



# THE LIGHT



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# Pastor's Page with Rev. Dr. Valdir Franca

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## *Miami Shores Green Day – Caring for God's Creation Together*



On Saturday, April 18th, our church will join the Miami Shores community on what has been named through the years as **Green Day**. This is a special opportunity for our congregation to come together in faithful stewardship of the world God has entrusted to our care. Our church and the MSPCS will spend the day engaging in conversations about practical steps toward caring for God's creation.

As people of faith, we believe that creation care is not simply a matter of environmental concern—it is an act of discipleship. In **Genesis 2:15**, we are told that “The Lord God took the human and put them in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.” From the very beginning, humanity has been called not to exploit creation, but to tend it lovingly and responsibly.

PC(USA)'s teaching on Caring for God's Creation reminds us that stewardship of the earth is a sacred trust and an expression of gratitude for God's gifts.

Earth Day in the life of the church is more than a cultural observance—it is a spiritual reminder that “the earth is the Lord's, and all that is in it” (Psalm 24:1). When we care for the land, reduce waste, plant beauty, and preserve resources, we bear witness to the God who called creation good and who continues to sustain it in love. Our denomination encourages congregations to include earth care as part of worship, education, and mission because caring for creation reflects our commitment to God's justice and our love for neighbor, especially as environmental harm often impacts the most vulnerable first.

Green Day is a chance to live out this calling together—not only improving our church grounds, participating in the Garden ministry, but deepening our understanding that every small act of care can be a prayerful offering to God. Whether you help plant, clean, organize, mulch, or simply encourage others, your presence matters.

Let us gather in gratitude for the beauty of God’s world and in hope for the generations who will inherit it after us. Together, may we joyfully embrace our calling as caretakers of creation.

**We hope to see you there this Saturday, the 18th!**

Come ready to celebrate God’s good earth together.

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## **Volunteer with Us at Green Day!**



We need volunteers for one- or two-hour shifts to staff the church’s booth between 3:30 PM and 8:30 PM. We will be offering prayers, sharing information about MSPC, and giving out special gifts.

If you’re interested, please call Carol in the church office at (305-754-9541). We hope to have at least three volunteers for each hour—so grab a friend and sign up! And don’t forget to stop by and say “hello!”

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*Green Never Looked So Good!  
Going Green Starts With You!*

*Join MSPC Booth*

# **GREEN DAY 2026**

Downtown Miami Shores  
(NE 2nd Ave @ 96-102nd Streets)

**Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>**  
3:30 PM - 8:30 PM

*Fun for All.  
Free admission and parking!*

[www.MSPC.net](http://www.MSPC.net)





MIAMI SHORES  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# MSPC SUMMER MUSIC SERIES

**THE SUMMER MUSIC SERIES IS BACK!**

*This year, we will have performances at 4:00 p.m. on Sundays. Tickets are \$20 and are available now using the QR code or at the door. Bring your friends and neighbors - Our goal is to invite people into our amazing space to feel the joy and sense of community we have as a church family.*

## **SUNDAYS 4:00 PM**

**MAY 31ST - HAZORI STRINGS**

**JUNE 14TH - BOP SHOP BRASS**

**JULY 19TH - NICOLE HENRY**

**AUGUST 16TH - WENDY PEDERSEN & JIM GASIOR**



**SCAN FOR TICKETS OR  
PURCHASE AT THE DOOR**

602 NE 96th St, Miami Shores, FL 33138 | [www.MSPC.net](http://www.MSPC.net)



## Thank You for a Beautiful Easter!

Thank you to everyone who came and celebrated Easter with us! It was a joyful and meaningful day because of each of you!





**A heartfelt thank you to our members, elders, and deacons for all their work behind the scenes, to the children who participated, to our musicians for the beautiful worship, and to our amazing staff for making it possible!**



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# Mission Corner

by *Leslie Wallace & Debbie Carreiro*

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Thank you for all the donations to the "First Sunday of the Month Donations." Your contributions are so necessary in helping to alleviate distress in people's lives. Food, clothing, personal hygiene products, and home goods are shared and received with gratitude.

The Mission Committee is doing meaningful work in South Florida and beyond. We serve in other locations across the United States, as well as in Haiti and Zimbabwe. (Find the thank-you letter from **House of Hope** on the next page.)

Come and join our dynamic Committee! There are monthly meetings and many ways to serve, from food deliveries and backpack donations to college care packages and replenishing needed supplies and garments for unhoused people.

The next Mission Committee meeting is scheduled for May 10, after church. Please come! A Mission Fair is being planned for the future to share information about the missions we currently undertake. May 3, 2026, is the next Food First Sunday.

## EYEGLOSS DONATION PROJECT

*Please Share the Gift of Sight*

MSPC is now a collection site for used prescription eyeglasses, prescription sunglasses, and readers! The Narthex has a basket for depositing glasses before they are taken to a Costco Optical Center. Costco partners with Assist International, a nonprofit whose volunteers sort and distribute donations to people with visual impairments worldwide.

Please check your drawers and closets, and when you find unused or out-of-date prescription glasses, bring them to Miami Shores Presbyterian Church.

Thank you for your generosity!



70  
YEARS

Spreading hope & changing lives  
— all thanks to partners like you!

April 2026

Thank you so much for your recent gift.

We truly couldn't do this ministry without your support. Thank you for your generosity.

We appreciate your important role in bringing hope and change to the children we serve.



This year we celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> year that the HOH has been ministering to children and youth in Haiti. In 1956, nurse Caroline Bradshaw saw a need for long-term medical care for children with various health challenges. Over the years, the HOH has been through some dramatic changes as the needs in Haiti have changed. For those of us who live at the HOH or are more connected we've watched these changes take place in small increments, and it isn't until we look back at pictures from years ago that we realize just how much change has taken place. It is especially surprising when we look at before and after pictures of kids who have been with us a long time.

Earlier this year, twins Lovena and Lovenide turned 8. They were so tiny and sick when they arrived at the HOH. We spent numerous nights at the hospital with them, and many more sleepless nights nursing and praying them back to health. Our Father graciously has given them health over these years of growth and change. They are lovely girls, but as different as can be. Lovena is outgoing and always in the middle of whatever is going on. Lovenide is a bit more on the quiet side and often is found hanging back watching the action. Lovena excels in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, but Lovenide struggles with her 1<sup>st</sup> grade studies. Lovena is quick to give a smile, but you must work hard to coax one out of Lovenide. Despite their personality differences, they are both loved by and love Jesus. And they are thriving where God has placed them. We look forward to more change for them in the years ahead.



Another change we have been able to observe recently is that of Lovedine. Her mother passed away when she was 2 and she was brought to the HOH. It is easy to see the pain on her young face, but God, in His mercy brought her healing, peace and joy. At the HOH she was loved and cared for, and then she in turn loved and cared for many who came in behind her. She remained a faithful helper until the day she left and moved on.

During recent travels, Jenny was able to meet up with Lovedine at a partnering church. It was wonderful to see her, and also to see how she is thriving where she is at. She works hard supporting herself. She is involved in a local church and when she isn't working, she is studying. Without warning, Lovedine was asked to speak to the church. She stood without hesitation and wept as she gave them a heartfelt thank you for their years of giving that changed her life as well as many others. If she met up with you, she would give you the same thanks. You might not always get to see the change your support brings about, but we are so grateful that you still give and allow the Lord to change lives through you. It is a pleasure to partner with you, and together with Psalm 115:1 we say...

"Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!"

For updates from the HOH, check out our blog:  
[houseofhopehaiti.org/blog](http://houseofhopehaiti.org/blog)

To receive weekly updates via e-mail write us:  
[houseofhopehaiti1@gmail.com](mailto:houseofhopehaiti1@gmail.com)

Or you can join our private FB page for these updates at:  
[facebook.com/groups/houseofhopehaiti1/](https://facebook.com/groups/houseofhopehaiti1/)



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# Garden Ministry

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## WHAT IS THIS TREE?



Many of you have walked by it, climbed it, appreciated the gently breeze and shade of this tree that has been growing in our church courtyard for 40+ years.

This beautiful tree is a **Pongamia tree!**

Many years ago it was used all over South Florida as an ornamental tree but it was discontinued because it is considered an invasive plant.

The Pongamia tree is native to India, Southeast Asia and Australia. It produces a legume or seed pod that has a bitter taste. The legume is packed with protein that can be processed into food for humans and animals. What's more the oil from the legume has the potential to become a sustainable biofuel. This unassuming tree can grow in any soil, is mostly pest resistant and fertilizes itself. What's more, the Pongamia tree adds nitrogen to the soil, stores carbon, which helps to mitigate the effects of climate change.



*Is your daughter or son graduating from high school, undergraduate/graduate school or vocational school this year?*

*We'd like to celebrate them in the next Light issues.*

*Please send an email to **Marta Lavandier** at **[MLavandier2000@yahoo.com](mailto:MLavandier2000@yahoo.com)** to get more information.*



# MSPCS NEWS

Dear MSPC Church Community



This month at our school reflected not just celebration, but a strong sense of growth, community, and shared experiences. We began with Read Across America Week, where our preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade students nurtured their love for reading through the imaginative works of Dr. Seuss. A particularly meaningful highlight was in kindergarten, where family members joined us throughout the week to read to the students, creating special moments that strengthened both literacy and the home-school connection.

We also hosted our Spelling Bee finals, a moment that showcased perseverance, discipline, and confidence. While we proudly celebrated our three winners, we also recognized every participant for their dedication and courage to take on the challenge. Congratulations to our winners: First Place: Armand H., Second Place: Sofia H. and Third Place: James M. We are so proud of them and all of our Spelling Bee Participants.

In celebration of St. Patrick's Day, our Student Council brought the community together with a lively dance. Students had the opportunity to fellowship through music, crafts, and shared joy, reinforcing the importance of connection and school spirit.

We concluded the month with our Easter show, where students beautifully expressed their talents in a heartfelt celebration of "He Is Risen." This event was a reflection of both creativity and faith, made possible by the support of our parents, staff, and, most importantly, our students, who continue to inspire us every day.

**Satrina Chargualaf**

# Upcoming Dates & Events

**First Sunday of the Month:** Pass It On Collection,  
Chapman Partnership & Safespace Donation

**Sundays:** 10 AM Adult Bible Study - Library

**Sundays:** 10:30 AM Nursery (Up to 4 Years)

**Sundays: 11 AM Worship Service**

**Sundays:** 11:15 AM Children's Church - Library

**Sundays:** 12:15 PM Fellowship Hour

**Saturdays: 9:00 AM Anti-Racism Book Club**

**Wednesdays: 9:00 AM Soft Dolls - Room 135**

**Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> : 3:30 PM GREEN DAY**

**DOWNTOWN MIAMI SHORES**

**Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>: MOTHER'S DAY**

**Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>: 4:00 PM First Show**

**MSPC Music Summer Series - Hazori**

**Strings (Purchase tickets)**

## Share Your Light!

*Have a story, reflection, or  
idea you'd love to share?  
Interested in being featured  
in The Light?*

*We'd love to hear from you!*

*Send your questions or  
article submissions to  
[mrodriguez@mspc.net](mailto:mrodriguez@mspc.net) for a  
chance to be published in an  
upcoming edition.*

*Let your voice shine!*

## The Light Staff -April & May 2026

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