



It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!

At a recent WBMJ roundtable discussion, Pastor Cory asked us what does Christmas mean to us personally. Among other things, such as family time, the wonder of the miracle of the Incarnation, and the marathon effort of getting through the obligations of the season, I mentioned the specialness of celebrating Christmas on an island that has the bona fide claim to the longest Christmas season in the world. At Second Union, the Christmas Bazaar, the annual Cantata, and the magic of the Christmas Eve season are major markers of this most wonderful season. But in addition to all of that, are the uniquely Puerto Rican traditions of pastilles, lechon, arroz con gandules, tembleque, coquito, and parranda singing. Some of the most joyous parties I have ever attended have been Christmas parties here in PR where all of those wonderful traditions come together under one roof. And, of course, the season does not end with Christmas Day, but continues through the 12 days of Christmas to Epiphany, aka Tree Kings Day, and on to the 14th of January with the Octavitas! Wow! Hey, if you are going to do Christmas, you might as well do it right. And if you want to do it right, do it here in Puerto Rico.



Pastor Bob Zoba

So too, after the way Maria put such a damper on our Christmas joy last year, I believe we are all the more joyous and celebratory this year as we have all come so far so fast.

Therefore, my word of encouragement to you all this year is to truly enter into the Christmas spirit, not by partying like this is 1999, but by rejoicing as the angels of old did by singing, praising, worshiping, and exalting the Lord in the highest. So too, I encourage you to enter into the true spirit of this season by giving as God gave to us, i.e. by giving to those who are least able to give back to us. Indeed, when we do that, I believe we will all recapture the magic of Christmas and the power of this season as we may remember it when we were much younger and more innocent.

In this most wonderful season I am most grateful for a wonderful wife who loves me more than I deserve, and a church family that blesses me, encourages me, and reminds me what a privilege it is to serve the King of Kings, the Prince of Peace, and the Mighty God who came to us in human flesh so many years ago.

Merry Christmas to all!

Pastor Bob

second thoughts

DECEMBER 2018

Sunday Services
10:00 a.m.

Adult Sunday School
9:00am

Sunday School
PK-12
10:30am

Choir Practice
Thursdays 7:17 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

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Gustavo Gonzalez
Youth Pastor

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Treasurer
Stan Pinkerton

Secretary
Brenda Ferrer

Worship
Risa Tobin

Outreach
Irma Torres

Property
Javier Rodriguez

Christian Education
Wanda Billoch

Staff-Congregation Relations & Nominating
Jose Guevara

Membership
Nilda Román

Fellowship
Julio Rivera

Women's Ministry
Anita Rodriguez

Men's Ministry
John Alberts

Pianist
Luis Manuel Tirado

Choir & Worship Leader
Jeff Penn

Youth Pastor
Gustavo Gonzalez

Office Manager
Mabel Varela

**Newsletter Editor
Website Administrator**

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) The Seven Signs of Jesus - Lucado	2UC Fellowship Hall	Christie Zoba: zoba129@gmail.com 787-717-4001
Tuesday Evening Bible Study (7-9pm)	Lorraine and Luis Alberto Rivera's home in San Francisco	Lorraine & Luis 787-370-2448
Wednesday Men's Breakfast (7-8am) Christianity and World Religions	2UC Fellowship Hall	Pastor Bob: PastorBobZoba@gmail.com
Thursday Night Prayer Service (6-7pm)	2UC Conference Room	Anita Rodriguez: anita00926@aol.com



For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:11

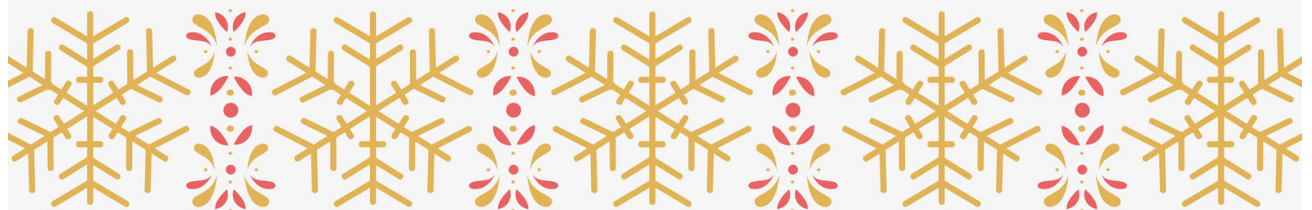


SECOND UNION CHURCH OF SAN JUAN

CHRISTMAS CANTATA

December 16, 2018

10:00 AM



Second Union Church

David & Laurie Yost are enjoying their stay in New Zealand as David is serving the Maori populations. They both retired this year and are now serving the Lord. David as a doctor and Laurie is volunteering in a Maori school. As they did here in PR, they are taking full advantage of their adopted country by visiting, exploring, and befriending the locals. You can follow their adventures by visiting their blog which is very interesting. <http://dlyostdownunder.blogspot.com/>



Yadira de Jesus has been back to 2UC not only as a worship leader but as a congregant. She has over 30 private piano students, which is keeping her busy during the week. She is a singer-songwriter who recently composed a song for the

Puerto Rican Campaign Against Abuse. You will see some very familiar faces!! Here's the youtube link: https://youtu.be/Fk9iM0_UFw

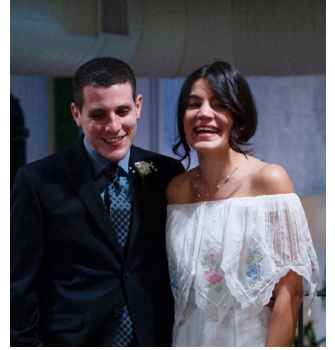
Stephan and Suzanne Termaat recently took a trip to Jimmy Buffet land in Key West, FL. And Sophie Termaat won several medals at a recent swim meet - 1 bronze, 5 silvers, 1 gold!! Suzanne is very active working with an organization on the island that rescues dogs, places them in foster care and then ships them to families in the States. Contact Suzanne if you would like to foster puppies or support this organization.



It was great to have the Woodruffs back after John's long sojourn in Vermont.

Mike Strong looks forward to the visit of his dear daughter, Crystal this Christmas.

So too, it is great to have Rosa Trinidad back from her trip to the States to attend her daughter Carla's wedding. Carla wore her mom's wedding dress! Congratulations to the mother of the bride!



Omar Montvalo helped take his USTA tennis team to the Nationals this fall. Congrats, Omar!!!

Pedro Seda was our Bazaar chef this year as he is not only a transmission expert but an excellent cook as well.

Jesse Sargent reports that he has become involved in a prison ministry in his adopted city of Albuquerque, New Mexico.



Our missions trip to the Dominican Republic in early January will include Alexandra Ruiz, Carmen Nieves, Raul Diaz, Lizzette Kelly, and Bob & Christie Zoba. We will be travelling to Hato Mayor in the center of the island and working in the nearby communities - primarily small villages in the middle of the sugar cane fields. Pastor Bob will be teaching local pastors and the rest will be involved in a variety of activities including translating for medical teams, construction, planting and other work crews.

Both Livia Roman and Sylvia O'Connor are up in the colder climes of NYC. But they will soon be back to where it is warm and wonderful.

Julio Rivera was visited by his daughter Rita recently as she passed through on a cruise ship.

Next week, Jason Duff and his new wife will be passing through on a cruise ship and hopes to connect with the Zobas during his visit. We are happy to report that Jason was married to Cathleen on Saturday, October 13th in Indianapolis!

Julio Pejim became our impromptu guest of honor at our Christmas bazaar as he just happened to be passing by from somewhere up North! ;-)

Our choir was blessed by the visit of Jeff Penn's family as both Jeff's dad and brother joined our choir the Sunday they were here.

Daryle Parker was also in town briefly to perform a reaffirmation of vows of a couple here in PR.

The Mohler family will be heading off for a family cruise of the Caribbean this Christmas. Just wait until Adlai finds the buffet table;-)

We had a wonderful visit from Eli & Serena Lozano last month as they are progressing with their adoption process. It's always a joy to see these good folks here in or midst.

Mike & Irma LaLlave are back from a quick trip to Florida to see their dear daughter in Miami.

Jose Guzman has also been in Florida for some much needed R&R, but will be back soon.

Christie and Pastor Bob were glad to have Christie's mom, Robbie and J.J. in town for Thanksgiving!



Dennis Gonzalez is the proud grandfather of his fourth grandchild, Marco. Congrats, Dennis!



Brendan & Sarah Frye have recently joined our fellowship. Brendan is with the Coast Guard and Sarah, a Texan, is a voice coach, and thus a welcome addition to our choir.



Bill Franki just celebrated his big 5-0, but doesn't look a day over 40.

It sure has been great to have John Fisher among us. We are happy about that and Carol is very happy!

Edwin Ebube is now a regular starter on his Manhattanville College Basketball team. You can watch him play on the ESPN app. Congrats Edwin!



Marion Calcolli reports that she is doing well with her new job up in Nebraska.

Marisela and Victor will be spending the bulk of their time in the DR. This is sad for us, but wonderful for them as they love it there.

John & Evelyn Alberts entertained one set of grandkids over Thanksgiving and look forward to a second set in February.



Attie & Alta Goosen have been entertaining Alta's mom, who is visiting from South Africa.



Catalina Montalvo, Nailah Gonzalez and Dylan Gonzalez were confirmed! Praise be to God!



Pastor Bob led a very informative and interesting seminar which highlighted the Biblical perspective of Economics and Government.

The Christmas Cantata will be held on Sunday, December 16 during our 10am worship service. Jeff Penn will be directing the choir with Luis Manuel Tirado as the accompanist. Jeff has selected a beautiful selection of Christmas music!

The Atelier del Mosaico will be holding an exposition of mosaic art on Thursday, December 13 at 6:30pm in Santurce at 355 Calle del Parque!

Our Christmas Bazaar was held this year on December 1st and praise be to God it was a great success. Though our final numbers are not in, it appears to have surpassed our sales from the previous Bazaar as well as our expectations!

As the coordinator of the artisans, I can assure you that our artisans were very pleased with their sales, but even more importantly, they had very favorable things to say about the Bazaar in general - the organization, the way they were received, the assistance that was offered. They were so grateful for the coffee and snacks provided thanks to Mabel! That was a very welcoming touch. Many commented to me that there was something special about our Bazaar compared to the others they had participated in. I have to think that was Jesus!

Our team pulled together and presented the face of Christ to the artisans and everyone that walked through the door. From the moment our customers entered, Evelyn Alberts provided them with a warm greeting and a brochure. The decorations were festive and inviting. The kitchen set-up and preparation, which was streamlined this year, thanks to Dely and Janet from DMG Services, operated very smoothly. Sandra prepared delicious bacalaitos outside which was such a blessing. Our artisans did an outstanding job of displaying their products. Luis Alberto and Loraine Rivera led a wonderful parranda throughout the church taking time to enter every classroom which was a blessing to the artisans and our visitors. The violin concert and mini-parranda was fantastic. The Bake Table was laden with yummy treats. New this year was the photo booth! And of course we had a most welcomed visitor from the North Pole! Throughout the entire day, Loraine manned the prayer room and accepted prayer requests from artisans, visitors and 'staff'! Stan, Connie, Lizzette and Raúl provided their expertise with the finances as John Alberts and Julio manned the cashier's stand. We certainly missed Thelma's participation this year, but her memory lived on at the renamed "Thelma's Boutique table.

We are grateful to everyone who participated - in ways great and small. So much work goes into the Bazaar and it's an activity to pull our church family together. Our efforts go to the organizations supported by Women's Ministries.

To God be the glory!!



Christmas Bazaar

December 2018



What I learned at the Christmas Bazaar . . . and what this has to do with Jesus.

I have developed an avid interest in sales during the past several years as my son, J.J., has evolved from excelling at sales to becoming a sales manager for a large corporation. In an effort to encourage him and understand the obstacles he encounters, I have read several books and listened to countless episodes of podcast about the art of selling. (I was in sales as well, so this is something that I find really interesting!)

As I was evaluating the sales of our artisans at the Bazaar several things stood out to me, which when combined with all I have read and listened to, seem to indicate key factors in selling success.

1) Standing up. I realized that those artisans who stood while presenting their products performed significantly better than those who remained seated most of the time. This seems to demonstrate an air of confidence in their products and in themselves. Gladys Gallardo, Isabella Isnardi, and El Atelier del Mosaico: our three top selling artisans spent most of the day on their feet.

2) Being welcoming. Another aspect which I noted was the countenance on the faces of the artisans and their 'welcomingness'. Most of our artisans seemed genuinely happy to be there, but there were a few that just seemed bored. And I get it - it can be boring at times, but those were the artisans who were the least successful.

3) Engaging. I got the impression that the artisans that were cheerful and chatty and maybe not only trying to sell their wares but seemed interested in developing a relationship with the people were the most successful. If you notice, these are really aspects of 'selling' in a typical sense.

4) Preparation and presentation. This may seem like a no-brainer, but guess who were the first to arrive to set up? You got it! Gladys, Isabella and El Atelier del Mosaico.

These aspects lead to creating a positive impression. Did you know that studies have shown that the impression that people form about you has a direct correlation with whether or not they feel you are successful? It's true. (I'll be happy to share the podcast episode with you where they discuss this research!) And though you may not always make the sale, the impression you have impressed upon the customer will most likely be a positive one. Think of it as planting seeds in good soil. "People will forget what you said. They will forget what you did. But they will never forget how you made them feel." Maya Angelou

So if I equate this to sales in general I would recommend to my son that he and his sales team should consider standing during their meetings - at least for a part of the presentation. They should smile frequently and truly try to engage the customer in conversation - and not necessarily about the product being sold, but in a sincere effort to develop a relationship with that person. They need to be prepared and in command and present themselves with confidence and certainty about what they are selling and how it will benefit the customer in an authentic and sincere way.

Now you may be wondering what this has to do with a church newsletter. Well, I believe there is a correlation between selling products at the Bazaar or in a commercial setting and "selling" the good news - the Gospel. Because if you think about it - each one of us is a sales person. We have been given the greatest gift in the world and that is forgiveness of our sins and eternal life through Jesus Christ. And He has commissioned us as His representatives to 'sell' Him. Now you may say that sounds very commercial and perhaps the term 'sharing' the good news is more appropriate. But I disagree. Selling, in my opinion, involves planning and strategy, setting goals, etc., and I believe that is exactly what Jesus expects of us.

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20.

Be prepared, stand up, be sincere, develop a relationship, convey the benefit (eternal life) and let the Holy Spirit do the rest.

On the day I began writing this, my devotional verse for the day was Acts 22:14-15: *"And he said, The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from his mouth; for you will be a witness for him to everyone of what you have seen and heard."*

And do you know what verse follows this one *"And now why do you wait?"* Acts 22:16

Let's get out there and make some sales!!

A message from Brenda Ferrer

Dear Second Union Church Family,

I just want to take this opportunity to send my heartfelt greetings to all of my 2 UC family in this Christmas season. I never thought I'd be putting this in writing since I had every intention of being there in person. But, as the saying goes, "the best laid plans of mice and men often go astray." I've been here in Florida, a couple of hours north of the 79 th municipality, with my granddaughter Mildred and her two children helping her with some medical issues. But God is good all the time and things are beginning to turn around. She had the first of two surgeries and will have the stitches removed on Dec. 7. Hopefully everything will be alright. Please keep her in prayer as she awaits the healing of the first surgery and the scheduling of the second.

Congratulations on a successful Christmas Bazaar! I received some very, very glowing reports of how wonderful and well-organized everything was. I explained that's how we do things at 2UC! How I missed being there even though Pastor Bob said I could take a fast plane and still make it.

May the Christ of Christmas be with each and everyone of you throughout this season and the coming year, 2019.

Peace and joy,

Brenda J. Ferrer

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Our traditional Candlelight Service will be held on Monday, **December 24th at 7pm.** This is a beautiful time for our church family to come together on Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of our Savior and give thanks to God for His many blessings. After the service, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for Christmas cookies and hot chocolate! If you are a baker, please contribute a plate of cookies!



*And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.*

ISAIAH 9:6



UPR Carolina Choir Christmas Concert

On December 6, Carlos Rivera directed a beautiful concert of the University of Puerto Rico Carolina choir at the historic Parroquia San Jorge in Santurce. Our very own Luis Manuel Tirado was the accompanist. They performed to a packed house. Congratulations to Carlos and Luis Manuel for their leadership and devotion!



Backpack Program

We had some very happy Backpack students thanks to a particularly generous donation from Costco this week, we were able to provide each family with a cheesecake, muffins and bread!

As Christmas approaches, we are planning an afternoon activity for all of the students and their families. Our church family is welcome to attend.

If you signed up to be a prayer pal, we encourage you to provide your student with a card. If you would like to give them a present, we will make sure to pass it along to them - but this is not a requirement! Please remember to pray regularly for your prayer pal - this is the most important part of the Backpack Program.



Atelier del Mosaico Exhibition

On Thursday, December 13 at 6:30 pm, the doors of the Atelier del Mosaico will be opened for a holiday exhibition. Join Luis Alberto Rivera, the founder and direction of the Atelier for some holiday cheer and the chance to see some beautiful mosaic works of art. The Atelier is located on Calle del Parque just behind the Ciudadela. It is sure to be a wonderful event!