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## *Thankfulness*

What are you thankful for? Will you be grateful for an end to this long and highly divisive political season (I think everyone knows the answer to that). Will you be elated if the Cubs win the World Series (probably not if you're an Indians fan). Are you thankful for a new car, new job? Or, will your thankfulness be a heartfelt remembrance of the many ways God's grace has weaved its way through your life this year?



This coming weekend as we celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary we do so with an immense sense of thankfulness. Beth-El has endured these 40 years thanks to countless volunteers, donations, and financial support, but what we are truly thankful for are the farmworkers whose hours in the fields fill our tables each day. Every night I go home to a place of safe shelter with a sound roof and comfortable bed to sleep in--filled with prayers that what I so often take for granted might someday be a reality for the families we serve.

Most farmworkers in our area live in mobile homes or subsidized housing. Their lodgings are overcrowded—sometimes two families sharing one space. The dwellings are dilapidated and frequently infested. Many absentee landlords charge each person a weekly fee and are quick to threaten eviction if someone falls even a week behind. Still, every day these men and women rise and take to the fields to pick the food for our tables.

This November the mission would like to show its thanks to some of these workers by providing a true Thanksgiving dinner. We are looking for partners willing to help us with the food preparation and serving: Turkey, mashed potatoes and stuffing—the whole 9 yards.



The dinner will be served at noon on Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at one of our local farms.

We expect to serve about 250 meals. If you would like to help, please call or email me at [Kathy@beth-el.org](mailto:Kathy@beth-el.org). And with grateful hearts let us give thanks.

Dios le bendiga

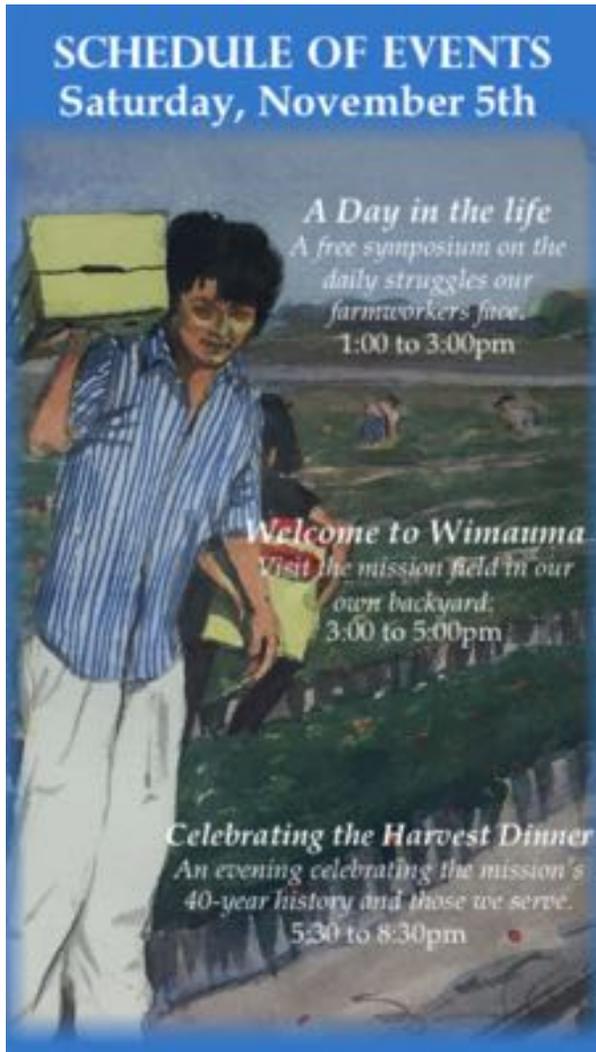
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathy".

Rev. Kathleen Dain  
Executive Director

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## Round Table Discussion on Farmworkers' Daily Struggles



Saturday afternoon Beth-El farmworker Ministry will host a round table symposium on the life and challenges our farmworkers face every day.

Guest speakers include members of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, Frontera de Cristo Border Ministry, and the National Farmworker Ministry, and local farmworkers.

***This event is free and open to the public.***

### **Welcome to Wimauma**

3:00 to 5:00 pm

Get a just hand glimpse of our community in and around the mission.

# Employee of the Month



Meet Maria Galarza. Maria has been with the mission for almost 13 years. If you've ever enjoyed some of the mission's tasty food, you can thank Maria. Maria always goes the extra mile in everything she does. Last week she noticed that one of our classrooms usually used for meetings looked a little dingy, so she took out some paint left over from our recent remodeling and went to work. Maria, like all of our staff bless the mission every day through their dedicated service.

*¡Gracias Maria por todo su trabajo duro!*

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## Step Up For Success



Step Up For Success is a mentorship program designed to help those in our community living in poverty seeking to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Many of the program participants don't have access to the appropriate attire when it's time to attend a job interview. We are accepting items for men and women such as: slacks, dress shirts, belts, shoes, ties, and dresses. Also, the Step Up For Success program is seeking volunteers who have skills and proficiency in areas such as: financial management, budgeting, human resources, public speaking, resume building, and computer skills. If you would like to make a donation, or volunteer, please contact: Kathy at [kathy@beth-el.org](mailto:kathy@beth-el.org). ***Teamwork makes the dream work!***

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# Hispanic, a Race?

## Conversation with Cubans in Cuba

By Rev. Walter F Chuquimia

Statistically speaking, the United States has created a new race called Hispanics, a race which is included in most “tell me about your life” forms and/or applications such as immigration forms. I have a Chilean friend of German decent who finds it frustrating that he cannot mark the little square that says “white.” You just can’t do that to a pure Aryan! Delfin Lluverez, a Dominican who came to the United States recently, is the proudest black person of the African descent. He’s also classified as a Hispanic. Ethnically, this is an error.

The Hispanic race does not exist. If there must be a statistical classification, Hispanics are a linguistically based community. There are different tones of skin colors who communicate among themselves in the same language. Maybe the United States, without realizing it, and because of its passion for statistics has “discovered” something that Hispanics have been missing all along. We have in our hands (excuse me, on our tongues) the best instrument for understanding that there is. The Hispanic race does not exist, but... that may not be such a bad thing after all. Although Cuban Americans have the tendency of excluding themselves of this overall concept they are a very important part of the history of Hispanics in the U.S.

During my recent visit to the Republic of Cuba, I had the opportunity to communicate directly with them because of my origin and the command of the Spanish language that I possess. I told them that the Cubans in the United States are one of the smallest groups (constituting less than five percent of all Hispanics) but they



are one of the most powerful politically. As refugees they have long dreamed of overthrowing Castro and returning home. Yet at a time when this dream seems closer to realization than ever, its appeal has begun to diminish, particularly among younger Cuban Americans born and raised in the U.S. I also told them that it is striking how Cubans have a significantly higher naturalization rate than Mexicans,

whose long and complex history in the Southwest has translated into one of the lowest naturalization rates. This helps to explain why Mexican's do not yet have the political power commensurate with their numbers. They were very interested in identifying some common issues for Spanish speakers in the United States.



I shared with them that bilingual education and the voting rights act are two issues around which most Hispanics have been able to come together. Yet there are plenty of other issues where Hispanic interest does not neatly converge. Cubans have focused on anti-Castro initiatives; Puerto Ricans have been preoccupied with statehood questions and the

rest of the Latin Americans with immigration issues, and currently are pushing the younger generation to take on the responsibility of exercising their right to vote.

*“The way I speak Spanish”* also caught their attention. I said to myself, is that bad or good? Then I remembered reading that *“The way we speak Spanish”* tops the list of significant differences among Hispanics. In Riverview, FL for example, the director of a child-care center (serving Mexican, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and a variety of Central and South American immigrants) notes that the idiomatic differences among them are so great that composing Spanish-language materials acceptable to parents and staff usually involves heated negotiations.

I enjoyed visiting Cuba. The detachment from phone calls, television, radio stations did well for me. Thank you Tampa Bay and Peace River Presbyteries. Gracias Beth-El Mission.

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## Immediate Needs

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry has an immediate need for the following items:

- **Turkeys**
- **Gently used light jackets & sweaters (S,M,L)**
- **Mittens**
- **Blankets**
- **Beanies**
- **Socks**
- **Warm pants**
- **Flannel long sleeves shirts**



We are in need of churches or groups to sponsor our Community Dinner for December 13th 2016 and forward into the year 2017. Community Dinners are held the second Tuesday of each month from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. If any one is interested, please contact Javier or Sheila at (813) 633-1548 for more details.

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I would like to become more involved at Beth-El Mission as a Volunteer:

- Community Dinner
- Food Pantry
- Lead VBS
- Organize a Workgroup
- Organize a Food Drive
- Organize a Clothing Drive

I would like to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_

- Summer Camp Scholarships
- Back to School Program
- VBS Supplies
- College Scholarships
- Music Lessons for Youth
- Food Pantry
- Mission's Greatest Need

**Support Beth-El Mission with your online contribution today.**



# Adopt a Family

The Adopt a family program has been a blessing for families that otherwise wouldn't be able to afford a meaningful gift for their children and even less for themselves. This Christmas, please consider *adopting a family*. The process is simple. Just call Beth-El, and pastor Walter will provide you with the names and ages of a family in need, you also can contact him at [walter@beth-el.org](mailto:walter@beth-el.org)



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**A Printable Copy of this Newsletter is Available on our  
Website at: [www.beth-el.org](http://www.beth-el.org) or by emailing us at:  
[info@beth-el.org](mailto:info@beth-el.org)**

**Beth-El**  
*Farmworker Ministry, Inc.*

Fueled by Volunteers and Your Faithful Prayers and Support

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Web: [www.beth-el.org](http://www.beth-el.org)



Beth-El Farmworker Ministry is open Monday through Thursday from  
8a.m. to 5p.m., or by special appointment.  
We are closed from noon until 1p.m. for lunch.



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