

FRESH Start

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE PORT CHARLOTTE SDA CHURCH

L  VE GOD

T
H
E
R
S





LOVE GOD LOVE OTHERS

A VISION FOR THE
PORT CHARLOTTE SDA CHURCH

BY BEN SHURTLIFF, SENIOR PASTOR

This article is aimed at introducing what I believe should be the mission statement of our church. However, I would like to introduce those core values for our church borrowing a concept from one of my favorite books on the debate between creation versus evolution. It is written by Michael Behe entitled Darwin's Black Box. In it, Behe introduces the term "irreducible complexity." The following is the definition he provides:

"I defined an irreducibly complex system as: a single system which is necessarily composed of several well-matched, interacting parts that contribute to the basic function, and where the removal of any one of the parts causes the system to effectively cease functioning."

One example of this, that you are presently using in reading this article, is the human eye. The cornea, iris, lens, pupil, vitreous, optical nerve, and more are all necessary for eyesight to occur. If you take out one or more of these items, there is either no vision or virtually no vision. Michael Behe's overall point is that vision is not evolutionary in nature. All the pieces and parts of the eye must be present and properly arranged or vision cannot occur. There can be no millions of years of trial and error to develop eyesight. Unless the necessary portions are

present and fully developed, there is no eyesight. If you haven't yet read his book, *Darwin's Black Box*, I highly encourage you to do so.

Let's transition to thinking about this concept of irreducible complexity in terms of the church. How would you describe a church's core values or mission statement in the most irreducibly complex way possible? For me, I think it comes down to "love God, love others." Love God first, and then because of your love for God, love all others with His help. A church that aims to love God and love others will be a church that loves to study God's word and delights to follow it. A church that aims to "love God, love others" will be a church that shows it's love of God by loving every tribe, nation, tongue, and people at every age and stage and from whatever walk of life. Ephesians

describes this very process. At the heart of Paul's message in Ephesians 4:15, 16 he states:

"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

Sounds like "love God, love others" to me.

God is truly working in us to do His good pleasure. When we love God and put Him first, we become His hands and feet to serve and by doing so, show His love to others. This may occur in a thousand different ways, but all of them could be summed up by "love God, love others". In my mind, as your friend and pastor this is the irreducibly

complex vision statement for God's church. If we say we have love for God, but don't demonstrate that love by caring for others, we are not the church as defined by scripture.

However, if we as a church family increase in our love for God, and therefore our love of others increases, we will surely be found doing what we are here to do before Jesus comes

again. I invite you to consider this mission statement for our church family. "Love God, love others" has a nice simple yet profound ring to it!

Behe, Michael J. *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*. Free, 2006.
Niv Bible. Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, 2007.



Photo submitted by Hannah Forbes

Congratulations to

Mr. and Mrs. Gavin Forbes

Pastor Gavin and Hannah Moraga were married on March 10 in the Miami area.

Keep the happy couple in your prayers as they embark on their new life together, and support them in their ministry at our church.

Happening Now

April Book Drive
The Single Mom's Ministry needs
new books for children 0-5.
Let's shower them with books!



The illustration features two smiling children, a girl and a boy, sitting on a row of colorful books. They are holding an open book together. Above them is a large yellow and orange striped umbrella. Several other books in various colors (yellow, pink, red, blue) are floating in the air around the children. The background is a light teal color.

KID'S JAM - ATHON
RUNNING FOR JESUS



APRIL 27
9:30-10:45
PCAS FIELD

Subheading

The photograph shows a group of children running on a paved path through a field of tall, golden-brown grass. In the foreground, a young boy in a grey t-shirt with the number '60' is running towards the camera. Other children are visible in the background, some wearing blue athletic gear. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.



Photo credits: Laura Dancek

Community Service Center: Update on Progress

BY DIANE SEDGWICK, CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

The story of our community service center began many years ago as a dream, cherished by several of our church members, to have a place open to the community where people with needs could come for love and care. Over time and through countless volunteer hours, thousands of pieces of

clothing, food items, furniture and knick-knacks found their way into neighborhood homes. And every month the center was a source of help for many electric and water bills.

Leadership changed hands several times and various programs and policies were put into place over

the decades, but the primary focus of caring and sharing remained the same. Then the wind event of 2021 came, followed by Hurricane Ian in 2022. Remodeling had already begun in response to leadership's then-latest vision for the center, but when hurricane forces combined with COVID-19 pandemic mandates, the



center's mission was forced into a long pause. For the first time in more than 40 years the center was closed.

Restoration efforts began for the school and the church, but insurance did not cover the small building in the middle of the campus. Its roof was replaced and the outside was repainted with church funding, giving a promising look to passers-by, but inside, the walls, floors and ceilings told a different story. It was now professionally estimated to cost us at least \$93,000 to complete the planned remodeling as well as to

make the necessary restoration repairs.

And then the miracles of volunteered love and skilled compassion began to happen. Brian Brunderman continued to offer his time and certification to function as our general contractor, using the plans that had been supervised and submitted to the county by Ed Dancek and the design team. Joe Francis and Resty Antonio removed walls and truckloads of unwanted items. Phillis and Duane Morauske moved, organized, cleaned, and moved and organized again. They also

spent hours restoring the outside sign to a better-than-ever state! Wayne Shinn repaired the ceilings and walls, getting them ready for painting. And then every wall was beautifully painted by Sokol Lekic and his team. Ric Germ took care of the outside landscaping with new plants and mulch. Victor Baz remodeled both restrooms and spray painted the entrance railings, as well as the safety posts.





Photo credit: Laura Dancek

The miracles continued! Victor Baz then began meticulously installing the tile that had been chosen by the Decision Team which had been working together in all three building color choices. The old food store section was brought back to life with new baseboards, fans, and lights. Then we asked Victor to tile the lobby area as well, giving the space a wonderful new look and





Photo credit: Laura Dancek



feel. At the same time, Errol Long offered to pick out the cabinets and countertops as well as encase the tankless water heater. He then installed them in his always professional style and the area is now beautifully complete with a new sink and faucet! So far, almost every lady who has seen the results asks... "can he come and redo my kitchen?"

Resty and Pastor Art Grayman are finishing the set-up of a new AV system and the Wi-Fi has been installed, as well as 2 landline phones. The fire alarm panel is set to go and has even been inadvertently tested already! The extinguishers are in place and the signs are on the restroom doors. As of this writing, the floor transitions are to be installed, and some minor



corrections made to ensure that the plumbing and electrical components are all up current code requirements. Then we will be calling for a thorough cleaning and a final inspection for occupancy certification.

So... the community service center has a brand-new look, and is getting ready to fulfill its mission once again. One last question remains... are WE ready to take up the mantle once more and use

it with the intent of serving our community, honoring God with loving care and shared resources? I can hear your voices already, with resounding "Amen's!" Let's go!





corrections made to ensure that the plumbing and electrical components are all up current code requirements. Then we will be calling for a thorough cleaning and a final inspection for occupancy certification.

So... the community service center has a brand-new look, and is getting ready to fulfill its mission once again. One last question remains... are WE ready to take up the mantle once more and use

it with the intent of serving our community, honoring God with loving care and shared resources? I can hear your voices already, with resounding "Amen's!" Let's go!



PCAS Week of Prayer

BY AMY HUNTER
FIRST AND SECOND GRADE TEACHER

From March 18-22, we were blessed with the GoThere4 ministry team. We embarked on an enlightening journey through the Bible's pages, delving into its profound message as the ultimate love letter from God.

GoThere4 led the daily sermonette, and unpacked the significance of scripture in our lives.

On our first day, we explored the majestic story of creation, marveling at the intricate beauty and divine purpose behind God's handiwork.

Our 3rd and 4th graders took center stage as they led us in heartfelt worship, lifting their

voices in praise and adoration. It's awe-inspiring to witness our young ones embracing their faith with such fervor and dedication.

We are excited to continue this enriching journey together with our students. Let's immerse ourselves in the timeless wisdom of the Bible, recognizing it as a love letter that speaks directly to our hearts.

Thank you for entrusting us with the privilege of nurturing your child's spiritual growth.



Photo credit: Amy Hunter

30



**Students
requested
Bible studies
and baptism**



Photos submitted by Rodney- Brydson Ocean





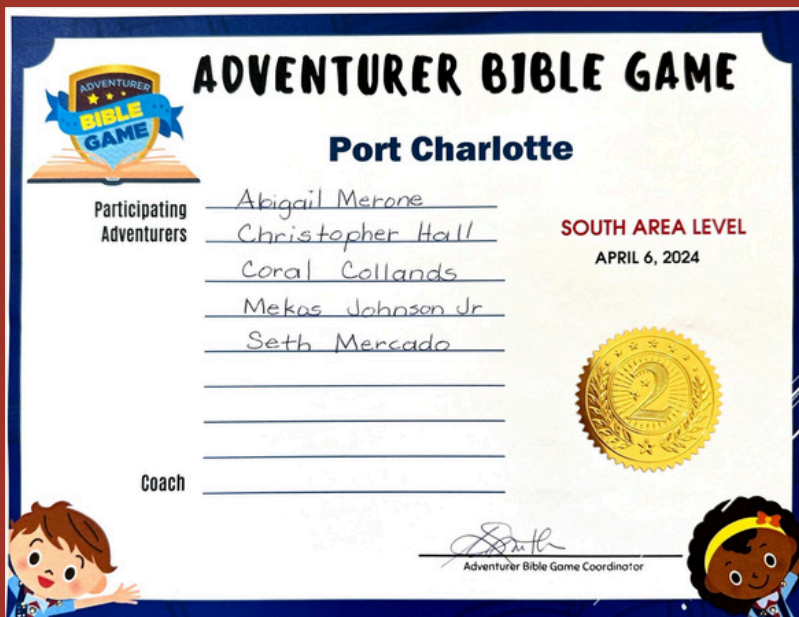
Photo submitted by Aixa Molina

ADVENTURERS BIBLE GAME

CONGRATS TO OUR ADVENTURERS

BY AIXA MOLINA

On April 6th, the Adventurers went to the Pompano Beach church for the Adventurer Bible Game 2024, along with five other churches of south of Florida. Adventurers and parents participated in the game together, and won second place. The kids had 40 questions to answer as a team and the parents had ten. We are grateful that they worked hard to learn the book of Luke and represented our church very well. Praise goes to the Lord! Thank you to the parents for their support.





The Chosen

Season 4, episodes 1-4 are available to watch at our church, but not yet available for personal streaming.

Come enjoy these episodes together in the sanctuary on Tuesday nights at 6 pm.

April 30 - episode 2

May 7 - episode 3

May 14 - episode 4



941-629-1333
2036 Loveland Blvd.
Pt. Charlotte, FL 33952

www.pcsda.net



Thank You PCAS Students!

The third and fourth graders wrote notecards to Esther Ryan to encourage her in her health challenges. They meant so much to Esther that she took a photo of them. Children provide blessings in a special way, so keep up the good work kids.



In Our Next Issue:

We will catch you up with photos and articles about the happenings of the past several months while we were on a hiatus.

FRESH Start Editor:

Laura Dancek

pcsdacommunication@gmail.com