander. God works in different ways and through different people... that same week we lost our baby Pastor Bob called asking me for my pregnancy without knowing what happened and how we were. We were devastated. He was great and prayed with me. I have almost all my family here in PR but Ron was here "alone", so I think it was harder for him. We trust God and we know he has a better plan for us. Three months after our loss, Ron got

called up to active duty for Louisiana for the oil spill. We got engaged and in April 2011 we got married. In June 2012, Abraham came into our lives as the best gift God could give us. Our mission will be to show Abraham how much God loves us as a family and all the blessings he gives us every day.

Why am I giving all these details about our life? Well just to tell you that even in the saddest day of my life or even on my happiest days I trust God. We can only see the stuff that is in front of us, but God can see the whole picture, the macro. We all have lost loved ones. We might have lost jobs, houses, marriages or even faith... But, what should we do to make our connection with God stronger not only when things are OK and running smooth, but when the road is bumpy and we do not know how to keep going? That's when I pray more and ask God for guidance, for strength, and for him to help me get through each day, trusting he is there for me.

Psalm 9:10 "Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD have never forsaken those who seek you"

Now that we are moving to Virginia in October, I have to say that we will definitely miss 2UC, I have never felt more close and useful to church than here. But we trust God and we know he will guide us in every step of the way. We might not find a "3UC = Third Union Church" but we definitely will try our best to find a church where we can learn more about God but at the same time help others get to Christ, our mission as disciples.

Raquel Robles

**Only God can turn a
MESS into a MESSAGE, a
TEST into a TESTIMONY,
a TRIAL into a TRIUMPH, a
VICTIM into a victory.**

Peanut Butter Sundays . . ? No this is not some kind of ice cream concoction, this is a 'peanut butter drive' which was held last week in an effort to collect healthy food for our backpack participants. A big thanks to all who brought in peanut butter, we collected over 35 jars of peanut butter, so we were able to give each student a jar to go with the box of Ritz crackers we received from the Food Bank.

And that's not all they received in last Friday's backpack: A large box of cereal, a box of Kellogg's cracker chips, a box of granola bars, four cans of juice, a liter of soy milk, shoestring potato sticks, two cans of black beans, Kellogg Pastry crisps and each family received either a 'Cuban Chicken' Dinner for 4 or a box of caramelized chicken patties.

It's kind of an odd combination, right? We are grateful for the food that we receive, free of charge, from the Food Bank (El Banco de Alimentos de P.R.). Each month we fill up our cars with the food that they provide for those agencies participating in the Backpack Program. We never know what we will receive, and while they try to provide us with healthy food for the children, they provide food that has been donated. We also supplement the donations with food that they have available to 'purchase.' We often are able to find deli meats, yogurt, fresh bakery items, hummus and even fresh fruit at times. The Food Bank 'sells' these items at \$.19 per pound.

The majority of the food donated to the Food Bank has reached the 'shelf date'. This is not, as many believe, the expiration date, rather it is the date the food should no longer be sold to the stores. From this date, most food has at least another six months of perfectly safe consumption until it reaches its expiration date. When food distributors have food that is about to reach the 'shelf date', they donate it to the Food Bank.

A big thanks to those who are involved in this ministry: Laurie Yost, Anita Rodriguez, Cadiz Rodriguez, Colleen Comer, Abigail Torrer, and Julio Rivera. AND an extra big hug to Ramon Chinaea who helped us load and unload in the midst of torrential downpours last Thursday!

Back to the Peanut Butter Sunday . . .in an effort to give the students a little more protein, Laurie Yost came up with the idea of doing a food drive for particularly healthy products to enhance the backpack offerings. This is a way for all of you to participate in this program and bring smiles to the faces of our Backpack program students. We will also have Canned Fruit Sunday, Tuna fish Sunday and even Vienna Sausage Sunday, soon!

We would also ask you to pray for these 27 students. If you would be willing to pray for a particular student, please let us know. We can give you the name of the student and more information about their family. You would be welcome to join us as we distribute the backpacks and have a chance to meet them. Maybe you'd be interested in giving them a small gift on their birthday. There are a lot of ways that we can reach out to these kids, and if you are looking to take the 5/30 challenge (see page 3!), then see Christie, Laurie or Anita!



Mar Azul may not sound like the name of a church, but if you stop by the Second Union Church building on a Sunday evening, you will in fact experience a dynamic and inspiring church in the midst of praise and worship - En Español! We are privileged to share our facilities with this wonderful ministry led by Pastor Jonathan Ocasio. He has such a love and passion for the Lord and it is evident in the contemporary, exciting and spirit-filled congregation.

Here's an excerpt from their promotional material:



Jonathan Ocasio & María Cristina

Mar Azul existe con el deseo de conectar personas con Dios para que crezcan integralmente y sirvan a su comunidad.

¿Cómo lograremos que esto ocurra en la vida de las personas? Guiando las personas para que se conviertan en seguidores devotos de Jesús. Ese es el propósito que motiva todo lo que hacemos. Queremos ayudarte a conocer mejor a Dios para que Él te ayude a ser todo lo que fuiste creado para ser. No importa donde te encuentres en la vida, te ayudaremos a encontrar un Punto de Partida en tu aventura con Él. Todo puede comenzar integrándote a un Grupo de Conexión, escuchando algún mensaje inspirador, dando o asistiendo regularmente a Mar Azul. En el transcurso esperamos trabajar junto a ti para hacer del mundo un lugar mejor.



¿Qué puedes esperar mientras estés en Mar Azul?

- Ambiente casual.
- Experiencias de una hora y media.
- Mensajes inspiradores y retantes basados en la Biblia.
- Enseñanza brindada por el Pastor Jonathan Ocasio
- Enseñanza divertida para niños y juveniles (información abajo)
- Personas amistosas que se reúnen en grupos el fin de semana para charlar y relacionarse.

We encourage you to attend one of their worship services and to invite Spanish-speakers as well. How great that our building is used to glorify the Lord in English and in Spanish! Que grande es nuestro Señor.

if you don't have time to
pray & read
scriptures,
you are busier than
God
ever intended you to be.

The kids have returned to school. Football is back. Halloween and Christmas decorations suddenly appear on store shelves.

Yes, it's September again.

Like any other month, there can be expenses that pop up in September that you didn't see coming. For example, you may pay your car insurance twice or four times a year. It happens just infrequently enough to throw you off; it can even feel like a Murphy visit, even though it's a typical expense.

The key is to know about such costs ahead of time. Not only will it keep you from getting blindsided, but that heads-up can help to mentally prepare you. Okay, honey . . . we've got to save a little money because this big expense is coming up. Let's be ready for it!

On that note, here are some items that usually make an appearance in the ninth month:

- Car insurance/car tags. Of course, these can happen any month of the year, but they may be coming due for you now. If so, don't forget to include them in your spending plan.
- Christmas saving. We've got three months left before gifts start going under the tree. Hopefully the amount you've saved is getting to the point that you can start looking for gifts without flinching at the price tags.
- Labor Day getaway. If you haven't made your September budget yet and want to do an overnight trip, make sure to put it in your spending plan.
- Thanksgiving holiday. It may seem a little early, but if you are taking a trip on Turkey Day or even just plan on hosting a bunch of people, you can start socking money away now.
- Halloween. Yes, it's not surprising to see stores selling costumes, decorations and spook-themed candy. If you come across a deal and have the cash, you might as well jump on it.

These are just a few possibilities. Each person's situation is different, so even if some of the bullets on this list don't apply to you, start thinking about your budget. Let this give you some ideas so you can put special attention on this month's spending plan.

It's a great way to keep from getting blindsided and an even better way to make Murphy run into a wall. If you know of other expenses for this month that aren't listed here, reply all and let others know as well!

Remember, the next FPU class begins this Thursday at 7pm!! As lifetime members, you are all welcome back for a refresher. Some of you are only missing a few classes from getting a completion certificate so I hope to see a lot of you back. If you know for sure you will be attending, please send me an email so I can have plenty of space for the small groups. There is still some remaining time to sign up friends and family so send them to our link at:

<http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu/locations/org/42659/class/229761>

Also, many of you still have free lesson tickets to give away to someone that you care about. Please take advantage of that and go to the class with them!! A personal invitation may just be what someone needs to go and completely change their financial future. And you could be a big part of that!



Thursday Evening Prayer Gathering

We are all called to serve the Lord, and praying is one way that you can perform a mighty ministry for Jesus. Each Thursday evening at 7pm, a handful of committed 2UC members meet to praise our Lord and lift up the prayers of our congregation and beyond. We meet in the Conference Room. We encourage you to join us and pray with us for our church, our ministries and the concerns on our hearts. Thanks to Anita Rodriguez for her faithfulness in serving as our Prayer Service leader. We are grateful for the weekly commitment of Bill Stowell, Joe Calcolli, and Charles Johnson. If you have prayer requests, give them to Pastor Bob, Christie or any of those mentioned above so your requests can be lifted up to the Lord. May the Lord bless you and keep you.

WHAT IS A UNION CHURCH ANYWAY??

Has anyone ever been confused as to the meaning of "Union Church"? Sure we all know what it means. We have walked through the front door. But perhaps some people don't make it as far, as the front door. How many people hear the name Second Union Church and mistakenly confuse it with The Unity Church or even the Unification Church? Perhaps we should do something!

It has been said that we don't get a second chance to make a first impression, and our name is the source of everyone's first impression.

As chair of the Forward Planning Committee, I want to know if you think that we should have an official phase or explicative slogan, after our name.

To this end I will be conducting an online poll, in order for you to express yourself, so that our church council may move towards expressing the will of the congregation. You will be receiving the following questionnaire though your e-mail. Please respond to this e-mail by September 14, 2013, because your opinion counts. The results will be announced at church.

Joseph Calcolli

Questionnaire

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Second Union Church,

How many people hear the name *Second Union Church* and mistakenly confuse it with The Unity Church or even the Unification Church? We are trying to determine if you are interested in adding an addendum to "Second Union Church" to clarify. Please note that no specific descriptive phrase has yet been proposed. The sole purpose of this poll is to gauge if the congregation would be interested in exploring this option.

Statement

I feel that we should add a descriptive addendum or phrase, after the name of "Second Union Church" For example: "Second Union Church, A place for all Christians" Or "Second Union Church, Christian Evangelical"

- #1 I agree
 - #2 I disagree
 - #3 I don't have an opinion
-