

We Will Win

When I was a kid growing up in Warren, Ohio (back in the 60s), high school football was one of the most dominating forces in my world. In fact, if you watched the amazing TV series, Friday Nite Lights, just change the location from Texas to Ohio, and you will have a sense of how all-important football was in my hometown.

But to make things even more interesting, there was an added factor of class conflict in my small world. When I was in elementary school our town was divided in two as we went from a one high school town to a two high school town. The original high school was on the east side of town, which was the wealthier side of town. But the new high school was on the west side of town. Guess where I lived? The west side! And thus, the east side of town lorded it over us, looked down on us, and called us "river rats" since we were on the wrong side of the Mahoning River. So, our rivalry was not merely athletic in nature, but sociological as well.

But to make matters even more interesting, our west side high school was a start-up high school, thus, the members of the varsity football team were almost all freshmen, as upperclassmen were grandfathered in and thus had the option to finish their careers on the east side of town. All but two opted to do that. Hence, during the first three years of our existence, we were not even in the same league as our cross-town rival. And I mean that literally as we played dinky, nondescript teams from little farm towns. So, our snobbish rivals to the east had even more reason to look down their collective noses at us. But here's the kicker: the starting quarterback for our high school football team for the first four years of its existence was my older brother. And starting out slowly, his freshman class grew up physically each year, and even more importantly, grew together as a team. Hence, by the time my brother was a senior, we were playing the top-tier teams of Ohio, including our rival to the east.

I will never forget the excitement, the stress, and the longing that I had as a kid to see us win that all-important game for so many all-important reasons, both personal, familial, and sociological. Thus, we went into that game as the clear underdog against a seasoned rival with all of the prestige, class, and tradition on its side. I was very hopeful for a win, but not very confident that we could do it.

However, the head coach of our team shocked everyone the night of the game as he had a special jerseys made up for that single, special game with these bold words emblazoned on the front: WE Will Win.



Pastor Bob Zoba

**APRIL
2018**

**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

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Rev. Robert Zoba
Pastor

Gustavo Gonzalez
Youth Pastor

That was an act of either extreme motivational genius or presumptuous stupidity, depending on the outcome of the game. But, in the end, it was the former rather than the latter as I still remember the score of the game. It was 14-6. And who won? We did. We really did win! And that was probably one of the most influential developments in my early life.

But I share this with you for a reason: as we celebrate Easter and the miracle of Christ’s resurrection we are not only assured that all of our past sins have now been forgiven on the cross, but we have the assurance when it comes to fighting against the final foe of life, i.e. death itself, then, we need to assured that the slogan on that football jersey is also the certain hope of our future: we will win over sin and death and we will win decisively. In fact, we will never again have to fear death or sin or destruction or the sadness of those who have no hope. Thus, since Jesus was resurrected almost 2,000 years ago, we have the assurance that we too will be resurrected when he comes again to claim his beloved.

May you and I rejoice in the hope of this Easter season and may we live our lives with the certainty that not only we will win in the future, but we have, in fact, already won in Christ Jesus Our Lord!

Pastor Bob

Second Union Church Council & Staff

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Rev. Robert Zoba

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Brenda Ferer

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Women’s Ministry
Anita Rodriguez

Men’s Ministry
vacant

Pianist
Luis Manuel Tirado

Choir & Worship Leader
Jeff Penn

Youth Pastor
Gustavo Gonzalez

Office Manager
Mabel Varela

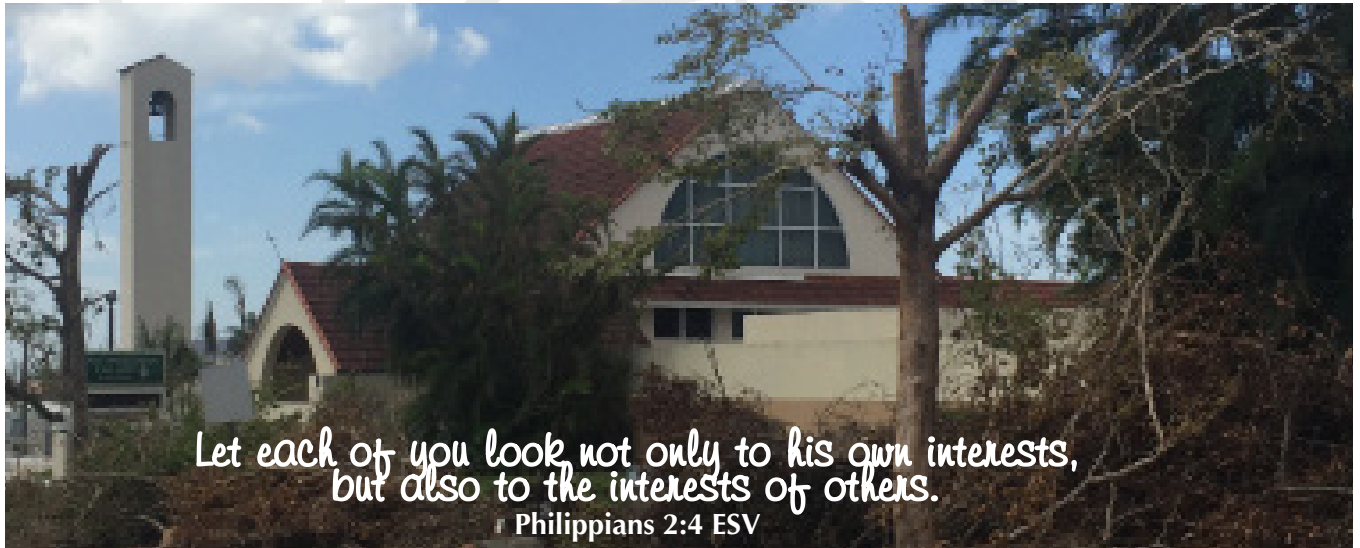
Newsletter Editor
Website Administrator
Christie Curie Zoba

Your newsletter editor took a break from her duties following Hurricane María. Second Union Church, along with everyone else on the island, was 'blown' into new directions. Many of our ongoing ministries were postponed, in many cases, such as the publication of the newsletter, to meet the immediate needs of our island.

I want to recognize and thank those who set aside their own interests and dedicated their time and effort to keep our church open and operating regardless of the obstacles. As we visited the island in the days and weeks immediately following María, we saw many churches with their doors closed - but not Second Union. We continued to hold our worship services and to serve as a gathering point and a sending-off point - both welcoming those who needed a hand and reaching out to those communities who were in greatest need.

We are grateful to Jeff and Tamara Penn for their dedication to ensure that Sunday worship continued - even before Pastor Bob was able to get back on the island. Under Jeff's leadership, the choir continued to meet and practice - the lack of electricity was not about to get in his way. He even managed to pull off a Christmas Cantata! Mabel Varela was so faithful to open our church every day. She welcomed individuals, groups, UPS delivery men and eventually the mail carrier - always with a smile, offering a lukewarm bottle of water and distributing what supplies we could provide. Pastor Bob, of course, was tending to the needs of our congregation - contacting them, doing what he could to meet their needs. Chris Strong, Don Julio and Mike Strong were at the church every day as well providing assistance wherever they were needed.

There were many others who came to help and so many from our diaspora that so generously provided supplies and financial support (see the article on Hurricane recovery) and we are grateful to them, but these individuals really set aside their interests and blessed our church.



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) Experiencing God	2UC Fellowship Hall	Christie Zoba: zoba129@gmail.com 787-717-4001
Tuesday Evening Bible Study (7-9pm) James	Loraine and Luis Alberto Rivera's home in San Francisco	Loraine & Luis 787-370-2448
Wednesday Men's Breakfast (7-8am)	2UC Fellowship Hall	Pastor Bob: PastorBobZoba@gmail.com
Weds. Evening and Thursday Morning Women's Study (8am) -	Cafe del Alma - Paraná Street	Anita Rodriguez: anita00926@aol.com

JB Wilcox reports that he misses the Men's Breakfast NCAA bracket race. So far, Joe Ramos, Mike Strong, and Dennis Gonzalez are neck and neck, but if Villanova wins it all, John Fisher will be catapulted to the top!!! Our thanks to newbie, Justin Mohler, who has crunched all the numbers and kept us abreast of the scores.

Speaking of the Mohlers, Chelsea is recovering from a broken arm. Get well soon Chelsea!



Time flies by! It has been a year since Madelyn and Xavi relocated to California! Xavi is a full time college student at CSUSB and has become an expert barista at Starbucks. Mom Madelyn is working with the legal team at California State University as well. Dad Raymond is happy to have his family together. However, Madelyn and Xavi still miss their Second Union Church family very much! Xavi and Madelyn keep volunteering at their new church and Xavi joined the Praise Team, in keeping with the family's musical path! They hope to come to Puerto Rico in the Summer time and visit with us soon!

Victor Moros had a very successful heart procedure the opened up several arteries that were almost 100 blocked. Praise the Lord! Also, Victor is quite the chef as he has his own marinades for BBQ cuisine.

Mabel Varela's son Josh Estremera, and Nina's grandson Mario, led their football team, the Dolphins, to a championship victory. Congrats Josh, Mario, and Kevin aka Jimmy Butler.



The Trivetts, the Mohlers, the Penns and the Zobas had a special Euchre Nite. (Euchre is a card game that's sort of like a dumbed-down version of Bridge that is very popular in the upper midwest.) Justin Mohler and Christie Zoba were the winners. (If anyone would like to join us for the next Euchre Nite, let the Zobas know.)

Rosa Trinidad is back at 2UC after a long absence. She's happy to report that older daughter Ivette is now settled in Toronto, Canada, and younger daughter, Carla, is engaged to be married.



Ramon China is the commissioner of the youth foot ball league.

Risa Tobin has done a great job recruiting ushers to serve on Sundays...including members of her own family.

Brian Tester and Jaime Irizarry will be starring in the upcoming Nicholas Cage movie to be filmed here in PR.

David Roman preached at our recent Good Friday Service. It was great to have David back in the pulpit.

Ari Tester invites all to attend the Cupeyville School musical, Big, at the Inter Metro Theater on April 13 & 14th.

New bride Nicole Stowell was recently here at church with her beloved husband Francisco. They were married in February at the swanky Vanderbilt Hotel and Pastor Bob presided and, we have to believe, papa Bill Stowell smiled from heaven.



Dely Seda has been hard at work with Samaritans Purse helping to rebuild damaged churches.

Humbelina Rodriguez's hubbie, Javier, is a life-long friend of singer Tommy Torres and they were able to get back stage passes for themselves and Pastor Bob & Christie at his recent concert. What a blast!



Famous PR writer and former 2UCer, Kathryn Robinson, is traveling in Chile to do research for her next novel.

Speaking of writing, Anita Rodriguez penned the script for our recent Maundy Thursday Service.

Edwin & Conchi Perez recently treated their top employees to a trip to Punta Cana, DR.

Jeff & Tamara Penn spent much of Spring Break putting a new deck on their cabin in northern Georgia.

Hector Pages visited PR recently. He has a great new job in FL and he and Susan are doing great!

Becky O'Meara is ecstatic that her husband Christopher will be reassigned from the Middle East to south Florida. Congrats Christopher! We hope and pray that this will bring you back to PR frequently.

Our good brother and long-time member, Joe Calcolli passed away on Palm Sunday. Joe was one of the true characters of 2UC and he will be greatly missed.

Lt. Col. Eli & Serena Lozana will be relocating to the great state of Alabama in May. It's so sad to see them go as they have been a huge blessing to 2UC!!!

We will also miss Sherry Davis and sons Zyan & Nigel. Pastor Bob will especially miss his favorite "amener" mother Mary. They will be going back to Eli Lilly headquarters in Indianapolis. So sad.



Rob Grosek, Humbelina Rodriguez, Chris Strong Dennis Gonzalez, and the Zobas are a part of a joint committee with Union Church to devise a way to provide roofs for those who lost them during Hurricane Maria.

Dennis & Linda Glenn are doing well up in the Naples, Florida area as Dennis has rejoined his tennis team and is very involved in outreach ministry.

Tom & Patricia Engfer will be taking a whirl-wind trip to Australia and New Zealand.

Alfred Delbrey has been visiting family in Texas.

Raylene de Jesus and the Mohlers joined us as new members recently. Welcome aboard!

John & Evelyn Alberts recently returned from a trip to Spain. Welcome home Alberts!

All of the Ramos sisters (Angela, Adrianna, Joellen, and Jennifer) are now all living in the Orlando area. Poor Elilda and Joe;-) Elilda is happy to share that Alejandro came to visit last week for spring break and Abu and Abi had a great time...



Alejandro and his mom, Jennifer has been living in Orlando already for 4 months... Jennifer is working at the Florida Hospital.



Adrienne and Henry also moved, Adrienne is working already as school teacher...

Mateo Vélez was just awarded the "Arrow of Light", the highest rank in Cub Scouting from CEDIN; Interamericana University Lab School.



Cadiz Rodriguez was inducted into the Alpha Chi Honor Society? This society inducts only 10% of the schools juniors and seniors, and all inductees must be nominated by faculty for not only good grades, but also for outstanding Christian character. Cadiz has also received the Outstanding in Major Award!



The McMurrays send greetings from California. "We are trying to adjust to a new life in a retirement residence. Library is an easy walk from our apt.—George and Joan give ESL CLASSES to newly-arrived Japanese/Chinese /Korean immigrants once a week. And Joan the "would-be" scholar has a weekly "Shakespeare with Joan" at the residence. The hearts still long for you folks at home but no plans for an immediate return." George and Joan

2UC Family Reunion in Orlando Florida: Cadiz, Maylie, Adriel, Anita & María!Liza



Mercado Haedo is a wonderful mom, Francisco Gabriel Haedo, who was born in PR has a new hair do and we love you all! Omar!

Raquel Robles Seely and son, Martín were in PR for a quick visit! Come back soon!



It was so special to see Doña Lidia, Edwin Perez' mom who was also visiting!



From our Christian Education Coordinator

July 30 to August the 3rd will be VBS. The theme is Shipwrecked by Group. The reason for this is because the school calendar has changed because of the hurricane and many schools end late this year. Also I have to wait for Pastor Bob to come back from his vacations. Volunteers and kids can already sign up with me, at the table I put up at the church.

For Sunday school, well I always need volunteers to sign up. The plan is to have 6 teachers for each group (pk-k, 1-2, 3-4, 5-6). They would serve one month each semester. I almost had all of them before Maria. I was just missing about 3. This is very challenging. I have a teacher training for April 14 at 9:30 am at the church. Our curriculum is Gospel Light and it is great. I would like to ask the parents to go get their kids every Sunday at the class room at the end of the service so that the teachers would know them better.

Sasha Seda

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR TEACHERS

One

Understand that teaching children is a holy calling of eternal value; pray for each child and ask for loving wisdom as you prepare. (Being prepared says you care.)

Two

Get down at a child's eye level; show love and welcome by your touch, words and smile. Teach respect by showing respect. (Your actions will teach far more than your words.)

Three

Make suggestions more often than you give commands; phrase directions positively. (A child must know what he or she can do in place of what he or she cannot do.)

Four

Be a teacher of great vision: See the most active, the most difficult or the most withdrawn child not as a problem, but as a person to be loved into God's family. (Remember and repeat often that God loves and has good plans for each one.)

Five

Give acceptable choices and set reasonable limits; stick to them and keep your word when you make a promise. (Limits foster a child's sense of security.)

Six

Realize that your interaction is always needed, even when children are absorbed in an activity. (Stay nearby to guide conversation: listen, show love and ask open-ended questions to help children understand and apply Bible truths.)

Seven

Be quick to see, describe and thank a child for right actions. (Describing a child's actions helps the child put meaning to concepts like fairness and kindness.)

Eight

Remember that children learn by doing, and provide active ways to learn. (Have several activities ready when the first child arrives, so children may choose.)

Nine

Know what is typical behavior for children and guide the child toward desirable behavior. (Children are not always able to see how their actions affect others.)

Ten

Remember how easily children absorb our attitude and how watchful they are of our actions and reactions. (Our attitudes and actions will either affirm or deny the truth of our words!)



Long ago, back in the summer of 2017, long before hurricanes Irma and Maria were even on the horizon, I met with Pastors Brenda Taylor and Lynette Johnson to discuss a retreat for the women's ministry team to be held in February 2018. In one of our brain storming sessions this idea of allowing the Kingdom of God to invade the world through us popped into our discussions. This is how the Holy Spirit catches my attention. Well, at least one of the ways. But this was it. This was the topic we would center on teaching, reflecting, and encouraging around. God's Kingdom Coming to the world for us, through us to others. We meet and planned and wrote.



And Maria came and everything was shelved until an undetermined time. The immediate need was for action, not for retreating. I admit that this was time of deep discouragement for me. I'd been questioning my role at church. I asked God if it was time for me to step aside. But after the New Year members of the team told me we need to gather the women of the church to offer them hope and encouragement. I asked God if this was His answer. I slowly crept back into leadership. Uncertain of my own abilities but unshaken in the might and power of my God to use me. So we went back to the drawing board, so to speak, Brenda, Lynette and I. Could we, I asked them, open up this topic to be less specific for the team and more for anyone? Yes, they replied, enthusiastically. With a quaking heart I suggested March 2nd and 3rd and those dates were set aside. Opposition came almost immediately. Determined not to be discouraged, we laid out our plans before God asking for Him to give us vision for His leading, each step of the way we continued to pray for the Holy Spirit to lead us in His direction, to open our eyes to the schemes of the enemy. The team sprang into action to prepare for this time of retreat, we prayed for the women coming, for each other, that we would all grow in knowledge and wisdom of God, that we would remain steadfast in our determination to serve our King.



This time of intense prayer for this retreat safe-guarded our hearts, but the attacks intensified. I remembered something Priscilla Shirer and Christine Caine both mentioned [in teaching videos from bible study] that when we are doing the work of our Father the enemy becomes relentless in his attacks. I was suddenly filled with a fierce joy I had not experienced in a very long time. We asked for His anointing to fall on us afresh. And He did it! That Friday evening I saw it on both Brenda and Lynette. I heard it in the pray offered up by prayer warrior Celestine Braxton as she rebuked the enemy, telling him he had no power here, only the power of Jesus would reign in this place. I witnessed it in the team's prayer circle prior to the start of the retreat. I saw their faith grow visibly stronger as they prayed over each other. I felt it personally when Loraine Colon prayed over us as speakers and teachers.



Long long ago we as a team decided that if we held events it was vital that Jesus be present in all we did. And He was there at the retreat. The Holy Spirit was in the house! Such mighty praise, such good teaching, such unity in the Spirit. Such a testimony to God's great mercy and goodness. May His Kingdom come!



Membership Committee

It is with a grateful heart that the Membership Committee meets and serves the Lord. At our last meeting we gathered, prayed and planned activities that would encourage all the members of Second Union Church to continue to enjoy fellowship as well as to serve the Lord. One of our members Joe Calcoli has gone to be forever with the Lord. We wish him farewell "until the day breaks and the shadows flee away" (Song of Songs 4:6)

In Christ,

Nina, Membership Chairperson

A Reflection: Psalm 146

Our hope is in our God and Lord.

The word hope in Spanish is "esperanza". What a powerful word: we all hope that we do our best, we hope we have a good marriage, we hope that we raise our children in the right way. And our hope is in our God and Lord, because the material things are not important in the long run.

I thought that a good college education was important, that where you lived was important, that having money was important . . . and doing the right things – all of this was very important. They are in a certain way but if I didn't have the Lord our God in my life nothing would matter; because in the end I will be judged not for the material things I have, but for the things I have done. If I have been a good Christian, if I have helped my Christian friends, if I hope in our God and Lord - that is more important to me.

There is happiness for those whose hope is in the Lord and our hope leads us to praise our Lord constantly. So my hope is that the Lord our God help me to continue praising Him. And for Him to keep hearing my prayers for my children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and all in need of prayer. But I will do it for my heart and soul.

So praise the Lord O my soul while I live I will praise the Lord I will praise him all I have my being.

Yolanda Cruz, November 20, 2016

Youth Retreat



Maundy Thursday Service



Maundy Thursday service is rather a unique tradition at Second Union. It is severe in regards to the way 2UC does potluck. No meat in the soups. No juice or sodas, only water. And the biggest no-no...no desserts, only bread without butter! If you have ever been to potluck at the church you know how austere that truly is. Music, drama, hand washing and communion round out the evening.



So rewind about 27 years ago, (the then pastor) Pastor Bill Hill-Alto handed me a script and asked me if I could do something with it, and by the way recruit and rehearse the cast to have it ready for Maundy Thursday. It was an unwieldy piece with 12 monologues of disciples decrying the unlikeliness of any of them betraying Jesus. It had good bones. I began to trim away and rewrite portions and we put it on. I feel the real miracle was finding 12 willing men to learn those monologues! That was my first experience with Maundy Thursday 2UC style.



Over the years I have explored many different ways to tell of what happened on that last night when Jesus was arrested. One play centered around the women Luke mentions in chapter 8 of his gospel, those women who formed the support system of the ministry. Another play tells the story from the point of view from high priest servant who lost his ear to Peter's quick sword work. Each script developed by God's creative outpouring in me. Each one an affirmation of His great love for us and how humanity needs a Savior.



Fast forward to 2018 and to the most recent Maundy Thursday service. The theme of the evening was love. The dramatic reading, What Can I Tell You About Him?, combining scripture, choral reading and four monologues to point the message of God's great love for us. Jared Adams and Gustavo Gonzalez read for the two disciples, Brenda Ferrer read for the woman, and Dylan Gonzalez read for the Royal Official's son. The rest of cast included Sasha Seda, Rosa Trinidad, and Ramon Chinaea.



A heart felt thanks to Pastor Bob and the 2UC Players cast for sharing the love of Jesus with us all.



It's been six months since our last newsletter - six months post-María, and we can all agree that this hurricane will be a significant timeline event for those of us in P.R. Trying to write an article to sum up all that has happened in the last six months is challenging to put it lightly.

At Second Union we were blessed in many ways. Our building was relatively unscathed – the beautiful stained glass that we feared could be shattered is still intact. Though we have lost trees, roof shingles, suffered flooding in the office area, and have new leaks to worry about, we are grateful to God and to the architects and engineers who built our house to withstand a storm the size of this one. Unfortunately, there were so many who were not so fortunate. We could fill hundreds of pages with pictures showing the devastation left by the hurricane that we have encountered on our visits, but perhaps we can bring God glory by showing the positive side of this disaster - just some of the people who truly stepped out of their comfort zone to serve this island and those who suffered so much. This is what the kingdom of God is all about.



Second Union has such a wonderful extended family - a diaspora that when they moved away from Puerto Rico, they left a part of their heart behind. The outpouring of support from friends and family of Second Union who are no longer living in Puerto Rico has been astonishing and heartwarming. Immediately following the hurricane, Second Union began receiving supplies from a wish list that former member, Karan Castell's daughter, Shannon Gurnari, posted on Amazon. We were so excited upon receiving the first shipment – three or four boxes filled with batteries, flashlights, lanterns, etc. We opened those boxes like kids on Christmas morning opening presents. The three or four boxes per day quickly turned into 20-30 boxes a day! We got to know the UPS man very well as he often had to make two trips in one day to deliver all that we had received. The gratitude we felt and still feel to those who went online and so generously sent supplies to our island is inexpressible. Christie's step-daughter, Yvette, kindly responded with a thank you email for all the packages we received.



What were we to do with this outpouring of aid? Trusting God, we initially formed small groups and fearlessly ventured into some of the areas that were the hardest hit in an attempt to get these supplies into the hands of those who needed them most. There were no traffic lights, interminable gas lines, roads that were still blocked by trees, washed out bridges. We visited a wind ravaged mountainous community in Adjuntas where families lost their entire homes and others lost their roofs and all the contents therein. Irma Torres boldly drove a carload of people and supplies and followed Pastor Bob to reach out to these people. We visited our brother, Carlos Sepulveda at his home in Aguas Buenas - and then God directed us to a community leader who took us around to the families that were the hardest hit. We distributed to these who had lost so much in the Levittown, Via Calma and ToaVille neighborhoods of Toa Baja which had 7 feet of flooding. All of their belongings were out on the sidewalks to be disposed of. We went up to the mountains of Naranjito, Orocovis, Coamo and Canovanas. We went to Yabucoa with Edda Sustache and the pastor of her mother's church to visit with elderly who were unable to get out to get supplies. We visited Caimito and Cupey, Caguas and Comerio and we delivered water, air mattresses, Samaritan's Purse tarps and everything from mosquito spray to mosquito nets to

portable stoves. We put our faith in the Lord and allowed Him to lead us to the people in need.

Through the website we began receiving monetary donations. Without asking for a penny, we received close to \$150,000 in financial donations and probably at least as much in contributions of much needed supplies. An ad-hoc committee was formed by the church council with the mission of distributing these funds. It was decided that we would identify individuals and families who had suffered significant losses and provide them with \$1,000 of in-kind help. Tom Engfer gave us wise advice to create a network of community leaders, pastors, social workers and agencies to work as a screening system for providing us with people who lost just about everything. Thanks to the committee: Loraine Rivera, Lizzette Kelly, Julio



Rivera, Irma Torres, Stan Pinkerton John & Evelyn Alberts and Christie Zoba who began visiting these families, praying with them and offering them a glimmer of hope knowing that some of what they lost would be replaced. On a typical visit, we would meet with the families or individuals, inspect their homes (or what remained of them), listen to their stories, cry with them, pray with them and then we would purchase the items that they felt they needed most. That way we were able to ensure that this money that was so generously provided would get into the hands of those who needed it the most. It is a rewarding but sometimes tiring and emotionally draining process



as we travel wherever we need to be. So far we have visited 50 of the 78 municipalities. We have been so blessed and we thank God for the opportunity to be His instruments and we are so very grateful for those who have contributed. We have purchased washers, dryers, building supplies, refrigerators, stoves, bedroom sets, sofas, roof sealant, many, many, many mattresses and so much more.

We are so grateful to groups in the States who held fundraisers or drives to collect relief supplies. Laurie and Matt Foster organized an adult Prom (Puerto Rico Overcoming Maria) and raised over \$11,000.00. Pastor Bob's niece, Caroline Zoba hosted a pampers, baby wipes and children's underwear drive which resulted in 20 boxes of these much needed items. Rashel Krankovich, our former beloved Youth Pastor, held a relief supply drive with her co-workers at Columbus Children's Hospital and shipped (thanks to Wendco Inc) countless number of boxes containing just about everything except the kitchen sink! Teresa Truesdale organized a sheet and towel drive and Fed-exed box after box - which we promptly delivered to nursing homes who had been without water or electricity and were struggling to keep sheets clean. Friends of Carlos Rivera; the Emanuel Ringers and Katonah Celebration Ringers, bell choirs in the northeast had a drive to raise money towards sheets, towels and other supplies - for two months the boxes kept coming! There are lots of other individuals who contacted us to help in some way. We are grateful to J.B. and Audrey Wilcox, Joy & Tom Mistele, Laurie & David Yost, Jane Ferger, Gus & Rhonda Scaiano, Jan & Dalia Gonzalez, Claude and Jane Burgess, and so many more generous souls.

We were also blessed to have visitors who have come to the island wanting to reach out first-hand and be a part of our relief efforts: Circe Torruella and her colleagues from D.C., Claire Grosek, Mabel and Allen Paige, John Weiss, Thayer and family, Scott McMillan from Toronto who brought down and helped us deliver 50 water filters. Madeline and Sean who just today stopped by the church with a donation of over \$1,000 in much-needed items and Home Depot gift certificates.



It is amazing to see how God has worked through all of you. We are blessed - we are humbled - we are grateful for all of you. With your generosity, so many people's lives in Puerto Rico have been touched. You have provided hope and encouragement and you have demonstrated the love of Jesus to so many. We will never forget all that you have done and we pray that God blesses you abundantly.

A special thank you to Christopher Strong for always being available to help, to Mabel Varela for her constancy, support, and encouragement, to Pastor Bob, to everyone on the Hurricane Recovery Committee - and especially to Loraine Colón - she simply says 'yes' whenever something is needed - and she serves with joy. What a blessing. On the next few pages, you'll see the faces of all who have been a part of our efforts. Hopefully no one is left out - we couldn't do it without you. We can't possibly begin to thank everyone, but we will try!

On the pages that follow we have put together a monthly photo journal - it doesn't do justice to all the hugs, tears, smiles, and encouragement that we have experienced, but it's a start! To God be the glory.

Puerto Rico se levanta!

Second Union Church



One of our first trips - Toa Alta. A 15 minute trip took us hours as bridges were washed out and roads were closed.



As packages began arriving, the Fellowship Hall served as a warehouse and distribution center for the items that were on the 2UC Amazon wish list - many showed up to help organize: Victor Moros, Yoly Cruz, Dennis & Linda Glenn, Chris Strong, Josh Estremera, Mike Strong, Muriel Francis, Dely Seda, and of course, Pastor Bob and Mabel!

Our first trip to Toa Baja - Levittown. We delivered cell phone chargers, lanterns, etc to some very grateful people who lost everything due to flooding.



Dely Seda delivering a check in Toa Baja.



Barranquitas and Coamo: Javier Rodriguez, Josh Estremera and Patricia Nuñez del Prado.



The 2UC Eli Lilly crew delivering bottled water in the Caguas area.



Adjuntas: Pastor Bob, Julio, Irma Tores, Chris Strong, Manny Fernandez, Thelma Rivera



Chris Strong in Toa Baja.



Lillian led a group from 2UC up to the Cañaboncito area in the hillsides in Caguas.



Lisa, the Housekeeping Manager at the Doubletree Hotel provided sheets and towels!



Providing food and water to a home for the elderly in Caguas.



Thanks to Gustavo, we were blessed to receive and distribute nearly 1,000 tarps to communities in Guaynabo and Cupey. Samaritan's Purse provided the tarps at no cost - they are truly an amazing orga-



Pastor Bob, Risa Tobin, Christie, John Alberts and Gustavo with community leaders.



Zenni Adams in San Sebastian



Carolina & Canovanas: Ramón Chinae, Mabel Varela & Achilles



John Alberts and Mike Lallave removing flood-damaged carpet from the 2UC office.



Toa Alta: Loraine Colón, Muriel Francis, Carol Fisher & PB



Canovanas: Muriel Francis, Pastor Bob, Loraine Colón, Marcy Shub, Carlos Gonzalez



Circe Torruellas and friends helped fold and organize sheet and donated clothing! They came all the way from D.C.!



PB in Aguas Buenas

Yabucoa: Edda Sustache and her mother's home church, Tom Engfer



Second Union Church



Corozal: The Pages, Pastor Nelly and Loraine Colón



Canovanas: Loraine Colón, Scott McMillan



Naranjito: Scott McMillan, Marie Cavanagh, Molly Wilmarth, Danitria Carruth, (from Steve & Loyda Spivak's church in Virginia)



Brenda & the Pages



Coamo: Loraine Colón



Banco de Alimento: Claire Grosek



Naranjito: Brenda Ferrer, Allen & Mable Page



Ponce: Celestine Braxton, Loraine Colón



Juncos: Brenda Ferrer



Toa Baja: Melba Davis



Maunabo: Sor Beatriz, Carlos Rivera, David Yost



Toa Baja: Laurie Yost



Coamo: Loraine Colón



Caguas: Loraine Colón, Livia Roman



Yabucoa: Livia Roman, Loraine Colón,



Caguas: Melba Davis & María Nieves



Yabucoa: Livia Roman, Loraine Colón,



Juncos: Special Sunday delivery!



Caguas: John Weiss and family from Wisconsin



Yabucoa: Livia Román, Loraine Colón, Christie Zoba



Guaynabo, Barrio Mamey: PB and students from Brown University InterVarsity



Yabucoa: Loraine Colón, Dely Seda, Livia Román



Caguas: It was a long hike up, but the view was worth every step



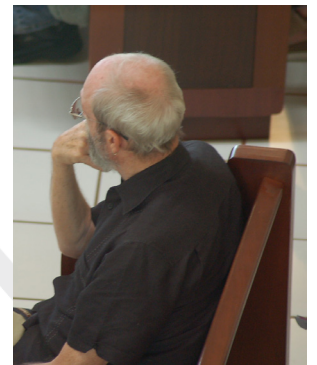
to be continued . . .



Our brother in Christ and faithful church member, Joe Calcolli passed away on Palm Sunday due to kidney failure.

Joe was a constant force and presence in our church. He served faithfully on Council, he attended regularly, he was a member of our Thursday evening prayer group and he was a part of the small group at Loraine and Luis Alberto's home. He impacted us all, and we will miss him; but we rejoice knowing he is in the arms of Jesus. Our prayers are with his daughter, Marion and his son, Joey.

A memorial service will be held for Joe during the first week of April.



Christmas Cantata

Jeff Penn demonstrated great dedication and perseverance. In the midst of a very challenging season, he managed to present a wonderful Christmas Cantata. Though we had no electricity at church in the weeks



leading up to the scheduled performance, Jeff put his faith in the Lord and moved full steam ahead with practices from October through December. He directed the choir and played the organ during the concert. We are grateful to him for his leadership and commitment. We are also thankful to Luis Manuel Tirado for his presence and talent, to Carlos Rivera and to the Baldwin School percussionists.

