



Can You Be Happy and Consistent?

Did you hear about the guy who is suing his parents for bringing him into this world? He says he never asked to be born and they imposed it on him, therefore, he wants to take them to court.

Rosie McCall of IFLScience tells us that this man's name is Raphael Samuel. "He is a businessman from Mumbai, India, who bases the dispute on the belief that it is immoral for a couple to bring a sentient being into the world without asking their permission to do so. His argument stems from a philosophical movement called 'anti-natalism', an outlook that reasons any new human life will inevitably involve pain and suffering, while pleasure (although good) is irrelevant to those who do not, or have not existed in the first place. An anti-natalist ultimately concludes it would have been better not to have been born in the first place."



Pastor Bob Zoba

This is the brave new world we live in now that we have thrown out the authority of God's Word and are seeking to live by reason and so-called scientific truth alone. And this was the topic of discussion of our recent men's breakfast where we asked the question if atheists can lead happy and fulfilling lives and still be consistent in what they believe? The conclusion was a resounding "no".

Of course, we are not saying that non-believers cannot be decent people who do good things for others. They can, and they do. Nor do we mean to say that all atheists are sadistic, kill joys who have no happiness or delight in life. Some do. But we are saying that they cannot do that and be consistent with the implications of their philosophical beliefs.

For example, one militant atheist who is consistent is the famous, naturalistic evolutionist, Richard Dawkins. He says, of our existence, that it has "no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing, but pointless indifference."

Another "consistent" atheist was Bertrand Russell. He once asserted that we "must build our lives on the foundation of despair". Wow! Talk about a bumner view of reality?

But at least he was consistent. So, yes, you can be happy and be an atheist, as long as you practice a mental disconnect and don't pretend to be consistent with what you truly believe about reality.

But at least the man who is suing his parents is consistent in his belief for he too assumes that "There's no point to humanity...[since] so many people are suffering." In fact, he asserts that "if humanity [goes] extinct, earth and animals

**FEBRUARY
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

Second Union Church

2109 Calle Mileto
Guaynabo, PR 00969

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

Rev. Robert Zoba
Pastor

Gustavo Gonzalez
Youth Pastor

would be happier. They'll certainly be better off. Also no human will then suffer. Human existence is totally pointless."

So there you go. Consistent, but not so happy.

Of course, Mr. Samuel does not believe he will actually win his case in court, but his whole purpose in suing his parents is to promote a growing philosophical movement known as anti-natalism, or the anti-birth movement. One of the promoters of this new movement is philosopher David Benatar. He states: "One of the implications of my argument is that a life filled with good and containing only the most minute quantity of bad – a life of utter bliss adulterated only by the pain of a single pin-prick – is worse than no life at all." Therefore, we would all be better off if we had never been born.

In response, I am reminded of what CS Lewis once said, namely, we can't argue that non-existence is better than existence, because we don't know what non-existence is really like.

But beyond the philosophical conundrums of their position, what about the Christian understanding of suffering as being something that God can use to deepen our understanding of others and deepen our faith in him. Indeed, in Christianity, the worst example of suffering, namely the crucifixion and execution of the only truly innocent man in human history, was used by God and transformed by God into the greatest act of love and blessing in the history of the universe. And because of our faith in God, we can find happiness, and even joy, in the face of life's worst setbacks and most horrific sufferings and reversals. Thus, we can be both happy and consistent in our beliefs. Unfortunately, those who have rejected God cannot.

Thus, that gives us a superior advantage in living life and triumphing over adversity. But it also blesses us with the responsibility to share the good news which is the basis of our hope, our joy, and our irrepressible happiness in this life, and that is that Christ's sufferings bring life and life eternal.

Thus, it is my hope that we might bear that responsibility and share that good news with all that we meet so that they might be both happy and consistent in what they know and believe.

Pastor Bob

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)	Loraine and Luis Alberto Rivera's home in San Francisco	Loraine & 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



Second Union Church Council & Staff

Pastor

Rev. Robert Zoba

President

Brian Tester

Vice President & Forward Planning

Humbelina Treviño

Treasurer

Stan Pinkerton

Secretary

Justin Mohler

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

Christie Curie Zoba

David and Laurie Yost are enjoying their six-month adventure in New Zealand. David is working with the Maori Indians and in their spare time, they have ventured all over. Follow their blog at <https://dlyostdownunder.blogspot.com/>



Yadira de Jesus has her own YouTube channel. (You can subscribe at www.youtube.com/user/yadiradejesusmusic)

Victor & Marisela were back to church after being in the Dominican Republic.

Risa Tobin recently survived a bout with appendicitis, she won the fight! Praise the Lord!

Ari Tester recently visited dear daughter **Nicole** in frigid Chicago, IL.

Gisele Stowell is helping out with our tutoring program.

Humbelina & Javier Rodriguez win the award for the most adventurous travelers. They are trekking across and kayaking around glaciers in Patagonia.



Anita & Joaquin Rodriguez were blessed to have son JD back in PR recently.

Kathryn Robinson may be back to visit PR in March. She is an accomplished author and former radio personality on WOSO.

Maria Isabel Rivera continues to be an angel to so many in our congregations with eye and health concerns.

Pastor Bob and **Pastor Joe Ramos** had a pulpit swap in January which was well received by both congregations.

Jaime Irizarry is skiing up in NJ this week.

We were sad to say farewell to one of 2UC's characters: **Frankie Cruz**. We have to believe that he, Joe Calcolli, and Bill Stowell are somewhere in heaven having a great time together.

Stanley Pinkerton did another thorough job of putting together our annual budget along with an analysis and copious notes.

Mercedes Perez is finally back to church. Now we are just waiting until she gets her voice back, so she can sing again.

Julio Pijem Jr. took his basketball team to the semi-finals.

Pastor Bob baptised **Leo Roberto Smith** over the Christmas holidays. Leo (son of Yvette & Jake) is one of the happiest babies ever!! Leo, his brother, Sebi and proud parents live in Wappingers Falls in upstate New York.



Tamara Penn took a trip to New Hampshire to experience a little winter weather while **Jeff** led a group of students on a week-long visit to our nation's capital.

Speaking of cold weather, **Sylvia O'Connor** is braving the brisk breezes of Brooklyn in order to give aid and comfort to her ailing brother.

Juan Navarro was in the middle of a major shoot out in Isla Verde last month. But, praise the Lord, he survived without a scratch. God is good!

Maguy Larochelle relocated to Santa Fe, NM for work. However, she still hopes to return to PR some day soon. (We do too!)

We are glad to see **Fred Ross**, a Men's Breakfast institution, coming to Sunday worship with his lovely bride, **Iris**.



Steven Johnson is on a roll as he won both the NFL pool and the Super Bowl poll at Men's Breakfast.

Wendy Heath and Charles were finally able to close on their condo here and are living in London, England.

Attie Goosen recently returned from Houston, TX where he visited his son.

Brenda Ferrer is back in PR and at 2UC and we are so glad she is!

Eze Ebube recently returned from a trip to Nigeria. You can catch some of his son, Edwin's basketball games on ESPN plus. He plays for Manhattan College.

Nicole Deliz is enjoying teaching literature at Commonwealth High School and is considering teaching German as well. So too, she may offer a class on comic books.

Over the holidays, Pastor Bob and Christie were surprised and blessed to spend New Year's Eve with **Hannah**, the daughter of beloved 2UC alum **Audrey and JB Wilcox**. Hannah's boyfriend is the son of dear friends of Christie's step-brother - what a small, wonderful world we live in!

Sherry Davis and da' boyz were back in town for a brief visit. It was sure great to see them. Next time, mother **Mary** hopes to come.

Mayra Chip is cast free again as her broken wrist is healing well. PTL!

David Benson is ecstatic that his New England Patriots won another Super Bowl.

John & Evelyn Alberts have been on a mission of mercy of late as they went up to NYC to bring comfort to Evelyn's sister Margie who recently lost her husband, Benny. So too, they have now split up and are helping with grandkids in both Connecticut and Chicago. They sure do miss PR and the warm weather.



The **Zobas** recently celebrated a marriage made in heaven (and Second Union) as they recently celebrated their 14th wedding anniversary.



2UC Alums David and Val Banderman are proud parents! After many months of waiting, they adopted a newborn son, who was born on December 17, 2018. We are so happy for them!



Another pair of 2UC Alums **Brook and Alison SchAAF** also are thrilled to announce the birth of their son, Ivan Gerasim!

It's so interesting that both of these beautiful babies were both adopted within a month of each other and their wonderful parents both live in Austin, Texas! Though the Banderman's and the SchAAF's did not attend 2UC concurrently, maybe God will bring their families together and these two boys will grow up to be best of friends and amazing young men of God! Blessings upon blessings!

Christie's son, **Rob Valdés**, was in town for a weekend in January. Rob lives in D.C. where he works in the health care industry.



Over the years, I have taught the third and fourth grade Sunday School group and for a very brief period, I worked with fifth and sixth graders in a combined group. My preference has always been to work with third and fourth graders as that's the age I remember most when growing up. I remember my third-grade teacher with fondness and appreciate the extra care. You see, I was born to a Spanish speaking family and was forced to speak English almost overnight. If I spoke anything but English, the school staff was forced to use corporal punishment to "fix" the problem. As a kid I remember asking myself if this level of cruelty was necessary? Was my language difference truly a threat to the academic environment? Weren't we there to learn?



As an adult, I realize now how cruel that method of "teaching" was to a child and their family. This method should never have been introduced let alone applied in any learning environment. The only thing taught is to treat violence with brute physical acts. Thank God I never became a product of that environment. And, thank God that corporal punishment is no longer a part of the educational system.

But have we really grown as individuals and as a nation or are we stuck in medieval times? I'm not referring to your smartphone or the car that can parallel park itself for you. I'm referring to our hearts and attitudes towards people who look different and sound different than we do.

We live in the twenty first century and sadly, there are people who think a refugee/immigrant is a mathematical "thing" rather than a human problem.

My immigrant father was employed by Union Pacific for nearly 30 years as a laborer. His hard work paved the way for the railroad lines that are used to transport freight, the food you eat, the clothes you wear, metals to warm your home and even to carry the body of a former US president to his final resting destination. My mother and my some of my siblings picked the fruit that nourishes your body. They did this all while paying taxes into this great nation. My parents were a positive contribution to this country and yet we were treated with hostility because we spoke a different language, because we look different.

How can anyone think we're a threat when my family helped build this country? This is the land of opportunity so why should we be forced to isolate? Why you ask? Plain and simple, because our parents were afraid, they would be sent back to their home country.

Where we are born and to whom we are born to is beyond our control. Unfortunately, my parents were born to a greedy and corrupt nation. There were upper-class and lower-class communities and no in between. No matter how hard they worked, they weren't advancing, and they were growing hungrier by the day. Poverty is not a personal choice and was most definitely not an option for my parents, so they left in search for a better tomorrow. There but for the grace of God go I.

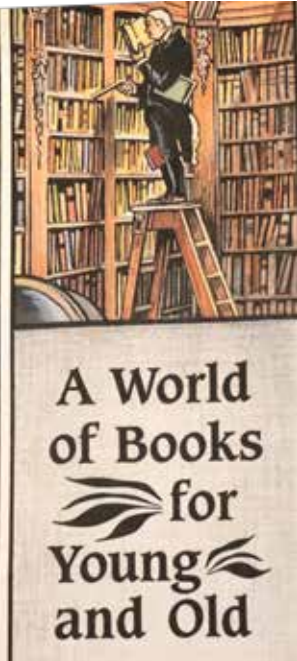
Next time you are confronted with the subject of immigrants and or refugees, ask yourself: Am I extending the hand of God? Am I tolerant of others who look and sound different? Can you relate to their struggles? Why did Mary and Joseph escape?

They are simple questions with complex answers. Everyday there are more and more people leaving their home countries in pursuit of happiness and pursuit to worship freely. Will you join me in changing the world we live in? How can we make it so that other people don't have to go through the struggles that my family and I did? We start with prayer. And we get to know one another. It's then that we discovered that we're not that different.

My name is Humbelina Trevino and I am the proud daughter of immigrants.

Sunday School Teachers				
Month	Pre-K & K	1st & 2nd	3rd & 4th	5th & 6th
March	Cadiz Rodriguez	Nikki Calvert	Denise Hill	Loraine Colón
April			Dennis Gonzalez	Christie Zoba
May	Wanda Billoch	Rosalind Robles		Dely Seda

There are still classes with no teachers, so please give thoughtful prayer to serving your church family in this way. Contact Sasha Seda, our Sunday School Coordinator!



The 2UC Library

From the Church Librarian:

Over the past year I have reorganized the library into sections of different subject matters. Some of these are Commentaries, References & Study Materials, Christian Living, Church History, History of Christianity, Spirituality, etc. So please, identify what subject matter interests you most, and make this a year of exploring and learning and growing in your Christian walk. Please, contact me any time, so as to help you identify a subject and which books can help you learn and grow. Steve Johnson.



Women's Retreat

The Kingdom Come Retreat is March 1-2 at Second Union. Pastors Mariel Lopez, Brenda Taylor, and Elilda Ramos will be leading us through what it means to let the Kingdom of God come through us to the world around us.

It begins Friday night (7pm) with worship and our first session. And then continues Saturday morning at 9am. Light breakfast and lunch are provided. The retreat is scheduled to end at 3:30 and is free to all who wish to attend.

AA Meetings: Wednesdays at 7pm

Alcoholics Anonymous (commonly referred to as AA) is perhaps the most widely known program related to overcoming an addiction or chemical dependency. For decades, AA meetings have helped countless men and women overcome their dependence upon alcohol and begin (or continue) their pursuit of lifelong recovery. Second Union Church lends its rooms for this great cause. Join us Wednesday evenings at 7. Together we share our experience, our strength and hope with each other that we may solve our common problem and help others recover from alcoholism.



Final Hurricane Relief

We are pleased to announce that we have just about depleted the funds donated to Second Union Church for Hurricane María Relief and Recovery efforts. Last Sunday one of our last donations was given to Gladys Colón. Gladys is the founder of Hogar Posada la Victoria, a Christian drug and alcohol rehabilitation center in Toa Alta. Their facility was devastated by Hurricane María and by the grace of God, they were able to purchase a previously closed school for \$1. But Gladys has faced a series of obstacles

as she has worked diligently to rehabilitate the abandoned school for use. The permitting process proved to be extremely tedious. The site has been broken into several times and equipment was stolen. Despite the adversity, Gladys has stayed the course with the help of Second Union, she is hoping to be operating within a month.

You may wonder why it has taken so long to disburse the remaining funds. These funds have been designated for over four months; however some of the families were in situations similar to Hogar Posada La Victoria - they were unable to begin construction until a variety of conditions were met.

We are grateful to God for His provision and the many generous people who contributed to help the people of Puerto Rico





A picture paints a thousand words." I believe this saying is particularly accurate when it comes to describing the January short-term mission trip to the Dominican Republic.

Our mission team was small but mighty and it was an eye-opening opportunity to serve God's kingdom. The mission team included Lizzette Kelley, Nikki Calvert, Carmen Nieves, Alexandra Serrano, Pastor Bob and Christie Zoba.



Hato Mayor is surrounded by sugar cane fields and there are hundreds of small villages referred to as 'bateyes' which provide housing for the laborers and their families. The majority of the mission work we did took place in one of the many bateyes. For more information about life on the batey, see the article on pages 10 & 11.

This was the second mission trip to this same area for Pastor Bob and Christie. Two years ago, Pastor Bob had been invited, by his cousin, Pastor Todd Jaussen, to join this group to teach area pastors who don't have the means for more formal seminary training yet are anxious to grow as leaders in their respective communities. The majority of these pastors live and minister to the Haitian community in the bateyes.



The 2UC team joined forces with over 150 other short-term missionaries mostly from the Pittsburgh and Erie, Pennsylvania area. Our home for the week was "MGM": Meeting God in Mission, which operates several facilities in the D.R. and can host up to 150 missionaries at a time. Since 1998 MGM has facilitated short-term mission trips to the Dominican Republic with the goal of encouraging participants into a closer walk with God while serving the needs of the poor in the DR. People of all ages have come away from an MGM mission trip with a renewed sense of faith and a deeper passion to serve those in need.



MGM provides transportation, boarding and meals as well as amazing worship each morning before breakfast and the opportunity to attend local churches in the evenings. There are many alternatives in terms of mission work to choose from including: sustainable farming, construction, medical clinics, prayer & evangelization, VBS-style children's ministry and they also have a robust baseball ministry. It's important to note that prayer surrounds everything that happens during this week.





Each day begins with a 7am worship service as the sun rises over the surrounding countryside. After a filling breakfast, the individuals set off to the vehicle that will transport them to the ministry they had selected the previous



evening. Most travel in 'cattle cars', but we were blessed on three of the five days to go in one of two school buses they have recently purchased. It often takes an hour to reach the bateyes and much of the trip is along unpaved roads. Upon arriving at the villages, a crowd quickly forms as for many this is the only medical attention they receive. Most can't afford to pay for any medical car. The medical teams were usually able to see 60-80 patients a day. Then at the end of a very long and productive day, the crews return to the compound for a cold shower and dinner which is followed by some activity in the evenings.



Christie and Pastor Bob also had the opportunity to spend time with Larissa, the Compassion International student sponsored by 2UC Women's Ministries.



It is an eye-opening and rewarding experience. Everyone from our team was humbled by the experience. We returned with grateful hearts for the opportunity to serve God's kingdom and a greater appreciation of the chasm between our lives and those in such desperate need.



To better explain the situation with the Hatians living in the Dominican Republic, this is a very comprehensive and concise article about the small villages that are facing such tremendous humanitarian need. This article comes from the Children of the Nations website.

On the surface, the Haitian batey (plural: batyes) appear very similar to poor Dominican villages. To understand the real differences, one must understand how and why bateyes came into existence. The Dominican Republic shares the Caribbean island of Hispaniola with Haiti, but the two neighboring countries might as well be across the globe from each other. Dominicans are Latin and pride themselves on their Spanish roots, whereas Haitians speak Creole and are largely descendents of freed African slaves.



In the early 1900s, Haitians sugarcane cutters, lured by the promise of work, began the seasonal migration to the Dominican Republic—the Haitians were willing to do this low-wage, back-breaking work whereas most Dominicans were not. Over the decades, many of these sugarcane workers did not return to Haiti at season end, and thus created a large, permanent population of Haitians in the Dominican Republic—a population that was not welcomed.

There has always been a clash of cultures between the Dominican Republic and Haiti, but under the anti-Haitian regime of Rafael Trujillo (1930–1961), animosity, prejudice, and racial tension toward Haitians reached horrific levels, culminating in Trujillo’s brutal order of a Haitian massacre (where 25,000+ Haitians found outside the sugar plantations were killed) and ultimately Trujillo’s assassination in 1961. During this time, Dominicans harbored a growing fear of a “Haitian invasion” (much the same way some Americans today fear the effects of the illegal immigration of Mexicans in the Southwest). In the mid-1960s, in an effort to stop this growing Haitian immigration from diluting the Dominican culture, the government proposed a solution—the batey. Bateyes were company-owned towns (consisting of nothing more than crude barracks surrounded by fencing) erected by the government on the outskirts of sugarcane plantations.



Throughout the late 1960s, '70s, and 80s (the heyday of the Dominican Republic’s sugar economy), Haitian sugarcane cutters were confined to these bateyes (i.e. “work camps”) under the watchful eye of armed government soldiers. Their belongings were confiscated and they were trucked back and forth from the fields, often working from sun up to sun down. The daily wage was barely enough to buy one meal a day—oftentimes the cane cutters and their families had nothing to eat but the very cane they cut. The bateyes had no running water,



no electricity, no cooking facilities, and no bathrooms. The shanty homes consisted of slatted wood walls, tin roofs, dirt floors and often housed up to eight or more people. The Haitians were not allowed to leave the bateyes, under the threat of deportation, except to work in the fields. By the 1990s,

the bateyes had become home to hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children—second- and third-generation Haitians born in the Dominican Republic, but with no legal citizenship status to be there and with no ties to their “homeland” Haiti. They basically became a people without a country.

In the mid-1990s, the bateyes drew the attention of humanitarian organizations, calling for action to address the “deplorable treatment” of Haitian families and children living in the bateyes. Most of the 400+ bateyes in the Dominican Republic had not changed much since they were originally erected—they still had no





running water, no electricity, no cooking facilities, no bathrooms, no schools for the children, and no medical facilities. And since the Constitution of the Dominican Republic does not extend citizenship to children born to non-naturalized Haitian parents, these children born in the Dominican Republic, did not have birth certificates or identity papers of any kind. This lack of documentation made it nearly impossible for children of Haitian descent to attend school or benefit from any other social services. These families and children were denied access to medical, social, and educational facilities. Just as the generations that preceded them, these families faced a dead-end life—with no way out of the batey. Essentially, what the Dominican Republic had done was to create a permanent underclass—a category of individuals that, in the eyes of the law, doesn't exist—they have no right to own property, no right to an education, no access to healthcare, and no right to vote. In essence, a class of people condemned to poverty.

A little over a decade ago, when the world markets (particularly the US) switched to high-fructose corn syrup and away from cane sugar, the Dominican government was forced to privatize the sugar industry and closed many of the struggling sugarcane plantations. Without cane to cut, the Haitian workers were no longer needed. Essentially, the economy of the batey (though sparse as it was) completely dried up. Not long after the Haitians' only means of support disappeared, so did the armed government guards and the fences that once kept them prisoner. All that remained in the bateyes were crying babies, bored and uneducated mothers, and unemployed men who were no longer able to even meagerly provide for their families.

But the Dominican's privatization efforts were not without consequence—much to their dismay, it forced the Haitians from the bateyes into the cities in search of work. Starting in the late 1990s, the women, ineligible for legal jobs, took positions in the homes of Dominicans as nannies and maids, or worse—entered into the sex trades. The men found under-the-table work in construction and farming. They also took to the streets as vendors. But in a country where unemployment is already high, competition for jobs was tough. And with this increased visibility and competition came a backlash—government officials and the media began to blame the Haitians for increased violence, social problems, and poverty, causing them to become, yet again, the target of Dominican frustration and racial prejudice.



Today, the bateyes remain—with little change, except that brought about through humanitarian and non-governmental organizations. An estimated 500,000 residents—7% of the population of the Dominican Republic, live in 400+ bateyes. Most still do not have latrines. Potable water is rare. Electricity, non-existent. Primitive dirt roads carved through ever-encroaching jungles become muddy lakes when it rains—cutting off entire bateyes from the outside world (including food and water) for days at a time.



Inside the bateyes, education and healthcare remain almost non-existent. Where these services are available, they generally have been built and are operated by humanitarian organizations, not the government. And when natural disaster strikes (like Tropical Storm Noel that made a direct hit in October of 2007, washing away homes, furnishings, and livelihoods), the bateyes are the last in line to receive assistance from the government—if they receive any at all.

<https://cotni.org/news/dominican-republic/2007/11/14/origin-dominican-batey>

Note: The pictures in this article are from our mission trip!

Tuesday Night Bible Study

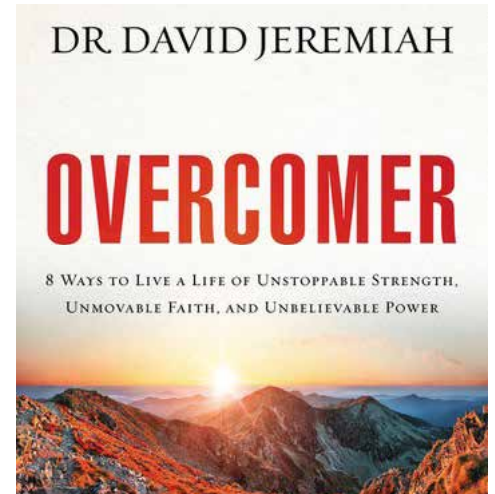
7 - 9pm
February 26-May 7
at the home of
Luis & Lorraine Rivera - Urb. San Francisco
5 minutes from church!

Our small group invites you to join us as we pray for one another, study the Word of God together, and share our lives in a relaxed setting of confidence and trust.

Here are the topics that we will cover during the course of the study:

- Overcoming Weakness with Strength
- Overcoming Evil with Good
- Overcoming Fear with Faith
- Overcoming Temptation with Scripture
- Overcoming Falsehood with Truth
- Overcoming Anxiety with Peace
- Overcoming Confusion with Wisdom
- Overcoming Everything with Prayer
- Overcoming Death with Life

All are welcome • Invite a friend • Study guides & snacks provided
Facilitated by Stanley Pinkerton.
Please call us for directions and any questions you might have.



Women's Bible Study Tuesdays: noon-2pm

Join as we study Francis Chan's book, *Crazy Love* along with the RightNowMedia series of short video teaching by Francis.

Does your life reflect the radically committed life Jesus calls his followers to live? *Crazy Love* is a best-selling book and a wake-up call. Chan challenges church members to take responsibility for their apathy, engage in honest self-examination, and totally surrender to God's purpose.

We try to deal with some very challenging teaching about loving those who are hard to love. Join us for fellowship, Bible study, deep discussions, prayer and caring support. There is always a place at the table for you.

Feel free to bring along a lunch.

We still have a few books available at no cost! Feel free to call Christie 787-717-4001.



Second Union mourns the passing of Frankie Cruz. Frankie died on January following a long illness.

Our hearts and prayers are with his wife, Yolanda. She was such a faithful and loving partner and never left his side. They have attended Second Union Church for many, many years, and we will miss his wit and his generous spirit.

Originally from New Jersey, Frankie and Yolanda, moved to Puerto Rico in the 70s and for many years, Frankie was the owner of a hardware store in Caguas. They moved to Orlando for several years, but returned to the island and have been here since.

At the memorial service here at Second Union, Mike Lallave and Carlos Sepulveda spoke lovingly about their long friendship with Frankie as did Pastor Bob and Mike Strong. Another long-time friend, Pastor Joe Ramos was present and gave the benediction.

Qué en paz descanse.



Angels in our Midst

God sent us a group of 18 angels! Seemingly out of the blue, a group of wonderful, dedicated, delightful followers of Jesus arrived at our church and tackled some work projects that we had put on the back burner. This group was a part of a team from the "Mission Cruise" who arrived in Puerto Rico and other destinations to serve, and we were the blessed recipients of their kindness. They came from Idaho, Indiana, California, Missouri and Texas, and we are so grateful to the Lord for them. They polished our pews, replaced ceiling tiles, power-washed the sidewalks around the building, painted the balcony-area of the Sanctuary and more.



Thanks to Property Chair, Javier Rodriguez, for getting the materials to make this possible and thanks to Brenda for arranging the transportation and providing lunch for the group!

It felt a little weird to be on the receiving end - like we were being pampered, as Mabel put it so aptly! We were undeserving of this kindness, but we are humbled and very, very grateful!!





At the end of January, we held a special activity for our Backpack Program participants and their parents. It was truly a 'labor' of love, as we transported 66 backpacks, 33 of which were filled with food and 33 of which were new backpacks filled with school supplies - thanks to a very generous donor from the States! (Thanks Adasa!) In addition to the backpacks our wonderful volunteers brought in a major load of baked good from Costco and cases of delicious fruits and vegetables from Gan Eden Farms (Thanks, Yoav!).



While Loraine addressed the parents with an excellent presentation on ways they can encourage their students' academic progress, Celestine, Brenda, Melba and Livia had a mini-workshop with the students on hygiene and nutrition.



We were especially blessed to have Mable and Alan Page with us. We met Mabel and Alan last year as they took their vacation time to come and help with recovery efforts after hurricane María. They returned to Puerto Rico and to 2UC this year, and what a blessing they are. They contributed lovingly and diligently to the Backpack Program activity and have blessed us in ways beyond!



We are grateful to God for the many people that give of their time to the Backpack Program. Raul, Loraine and Christopher Strong have consistently made themselves available to pick up food from the Banco de Alimentos, pack

the backpacks and distribute them to the students each week. And it is not the fact that they do it that is so gratifying, it is their willingness and the love with which they do it. Thank you Jesus for these people who are committed to Your kingdom.



A typical Friday afternoon at Escuela La Urbana in Guaynabo!



Serving in God's Kingdom

We are all called to serve in God's kingdom. In Jesus' words,

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40.

Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20:26-28

At Second Union Church, we are glad to provide you with opportunities for you to serve in God's kingdom - right here as well as in our community. On the final page of the newsletter are options to serve during our Sunday worship service. You can serve on just about any church committee. (see the names of the committees and committee chairs on page two of this newsletter). We have a variety of ministries: Women's Ministry, Men's Ministry, Couples' Ministry, Youth Ministry - they are all in need of volunteers. You can teach Sunday School. Through our Backpack Program we need help picking up product from El Banco de Alimentos as well as delivering backpacks to the students on Friday afternoons. We have an English tutoring program at the Centro Vedruna near the church.

Take some time (but not too much time) to prayerfully consider where God is calling you to serve, and take a step that will bless you and bless God.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Romans 12:1

Second Union Church

February
2019

16

Lay Participation for Worship Service 2019

DATE	LITURGIST	CHILDREN'S	USHER	Flowers	GREETER	COFFEE
2.17.19	Christie Zoba				Muriel Francis Greta Jackson	Christie Zoba
2.24.19	Wendy Heat			Monica Echaves		POTLUCK
3.3.19	Brenda Ferrer			Conchi Gonzalez	Livia Roman	
3.10.19	WM	WM	WM	Brenda Ferrer	WM	Livia Roman
3.17.19	WM	WM	WM	Monica Marrero	Chucks Mordi	WM
3.24.19	WM	WM	WM	WM	Humbelina Trevino Javier Rodriguez	WM
3.31.19	Alexandra (youth)		Joshua Estremera Paola	WM	Emilio Alejandro Juliee	Jasmine
4.7.19	Anita Rodriguez			Don Julio Rivera Steve & Lynette		
4.14.19						
4.21.19				StanLey Pinkerton		
4.26.19						
5.5.19	Michael Strong				Humbelina Trevino Javier Rodriguez	
5.12.19						
5.19.19						