



Easter "Sonrise" Service

# 2nd Thoughts

MAY  
2014

## History Doesn't Repeat Itself, But It Rhymes

"In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes." This is how the Book of Judges ends. This ending serves as a perfect summary of the entire book, a book we recently finished in our program of reading through the Bible in a year. The point of the summary was (and is); without authoritative leadership, chaos reigns. In the example from Judges, the children of Israelites had recently entered the Promised Land where they experienced great, initial success. However, in a surprisingly short time, many of these same Israelites soon forgot their covenantal relationship with the very God who had delivered them from Egyptian slavery and had blessed them with land flowing with milk and honey. In fact, with surprising rapidity, they started pursuing the gods of the Canaanites and the Philistines. Consequently, the blessing of God's covenant was replaced by the curses of His covenant. That is, instead of the blessing of large families, bumper crops, immunity to disease, freedom from pestilence and victory over pagan oppressors, they experienced the reverse, i.e. the curse. Thus, in their decline, they would cry out to God, repent of their sin, and pray for His deliverance. And God was good to oblige by raising up a Gideon-like judge who would muster an army, fend off the oppressor and restore relative peace and prosperity to the land. But ironically, the same cycle would repeat over and over again. However, it seemed, with each successive cycle, Israel became even more degenerate until, by the end of the book, Israelites were chopping each other up in pieces and chaos, civil war, and anarchy reigned supreme. Thus, the epitaph: "In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes."

Someone once said that the one thing we learn from history is that we learn nothing from history. The ancillary saying is: if we don't learn from history, we are damned to repeat it. Well, apparently, we, as a human race, do not learn from history because we keep repeating the same mistakes. And this is a case in point: by rejecting God's revelation as the authoritative source of our laws, morals, governmental structures, and freedoms, we have become a post-Christian society where all truth is relative, where man is the measure of all things, and where anything goes because each person does what is right in their own eyes. Consequently, our society is unraveling in the areas of honesty, sexual mores, commitment to marriage, basic fiscal responsibility, and political liberty. In the words of the sage, we are sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind.



Pastor Bob Zoba

**Sunday Services**  
10:00 a.m.

**Adult Sunday School**  
9:00am

**Sunday School**  
PK-12  
10:30am

**Choir Practice**  
Sundays 12pm  
Thursdays 7pm

### Weekly Activities

**Ladies Bible Study**  
Tuesdays noon-2pm

**Small Group**  
@ the Rivera's  
Tuesday 7pm

**Men's Breakfast**  
Wednesday 7am

**Women's Study**  
Wednesday 7pm

**Prayer Service**  
Thursday 7pm

Second Union Church  
Ave. Apolo esq. Mileto  
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Rev. Robert Zoba

Perhaps, however, history will repeat itself again, albeit in a positive sense. That is, perhaps, like the Israelites of old, our society will soon realize that the pendulum has swung too far and that the credos, hopes, and faith of our forebears need to be embraced anew. Witness the popularity of movies with openly Christian themes in a year in which most Hollywood movies have flopped. God Is Not Dead, Heaven Is Real, and The Son of God have surprised many at the box office. Perhaps, our society is sensing intuitively that the stories based in secular values are ultimately empty and unsatisfying and only that which is transcendent, noble, and God-inspired is what truly satisfies. I may be an optimistic dreamer, but it is my hope that is evidence of a trend that people are finally looking for something more than what Madison Avenue and Hollywood can promise them.

May you and I be ready and willing to point them to the God of Scriptures who is the King of King and who is the ultimate source of all authority. Indeed, let us pray that we will one day say "In those days there was a king over all and His name was King Jesus; and all the people did what was right in His eyes." May that movement start with you and me!

Blessings!

*Pastor Bob*

### Small Group Opportunities

<u>Time</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Description &amp; Subject</u>	<u>Place</u>
9:00 am	Sundays	Adult Bible Study: Genesis	Bazaar Room at 2UC
noon-2pm	Tuesdays	Women's Bible Study: Gideon	Fellowship Hall at 2UC
7pm	Tuesdays	Adult Bible Study: Romans	Rivera's home in San Francisco
7am	Wednesdays	Men's Breakfast	Fellowship Hall at 2UC
7pm	Wednesdays	Women's Bible Study	Anita Rodriguez' home Rio Piedras Hts.
7pm	Thursdays	Adult Prayer Meeting	2UC Conference Room

### Second Union Church Council & Staff

Pastor  
Rev. Robert Zoba

President  
Luis Alberto Rivera

Vice President  
John Alberts

Treasurer  
Stan Pinkerton

Secretary  
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Worship  
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Outreach  
Julio Rivera

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Christian Education  
Elsy Perez

Staff-Congregation Relations  
Efraín Droz

Membership  
Eze Ebube

Fellowship  
Christie Zoba

Nominating  
Carlos García de la Noceda

Forward Planning  
Joe Calcolli

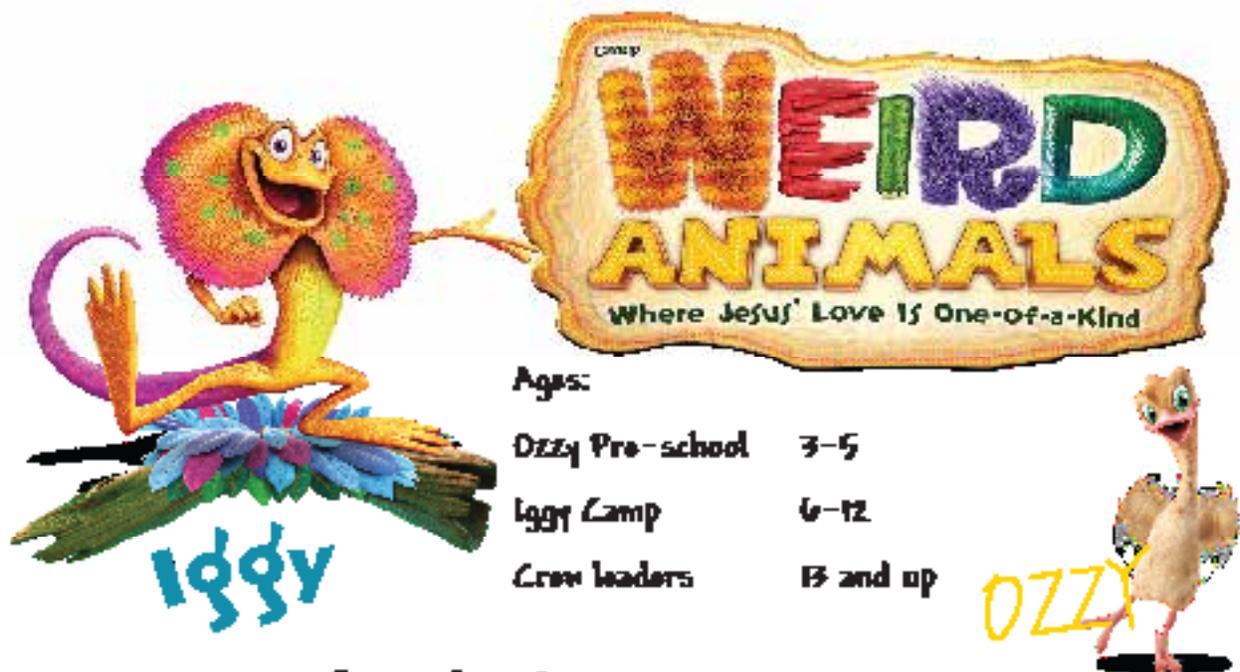
Women's Ministries Team Leader  
Anita Rodriguez

Office Manager  
Mabel Varela

Minister of Music  
Luis Manuel Tirado

Choir Director  
Carlos Rivera

Newsletter & Website Editor  
Christie Zoba



New friends ,Amazing experiments,

Untamed games,

Lip-smacking snacks, Surprising adventures

& Incredible music

Tuesday June 3,2014- Saturday June 7,2014

<https://www.groupvbspro.com/vbs/e2/secondunion>

VBS Donation \$30.00 per family

(up to 2 T- Shirts, additional kids paid for their T-shirts)

VBS outreach - Water for India & Young Life Puerto Rico

Second Union Church

**Sofia Droz** finished her semester abroad (all A's) in Spain and comes back on May 8th.

**Irma and Mike LaLlave** will be making their yearly pilgrimage in June to visit family and friends in the States.

The tennis team of **Dennis Gonzalez** made it to the finals in the Nationals. **Amarilis'** team had a record of 2-2 and almost made it to the semi-finals (Dennis is the tall one on the right).



**Dennis** will start racing again in June with the first race at the Indianapolis 500 racetrack!!!

**Janette Quiles** will be traveling to Germany during the month of May?

**The Christian Ed. Committee** will be having a "field trip" to La Marquesa Forest Park on Saturday, May 24. We will meet at the church at 9am sharp and car pool to the park from there.

**Cuqui (aka Elisa Perez)** is graduating from Kindergarten on May 30th.

**Elsy Perez** is graduating from Liberty University in May as well with a second major in Psychology and a specialization (minor) in Christian Counseling.

**Christie Zoba's son, J.J. Valdés**, graduates from Southern Methodist University this month. He was just offered a job with ADP which he accepted!

**Madelyn Vega** writes: I would like to share that **Xavi** won 2nd place at the Spelling Bee at his school Leadership Christian Academy. He will be collecting the highest honors also during his 8th grade Graduation Ceremony.



**Raymond** just got invited to participate as a speaker at the Music Higher Education Conference in Brazil this coming July.

**Madelyn** was invited as a guest to the Tele-mundo TV station in Los Angeles KVEA TV Channel 52, because of the publication of my book "Letters to my Son 2".



**Rashel Krankovich** has now graduated with a Masters Degree in Social Work from Ohio University? That's BIG news!! Congrats, Rashel!



**Susan Pagés** was recently in town together with husband, Hector, for Hector's high school reunion!

**Chad Riley** writes: God is Great! We are blessed beyond measure! Everyone is doing well. **Chanse** was recently inducted into National Honor Society (3.6 GPA minimum), named Team Captain for Football Team, Defensive Back of the year, and also serves as an Usher at First Baptist of South Orange. **Cole** was recently awarded Pop Warner Football First Team All-American Scholar (96% GPA minimum). More than 425,000 kids participate and less than 2% achieve this level. He also serves as an Usher at First Baptist of South Orange. **Ella** was recently baptized and continues to embrace her deeper understanding of our Lord and Savior. **Alicia** teaches a Pre-K Autism Class and serves as shining example that God has given us all talents that can serve others. **Chad** was recently promoted at Colgate to Director of U.S. Grocery and Retail Operations where he oversees all grocery store sales operations and in-store execution across all channels in the U.S.



**John Alberts** completed the Boston Marathon!! As he ran, he listened to pre-recorded words of encouragement from friends at Second Union. He reported that those uplifting messages helped him to persevere and complete the course!

Congratulations, John!

**Christie Zoba** traveled to Washington, D.C. to visit her son, **Robbie**, who is working for The Advisory Board Company. She was joined by her step-daughter **Yvette** and her grandson, **Sebastian**! They had a cold, but wonderful visit to the Nation's capital.



**Brenda Ferrer** is giving glory and honor to God for a very successful **Women's Walk to Emmaus**. Thirteen Pilgrims representing nine different churches from Washington, DC, St. Thomas, USVI, Bayamon, Carolina, Guaynabo, Humacao, and San Juan had an enjoyable three days together in the Lord on Walk #48 in Aibonito. An awesome team served in the conference room with members representing the three Emmaus communities in Puerto Rico, the Spanish Community, Chrysalis (the Youth), and Sonlights, the English Community. This was history in the making, a first! Background workers from the Spanish Community came from Methodist churches in Guayama, Rio Piedras Heights, Lomas Verdes, Levittown, Dorado, Torrimar and Sonlights Community from Parroquia Espiritu Santo, 2UC, Seventh Day Adventist of Tortola, and Iglesia Bautista de Carolina. An amazing Fourth Day was held in Palmas del Mar in Humacao, hosted by Palmas Community Church. Muchas gracias to all who helped in some way.

The **Outreach Committee** collected over 1,000 pounds of rice to be given to families in need. Thanks to Don Julio Rivera for his leadership of this committee.



**Coralie and James Martinez** generously donated a refrigerator to 2UC for the backpack program? (behind Don Julio in the picture above!). We are very grateful to have the ability to store refrigerated items!! Thanks so much!

**The Second Union Church Players** did an excellent job on Maundy Thursday as they presented a drama written and directed by **Anita Rodriguez**!



### VBS Staff:

Mabel Varel	VBS Director 2014	Alysha Jackson	Youth VBS Director "Zoo Zone"
Dalia Gonzalez	Pre-school VBS Director	Ramón Chinaea	Untamed Games
Anita Rodriguez	Critters Cafe	Cadiz Rodriguez	Sing & Play Stampede
Elsy Perez	Imagination Station	Rosa Trinidad	Craft & Play Ozzy Park
Isabel Fernandez	Games Ozzy Park	Laurie Foster	Bible Adventures Ozzy Park
Christie Zoba	One of a Kind Bible Adventures	Marietta Benero	VBS Set Up & Decoration
Jorge Figueroa	Spotlight VBS	Sebastian Droz	Spotlight VBS
Ricardo Nazario	Spotlight VBS		

**Crew leaders:** Ricardo Perez, Joshua Estremera, Mario Medina, Daniel Rivera, Sara Rivera, Paul Palermo ( Union Church), Paola Navarro, Louis Navarro, Sariemma Mendez, Sariana Mendez, Jean Marco Montalvo, Julian Montalvo & Carlos Andres Diaz

**Volunteers:** Risa Tobin, Josette Droz, Marie Angie Melendez, Gigliola M Olguin, Pastor Bob, Thelma Rivera, Troop 515, Irma Torres

**Prayer Warriors for VBS:** Elsy Perez, Robert Zoba, Anita Rodriguez, Thelma Rivera, Irma Torres, Silvette Candelaria, Marie Angie Melendez, Christie Zoba, Rose de Jesus, Dalia Gonzalez Mayra Chipi, Risa Tobin, David & Laurie Yost, Cadiz Rodriguez & Mabel Varela

### The following materials are needed:

- soda or water-size plastic bottles
- foam
- Christmas lights
- pool noodles
- cellophane paper
- Tissue and gift-wrapping paper
- animal pictures
- fabrics
- kiddie pool

VBS is for the entire Church family, we need mentors(20), painters, crew leaders(20), Station leaders(8)  
\*\*Community service hours for school will be granted\*\*

### VBS Preparation Schedule

Friday, May 9	1-4pm	Crew Leaders
Friday, May 16	5-8pm	Crew Leaders
Saturday, May 24	9am-noon	Crew Leaders
Saturday, May 24	1-6pm	All Staff & volunteers Decoration Day
Monday, June 2	8am-finish	All Staff & volunteers Final Set Up Day





Second Union welcomes Gustavo Gonzalez Rodriguez as our new Youth Pastor.

Gustavo was commissioned during the May 4 worship service, and his wife, Sasha, and children, Dylan & Nailah May were cheerfully by his side.

Gustavo was born and bred here in Puerto Rico. He received his BA at UPR and a Masters degree from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (AUB) in Spain. He is finishing a doctorate in Child and Adolescent Psychopathology from AUB as well.

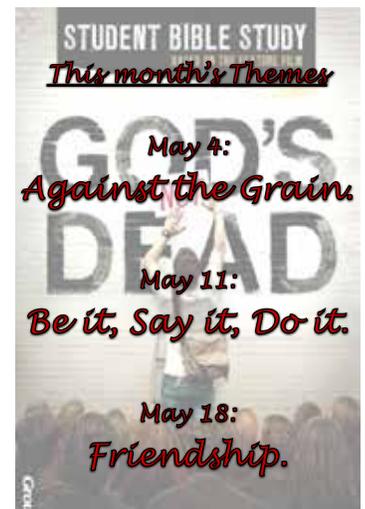
In addition to serving as a youth pastor at a Disciples of Christ Church in Bayamon, Gustavo has his own company, Algo Más Entertainment, in which he functions as a dynamic workshop coordinator to nurture team building in corporations, churches, and schools.

We are grateful that God has sent him to our congregation to ministry to our youth. It is our hope that everyone in Second Union will offer the Gonzalez family a warm welcome into our fellowship of faith.



### Youth Sunday School: May 2014

During the month of May the Youth (7th-12th grades) will be discussing topics from the movie "God's Not Dead" during Sunday School. All are encouraged to attend as Gustavo leads you in this journey of understanding and defending your faith.



### Christian Ed Committee Field Trip

**Saturday, May 24 at 9am**

The Christian Education Committee will be having a "field trip" to "La Marquesa" Forest Park on Saturday, May 24.

We will meet at the church at 9am sharp and car pool to the park from there. Anyone that is a part of the 2UC family is invited. More details to follow. To sign up, see or call Elsy at 787-697-6192.

## TAMAR

Four of the five women in Jesus' genealogy are connected to some great sin with Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, being the exception. As I researched and studied the amazing lives of these women, four truths about salvation became evident: salvation is for sinners; salvation is through faith; salvation is apart from the works of the Law; and salvation is one of forgiveness.

Tamar is the first woman listed in Jesus' genealogy according to Matthew. I doubt that many are familiar with her story in Genesis 38. Tamar's actions of harlotry and deceit would make even the most liberal minded blush from embarrassment. Her story in the Bible is treated with disdain and great displeasure, or simply skimmed over or ignored all together. Having no bearing on what precedes it in Genesis, nor any connection to what comes after it, Tamar's story stands in the pages of Scripture entirely on its own, yet it has its Divinely appointed place in the Bible. Tamar's story has a definite bearing upon Messiah's "royal lineage and fleshly ancestry." She in fact gives birth to the "progenitor" of the tribe of Judah, thereby becoming the "fore-mother" of the famous tribe which would later on become the royal tribe of Israel. Out of the tribe of Judah would come the kings of Israel, eventually leading to Israel's Messiah. Before his death, Jacob, Israel's patriarch, passed the royal line to Judah: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and the obedience of the people is his" (Genesis 49:10).

Judah, the patriarch of the tribe of Judah, had three sons; Er, Onan, and Shelah. According to Levirate law, an Israelite who died without an heir would be given offspring through his brothers, posthumously. Tamar was given in marriage to Er in order to produce an heir for the house of Judah. Because of his wickedness in the sight of God, Er died leaving Tamar childless. After the death of her husband, Tamar was espoused to Onan, who was commanded by Judah to fulfill Tamar's levirate right. Onan used a form of birth control which was displeasing to God because he didn't want to father an offspring for his brother. As a result of his actions, he was struck dead leaving Tamar without a son. Next in line was Shelah, Judah's youngest and only living son. He was promised to Tamar in marriage, but not until he became of marrying age. Tamar waited and waited, yet this promise was never fulfilled by Judah. Apparently, it was never his intention to fulfill the promise for fear that Shelah would suffer the same fate of his brothers.

Denied her Levirate right to produce an heir, Tamar took matters into her own hands. Aware that her father-in-law would attend the spring sheep-shearing festival in Timnah, she dressed herself as a temple prostitute and waited for him outside the town gate. When Judah saw her by the road side, he mistook her for a sacred prostitute for her face was veiled. Using her seductive powers, Tamar lured Judah into having sexual intercourse with her and she conceived. No more would she suffer the shame or scorn from the other women for her barrenness. Her wish and desire to conceive an offspring for the house of Judah had been fulfilled, as was God's awesome plan to establish and conserve the royal tribe of Judah, and assure its perpetuity until the coming of Messiah.

When the time for Tamar to deliver arrived, she gave birth to twin sons: Perez and Zerah. Perez, Tamar's firstborn, became the progenitor of the tribe of Judah and the ancestor of King David. According to the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7), God's promise to David of an everlasting throne for his offspring, Messiah would come from the lineage of David and the tribe of Judah. In both of Jesus' genealogies, Messiah is described as a member of Judah by lineage. He is referred to in Scripture as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Jesus Christ, the "firstborn of all creation" (Col. 1:15) descended from the tribe of Judah, the tribe of the firstborn.

Our awesome God took a sinful woman's action of whoredom to establish and preserve Messiah's royal lineage. Had Tamar not committed her great sin, the line of Judah might have become extinct. Her story teaches us that there is no one so sinful that God cannot reach. He takes our evil, sinful deeds, and in His awesome plan for our life, He turns them into something good even though we do not know or understand His plan. The blood of Christ atones for the sins of the world, and it atones for the sins of each. Jesus said: "I have come not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:32). Salvation is for sinners. Salvation is for you and me for "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Contributed by Mayra Chipi (part 3 of the series)

### Couples' Ministry: Marriage Built to Last

The next gathering for the  
2UC Couples' Ministry is this Saturday, May 10th at 6:30pm



We will be continuing our efforts to keep our relationships alive and growing in intimacy. The default is to grow distant and less intimate, don't allow that to happen in your marriage. Our next discussion topic will be "Breaking Down Walls".

Child care will be provided. We will begin with a potluck dinner, so please let us know if you can bring a main dish, a side dish, a salad or a dessert!! Email Christie with your contribution: zoba129@gmail.com

### Men's Ministry Golf Tournament

June 14, 2014 @ Caguas Real Country Club

#### Volunteers Needed:

- Help greeting players at arrival
- Helping register participants
- Helping in giving out breakfast sandwiches (By Subway) & lunch
- Directing traffic (making sure players know where they're going)
- Help with award ceremony

#### Sponsors Needed:

- Hole Sponsor: \$500.00
- Two (2) Spots for play
- Logo on a specific hole
- Breakfast and lunch included
- Mention at the award ceremony
- Non-hole sponsor (\$\$\$ or items for raffle or goody bags)
- Mention at the award ceremony



All monetary donations should be: **Check or Money Order in name of (Second Union Church.)**

All proceeds will be divided for: Palmas Church (building fund), Young Life, & Puerto Rico American Football Club Corp.



The Backpack Program (a.k.a. la Mochila Alegre) is a weekly ministry that provides a backpack filled (and I mean filled) with food every Friday afternoon to 30 students at the Juanillo Fuentes Elementary School in the Canta Gallo neighborhood in Guaynabo. This is part of a program that is sponsored by Feeding America and the "Banco de Alimentos de P.R." Through this program, students who evidence poor nutrition over the weekend are invited to participate in this program. How are these students selected? This is the job of the school social worker, Hugo Robles, and the teachers. They look for students who exhibit signs of hunger - lack of energy and interest in school work (particularly on Monday mornings). These students are usually the first in line when it's time for lunch. Hugo and the teachers meet with the



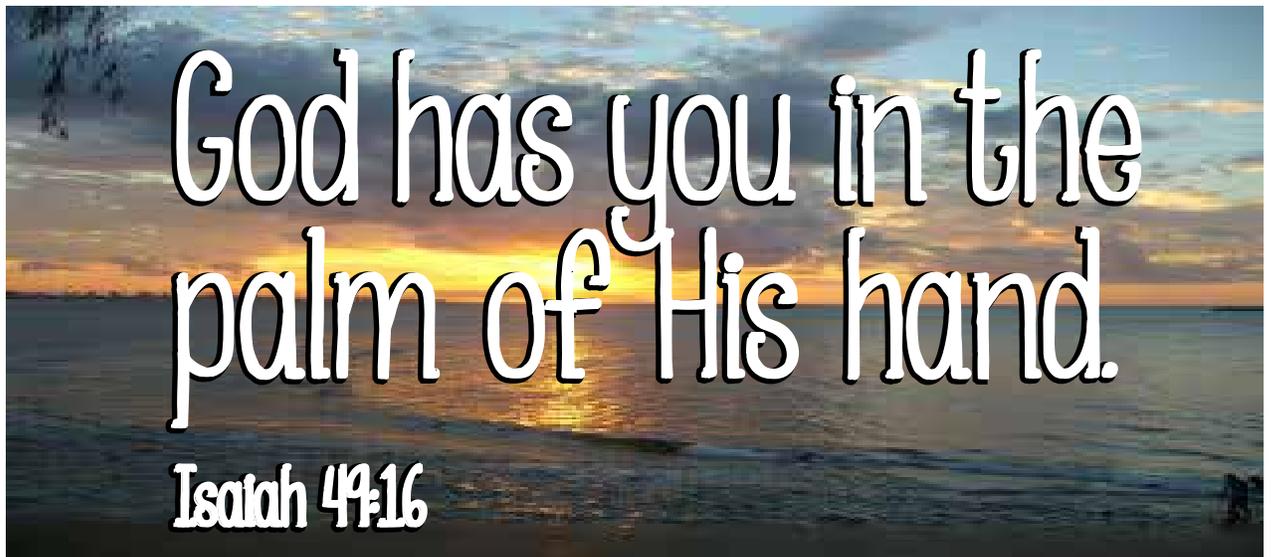
parents to discuss the backpack program and determine if the student does, in fact, warrant participating in the program.



This is a weekly program - backpacks are distributed during holidays and over the summer break as well, - so it requires some dedicated volunteers and supporters. We are very grateful for all those who have helped out by packing the backpacks each week, picking up food at the Banco de Alimentos warehouse in Hato Tejas, and delivering the backpacks to the students and their parents on Friday afternoons - rain or shine!

We are especially grateful for those of you who contribute food to the program. There are weeks where we have very little food left from the Banco de Alimentos. And often the food that we receive from the Banco isn't all that nutritious. Remember they can only give from what they receive! So those that bring in soup, fruit cups, peanut butter, applesauce, vienna sausages, cheese, mac 'n cheese, etc. are making a very significant impact. We accept all contributions!

We are called to serve God's kingdom in ways small and large. This is a small way, but we pray that it is significant to these children and their families. We also ask for your prayers for these students - that through our work, they might see Jesus and come to know Him.





God treated the faithful to a beautiful sunrise on Easter morning as the ESPN (English Speaking Pastors' Network) held the annual 'Sonrise' service. Despite an early morning downpour in several parts of the metro area, the weather was picture perfect as hundreds gathered on the grounds of "El Morro" fort to praise and worship God. Our very own, Laurie Yost, played the hymns on the keyboard which was a blessing to all.



the faithful 2UC early risers!

If you were one of those who woke up early, saw the rainy weather and went back to bed, you missed a great opportunity to enjoy God and His amazing creation and celebrate the resurrection with believers from many churches in Puerto Rico.



Following the early morning service, a very special Easter brunch was held in the Fellowship Hall at Second Union Church. Baked goods, egg casseroles, fruit, pastries: everything was yummy. Thanks to all who contributed and who helped set up, serve and clean up!! We are truly blessed at Second Union Church to have so many faithful servants!



### Wednesday Night Bible Study @ Anita's

Wednesday evenings at my house are such fun. Women come from a day of work and we open bibles together, digging into God's Word, reading together and asking tough questions. It is a time of laughter and tears as we share what God has done in our week, and as we pray together for those concerns that have been pressing on our hearts. Together we come before the throne of Grace and find sweet peace and joy. There is nothing

like sharing this walk of faith with someone who loves Jesus, too.

There is always room for more around the table. Have you noticed how people from Second Union have a way of creating a family atmosphere whenever they gather? Join us; your spot at the table is ready. See you Wednesdays at 7pm.

*Anita Rodriguez*

(The Wednesday evening Ladies Bible study is currently studying the book of Romans)

# Second Union Church



On Saturday, May 3, Property Chair, Juan Gonzalez, organized a work day. A great crew of willing helpers turned out to take on various projects including sealing the roof and replacing a rotten bulletin board.

Many thanks to all who showed up to help keep our church facility looking great.



## Honoring Our Outreach Recipients

The Outreach Committee hosted a very special afternoon where the island charities that receive financial support from Second Union Church were honored.

The Aibonito Bell Choir, directed by Carlos Rivera, was on hand for musical entertainment and the various agencies that attended were commended for the great work they do in the community to help those in need. Funds were distributed by Don Julio Rivera, the Outreach Committee Chairperson.

The afternoon ceremony was a great opportunity to not only honor the work the organizations are doing, but also to see their representatives face-to-face and encourage them. Due to the financial crisis Puerto Rico is facing, many agencies are operating on drastically reduced budgets, and it is truly a blessing to be able to support them in this way.

