



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



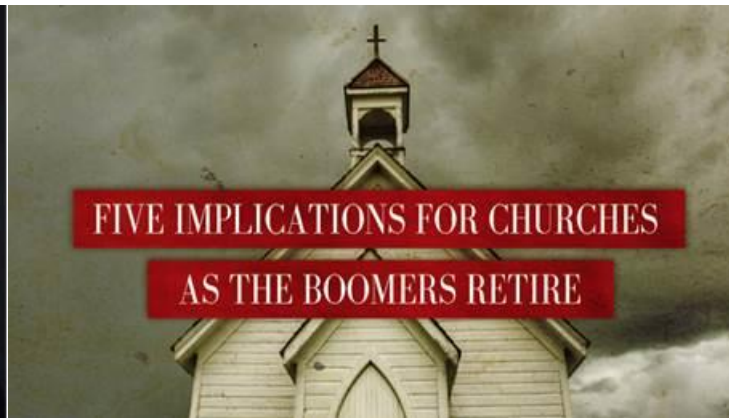
WEEKLY PRESBYTERY LETTER - FEBRUARY 10, 2015
Rev. Graham Hart, General Presbyter

Speaking from the Hart

Part 1 - Gratitude for a life lived well

As was shared several weeks ago, Steve Hayner, a friend and colleague, President of Columbia Seminary, died on January 31st. Many of us kept up with his fight with cancer and his joyful embrace of life, even to the end, through the Caring Bridge web-site. Several times a week he would share updates on his condition, as well as some of the most honest reflections I have read on death, dying, and those three abiding realities called faith, hope, and love. In my last conversation with him in December, I shared gratitude for the gift he has been to so many, including me, and the gift he has given by sharing his journey so openingly and honestly. It was one of those conversations that one tucks away and cherishes. Sharol, Steve's wife of 42 years has posted two wonderful reflections, which I have shared below. One is a parable that a lifelong friend shared with Steve about what it may be like to die, which is really about what it means to live, and the other is Sharol's expression of thanks, as well as a refreshingly honest sharing about marriage, and missing Steve (see below for the posts)

Part 2 - The Baby-boomers are coming February 26.... [\(Click here for video presentation\)](#)



Every day since January 1, 2011 10,000 have turned 65, and that will continue until 2030 when the last Baby Boomers will be 65 or older. Are we ready?

One writer speculates what some of the implications of this massive demographic shift will have on the church. He believes:

1. **They will have less money to give to churches.**
2. **Some will have more volunteer time.**
3. **Most of the Boomers still want to change the world.**
4. **Many of the Boomers will be traveling more.**
5. **Retiring Boomers will kill traditional church senior adult ministries.**

So are we ready? And do we know how to reach them? The good news is they are more church-ed than their children and grand-children, but the bad news is they are not as church-ed as past generations. So for those of us here in southwest Florida, how do we ministry and relate and prepare for this changing demographic?

We are suggesting that every church have a team come to the presentation of Amy Hanson on Baby-Boomers and Beyond, February 26 at Pine Shores Presbyterian Church in Sarasota, and one of the regional workshops on February 27 at First, Bonita (9:30 to noon) and Trinity, Venice (5:00 – 8:00). Please see the attached brochure for more details, and go to Amy's web-site for more background information ([click here](#)) or if you want to [download a chapter](#) from her book – [click here](#).

So for the gift of life, and chance to make a difference in the lives of others, thanks be to God!

Graham

Graham Hart – graham@peacriverpresbytery.org



Fullness of Joy

By [Sharol Hayner](#) — January 31, 2015

Steve's life was swallowed up by LIFE this afternoon. As we had prayed, and he had written about, he went home "before dark," without pain and surrounded by family and dear friends.

We are grieved, but not as those who have no hope. Truly, it was beautiful to walk him home together and we trust that he is now experiencing the fullness of joy in Jesus' presence.

Steve Harrington, who has been a friend of ours for three decades, recently wrote about a memory of a time together with Steve on a retreat. He has turned the memory into a parable which speaks deeply to me every time I read it:

My favorite unique memory with you was years ago at Wellspring Retreat Center. You remember we were given various iterations of the "trust walk". In one of those exercises we were supposed to guide our blindfolded partner from behind using only our voice. You walked in front of me and I directed you with only words into a small thicket of woods. I had you stepping over logs and ducking down below strong branches. You went slowly and could feel dead wood snapping beneath your feet and all of the twigs on your face as you brushed past them. You knew that you were walking through a very thick and tangled terrain – a precarious path for someone blindfolded and having to trust only the words spoken to them.

Then I brought you almost out of the woods to the very edge of a large flat grassy field and stopped you 6 inches from the grass – you were still standing in the woods blindfolded (you remember, right?). You had no idea that all the tangles and tripping hazards and undergrowth and slapping branches and hard trees were behind you and that before you was

only a broad, flat, lush field of green grass. You were still in the woods imagining yourself stuck in the midst of all the tangles and hazards. Only I knew that before you it was all level and open and free of any encumbrance or danger or fear.

Then I said, at the count of three I want you to run straightforward as fast as you can.

I counted to three and, with great trust, you took off running, charging ahead, screaming your lungs out, flailing your arms – worried that you were still careening through the woods but also suddenly laughing to find out that you were out of the tangled danger and running easily into a flat field full of soft and forgiving grass.

This is the journey ahead for you my friend, whenever it is that you take it. The Word is behind you but also goes before you; the Word made flesh walks with you and is within you. And therefore all shall be well, and all shall be well – and all manner of things shall be well. The nausea and the discomfort, the fear and weakness, the tears and the treatments (the tripping hazards and the threatening thicket) will be over and you will run full speed screaming and laughing into the forgiving arms of grace and the healing heart of God.

Steve is in God's forgiving arms of grace and the healing heart of God. I pray that this parable will be an encouragement to you, too – whatever you are facing.

We will have a celebration of Steve's life on February 23 at 2:00pm at Peachtree Presbyterian Church in Atlanta. In lieu of flowers, gifts may be sent in honor of Steve to Columbia Theological Seminary, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, World Vision, or the International Justice Mission.

Latest Journal Update

Joy...fully

By [Sharol Hayner](#) — Feb 7, 2015 7:21am

Ours was not a perfect marriage. There were so many times when we gave each other the remnants of our day. The joy that some have written about was often down to the last drop. There were many ragged edges. But ours was definitely a "good enough" marriage. Our foundation was strong and the past nine months only made it stronger. Wonderfully and mercifully, our 24/7 relationship in the past months was a sweet gift.

I am a mixture of tears and gratitude these days. I miss Steve so much and think of him off and on all day. I momentarily forget he is not here--wanting to tell him something or forward him an email. Many times a day I think, "Steve, you would love this!" So I've begun to ask Jesus to pass on my messages to Steve, grateful that in his perfected state, Steve will always listen and will smile that radiant smile.

Psalm 16 was a favorite of ours. When Steve was interviewing for his first call at University Presbyterian Church in Seattle, the committee thoughtfully brought us both, still engaged, to the interview. Psalm 16 became our companion. The lines had indeed "fallen for us in pleasant places;" we had a "goodly heritage." Nurturing and loving families, mentors who called out our gifts, friends who faithfully journeyed with us.

We dared to believe that the Lord truly was at our right hand and that indeed through the work of the Spirit, our hearts would instruct us in the night as we discerned God's call not just for Steve but for me as well. We welcomed the Lord's presence, made real to us in Jesus, where we would find fullness of joy.

Psalm 16 has fortified and instructed us all through our 42 years of life together, but I have a fresh understanding of the last verse in the psalm. Steve is now face to face with God, fully in God's presence, and he is knowing fullness of joy. No more scarcity, no more mere drops, but abundant, overflowing fullness. Joy...fully.

Thank you for your notes and posts. Thank you for your prayers. When we pray "thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven," that prayer is being answered as we celebrate the many ways that God used Steve to help us take steps toward

Jesus and toward the things that Jesus loves--new life, justice, reconciliation, peace, forgiveness, joy. My heart is full even in grief.

Steve's memorial service on Feb. 23 will be streamed live. I will post the link as it gets closer.

The following articles may be of interest to you:

[In God's name, dismount](#)

The Economist: Obama and Christianity.

[Can the church return to the faithful?](#)

The New York Times: Faith can come back to us, over the course of a long life, at moments we least expect. The church is a boomerang. Maybe, with hope and grace, it can return to its faithful.

[Loneliness and isolation biggest social problems say clergy](#)

Christian Today: Loneliness and isolation are the most widespread social problems affecting English communities, regardless of income or social class, according to a clergy survey.

[Is Billy Graham an Evangelical?](#)

Christianity Today: Grant Wacker's comprehensive portrait displays the tension between 'America's pastor' and 'evangelicalism's architect.'

[Paying for seminary](#)

Christian Century: Ballooning student debt is troubling not only for graduates but also for the schools that train them, as well as for the churches and other faith-based institutions that depend on their leadership.

[Onward, Christian health care?](#)

The New York Times: Membership in "healthcare sharing ministries" is growing despite concerns of regulators that they offer only the illusion of insurance.

[Pope: 'Absolutely no place in ministry for those who abuse minors'](#)

National Catholic Reporter: Pope Francis has written leaders of the world's bishops' conferences and Catholic religious orders, asking them to cooperate fully with initiatives to prevent sexual abuse of minors and to protect those vulnerable with "fairness and mercy."

[Why Huntsville's First Seventh-day Adventist Church is starting a Sunday worship service](#)

Huntsville (Ala.) Times: The Saturday-Sabbath is such a big deal to Seventh-day Adventists that it's their first name. So why is one of the fastest-growing Adventist churches in the country beginning a Sunday worship service?

[Americans are fleeing religion and Republicans are to blame](#)

Pacific Standard: The retreat from religious affiliation is, essentially, a retreat from the political right.

An appreciation of Dean Smith's life

Sportswriter and Duke graduate John Feinstein wouldn't have cracked the top 1000 people who meant something to Dean Smith. Yet, he writes in the Washington Post, outside of family and close friends, few people were more important to him than Dean - "because of what he taught me about [how to treat people and how to live my life.](#)"

SPECIAL EVENTS:

(Click on the links or download the attachments.)

[February 26 & 27: Baby Boomers & Beyond with Dr. Amy Hanson](#)

As we face a drop in church membership and the next generation of retirees moving to Florida and NOT automatically coming to church, as has been the habit of past generations, breathe, don't panic, but do something. Keep your

calendar marked for the presentation of [Amy Hanson](#), Baby-Boomer and Beyond ([click here for more info](#)) at the Stated Meeting of PRP on February 26, and the regional workshops on Friday, February 27.

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[February 28 & March 1: God's Call To Mission with Rev. Dr. Hunter Farrell](#)

When we wonder what is God up to in the world, is the global church in trouble?... breathe...God is at work as God has been for a long time. Mark your calendars for a Saturday morning, February 28<sup>th</sup>, presentation by Hunter Ferrell, Director of Global Missions for the PCUSA ([click here for video](#)).

**STATED MEETING OF PRESBYTERY**

Thursday, February 26, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota  
6135 Beechwood Avenue | Sarasota, 34231

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Amy Hanson on Baby Boomers & Beyond

\*\*Lunch Reservations are required no later than Monday, February 23.

\$10.00 per person – payable at registration

Email reservations to: [ori@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:ori@peacriverpresbytery.org) / [alesia@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:alesia@peacriverpresbytery.org)

or call the Presbytery Office, 941-426-8421

Include your name and church.

(Lunch includes hot sandwiches and sides.)

**MISION PENIEL**

*A Ministry of Peace River Presbytery to the Farmworkers in Immokalee*

The Mision Peniel Task Force continues to meet and build the support and structure for continuing this vital ministry. If you want to make a donation to support this recovery effort you may send the check (marked Mision Peniel) to Peace River Presbytery | 5600 Peace River Rd. | North Port, FL. 34287.

- Volunteer Position Opening: Publications Coordinator ([click for information](#))
- Meal Serving Schedule ([click for information](#))
- Collection Centers for Mision Peniel Supplies ([click for information](#))
- Critical Needs List ([click for information](#))

**BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.**

*A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma*

[Winter 2015 Newsletter](#)

[Fall 2014 Newsletter](#)

**PRAYER NEEDS:**

**Please pray for:**

- The family of Rev. Dr. Robert M. C. Ward, who passed away on January 31, 2015 following a lengthy illness from a stroke a couple of years ago. Dr. Ward was a current member of Blackhawk Presbytery and formerly a member of Peace River Presbytery, serving as Interim Pastor of a couple of PRP churches.

**Please continue to pray for:**

- The family (Martha Chaney) and friends of Rev. Paul Chaney (retired), who passed away this past weekend. His service will be held at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, at Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church, Sarasota.
- The family and friends of Dr. Stephen Hayner, who passed away on Saturday, January 31, after a battle with Pancreatic Cancer.
- Alesia Sharpe, PRP Office Manager, in the passing of her 25-year old son, Christopher, on January 14 from complications related to Muscular Dystrophy.
- Sung and Hope Lee, in the passing of Sung's close uncle, Rev. Dr. Syngman Rhee, Moderator of the 212<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.
- Pat Woody and family, in the loss of Rev. Dr. Ray Woody, Pastor Emeritus of Siesta Key Chapel.
- Anita Adkison, mother of Rev. Dr. Stephen Adkison, Pastor of Chapel By The Sea – recovery from breast cancer surgery and treatment to follow. Lives in Arkansas.
- Rev. Susan Rice, Associate Pastor of Faith, Cape Coral – health
- Greg Beckwith (son of Jim and Becky Beckwith) – kidney failure – is undergoing dialysis and is on a kidney transplant list. Greg is also diabetic and underwent quadruple bypass heart surgery in June 2013.
- Glenn Beisser (father of Rev. Devon Beisser Ducheneau, Stated Supply Pastor for Wintergarden P.C.) – lung cancer and heart issues
- Hmingi Browne's (A.P. of Church of the Palms) sister, Nutei – health
- Donna Blaser (wife of Wayne Blaser) – Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma
- Grandson of Tim and Martha Halverson - suffering from a rare autoimmune disease.
- Beth-El Farmworker Ministry
- Misión Peniel
- Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center
- Dan and Elizabeth Turk, PCUSA Mission Co-Workers in Madagascar
- Les and Cindy Morgan, PCUSA Mission Co-Workers in Bangladesh
- Pastors and Educators in transition
- Nations in crisis

## **CHURCH PRAYER GUIDE: FEBRUARY 2015:**

|             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February 1  | <u>Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u><br>Co-Pastor: Rev. Dr. Bruce Wismer<br>email: <a href="mailto:pastors@pineshorespres.org">pastors@pineshorespres.org</a><br>Co-Pastor: Rev. Karen Wismer<br>email: <a href="mailto:karen@pineshorespres.org">karen@pineshorespres.org</a> |
| February 8  | <u>Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, Sarasota</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Michael Mansberg<br>email: <a href="mailto:covenant.presbyterian@comcast.net">covenant.presbyterian@comcast.net</a>                                                                                                   |
| February 15 | <u>Siesta Key Chapel, Sarasota</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Kathi Wiggins<br>email: <a href="mailto:pastork@comcast.net">pastork@comcast.net</a>                                                                                                                                                |
| February 22 | <u>Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u><br>Temporary Supply Pastor: Rev. Jane Jones-Norris<br>email: <a href="mailto:jjn7416@gmail.com">jjn7416@gmail.com</a>                                                                                                               |

## **PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: FEBRUARY 2015**

You may view the entire calendar on the Presbytery web site: [www.peaceriverpresbytery.org](http://www.peaceriverpresbytery.org)

### **February 11**

Committee On Preparation For Ministry

### **February 12**

Finance Team

Nominations / Representation Committee (@ St. Paul's Presbyterian Church)

### **February 18**

Mision Peniel Task Force (@ Covenant Presbyterian Church)

### **February 19**

Steering Committee

### **February 26**

Stated Meeting of Presbytery (@ Pine Shores Presbyterian Church)

### **February 27**

Baby Boomers & Beyond Workshops with Dr. Amy Hanson (@ Venice and First, Bonita Springs)

### **February 28**

Rev. Dr. Hunter Farrell, Director of World Mission (@ First, Sarasota)