

BACK HOME FROM LA GUAIRA, VENEZUELA

I learned so much on this trip. I met incredible people and witnessed firsthand the courage of rescue workers, volunteers, and survivors. I saw their determination, held their hands, prayed with them, and listened to their stories. I will never forget their faces.

Before leaving, I had no time to prepare. My wife reached out to friends who generously lent us equipment, shared advice, and helped us pack for the unknown. Their kindness reminded me of the beauty of Christian community. We are deeply grateful.

What impressed me most was the heart of the Venezuelan people. I met individuals who dropped everything and rushed to La Guaira without waiting for organized plans or formal assignments. They slept on sidewalks, under tents, and on piles of donated clothing. They worked with little rest and asked for no recognition. Their actions spoke louder than words. They simply wanted to save lives.

I met a young woman who joined more than 70 Venezuelan tech professionals from around the world to create an information hub dedicated to gathering verified resources and reducing misinformation.

I met medical professionals who established camps near the disaster zones and served victims around the clock. One group of young doctors left their hospital to bring water to exhausted first responders. They weren't seeking attention—they simply saw a need and responded.

One story I will never forget involved an Adventist rescuer whose firefighter boot had literally come apart after days of relentless work. Resourceful volunteers searched through debris, found screws from a damaged fan, and repaired the boot on the spot. Afterward, one worker even offered his own boots, saying he would tell his company he had lost them. Such selfless generosity is hard to describe.

International rescue teams also brought encouragement. Amid the tragedy, there was a remarkable sense of unity. Different languages, different uniforms, but one shared mission. It reminded me of Pathfinder international Camporees (<https://www.camporee.org/>)—except everyone was united in a solemn effort to search, rescue, and bring hope. We even exchanged patches.

The survivors touched me deeply. Many were still in shock days after the disaster. Some wrestled with survivor's guilt. Others wondered how they would rebuild their lives without homes, businesses, or loved ones.

I noticed a young entrepreneur standing alone beside a damaged building, holding a dusty gift bag—the only thing she had recovered from her business. She appeared deeply distressed, fighting back tears. Yet she felt guilty grieving because others had lost family members.

On our first night in La Guaira, we went directly to a collapsed site. As I carefully walked through the debris of a six-story building, I saw personal belongings scattered everywhere—bicycles, books, toys, cards. Reminders of lives that once filled those rooms with laughter and dreams.

I picked up a single UNO card and slipped it into my pocket. Today, I looked at it closely. It was a green Reverse card. I broke down in tears. For me, that card became a symbol of hope. A reminder that one day God will reverse all pain, suffering, death, and loss.

"He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." — Revelation 21:4

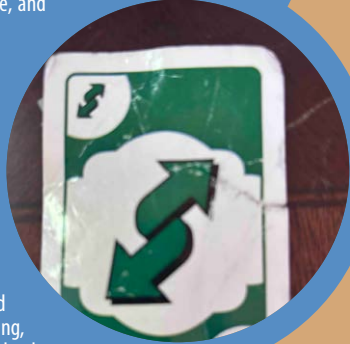
The green color speaks of growth, renewal, and life. One day, the brown debris and brokenness of this world will give way to green pastures, beauty, and restoration. "... I am making all things new..." — Rev 21: 5.

"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first." — 1 Thessalonians 4: 16.

Until that day, we continue serving Jesus, loving people, and inviting others to place their hope in Him.

Nelson Silva

Full Post with pics: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1DKekL9dpT/>



Contacts

Pastor - Glenn Hill

Head Elder - Tony Estella

Head Deacon - Eric Berger

Head Teacher - Michelle Comstock

Communications - Igor Kikena

Clerk - Teresa Johnston

Audio Visual Team

Our Mission

To honor God by nurturing a Christ-centered church family, mentoring all ages, building genuine relationships by growing and connecting together in love through selfless service as we share the hope of Christ's return. (Matthew 28:18-20)

LOVE • CONNECT • SERVE



Visit our website for other resources, like live or recorded sermons, articles, etc: ridgetopsda.com



Check out our new Facebook page: [Ridgetop 7th Day Adventist Church](#)

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Ridgetop SDA Church
July 11, 2026

Sabbath School

9:30 - 10:30 AM

SONG SERVICE 9:30 - 9:35 am
 LESSON STUDY 9:45 am
 ADULT LESSON STUDY Sanctuary
 YOUNG ADULT LESSON STUDY Purple Room
 YOUTH / TEEN STUDY Green Room
 EARLY TEEN / JUNIOR STUDY Green Room
 BEGINNERS (BIRTH TO 3 YRS) Children's
 KINDERGARTEN (4 - 6 YRS) Classrooms are
 PRIMARY (7 - 9 YRS) located across the
 foyer at the right-
 hand side of the
 Sanctuary

Join us!

- Potluck:** Third Sabbaths
- Breakfast Potluck:** Fourth Sabbaths, 8:30-9:15am. Bring something to share!
- Prayer Time Tuesdays:** Tuesdays 9:30am - 10:30am.
- Prayer Meeting:** Wednesdays at 7:00 pm right here at church .
- Pathfinders:** Thursdays 6:30-8pm. Contact Kurtis Lam.
- Adventurers:** 1st and 3rd Tuesday 3:15-4:30pm. Contact Don & Marilyn Kenerson.
- Community Service Center:** Tuesdays 9:00-11:00am. Contact Brenda Dempsey, Helen Kelly.
- Blessing Box:** Any time, let's keep it stocked! Questions: Tony or Julie Estella.

Worship 10:50 AM

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Earl Hall
 MISSION SPOTLIGHT
 PRAISE & WORSHIP Nancy Beard
 INVOCATION Earl Hall
 OPENING HYMN 672: Spirit of the Living God Nancy Beard
 TITHE & OFFERING WB-General Conference
 CHILDREN'S STORY Suzanna & Chad Andrew
 SCRIPTURE & PRAYER Exodus 17:7 Freida Lane
 SPECIAL MUSIC Kristi Shaw

MESSAGE
FRAGILE FAITH
 Manny Polanco

CLOSING HYMN 608: Faith is the Victory Nancy Beard
 BENEDICTION Manny Polanco

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 17:7

And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the Lord saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

To give tithes and offerings online visit adventistgiving.org or scan the QR code:



SUNSET TONIGHT: 8:08 PM
SUNSET NEXT WEEK: 8:04 PM

Bulletin: Please submit board approved announcements by Wednesday noon to bulletin@ridgetopsda.com

Church Events

JUL 11

Loma Linda labels for Sabbath School Investment: At 25 cents per label, Loma Linda labels with the UPC code are the only labels now accepted for S.S. Investment. Please continue to save them and place in box in front lobby. According to the instructions, "Funds should be used for worthy projects."

Share your scenic/inspirational photos for the bulletin: If you have any scenic photos you would like to share to be used for the bulletin cover, please send them to bulletin@ridgetopsda.com with a description of the location, your name, and (if you remember) when it was taken. We really appreciate it!

The Blessing Box: You can put items in the box at any time. Foods that are needed in the box: Canned fruit, vegetables, beans, stew, soup, fruit cups, dried fruit. Rice, dry beans, pasta, sauce, Mac and cheese, peanut butter and jelly/jam. Crackers, graham crackers, canned tuna, canned chicken or turkey sausages. Questions: Tony or Julie Estella.

JUL 13-18

VBS: "Cactusville where kids are called to follow Jesus!" Contact Marilyn Kenerson or Stephanie Grass for further information.

JUL 26

Back to School Party: 3-6pm. Be sure to invite all your friends and people in the community!

AUG 2

Wedding Shower Brunch Olivia & Jonathan: 10am-12pm celebrate with Olivia Nelson and Jonathan Vasquez. Kenerson's poolhouse pavilion: 5020 Brick church pike Goodlettsville, Tn. Money tree will be available. Can enter at gate between 5052 and 5046 and drive through field to park.



Wedding registry

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for our community outreach and children's ministries with VBS. Also for our immediate need for a K-2 teacher.
- Keep Truman Raines in your prayers as well as Rose Sanzone

Conference Events

AUG 4-9

Forever Young Camp (50+ Camp): Summer Camp for Adults— where fun knows no limits! Experience a week packed with crafts, ceramics, pickleball, horseback riding, zip lines, rock wall climbing, swimming, canoeing, skiing, and pontoon rides. Reconnect with friends and make new ones over great food, laughter, and inspiring times of worship. Whether you're craving excitement or relaxation, come celebrate life to the fullest (No kids allowed)

REGISTER
<https://kytnsda.regfox.com/2026-50-camp>



SEP 11-13

Women's Fall Retreat: Join us September 11-13 at ICC with Speaker, Jennifer Woody. **Early bird price until August 4:** \$170, Regular price: \$185, Sabbath only: \$80. For further information and to register visit: www.kytn.net/womens-fall-retreat

