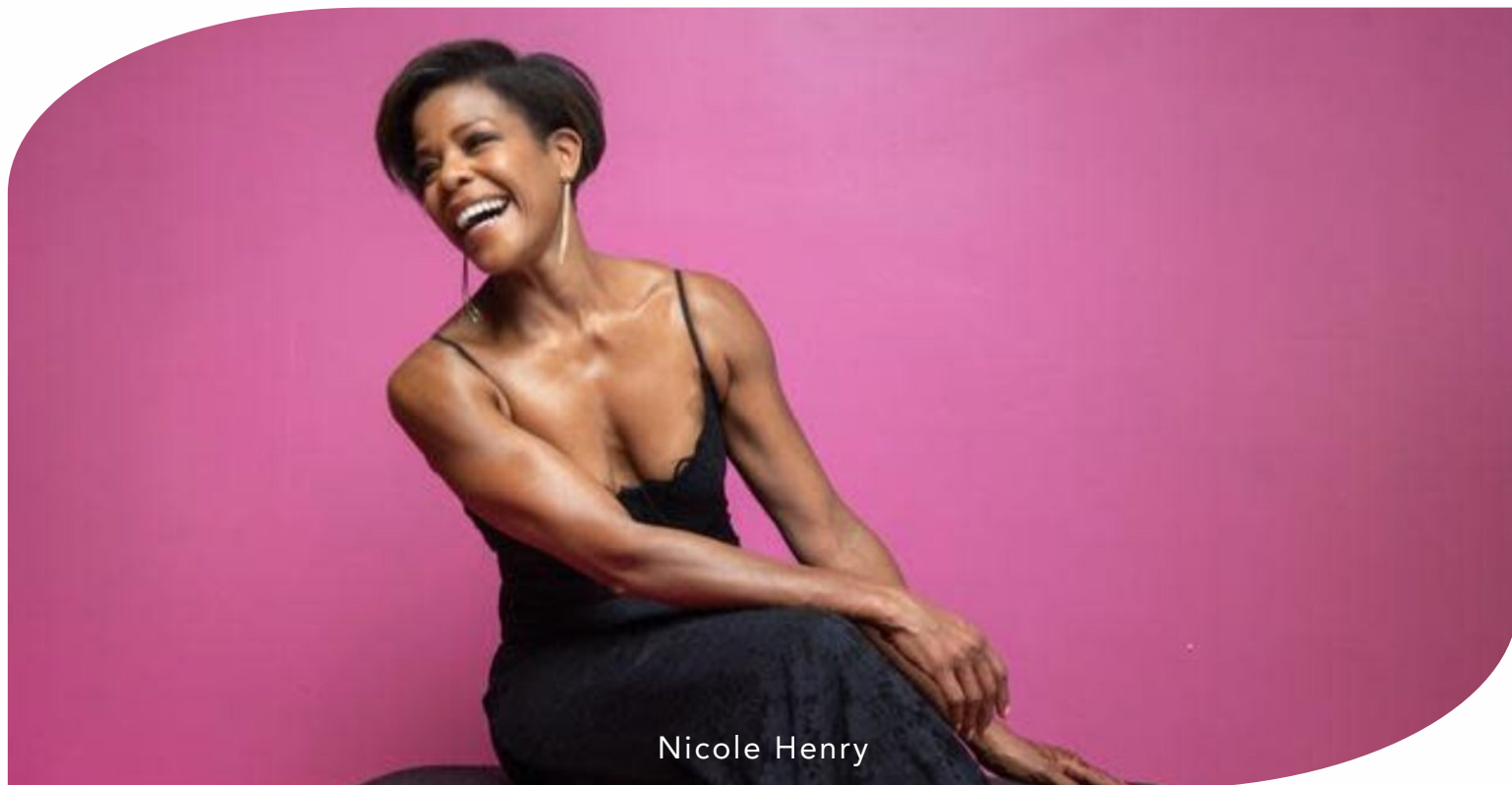




THE LIGHT



Nicole Henry



Jim Gasior & Wendy Pedersen

Pastor's Page with Rev. Dr. Valdir Franca

Building Community in a World Cup Season

*"A new command I give you:
Love one another"*



As we prepare to release this issue of The Light, the world is gathering at our doorstep through the FIFA World Cup. Nations, cultures, languages, and traditions are coming together in a celebration that transcends borders. For many reasons, I love this game. Soccer is simple enough to be played almost anywhere, yet profound enough to unite people who may otherwise have little in common. In many ways, it mirrors our own efforts to build authentic community.

A soccer team is made up of individuals with different gifts, strengths, and responsibilities. Some score goals, others defend, and still others create opportunities that may never appear on the scoreboard. Yet success comes only when each player understands that the team is greater than any individual achievement. Community works the same way. Healthy communities are not built around personal recognition but around shared purpose, mutual support, and a commitment to one another.

Jesus understood this truth well. In the Gospel of John, he reminds his followers:

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
(John 13:34–35)

Just as a soccer team learns to trust one another on the field, followers of Christ are called to cultivate trust, encouragement, and sacrificial love in their relationships. Community is not simply about being in the same place; it is about moving together toward a common goal.

Building Community: Lessons from Bonhoeffer

The German theologian and pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer devoted much of his life to understanding Christian community. In his book *Life Together*, Bonhoeffer warned against idealized visions of community and instead encouraged believers to embrace one another as God has given them. He wrote that Christian fellowship is a gift of grace, not a human achievement.

Bonhoeffer recognized that true community is formed when people gather around Christ rather than around their own preferences. Like a soccer team, a community cannot thrive if every member insists on playing their own game. Unity emerges when individuals commit themselves to a shared mission and learn to serve one another.

His insight remains deeply relevant today. In a world often marked by division, polarization, and isolation, Christian communities have an opportunity to model something different: a place where people are welcomed, valued, and encouraged to grow together.

The Beautiful Game and the Beautiful Gift

One of the most beautiful aspects of the World Cup is watching people celebrate together. Fans from different nations fill the same stadiums, share stories, and experience moments of joy and disappointment side by side. For a few weeks, the game reminds us of our common humanity.

The church is called to offer something even greater. We are invited to become a community where people from every background can find belonging, purpose, and hope. Like players wearing different numbers but representing the same team, we each bring unique gifts while serving a common mission.

As you read this issue of *The Light*, may the excitement surrounding the World Cup inspire us to reflect on our own role in building community. May we learn to pass the ball more than we seek the spotlight, to encourage rather than criticize, and to celebrate the successes of others as our own.

For in the end, the strongest teams—and the strongest communities—are not built on individual talent alone. They are built on trust, love, and a shared commitment to something greater than themselves.

Mission Corner

by Leslie Wallace & Marta Lavandier

The Missions Committee hosted a luncheon to showcase the partners and events we support in our community. Missions members displayed boards and spoke with members of the congregation about the many ways they can get involved.



FOOD COLLECTION

Donations for Third Sunday PIO (Pass It On) Food Bank. This is an expanded program to recognize the increased need for food in our area. Thank you to the members of the congregation who continue to support Pass It On and who have also made an extra effort with food donations.



The table in the breezeway was filled with people who expressed a desire to help and also shared how grateful they were that they could contribute and support others. Our church will now be collecting non-perishable items for Pass It On on the first and third Sundays of each month.

Again, thank you from the Mission Committee.



MIAMI SHORES
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE! ♥



STARTING
SUNDAY, MAY 31
THROUGH

Sunday, August 5



OUR GOAL:
FILL 150 BACKPACKS

to benefit our three local elementary schools, the children at Pass It On, Safespace, the Nora Sandigo Children Foundation, and, for the first time, House of Hope.



OR FOR **\$30**,
you can fund a backpack
full of supplies.

Please add "BACKPACK DRIVE"
to your check or online
payment memo.

YOU ARE WELCOME TO DONATE
THE FOLLOWING SUPPLIES: ♥

- ✓ 1 backpack
- ✓ 2 wide ruled composition books
- ✓ 1 pack wide ruled paper
- ✓ 2 folders with pockets
- ✓ Crayons 24 count
- ✓ 1 small pack of #2 pencils
- ✓ Colored pencils
- ✓ Erasers
- ✓ 1 covered pencil sharpener
- ✓ 1 pencil pouch
- ✓ 1 blunt end scissor
- ✓ 1 glue stick
- ✓ 1 highlighter
- ✓ 1 special item (small notebook, cute pencil or pen, etc)



*Thank you for supporting
our children and community!*



PLEASE JOIN US

Sunday, August 5

TO FILL THE BACKPACKS
IN FELLOWSHIP HALL! ♥

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

ADVENTURE AWAITS: FOLLOWING JESUS EVERY DAY

By Luisa Bernal-Blanco



Hi Everyone,

I am very excited to be helping with VBS this year! Our theme is "**Adventure Awaits: Following Jesus Every Day**," based on Matthew 4:19: "Come, follow me," Jesus said. The theme focuses on helping children understand that following Jesus is something we do every day through our actions, kindness, and faith.

During the week, we will learn how Jesus calls us to follow Him, how much He loves everyone, how we can trust Him when we are afraid, how to serve others, and celebrate that He is alive. Through Bible stories, worship, crafts, games, snacks, and hands-on activities, we hope every child will grow closer to Jesus and have lots of fun along the way.

It is a blessing to be part of VBS this year, especially as my first time leading it. I am looking forward to spending this special week with our children and families as we learn more about God's love and continue growing in our faith together.

We hope your children can join us for VBS, July 20–24, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

I can't wait to see you there!

Blessings,

Ms. Blanco

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



MIAMI SHORES
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Theme:

Adventure Awaits:
Following Jesus Every Day



Dates:

July 20-24



Time:

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM



Cost:

\$80 per week

No aftercare available



Early Drop-Off Available

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

\$25 additional fee per week



Registration Opens:

JUNE 15

For more information or to register,
please contact:



Carol at 305-754-9541



cwilde@mspc.net



2026 MSPC MEMBERS GRADUATES

- Parent: **Susan Carlson**
- University: **Elon University**
- Degree: **Psychology**, with minors in Human Resources Management and Human Service Studies
- **Honors:** Graduated Magna Cum Laude and was inducted into both the Psychology Honor Society and the Human Service Studies Honor Society.
- **Future Plans:** After a trip to Italy with her family, Kate will begin a Human Resources Management position in South Florida.
- **Favorite MSPC Memory:** *"I have so many fond memories of MSPC, including MSPCS, but most importantly, I remember how the church and Pastor Kim were always welcoming and encouraged me to have fun, explore, help others, and grow my faith. I will always remember volunteering in the community, including at the library, installing new landscaping, painting the pillars at the bay, serving dinner at Chapman Partnership, and the summer youth trips to New Orleans and West Virginia."*

KATE CARLSON



DESTINY ROBINSON

- Guardian: **Ms. Joyce McElwee**
- High School: The Academy of Excellence
- College: **Miami Dade College**
- Major: Computer Science
- **Favorite MSPC Memory:** *"Her fondest memory of MSPC was being part of the Living Nativity every year, starting as a cherub and angel and continuing as she got older."*

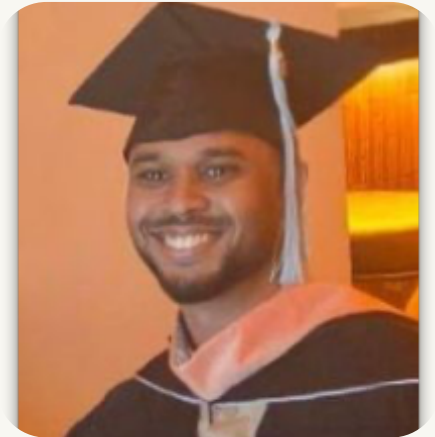


EMMY SHOAF

- Parent: **Elizabeth Shoaf**
- Grandparents: Dave and Diane Shoaf
- High School: Miami Country Day School
- University: **University of Oregon**
- Major: Human Physiology and Psychology
- **Favorite MSPC Memory:** "My favorite memory from MSPC is the Living Nativity. I always had so much fun being in the street scene and eating cookies during the break with my friends. Another one of my favorite memories is singing in the children's choir."

SIMON RAMNAUTH

- Aunt: **Grace Moore**
- Graduate School: City University of New York Graduate Center
- Degree: **Master's Degree in Environmental and Occupational Health Services**



LAIANNI MOORE

- Grandparent: **Grace Moore**
- University: **Tennessee State University**
- Degree: **Bachelor of Science in Political Science**
- **Honors:** Graduated Summa Cum Laude and earned numerous academic achievements throughout her college career.
- **Future Plans:** Laianni Moore got a job with the Senate office in Nashville, Tennessee. She also plans to pursue a master's degree in her field.

MSPC SUMMER MUSIC SERIES

THE SUMMER MUSIC SERIES IS HERE!

The Summer Music Series is an opportunity to welcome friends and neighbors into our church to hear talented musicians fill the space with the power of music. We encourage everyone to spread the word, buy tickets and invite your community. Tickets are just \$20 and available on Eventbrite (search MSPC) or at the door.

July 19th - Nicole Henry
**August 16th - Wendy Pedersen &
Jim Gasior**

SUNDAYS 4:00 PM



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



602 NE 96th St, Miami Shores, FL 33138 | www.MSPC.net



MSPCS NEWS

Dear MSPC Church Community



As we reflect on the many blessings of May and June, we are grateful for another successful and faith-filled school year.

The month of May began with Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week, a special opportunity to recognize our dedicated educators and staff who faithfully serve our students each day. Through the generosity of our students, parents, and families, they were showered with expressions of gratitude and appreciation. We extend a heartfelt thank you to our Parent Association for their continued support, including the monthly staff lunches that are so thoughtfully provided throughout the year.

On May 22, teachers met with parents during Parent Conferences to review students' MAP Testing results and celebrate their academic growth and achievements.

As the school year drew to a close, our school community enjoyed several memorable events, including the Safety Patrol Breakfast, Math Olympiad, the WAVES Got Talent Show, and the Parent Association's Boosterthon/Fun Run fundraiser. These activities brought together students, families, and staff in celebration of a wonderful year of learning and fellowship.

Our culminating events were the cherished Graduation Ceremonies for our PK4, Kindergarten, and Fifth Grade classes. We bid farewell to our 5th-grade students and wish them all the blessings as they head into middle school. These special celebrations marked important milestones in our students' educational journeys and provided an opportunity to thank God for His many blessings throughout the year.

We are grateful for your support and look forward to another year of faith, learning, and service.

Sincerely,

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

Now through August 2: School Supply Drive

Sunday, July 19: 4:00 PM MSPC Summer

Music Series - NICOLE HENRY

(Tickets available online)

**JULY 20 TO 24: VACATION BIBLE
SCHOOL (Now Registering!)**

✨ **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 for a
chance to be published in an
upcoming edition.*

Let your voice shine! 🧡

The Light Staff -July 2026

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