



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



WEEKLY PRESBYTERY LETTER - JANUARY 20, 2015
Rev. Dr. Chuck Wiggins, Pastor, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Venice

THE YOUTH ARE NOT THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH

"Make the most of every opportunity to redeem the time because the days are evil." Ephesians 5:16

As a pastor, I am chagrined when I hear the number of clichés-as-truth passed on as gospel.

One of my favorites is *"The Church is only one generation away from extinction."* So much for Jesus' words in Matthew 16:18.



Another is the time worn hand-wringer: *"The youth are future of the church."* To wit, if you don't have a good youth group your local congregation won't be around in a couple of years.

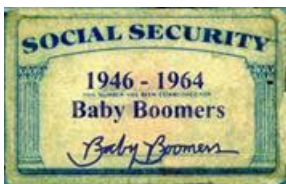
But the youth are **NOT** the future of the church. At least, not in Southwest Florida. The Baby Boomers are.

I have been asked by PRP's Planning Committee to shake the pews for a series of events that will happen late next month, beginning with our Stated Meeting on February 26th.



(Let me say that the spark for all of this centered around what you could call an offhand remark that GP Graham Hart said as part of his report way back in November, 2013. But it was a wakeup call for me. *"The generation of Baby Boomers is now retiring to Florida"* Graham said, *"and they don't do church the way we've been used to."*

That got me researching the subject of Baby Boomers and Christianity.



There's not a lot of engaging material out there. But I did come across the book **Baby Boomers and Beyond** by Dr. Amy Hanson. With extensive experience in vibrant ministry with "older adults" and eye-opening research, Dr. Hanson has some profound insights on HOW and HOW NOT to reach this migrating generation headed our way: Those born after 1946 and before 1965. If you intend to reach the Baby Boomers with the gospel, be prepared to do it differently. Or, to use the advertising tag: *"This is not your grandfather's Oldsmobile."*



Amy Hanson will be with us two days next month: As the keynote speaker for Presbytery and north/south follow-up gatherings. Those dates are February 26 and 27, respectively.

Why not take a moment to read and print out the colorful publicity flyer which follows. Pastors, the PRP’s planning committee encourages you to bring 4 or 5 KEY people from your congregation to one of the Friday follow-up seminars held in Venice and Naples. Together, we’ll discover—at least for SW Florida—who really will be the future of the church.

*Rev. Dr. Chuck Wiggins
Pastor, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Venice*

COMING TO PEACE RIVER IN FEBRUARY ...

[BABY BOOMERS & BEYOND](#) (click for flyer)

NEWS ARTICLES

This article is from the Naples Daily News addressing how the recent court decisions re marriage are being interpreted, and lived out in several different churches. Jim Kirk, Pastor of Lely Presbyterian Church, Naples was interviewed for this article, and he talks about how they have dealt with this issue at Lely.

[Click here for the article.](#)



The articles below may interest you. Click on the underlined phrases.

[About Paris attacks, Francis says freedom of expression has certain limits](#)

National Catholic Reporter: While stating forcefully that “one cannot kill in the name of God,” Pope Francis said there should be limits in the practice of freedom of expression that bar things such as insults against faith.

[UK economy is a ‘tale of two cities’ say archbishops](#)

The (London) Guardian: The Church of England has launched a scathing attack on inequality, arguing that Britain has been dominated by “rampant consumerism and individualism” since the Thatcher era.

[MUST SEE: Detroit's historic churches from the heavens](#)

Detroit Free Press: Detroit is home to oodles of gorgeous historic churches, but you really get an even great appreciation for their beauty when you view them from the heavens.

[My journey from atheist to Catholic: 11 questions for Leah Libresco](#)

America: An interview with a young writer about her conversion and newfound Catholic faith.

[Majority of British Jews feel they have no future in England, Europe](#)

Religion News Service: British Jews fear a return to the 1930s and question whether they have a long-term future in this country, according to a survey conducted by the Campaign Against Anti-Semitism.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

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](#)) on February 26, and the regional workshops on Friday, February 27 (link to flyer above).

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 28th, presentation by Hunter Ferrell, director of Global Mission for the PCUSA ([click here for video](#)).

More details related to times and locations will be published in next week's letter.

STATED MEETING OF PRESBYTERY

Thursday, February 26, 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota

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

[Fall 2014 Newsletter](#)

PRAYER NEEDS:

Please continue to pray for:

- Alesia Sharpe, PRP Office Manager, in the passing of her 25-year old son, Christopher last Wednesday, 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 212th General Assembly.
- Dr. Stephen A. Hayner, President of Columbia Seminary – in Hospice in the last stages of cancer.
- Rev. Paul Chaney (retired) – declining health. Has been at Westminster Towers, Bradenton for the past three years with Alzheimer's and Dementia, and developed pneumonia around Thanksgiving. He has been in bed since, on oxygen, IV's and medication.
- 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 – undergoing strong chemotherapy and radiation treatments for breast cancer.
- 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 – long recovery continues after being hit by a bus. Lives in Myanmar.
- Donna Blaser (wife of Wayne Blaser) – undergoing difficult treatment (Chemotherapy infusions) for 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: JANUARY 2015:

January 4	<u>Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Karl Kling email: KarlKlingdmin@gmail.com
January 11	<u>Church of the Palms, Sarasota</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Stephen McConnell email: smcconnell@churchofthepalms.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Dr. Hmingi Browne email: hbrowne@churchofthepalms.org Exec. Assoc. Pastor: Rev. Bruce Hedgepeth email: bhedgepeth@churchofthepalms.org

January 18	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Glen Bell email: gbell@FirstPresSarasota.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Melanie Kim email: mkim@FirstPresSarasota.org
January 25	<u>Northminster Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Christopher Carlson email: pastorchris@npcsarasota.org

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: JANUARY 2015

January 22

Nominations/Representation Committee
 Mision Peniel Task Force at Vanderbilt Presbyterian

January 25

Installation Service for Rev. Dr. Stephen Adkison at Chapel By The Sea

January 27

C.O.M. Central Cluster Meeting