

**AUGUST
2017**

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

**Adult Sunday School
9:00am**

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

**Choir Practice
Thursdays 7:30 pm**

Weekly Activities

Ladies Bible Study
Tuesdays 12-2

Small Group
@ the Rivera's
Tuesday 7pm

Men's Breakfast
Wednesday 7am

Women's Bible Study
Thursday 8am

Prayer Service
Thursday 7pm

**Second Union
Church**

2109 Calle Mileto
Guaynabo, PR 00969

**787-720-4423
secondunion.
org**

Rev. Robert Zoba
Pastor

Gustavo Gonzalez
Youth Pastor



We Want God

Back in 1979, less than a year after John Paul II was elected Pope, he gained permission to return to his home country of Poland. This was the height of the Cold War as the world was divided between East and West, communist and free, secular and faith-based. Indeed, the doctrines of Marxist Communism declared that religion is nothing more than the opiate of the masses...a phony drug to take people's minds off of the injustices of this world and to hallucinate over the hopes of heaven instead. Thus, secular Communism created a huge spiritual vacuum.

However, as your eighth-grade science teacher once told you, "nature abhors a vacuum". And this is equally true of spiritual values as the human heart will either be filled with the truth of God and the person of Christ or it will be filled by the cheap substitutes of secularism. But the Pope realized that, although the Marxists had been quite successful in excluding the God of the Scriptures from much of the Soviet bloc, he knew that there were still thousands in his native Poland who "had not bowed their knee" to the Baal of Bolshevism.

Indeed, despite the best efforts of the Communists to limit the size of the crowd, Pope John Paul II was mobbed by a mass of Polish citizens in Warsaw's Victory Square, where he celebrated Mass. But before he could finish the Mass, the crowd began to chant: "We want God! We want God!"

Pope John Paul asked: "What was the greatest work of God? Man. Who redeemed man? Christ. Therefore," he declared, "Christ cannot be kept out of the history of man in any part of the globe, at any longitude or latitude. . . . The exclusion of Christ from the history of man is an act against man."

The communist vanguard grew nervous when the chant of the crowd turned to thunder: "We want God!"

Just a month ago, President Trump stood in that same place and echoed that great speech of John Paul when he declared that when the Pope asked those question, "A million Polish people did not ask for wealth. They did not ask for privilege. Instead, one million Poles sang three simple words: 'We want God!' " He called the Polish people "the soul of Europe."

These were stirring words indeed. However, the reality of too much of Europe today is a soulless, spiritual vacuum which has witnessed a serious decline of the Christian faith. The continent that was once the center of Roman Catholicism, the land that witnessed the birth of the Reformation 500 years ago, and the locus of missionary activity that sent ministers and missionaries to us in the New World and the farthest reaches of the earth, has now become a spiritual wasteland. In fact, in most European countries, the percentage of folks attending church services can be measured in single digits. As a result, this spiritual void has been filled by materialism, secularism, and more recently, Islam. And yet, the God-sized void in every human heart remains and from this void springs the cry, "We want God. We want God!"



Pastor Bob Zoba

Thus, Europe is now a mission field and the fields are ripe for harvest. Let us pray that God would send his workers into that harvest to bring the Gospel afresh to this continent as well as our own. So too, let us be reminded that every person that we might meet, whether they claim to be atheistic, agnostic, or none-of-the-above, have this same God-shaped void that longs to be filled with the Bread of Heaven and the Living Waters of Jesus' sweet, sweet Spirit.

Amen?
Pastor Bob

Are you serving God's Kingdom?

The gifts of the Spirit were given to ALL *"for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect [complete, mature] man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ . . . speaking the truth in love, [that we] may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ"* (Ephesians 4:12-13, 15)

How are you using the spiritual gifts that have been given to you? How can you serve God's kingdom? We encourage you to pray about where God is leading you. But at the same time we exhort you to take the next step . . . TODAY. Don't wait for the perfect time', do something for His kingdom now. Here are some suggestions:

- Visit Pablo Melendez at La Casa Primavera nursing home
- Backpack Program: donate food, help with backpack distribution, tutor students, etc.
- Starfish Ministry - reach out to the homeless (see page 6)
- GPS: Facilitators needed (see Dennis Glenn)
- Safe Families: short-term 'foster' home care (see Christie Zoba)
- 2UC Choir - rehearsals Tuesdays at 7:30pm
- Heart to Heart Ministry to the Homeless - help prepare food and/or serve meals
- Teach Sunday School
- Join the WhatsApp Prayer Team
- Participate in the Thursday Evening Prayer Service
- Support one of our Outreach Committee Organizations
- Sponsor a Compassion International Student
- Start up a new ministry at 2UC
- Help with the Christmas Bazaar

Did you know?

You can make donations to the church or to any of the ministries of our church on line. You can even pay your pledge! Here is the link:

<http://secondunion.org/donate/>



You can even earmark funds for the Backpack program on this page! So the next time we are in need to food or school supplies, you don't even have to go shopping - you can just take a minute and send money.

Soon we will also offer the possibility of making electronic payments via ATH-móvil or VENMO (or both!)

Stay Tuned!!

Pastor
Rev. Robert Zoba

President
Brenda Ferer

Vice President
Maylie Colón

Treasurer
Stan Pinkerton

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Humbelina Treviño

Worship
Risa Tobin

Outreach
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Membership
Nilda Román

Fellowship
Julio Rivera

Nominating
Michael Strong

Forward Planning
Harry de la Cruz

Women's Ministry
Anita Rodriguez

Men's Ministry
Joe Calcolli

Pianist
Luis Manuel Tirado

Choir & Worship Leader
Jeff Penn

Youth Pastor
Gustavo Gonzalez

Office Manager
Mabel Varela

Newsletter Editor
Website Administrator
Christie Curie Zoba

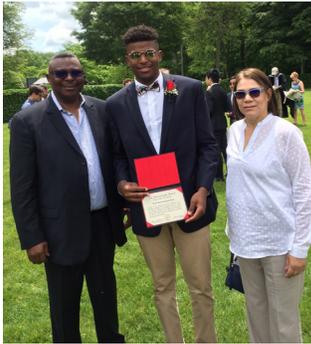
Bible Study & Small Group Opportunities at 2UC

Day and Study	Location	Contact
Sunday 9am Adult Bible Study Matthew	2UC Conference Room	Lizzette Kelley: Howard01@prtc.net
Tuesday Lunchtime Bible Study (12-2) Abundant, Rooted, Prayer	2UC Fellowship Hall	Christie Zoba: zoba129@gmail.com 787-717-4001
Tuesday Evening Bible Study (7-9pm) Revelation	Lorraine and Luis Alberto Rivera's home in San Francisco	Lorraine & Luis 787-370-2448
Wednesday Men's Breakfast (7-8am) Man and His Work	2UC Fellowship Hall	Pastor Bob: PastorBobZoba@gmail.com
Thursday Morning Women's Study (8am) Book of Titus	Cafe del Alma - Paraná Street	Anita Rodriguez: anita00926@aol.com



Second Union Church

From **Susan Pages**: We were so happy to visit Puerto Rico over Mother's Day weekend to see Hector's mom. Pastor Bob and Christie were so nice to meet us for dinner one night. John & Evelyn Alberts joined us for some "catching up" at Hector's mom's house on another evening. The biggest news for us right now is that we are planning a May 2018 wedding for our daughter **Danielle and her fiancé Jim!** It will be held in NJ where they reside. God is so good!



Eze Ebube writes: We are grateful to the Lord for all His blessings! Our son **Edwin Ebube**, graduated from his Postgraduate program at The Lawrenceville School, New Jersey, and has began his university's studies at the Manhattan College, Riverdale, New York, where he is a member of the College NCAA

Div 1 Basketball Team. Our daughter, **Nkechi Ebube**, relocated from Ithaca, New York after finishing at Cornell to Virginia Beach to begin her law studies at the Regent Law School. We are really thankful to God for her decision to go to a Christian school and pray that she will use her studies for the common good and to become an effective witness for Christ.

Madelene Vega's son, Xavi, recently suffered a head-on collision and totaled his car, however, Xavi was not at fault and everyone walked away without a scratch. Praise the Lord!

Christie spent the pre-4th of July weekend with her mom, Jane, in Key Largo. Christie and Bob's sons, **Rob and Jorge** (a.k.a. Robbie and J.J.) joined them for some fun including an exhilarating swim with some Key Largo locals!



Dr. David Yost hopes to be back in PR at the end of September!

JB & Audrey Wilcox are new grandparents...again! **Gordon James Moore** was born at 11:45 pm on July 14th to proud parents Sarah and Garrison. And, their daughter **Catherine** is also expecting! Congrats!



The **Woodruffs** have been enjoying the splendors of summer in Vermont.

Waldemar & Clara Velez attended Boy Scout Camp with their son, **Mateo**, recently.

Mabel & Ramon Chinae have been living it up at the Ritz this last week.

Risa and Omar and family have been enjoying the craggy coastline of Maine before helping **Jean Marco** get settled into his new dorm at the University of Maine.



Brian Tester was the guest preacher at Palmas Community Church this summer.



Nicole Stowell recently got engaged. Congrats! (Bill would be so proud.)

Mike & Irma LaLlave have extended their trip to the US, but expect to be back soon.

Damaris Ruiz' daughter, Alexandra, received her black belt in karate!



Greta Johnson got a great nursing job here in on the island. Praise the Lord!

Pastor Bob and Christie spent a week with Christie's mom at Walloon Lake, Michigan - way up north near Petoskey. They enjoyed the beautiful sunsets and cool weather. They also had the opportunity to hear Christian author, Philip Yancey preach at a church service at the Bayview Methodist encampment in Petoskey.



Sariana Rodriguez blessed us with a special solo as she sang, "People Need the Lord" when Pastor Parker was here from China.

Luis Alberto and Loraine Rivera's eldest son, **Armando Rivera** tied the knot last month and is officially a married man. Congrats **Armando and Lizbeth**. It was a very beautiful wedding!



Joellen Ramos was back for a visit and sang a wonderful solo at our church service. She was accompanied by sisters **Angela & Adrienne**. It was the same Sunday that Papa Joe preached...with 10 minutes notice. Thanks Joe!



Janette Quiles is excited that **Ed** has been given permission to work from their home in San Diego. We were thrilled to see them when they returned to PR for a visit in July!



Jessica Perez and son, Adonis, toured the sites of Italy this summer.

Edwin & Conchi Perez sailed the Adriatic Sea this summer.

Jeff & Tamara Penn visited the Emerald Island of Ireland.

Juan Navarro's daughter, Paola, joined the US Navy.

George & Joan McMurray love to take in the opera via closed circuit in the theater.

The McCarley clan gathered back in Little Rock this summer as they have a new grandbaby to celebrate.

Lt. Col. Eli Lozano and Gustavo Gonzalez did a great job of preaching this summer while Pastor Bob was away.

Mar Lopez reports that things are going well in San Antonio. She has a big court translators test coming up so she covets our prayers for that.

Rashel Krankovich and Keith Baum are now happily married and enjoying life together in Columbus, Ohio.



Steven & Linette Johnson are back from New England and Steve is hard at work in the church library.

Dennis & Linda Glenn have had amazing results in reaching out to the folks at the traffic lights as well as the homeless who come to Heart to Heart. (see page 7)

John & Carol Fisher are up in Pennsylvania celebrating the 85th birthday of Carol's mom.

Connie Estades is recovering from a shoulder injury she suffered while "horsing" around. But she's recovering fast and will back in the saddle soon.

Alfred Delbrey is also recovering well after undergoing open heart surgery.

David, Rosalind, and Victoria Deakin sailed the BVIs this summer as David is both a certified sailor and airplane pilot.

Colleen Comer has been hard at work this summer filming a movie with John Travolta. One of her production assistants was our own **Cadiz Rodriguez**.

Jared Adams is serving as quarterback coach with Ramon China's team. In fact, his protégé is **Mabel's son Josh**.

Second Union Church

Carlos & Mayra Chipi were able to gather their entire family in Dorado during the month of July for some fun in the sun. Mayra and Carlos' eldest granddaughter, **Valentina**, landed the role in a movie and has been on the set of the John Travolta film!!



Willi Chin has taken a new job with Marriott Hotels in Florida.

Victor & Marisela Alvear have enjoyed the month of July in the DR.



Manny Fernández graduated in June with a degree in Computer Sciences, and he is now working part-time at 2UC as our IT solutions manager!!



Pastor Bob's cousin, Todd Jausen and his wife Jan were in Puerto Rico for a short visit in July. Todd is also a pastor. His church is in Greenville, PA about 40 minutes outside of Pittsburgh.



Todd and Jan are very active in the Hato Mayor community in Dominican Republic where they work with an organization that reaches out to those in need and plants churches in the Bateyes (sugar can villages). They are the proud parents of 11 children!



Wendy Watson and daughter **Claudia** were traveling in England and France this summer, and from the looks of it, they were having a wonderful time in Paris!



Steven & Loida Spivak are still up in the DC area wrestling with irascible contractors. Loida was the winning finisher in the Lake Bancroft 2nd annual cardboard boat race!! Only cardboard and duct tape can be used to construct the paperboard boats, no larger than 4 ft wide by 6 ft long.



This cardboard boat was designed and built by Lou Bruhn, a member of Loida's First Christian Church when we are resident in Virginia.

Among adults / all-comers' category, Loida was sole captain & paddler of the petite-sized "Unsinkable Molly Brown". She went out first and finished far ahead of any others in the competition.

Several cardboard boats broke up, sank, and paddlers had to be rescued, but not Loida! Many from this northern Virginia community came out to cheer the competitors - who finished either fairly dry or very wet; or neither!



Loida Velilla and Steve Spivak hope to return soon to our friends at Second Union Church.

From the cardboard boat race, here are better photos of the "winner" and her church-designed, all-paper race boat crossing the finish line first and foremost. Loida as a senior mature woman, of slight build and shy demeanor, she and the "Unsinkable Molly Brown" bested all in this national Community Night Out event in NoVA.

The true story of Margaret - Molly Brown, a Titanic survivor and later famous suffragette, is itself quite inspirational as the lead to musical of same name.

Omar and Lizza Haedo are proud grandparents. We rejoice with them and welcome little Nicolas Haedo into this world. May God bless him and keep him in His perfect love! Congrats to the Haedo family!





Six months ago a very special couple walked in the doors of our church for the first time, and what a difference they are making at Second Union Church and in Puerto Rico. Dennis and Lynda Glenn are from Naples, Florida and they are in Puerto Rico on a mission - literally. Dennis, a former FBI agent, felt the Lord's call to bring GPS ministries here to Puerto Rico. GPS is a program to help Christians identify the gifts God has given them and through an in-depth process determine how they can use their gifts to serve the Lord. It has a very systematic approach which results in tangible next steps to start answering God's call in your life. Dennis has already led many groups through this process including three right here at Second Union. His ministry is offered to churches and non-profit organizations such as Teen Challenge, a spiritual Bible-based substance abuse rehab and leadership program in Bayamon and Arecibo. And that is not all. Dennis is also instrumental in bringing well-known Christian author, Richard Blackaby to Puerto Rico for a two-day conference at Second Union in January of 2018. Dennis is leading a Bible study beginning in September for our entire church entitled, *The Seven Realities of Experiencing God*, a very influential and life-changing book written by Richard and Henry Blackaby.



The other side to this story begins with Dennis' wife Lynda. "Lyn" was not quite as enthusiastic about coming to live in Puerto Rico; yet she faithfully took the step alongside her husband. Though reluctant to leave her home and children in Florida, once she arrived on the island, she, too, set herself on a mission. As she and Dennis drove from their home in Caguas to San Juan on a regular basis, she noticed the homeless people on the street corners and traffic lights. She sensed God's call to reach out to them sharing food and God's word.



Lynda and Dennis began by preparing 'love bags' of food. Lynda would offer these bags of food to the homeless asking for money at traffic lights in exchange for the opportunity to read the Bible to them. You might be thinking, how wonderful, but take a moment and visualize this: she is not merely handing out food and driving on, she is getting out of her car, crossing three or four lanes of traffic to reach out and touch these people literally and spiritually. She doesn't stop there, she seeks their permission to sit down with them - right in the median or off to a nearby corner and she reads the Bible to them. She manages to communicate with them, her Spanish is broken at best, yet through the power of the Holy Spirit she has been able to develop relationships with these people. She knows them by name, she prays for them, and she leads them to Christ when they are ready. She recently found out that one of the men she ministers to has begun a rehabilitation program at Teen Challenge. Lynda has also encouraged Raúl and Jonathon to join her. (And Dennis is always nearby watching vigilantly.)



Lynda has lovingly named her endeavor, "Starfish Ministry" based on this story:



On a beach, the old man noticed a small boy approaching. As the boy walked, he paused every so often and as he grew closer, the man could see that he was occasionally bending down to pick up an object and throw it into the sea. The boy came closer still and the man called out, "Hey! May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

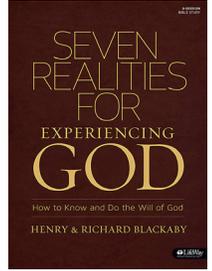
The young boy paused, looked up, and replied "Throwing starfish into the ocean. The tide has washed them up onto the beach and they can't return to the sea by themselves," the youth replied. "When the sun gets high, they will die, unless I throw them back into the water."

The old man replied, "But there must be tens of thousands of starfish on this beach. I'm afraid you won't really be able to make much of a difference." The boy bent down, picked up yet another starfish and threw it as far as he could into the ocean. Then he turned, smiled and said to the old man, "It made a difference to that one!"



And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. Luke 14:23

On September 6 & 7, we are beginning a church-wide study led by Dennis and Lynda Glenn. It is our hope that EVERYONE will attend either the Tuesday study from noon-2pm or the Wednesday evening study from 7 to 9pm. This is a 7-session study which will focus on responding to God's initiative in your life.



Too often Christians genuinely wonder and even worry about how to know and do the will of God. We need to remember that Christians can enjoy a love relationship with God. He invites ordinary people to experience Him in extraordinary ways. Through daily devotions and group discussion, Henry and Richard Blackaby identify a biblical pattern by which God reveals His will so that you can join Him in the mainstream of His activity.

- RECOGNIZE a direction God is taking in your life.
- BELIEVE and experience daily God's infinite love for you.
- IDENTIFY God's unmistakable activity in your life.
- HEAR when God is speaking to you.
- KNOW how to respond to what God shows you.
- ADJUST your beliefs, character, and behavior to God and His ways.
- EXPERIENCE GOD doing through you what only He can do.

If you are willing to take this step, please see Dennis Glenn or Christie Zoba so we can order books. The books are only \$10 a very worthwhile investment.

**Tuesday Lunchtime Women's Bible Study
August: Three Weeks of Powerful Bible Teaching**

Our Tuesday Lunchtime Bible study is open to every woman in our church. Leading up to the kick-off of the Seven Realities study in September, this month we will have three wonderful sessions. There is no homework or preparation for the next three weeks of study, and we would love to have you join us. The video portion of the study will begin promptly at 12:15 so we will have adequate time for group discussion. We hope to see you at noon on Tuesdays!

Tuesday, August 8: ABUNDANTLY BEYOND WHAT WE COULD ASK FOR

Many believers face circumstances in which they feel overwhelmed, useless and defeated. Priscilla Shirer, Bible study teacher and author, explains how believers can approach the battles of their lives with confidence and assurance knowing that God will give them abundantly beyond what they could ever ask or even imagine.

Tuesday, August 15: ROOTED IN CHRIST, NOT JUST FAKING IT

There are times when we minister out of a deep enjoyment of Christ's love. Then there's the norm: when we go through the motions to get through another week. How can we renew our passion for Christ—not just for our own sake, but also for His? Francis Chan, sought-after speaker and bestselling author of Crazy Love, challenges us to be rooted and grounded in Christ's love, not settling for anything less.

Tuesday August 22: PRAYER

Most people are asking two basic questions about prayer: How does it work? and How can I get better at it? Author and speaker **Jen Pollock Michel** explores the Lord's Prayer and other biblical prayers to address the role of desire, even disappointment, in holy, human conversation with God.

Our Compassion International Students

We'd like to introduce to you Larisa and Alison, two beautiful girls that the Women's Ministry Team has chosen to sponsor through Compassion International. These students attend a Compassion International School in Hato Mayor, Dominican Republic.

Larisa will be 12 years old on August 21. She lives with her mother and father and she loves to play group games and volleyball.

Alison is 6 years old and she also lives with her mother and father. Her favorite subjects are art and physical education and she always looks forward to snack time!



Larisa

Alison

Please join the Women's Ministry Team in praying for Larisa, Alison and their families. May God use us to provide for their needs and bless them through prayer. We hope to visit the girls in 2018. If you have questions or would be interested in sponsoring a student, please see Christie Zoba.

In just about a month choir will resume. We have a full repertoire lined up celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, Easter, and of course the Christmas Cantata. In a day in which many churches are losing their choirs, let us take a moment to consider what a choir adds to our church, and, more broadly The Church. While these are not my original ideas (they were originally published by Jonathan Aigner in his blog (the URL appears at the end of the article)), I wholeheartedly agree with them. We would love to see you in the choir this year - all are welcome.

1. Choirs support good congregational singing. A solo leader singing into a microphone sends a message to the congregation that its role is similar to that of an audience at a rock concert. Many congregants choose not to sing. On the other hand, a choir demonstrates that the voice of the congregation is primary, not secondary. It encourages them to join in by lifting their voices, without overpowering them with a wall of amplification.

3. Choirs make a broader repertoire available for a worship service. With a good arrangement, choirs can sing selections from practically any genre, from classical, to folk, to world music, to contemporary/popular music, something that just isn't possible for a "worship leader" and a praise band.

4. They can offer more difficult and complex music than is possible for the greater congregation. Besides leading in times of corporate singing, since choirs have the benefit of outside rehearsal time, they can offer up musical praises on behalf of the congregation that would otherwise not be possible. In this sense, a choir can be a preaching and praying group, proclaiming God's self-revelation, to which the congregation can listen, meditate, and respond worshipfully in their hearts.

5. Choirs help singers develop and improve their musical gifts. Christians are a singing people. This is not only biblical, but is a tradition older than the faith itself. Church choirs provide a free musical education, and help to refine the abilities of amateur musicians who might not otherwise have the opportunity.



6. Participation in choir ministry can be an avenue for introducing outsiders to the church and the Christian faith.

7. The choral process reflects the mission of the universal church. Participating in a church choir teaches Christians how to work together sacrificially for the common good of the group, just as the church is to follow the model of our Servant-Savior and give sacrificially for the good of Christ's kingdom.

8. A church choir is an open, welcoming, and diverse group. ... there seems to be a trend in contemporary worship culture that says unless you look a certain way, dress a certain way, have the right personality, fit into the targeted age bracket, or meet some other predetermined "coolness" factor, you cannot lead in corporate worship. This is wrong. Worship leadership should resemble the radical diversity of Christ's Kingdom, and a choir facilitates this quite well.

9. They add creative artistry and beauty to a worship service. The profound poverty of artistry and imagination found in our culture's popular musical output is staggering, as is our willingness to fill our worship gatherings with christianized versions of this stuff.

Michael Raiter refers to this phenomenon as the "Hillsongization" of Christian gathered worship, where everywhere "the singing in the church – both the songs that are sung and the style of music is just the same. Oh, the words of the songs might differ, but it's the same music team singing the same way. There's the obligatory leader with the obligatory two or three singers accompanying her, the obligatory drummer, the obligatory keyboard player and the obligatory two guitarists. You're allowed some freedom in your choice of a sax or flute, depending on the resources available, but it's all exactly the same for every song in every place." It's as if every church has its own cover band, and the quality of the worship (or, rather, "music") is determined chiefly by whose cover band is the best.

As our fragile and fleeting human ability to create beautiful artistic expression is such a striking example of our divine Creator's image in us, I don't think the church can denounce this trend strongly enough. Oh, to be sure, having a choir doesn't automatically mean your church's music won't become "Hillsongized," but it gives you a greater organic palate for exploring the full capability of the human voice. In closing, we need to stop and think about all we are giving up when we lose a choral presence in corporate worship. I think decreased emphasis on choral music in church is costing us dearly in our ability to follow the New Testament admonishment to sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord.

From the blog "Ponder Anew": <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/ponderanew/2014/09/23/9-reasons-to-keep-the-church-choir-alive/>

THE BICYCLE DIARIES

A review of the book by David Kroodsmas

Palo Alto CA is just south of San Francisco. Ushuaia, Argentina, is on the southern side of Tierra del Fuego. You could fly from Palo Alto CA to Ushuaia in about 46 hours. You could drive from Palo Alto to Ushuaia in about 200 hours. Either way would be a long, tiring trip.

Imagine, though, covering that 21,000 miles on a bicycle. That's what David Kroodsmas did beginning in November 2005.

Kroodsmas was just 26 years old when he began this ride. His prior experience with bike touring had been a cross-country trip with his father from Virginia to Oregon many years earlier, and a more recent trip from Oregon to Palo Alto CA. On this latter trip, he had met a man who had biked to Tierra del Fuego. The idea of such a trip stuck with him and he was determined to make a similar trip of his own. So for the next four years he studied, planned, saved, and trained on del Fuego, the nickname he had given to his 100-pound, steel-framed bicycle.

He was studying at Stanford University and earned a degree in Physics and a Masters degree in environmental science. As he planned and practiced for his ride, he discovered that his two loves-biking and the environment-could dovetail into a single purpose: the "Ride for Climate."

His book, *The Bicycle Diaries*, turns out to be an intriguing blend of travelogue through Central and South America, a study on the economies and lifestyles of the countries he crossed, and a tutorial on the effects on the environment, especially the micro-environments, he encountered on the journey that covered over half the distance from the North to South Poles.

I especially enjoyed the travel stories in the book. Kroodsmas traveled through Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Panama in North America, and through Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, Peru, Chile, and Argentina in South America. I have visited more than half those countries myself, though by more conventional means. It was fun to revisit those places I had seen and to hear about those places I missed. For their similarities though, Kroodsmas's travels were much more intimate. Bike tourists, he discovered, are extremely well received in the small towns that he passed through. On a great many of the days in his 18-month journey, he was invited for dinner to the homes of farmers and others living on the land. Most nights, he slept in his own tent pitched a hundred yards or so off the roads on which he rode, or in the yards of the campesinos he met. Early in his trip, in Mexico, another cyclist had suggested he ask the local fire departments for a place to sleep. In nearly every town he asked, the bomberos welcomed him in, giving him a patch or a jacket or a hat to commemorate his stay. Only in Peru and Venezuela did he find some fire stations that did not welcome him.

Though Brazil is the largest country in South America, Kroodsmas did not spend much time traveling there, and much of his trip was by boat on the Amazon rather than on bicycle. He crossed into Peru and traveled through much of Peru by boat as well. Once back on wheels in central Peru, he rode into the highest parts of the Andes Mountains, looking for a crossing to return to the Pacific coast. His descriptions of the forests and plains and the mountaintops at the Brazil-Peru border are breath-taking. When Kroodsmas arrived in Lima Peru, it had been over 50 days since he had last been in a city of any size and much longer since he'd been in a city of millions of people.

From Lima, he rode from the coast into the Andes once again. Crossing them and passing near Machu Pichu, he crossed into Bolivia near lake Titicaca. The most striking sight in Bolivia was the Salar de Uyuni. Kroodsmas describes it as "the world's largest salt flat-a sheet of salt half the size of New Jersey. The Salar de Uyuni is the flattest region on Earth. Its vast surface varies by less than two feet in elevation; that's flat enough for satellites to use its surface to calibrate their altitude measurements."

For the final hundred days of his trip, Kroodsmas crossed back and forth over the mountains between Chile and Argentina, in the area known as Patagonia, usually sleeping in his tent near the road and at fire stations when he could. Patagonia is one of the least populated areas on earth. For many, the isolation might be tough, but Kroodsmas marveled in it. He said that traveling by bicycle, you don't see the world through a plate of glass as you do from a plane, train, or car. "On a bike, you can practically touch everything you see. The world is right there, in 3-D."

The Bicycle Diaries, A Review, contd.

The cities of note in this final long leg were Salta, one of the highest cities in Argentina; Santiago, Chile's capitol near the pacific coast; Bariloche, a popular tourist town in the Argentine Andes known for its chocolates; and finally Ushuaia Argentina, well south of the Strait of Magellan that is also popular with tourists as it is considered to be the southern-most city in the world.

David Kroodsma had intended to end his trip once he reached Ushuaia. That's where most who cycle through South America stop. Once there, though, he felt he hadn't gone far enough. A few intrepid travelers continue another twelve miles south and stop at the end of Route 3 where a sign proclaims "the end of the world." Still Kroodsma felt he hadn't gone far enough. Searching a map, he found a slender gray line indicating Route J. The map indicated that Route J was blocked by washed-out bridge. Still, it was worth a try. Kroodsma pedaled on. He never encountered a washed-out bridge and two days and 60 miles later, he reached the end of the road. He was satisfied. He had made it.

David Kroodsma completed his journey, and if you will read *The Bicycle Diaries*, you can complete the same journey with him as guide, ... and without turning a pedal.

Submitted by John Alberts

[This is part one of a three-part review of this most interesting book.]

Men's Ministry

Men's Ministry of Second Union church has been established to encourage and support men to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The ministry works to nurture our faith through fellowship and study, support of the mission of Second Union Church and the church worldwide, develop strong personal relationships, and provide of opportunities for men to be of service within the church, within the community, and within the world.

All men, whether friends of members, who attend Second Union Church are considered part of the Men's Ministry and are encouraged to participate.

The Steering Committee of Men's Ministry is currently developing its fall agenda. Upcoming activities will fall into two main categories: Activities and Projects. Activities are designed to develop and encourage participation in spiritual development and opportunities to participate in or attend social, sports, or other fellowship activities. Projects will recruit men to participate in projects for minor maintenance and upkeep of the Second Union Church property and for projects which will benefit the church's neighborhood and community at large.

We urge anyone who has ideas for activities or projects that will help meet the goals of Men's Ministry to share them with us. Please leave your ideas in the church office or share them with Pastor Bob or John Alberts.



2UC Library

We are grateful to Steve Johnson for his desire to revitalize our church library. If you haven't visited the library, you will find it right next to the water fountain. It is a wonderful collection of books and resources that will encourage and inspire you in your walk with the Lord. You are welcome to borrow books and we will gladly accept donations of Christian books.

The Library needs two bookcases 72"H x 36"W. If you have any that you could donate or if you would like to make a monetary donation, please see Steve Johnson or let the church office know.

Also, we have many people who drop off books at our library; however, we would prefer in the future to receive a list of the books you would like to donate, and Steve will contact you to arrange to receive the ones that we can accept! If you have non-Christian themed books you'd like to donate, please visit our next-door neighbor, the San Juan Community Library or see Connie Estades, its Executive Director.

Second Union Church



Our heartfelt thanks go out to Union Church for preparing a wonderful picnic for our two churches as a part of their 100th anniversary celebration. We enjoyed delicious food and a spectacular view, as we fellowshiped with the members of Union Church. We shared our stories, sang, played games, swam and gave thanks for the way God has worked in the lives of our two congregations. Pastor Bob and Pastor Mark went 'head to head' in a game of egg roulette! Thanks to the Hitts for hosting us - Marilyn Hitt was such a gracious hostess, she truly blessed us. Thanks to Chris and Mike Strong for all of their assistance! Happy 100th UC!

