

FRESH Start

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE PORT CHARLOTTE SDA CHURCH



IT'S A NEW DAY AT PCSDA!

"The Lord's loyal kindness never ceases; his compassions never end. They are fresh every morning..." Lam. 3:22,23 NET

**"Oh come, let us sing to the Lord!
Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving;
Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms.
For the Lord is the great God,
And the great King above all gods.
In His hand are the deep places of the earth;
The heights of the hills are His also.
The sea is His, for He made it;
And His hands formed the dry land.
Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For He is our God,
And we are the people of His pasture,
And the sheep of His hand."**

Psalm 95:1-7

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**[Click Here for
SABBATH SCHOOL
LESSONS](#)**

[Click Here to GIVE](#)



Give Thanks



THANKFULNESS

BY DUSTIN HALL, SENIOR PASTOR

"Please" and "thank you" are some of the first words we learn to use as children. Probably all of us can remember our mothers saying to us "now what do you say?" after we were given something by another individual. After we were old enough to know saying thank you was standard etiquette, all it would take from mom was a certain look from her side eye to know we had forgotten to say "thank you."

In adulthood, we have holidays and religious practices that prompt us to be thankful. We have

Veterans Day, and Memorial Day to remind us to thank our veterans and their families. We have Mother's and Father's Day to remind us to thank our parents for their love. We have Thanksgiving to remind us to be... thankful. In the church the Sabbath is the day that God says "remember" that He is our Creator and Savior. The Communion Service is done in remembrance or thanksgiving. We may think, as adults, that we no longer have anyone holding us accountable to be thankful, but these holidays and traditions are very much like our mother saying to us, "now what do you say?"



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Jesus once encountered a group of people who also needed a reminder to give God praise and thanksgiving. In Luke 17 we read the story of the Ten Lepers. As they saw Jesus pass by they cried out for His help. He instructed them to go to the priests. In those days, the priest had to approve your re-entrance into society if you believed you had been cured of an infectious disease. All ten men went but only one man returned to thank Jesus. Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then He said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well," Luke 17:17-19.

The final words here from Jesus are powerful, all ten were cleansed but only one was made well, and it was not a man from the line of Abraham. A Samaritan was more thankful than the Jews.

It was the man who returned to give thanks who was fully healed. Nine of the men had their skin cured but only one was made whole. It didn't take a holiday, and it didn't take his mother reminding him; this man knew what Jesus had done for him and he joyfully returned to thank Jesus.

How important being thankful is for our lives. A life of thankfulness is what gets us through the hard times and pulls us closer to the people that have done so much for us. As we see from the story, being thankful is central to our being made whole. Being thankful chases away entitlement.

Thankfulness reminds us of how God has never let us down. Remembering to give thanks reveals how much we know we have been given, and forgiven.

continued on page 4



"BEING
THANKFUL IS
CENTRAL TO
BEING MADE
WHOLE."

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Thanksgiving should not just be a holiday. Thanksgiving should be a way of life. As Colossians 3: 15 reads, "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful."

So thank you, moms, for all your reminders to say "thank you." We all know we ought to listen to our mothers.

"THANKFULNESS REMINDS US OF HOW GOD HAS NEVER LET US DOWN."



Research shows that having a grateful spirit can benefit your health, personal relationships, career, emotions and personality.

For more information, [click here](#).

GRATITUDE WILL:

1. Make us happier
2. Increase psychological well-being
3. Enhance our positive emotions
4. Increase our self-esteem
5. Keep suicidal thoughts and attempts at bay
6. Makes us more likable
7. Improve our romantic relationships
8. Improve our friendships
9. Increases social support
10. Strengthen family relationships in times of stress
11. Make us more optimistic
12. Increase our relationship with God
13. Make us more giving
14. Reduce materialism
15. Enhance optimism
16. Make us more effective managers
17. Reduce impatience and improve decision-making
18. Help us find meaning in our work
19. Contribute to reduced turnover
20. Improve work-related mental health and reduce stress
21. Reduce depressive symptoms
22. Reduce your blood pressure
23. Improve your sleep
24. Increase your frequency of exercise
25. Improve your overall physical health



Six Ways to Learn to Be Grateful

While being thankful may come more naturally to some of us than others, a spirit of gratitude is something you can cultivate—and in fairly simple ways. Here are six ideas. Try them all—or pick and choose what works for you:

Keep a gratitude journal. Every day, be on the lookout for the good things in your life, and write them down. Consider blessings big and small, now and in the past. Think of the people who love you, the things you've accomplished, the food on your table or the smile on a friend's face. Give special thought to things you might have taken for granted.

Create a gratitude ritual. Make it a habit to reflect on what you're thankful for at certain times—say, at dinner with your family or on your way to work. Or you could start or end the day in a promising way by thinking about your good fortune.

Mark milestones with gratitude. Is it your birthday, an anniversary or another special occasion? This is your cue to look back and savor the highlights of your life so far.

Say thank you with a special letter. Is there someone who's made a positive difference in your life? Take the time to craft a thoughtful note. Not only might you lift someone else's spirits, odds are you'll lift yours as well.

Spread good news. When something wonderful happens to you, don't keep it inside. Telling others about a happy event can give you extra satisfaction from it.

Make the best out of the bad. When you face something unpleasant, appreciate what you've learned. Ask yourself, "How have I grown from this situation?" or "What makes me proud about how I handled this?" Look for the silver lining—chances are it really is there.

Source: www.adventisthealth.org/blog/2016/october/reap-the-benefits-of-gratitude

NOVEMBER | 13 & 14

International Weekend

You will want to be attend this very special weekend!

International Unity Sabbath will be celebrated during the worship service on November 13. We have over thirty countries represented in our church. If you want to represent your country, please contact Pastor Art.

On November 14, the school will be hosting an International Fall Festival/Open House. The festival will include:

- A bounce house
- Food (for purchase) from many countries
- A Festival of Nations Parade
- The Openhouse: A "trip around the world in a day." Visit each classroom to explore a country that students have researched.

Please get in touch with the church or school office if you would like to have a dish for the International Food Fair on that same date.

It's going to be delicious!

See you there!





Picnic in the Park

At 1:00 Sabbath, November 20, we will meet at the large pavilion at Gilchrist Park for a church picnic.

Bring your own picnic lunch, including food, beverages, and tableware. There are six to eight picnic tables under the pavilion. If you have portable tables and chairs to add, you are welcome to bring them, and maybe lawn chairs and/or blankets to enjoy the sunshine.

Comfortable walking shoes will be a good idea for those who want to walk through the park or over the bridge.

There is a play area for families with young children, and restrooms.

In case of rain, the picnic will still go on because we have reserved the covered pavilion. Harsh weather conditions may necessitate cancellation, which would be announced that Sabbath morning.

Come enjoy the blessings of togetherness and the beauty of Charlotte Harbor.





Photos by Barb Goffin

On October 2, the Spanish congregation dedicated their new home in Room 115. With a special sermon given by Pastor Dustin Hall, and translated by Pastor Jaime Pombo, the members came together to celebrate their new place to worship God.

Room 115 had been the church office prior to the major addition in the early 2000's. In recent years it has been used for storage. The Spanish congregation identified it as being able to meet their needs, and did a remarkable transformation. Members familia Nájara, Felix Kelmés, Cecil Baird, Maria Luzon, Juana Crawford, Darrell and Juanita Steele, Arturo Rodríguez, Elizabeth Peters, and Prudence Grayman were involved in the beautiful remodel. Their new room provides them with more privacy and fewer disruptions than the Grand Hall, where they

met for many years, often having to take down their set up to allow for other functions.

In the late 1990's, the Spanish congregation was formed, initiated by the Moran family. In 2000, Pastor Art retired from Christian Record Services, Inc., a Seventh-day Adventist ministry for the blind, and moved to Port Charlotte. He has been the associate pastor overseeing the Spanish congregation since that time, and in recent years Pastor Jose Carreño has been assisting in the Spanish congregation.

Over the years attendance grew to 55 members, but in recent years it reduced to about 25 on average. Although we have a significant contingent in our church from Spanish speaking countries, not all attend the Spanish services. They are able to accommodate forty people, and welcome new members.

A FRESH START FOR THE SPANISH CONGREGATION

BY LAURA DANCEK



The Spanish congregation has always been part of the Port Charlotte SDA Church, and not its own entity.

They also offer services on Zoom for those who cannot attend in person.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY: Dima, Jr. and Emily Poperechnyy

PHOTOS AND ARTICLE BY BARB GOFFIN

Dima, Jr. and his wife Emily (Emma) Poperechnyy made the journey from Portland, Oregon with their other family members about one year ago. Emma is originally from Sacramento, California. The couple met at an SDA youth camp on the west coast. Both raised as Adventists, they have a long history of being very involved in their home churches. You may have had the pleasure of hearing the couple sing a beautiful duet for our church service or saw them volunteering at the last Vacation Bible School.

Besides singing and playing the piano, Dima (pronounced Deema) loves to play volleyball and basketball. He presently works as a freight broker in Venice. Emma is very artistic and loves to draw. She owns her own online clothing business, but her passion is snowboarding. Since there is no snow in Florida, Dima had to promise to take her snowboarding once a year out west!

Dima's older brother is the one who heard of Pastor Dustin and the family decided to give our church a try. From their first visit they felt very welcomed. Dima said, "We love this church. It is so friendly and inviting." He also welcomes anyone to approach him as he is looking forward to sharing his story and making friends within his new church family.



WELCOME TO THE FAMILY: Dima, Sr. and Lyudmila Poperechnyy

PHOTOS AND ARTICLE BY BARB GOFFIN

Pictured in small square: Victor and Valentina Kolesrickenno (Mila's parents)



Dima, Sr. and Lyudmila (Mila) were both born and raised in Ukraine. They decided to come to the U.S. about 21 years ago and made Portland, Oregon their home. They have three married children and seven grandchildren. Family is so important to them that when they decided they were tired of rainy, grey Portland days, everyone, but their daughter and her family, made the move to Southwest Florida, including Mila's parents. The move to this area was somewhat easy as the family had vacationed here for years.

Mila, who works for Instacart, shops and delivers groceries to people's homes. She also loves to sing and play piano, and has even been a choir director in the past. Dima (pronounced Deema) drives for Uber and when not working he loves to fish -- a love that has been with him since childhood. Now he loves to fish with his kids and grandkids.

Dima and Mila travel back to Portland often to visit their daughter and her family. They hope that someday she will also make the move to Southwest Florida.

Make sure to warmly greet this family when you see them. They look forward to making homemade pierogies for the upcoming International Food Fair.

We welcome the entire four generations of Poperechnyy's to our church family!



SCHOOL NEWS

BY XYLIA CAPOTE

On the sixth week of school, Port Charlotte Adventist School had their first week of prayer of the year. The students gathered each day to worship together. Throughout the week the teachers collected private prayer petitions that were set on fire in the field at the end of the week. We had object lessons with Pastor Brent, praise and worship with Pastor Peterson and his daughter Addyson, and some special appearances of Peter the puppet. Pastor Pombo finished out the week with a call for those who desire to receive Bible Study and/or be baptized. The first baptisms took place on October 30 on the first full Education Sabbath of this school year. [These baptisms will be featured in the December newsletter.]





Thanksgiving Memories

*Four church members share their personal
holiday stories on the following two pages.*



UNWANTED THANKSGIVING GUEST

BY WAYNE GOFFIN



Growing up a product of a Swedish immigrant farming family, much of my childhood memories revolved around the work at hand and the practical nature of life on a Wisconsin Dairy Farm.

Thanksgiving was one of the few times when farm work paused, then family and extended family would gather for a meal around Grandmother's table. She was a famously great cook and lived in the bigger of the two houses on the farm, so most of the family gatherings were held there.

My grandparents' house was old, from 1920, and of somewhat primitive construction, but the kitchen was outfitted with a big, raised, double oven with a cupboard above it, and above that on the second floor was the attic.

I remember the turkey had come out of the oven and the custard pie went in. Grandmother needed something out of that cupboard, so she asked Papa to get it and when he opened the door, an unwelcome guest who had been seeking warmth from the ovens flew out. Our stoic gathering erupted to pandemonium as yelling shrieks and screams ensued. Papa, my Dad, and uncle grabbed a broom, tennis racket and a laundry basket to take after the unwanted guest... a large screeching bat!!

After several crazy runs through the house the bat was removed, order was restored, and we all sat down to a great dinner together, with a funny little memory to share for years to come.



MY FAVORITE THANKSGIVING

BY CANDY BEDFORD



I've always thought of Thanksgiving as sharing a special meal with family and one in particular stands out for me. It was 2010, my husband and I had been in Mt. Juliet, TN for a little over five years. His oldest son and family surprised us with a visit. We shared a traditional holiday meal and then visited some of the local sights including a boat ride inside the Gaylord Opryland hotel. While fixing lunch the next day, our granddaughter, Ainsley, five, had to stand on a chair to reach the counter so she could help. I showed her how to make blondies (chocolate chip cookie dough pressed in a pan), something that her own Dad enjoyed when he was a boy. After lunch we set up the Christmas village and tree. What was fun for me was the imagination we used while we created a winter wonderland with batting for a base and cotton ball snow drifts. We postulated that the Victorian caroler missing his hand had lost it in the war. Houses (thirty in all), trees and people were strategically placed so they lit up the hall and dining area with a magic that belongs only to the holidays. I don't know if it was memorable for our grandchildren, who are all teen agers now, but it is not one that I will ever forget, not ever.



THE BEST THANKSGIVING EVER!

BY JANELLE AND VIC MELITI

It was the fall of 1988, and we had gone through some major life adjustments. We celebrated our fourth wedding anniversary a few months earlier, and had recently moved from New Jersey to Ohio so Vic could return to college. We were expecting our second child in late November.

Vic's first semester back in college was going well and Janelle was busy setting up the basement in her parent's house as an apartment for this soon to be expanding family.

Janelle's due date was November 23, and Vic had a major biology test scheduled for November 22. As the test date neared, Vic approached his professor and asked if there was a good excuse for missing a test. The professor replied, "death – your own." Vic then explained that his wife was due on the 22nd and the professor told him that they would work something out if she went into labor early.

Personal computing was beginning to become more popular and, as we were living with Janelle's parents (Miro and Jeanne Manestar), we had the opportunity to play with a computer since Janelle's younger brother, Kevin (who had recently finished school and was also living there), had purchased an Amiga computer. Flight Simulator and submarine war games were two of the more popular games the men played.

November 23rd came and went...for the most part. Miro, Kevin, and Vic were up late on Thanksgiving Eve playing games on the computer. Janelle had been asleep in their basement bedroom when her water broke. She was shouting at the top of her lungs for any of the men to hear, and it was her dad who finally heard the shouting.

After a twenty-minute drive to the hospital, we got her all checked in and settled in her room. By then, it was early morning on Thanksgiving Day.

Our son, Michael, was born a little before 11:00 on Thanksgiving morning. Vic watched the whole thing with fascination and yes, Vic cut the umbilical cord. Janelle was just glad it was finally over.

Over the years, we have had some very memorable Thanksgivings spent with family and friends, but that one will always be, for us, "The Best Thanksgiving Ever."



THANKSGIVING BASKETS

Are you grateful for the blessings you have received?
We hope you will consider sharing those blessings by participating in our
annual food drive for holiday baskets.

We are already collecting food and monetary donations for
Thanksgiving baskets to be distributed to those in need in our community.
Please bring your donations to church on Sabbath, or to the church office
during office hours. They will assembled on November 21.

If you would like to assist with preparing or distributing the baskets,
please contact the [church office](#).

"If you are really thankful, what do you do?
You share."

W. Clement Stone



FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

An Update from the
Design Team

BY LAURA DANCEK

Imagine walking into the family resource center and being greeted by a smiling church member standing at the counter offering you a beverage. Beyond the counter you see a hot air balloon --right inside the building! As you look around, you realize that everything you see represents an area of the world that is full of life, beauty, and fascination! You hear the laughter of families playing together in each of the areas. And you notice there are comfortable seats to sink down into and relax in as you enjoy talking to friends.

That is what is developing in the minds of the design team as we are making plans to build something outstanding for people in our community. We meet weekly to dig further into the details of each section of the center. Currently, we are focusing our attention on the largest space of the center – the tropical rainforest. The rainforest will have a treehouse, spiral slide, climbing walls, a zipline, boats propelled by little feet, swings, and much more – all scaled down to a child's level.

When the renovation permit is received, the physical work on the tropical rainforest will be ready to commence. We will need people skilled in painting, construction, woodworking, craftsmanship, and artistic skills. If you are interested in helping, please contact the church office.

THANKFUL FOR YOUNG ADULTS

BY LAURA DANCEK

Are you in your 20's, 30's or 40's? You are a young adult and a valued treasure to our church. We're thankful for your energy, time, ideas, talents, and creativity. Not only are we thankful for you -- we LOVE you! And we'd love to see more and more people your age, so bring your friends!

Did you know that the Seventh-day Adventist denomination was built on the backs of young adults? God values youth!

If you have ideas to share or would like to be more involved, talk to one of the pastors or church leaders.

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young. Set an example for the believers in what you say and in how you live. Also set an example in how you love and in what you believe. Show the believers how to be pure."

1 Timothy 4:12



THANKFUL FOR OUR FOREFATHERS:

A Tribute to Bob and Wretha Lang

BY LAURA DANCEK

When my husband, Ed, and I moved to the Port Charlotte SDA Church as young adults, we were quickly invited to enjoy Sabbath dinner at the home of Bob and Wretha Lang. Thirty-seven years ago, I never would have guessed that one day I would want to write a personal tribute to them. Although they had children our age, they always seemed so young. I use the word "want" intentionally. Of course, I don't "want" to have a reason to write this, but I realize that for the very first time in this church's history we have pastors, and many members, who did not know Bob and Wretha. You should know who they were.

Not only was the Seventh-day Adventist Church built on the backs of young adults (see page 18), THIS Seventh-day Adventist church was built on the backs of young adults. One of those backs belonged to the tiny frame of our beloved Wretha Lang. Wretha had a big smile, infectious laugh, and enthusiastic spirit. Although small in stature, we thought of her as a giant. She was deeply spiritual and created and led her own Bible study plan. She was all about healthy living and exercise. As a professional musician, Wretha initiated and grew a quality music program here that continued for much of our church's life. It's hard to recall a Sabbath when she wasn't at the piano, organ, or directing the choir. Music is the place she connected with many of us, and how I grew to know and love her, and have countless memories with her. Wretha did all this, and more, while raising four outstanding children.

Bob was a physician in Punta Gorda. While Wretha was the "up front" person, Bob was the "behind the scenes" guy, always supporting Wretha's endeavors. In contrast to Wretha's extroverted, take-the-bull-by-the-horns spirit, Bob was a quiet, gentle and calming presence. Although a doctor, he was humble and practical. Bob, too, was deeply spiritual and he inspired others to seek relationships with the God he loved.

Bob and Wretha were founding members of the Port Charlotte SDA church and gave their all in growing this church from a handful of people to over 800 members years ago. It is no understatement to say that without them, and their total dedication to this church, it would be nothing like it is today. Several years ago they moved to Tennessee to live with one of their sons. Bob passed away in October of 2019, and Wretha passed away almost exactly two years later -- in October of this year. They were the definition of "pillars of the church."



I'm sure Bob and Wretha consider their children and grandchildren their greatest legacy. They would be too humble to admit that our church might be their other great legacy. If you did not have the privilege to know them, look for them in heaven. They will be delighted to learn that you came to our church, and you can thank them for all they did so you had this church to attend.

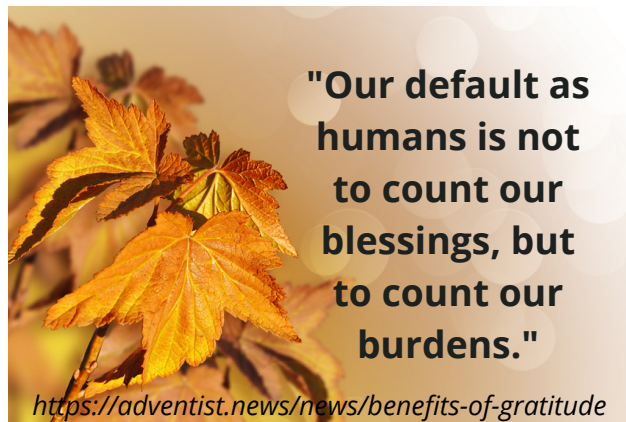
THANKFUL FOR OUR PASTORS



Photo by Wave Williams

We appreciate our pastors, and their families, but often fail to express that appreciation to them. On October 16, they were presented with flowering plant arrangements, cards, and monetary gifts as small tokens of our gratitude. On October 30, a church potluck was held in their honor.

Did you miss these events? It is never too late, and always appropriate, to thank our pastors for their leadership in our church.



"Our default as humans is not to count our blessings, but to count our burdens."

<https://adventist.news/news/benefits-of-gratitude>

**Please wish a very
Happy Birthday to
Duane Morauske**

November 22



Mystery Member



We are making it easier for you to guess the name of mystery members. From now on, all you need to do is choose the correct name out of a few options - it's multiple choice!

[Click here](#) to take a guess!

THANK YOU for participating and trying to get to know our church family better.

We are looking for future mystery members. If you are willing to be featured, please contact us at pcsdacommunication@gmail.com



Our October Mystery Member - Crystal Salyer

This month's mystery member clues:

She was born and raised in North Carolina.
She was brought up in a very nonreligious home.
She has four children, and homeschools.
She love flowers, gardening and being outdoors.
She loves to cook.
She has been a foster parent.
In November, she will celebrate her 25th wedding anniversary with her husband, Derek.





“

**Gratitude is more than
frivolous interaction
but a discipline that
brings us closer to God
and our loved ones,
creating a ripple effect
that touches every
aspect of our lives.**

”

<https://adventist.news/news/benefits-of-gratitude>



The theme of the December issue of *FRESH Start* will be "Christmas is for Children." We would love to include CHRISTMAS photos of your children, grandchildren, or yourself as a child at Christmas. Email them to pcsdacommunication@gmail.com. Please include your name and the name of everyone in the photo, left to right.



**Upcoming Christmas Event
Saturday evening, December 4**

**Watch the bulletin and Facebook
for details.**

Outdoor Sabbath

On October 30, much of this special event had to be moved indoors due to rain, but it was spectacular and the children loved it!

Photos by Barb Goffin







Happy
Thanksgiving

~ from the newsletter staff ~

We appreciate your support
and feedback.
A special thank you to all who have
contributed to the newsletter.

Sabbath Morning Schedule

10:00-10:45 Sabbath School
11:00 Worship Service

*All services in the sanctuary will be livestreamed on our
YouTube Channel

Masks are optional.

If at any time, you or your family exhibit any symptoms of possible COVID-19, i.e sore throat, fever, runny nose, loss of taste/smell, or if you have been around individuals who have been possibly exposed, please do not come to church. You may return to church after you have tested negative for COVID-19.



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Sermon Schedule

November 6
Pastor Dustin

November 13
Pastor Dustin

November 20
Pastor Dustin

November 27
Pastor Dustin