



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



WEEKLY PRESBYTERY LETTER - JULY 14, 2015
Rev. Dr. Kathleen Weller, 2015 Presbytery Moderator

"Real holiness doesn't feel like holiness; it just feels like you're dying. It feels like you're losing it. And you are! You are losing the false self, which you foolishly thought was permanent, important, and you! You know God is doing it in you and with you, when you can even smile, and trust that what you lost is something you did not finally need anyway." - Richard Rohr

Dear PRP Friends,

I ran across the above quote from the Jesuit, Richard Rohr, recently. It was one of those moments when my whole body heaved a sigh of agreement and relief. My experience on this journey of faith is dotted with those moments he described. But it's not only my experience. My mind and heart are full of significant conversations with people on this path who some of the time feel *like I'm losing it*. I've been party to many conversations that begin: "I really need to tell you something" and end with: "thanks, because I really thought I was losing my mind."

Over the years I've brought small examples of my own encounters of instability with the divine mysterium to the pulpit or to sacred conversations, sharing how God has spoken through the appearance of stars in the sky, or ripples on the water, or feathers on a path... pointing me in a direction that I'd not been able to see or choose on my own. When I share the holy subtle nudges of God that cause me to wonder if I'm losing it, there has always been a knowing response. Perhaps the only way God can really get our attention is by destabilizing our firmly entrenched status quo.

But it sounds foolish, doesn't it, to embrace instability. Yet, when divinely orchestrated instability comes we have two choices. We can embrace it as God's way of moving in our lives, or we can struggle with it. The first response feels like body surfing in clear, lively azure waves on a bright summer day. The second way feels like body surfing in quicksand. The first way we paddle out to catch the wave with God right next to us. The second way we enter the murky pond alone. Embracing divine instability builds faith and trust in a God we cannot see and leads to wisdom. Struggling with what God has allowed puts blinders on our minds and hearts and we burrow into deeper darkness.

At any moment, we can choose to embrace the instability that has come into our lives as a nudge to holiness. We embrace it not to fight it to the ground, but simply place it in our hands and offer it back to God as an act of worship. We embrace it in faith believing that nothing that has touched us was not first sifted through God's hands and has some good that it will leave in our lives. We do not deny the pain it may cause at present...but we acknowledge our confidence that God's love can and will use it somehow for our good -- so great is God's love for us.

As Rohr wrote, when these moments of instability come, what we lose is the self that we thought was authentic (or at least the self we had become comfortable with). It's painful. Often times it makes us sad for a while. Sometimes the 'who' and 'what' we are becoming is not at all clear. But when we embrace change as coming from the hand of God, our fears recede.

What is the place of holy instability in your life at present? Has the instability come in terms of our health, career, children, parents, finances, dreams? When being conformed to God's Image (becoming holy) is the goal of our life -- all of these things are what God uses in the process of our transformation. Does it feel like you're dying? Commit it, submit it, remit it to Christ who promised to exchange our heavy burdens for His way that is easy and yoke that is light.

Becoming holy, like growing older, is not for the faint of heart. I believe with you-and for you if necessary-that what God is leading you to become, is beyond anything you presently can think or imagine. Your holiness, like His will one day shine like the noonday sun! Until then, we embrace the sacred instability.

In Christ,
Kathleen Weller, Obl.SB

P.S. Would love to know about the **sacred instability** you've encountered. My email is: thecelticmonk@att.net

The next STATED MEETING of PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY is scheduled for:

Thursday, November 19, 2015

at Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood

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In lieu of the August/September Stated Meeting, Peace River Presbytery will hold

**FALL REGIONAL GATHERINGS:**

Thursday, August 20 @ Venice Presbyterian Church, Venice

Thursday, August 27 @ Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples

Thursday, September 3 @ Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch

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The tentative start time for each gathering will be 9:30 a.m. Lunch will be served.

Attendance and Lunch Reservations are to be made with the host churches,

not the Presbytery Office. Contact information will be provided soon.

These are not Stated Meetings, and Presbytery business will not be conducted.

The purpose is to build relationships between churches, connect churches missionally,

and to give opportunity for churches to share with one another.

More details to follow.

BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.

A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma

Back To School Appeal

Every summer Beth-El Farmworker Ministry reaches out to its mission partners in the collection of back to school supplies. From pencils and paper to backpacks and new shoes, every year Beth-El helps over 500 returning students with much needed school supplies. To learn how your congregation can help or to receive a complete list of needed supplies, please contact Beth-El Farmworker Ministry at [813-633-1548](tel:813-633-1548) or email: info@beth-el.info. Gracias!

[July Newsletter](#)

[Back To School Supplies List](#)

[June 2015 Update and Financial Appeal](#)

CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

A place apart to build up the body of Christ in love.

[Web Site](#)

MISION PENIEL

A Ministry of Peace River Presbytery to the Farmworkers in Immokalee

Pastor Miguel Estrada is on Study Leave for the month of July. Please direct any questions or requests to:

Mary Ellen Frost, 239-240-9178, tmefrost@yahoo.com; or

Pete Rodino, 201-841-9977, pvrodino@aol.com

Pastor Miguel will resume being the main point of contact on August 1.

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

- Collection Centers for Mision Peniel Supplies ([click for information](#))
- Critical Needs List ([click for information](#))



July 30 – August 1, 2015
University of Tennessee Campus
Knoxville, TN

Be inspired . . . Become equipped . . . Get connected!

Experience that deep sense of community one would expect at a national gathering of Presbyterians—a great big family reunion! Join us for a wide variety of workshops, all under one Big Tent, a conference that will inspire and equip Presbyterians to live missionally. In past year each the General Assembly Ministry areas has hosted their own conference... this year you will be able to move between areas and interests in this 3 day event. Also, note the cost has been greatly reduced. The registration is \$395 per person, which includes accommodations, seven meals, campus parking and outstanding programming. Fees for children and youth are no more than \$150 each.

Register Online Now!



CHURCHES OF PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

(click on church name to link to its web site)

Braden River Presbyterian Church, Bradenton	First Presbyterian Church, Bradenton
Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, Bradenton	Palma Sola Presbyterian Church, Bradenton
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bradenton	Palmetto Presbyterian Church, Palmetto - kcooper@ppcfl.org
Christ Church of Longboat Key Longboat Key	Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch
Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church, Sarasota	Church of the Palms, Sarasota
First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota	Northminster Presbyterian Church, Sarasota
Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota	Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, Sarasota
Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church, Sarasota	Siesta Key Chapel, Sarasota
Trinity Presbyterian Church, Venice	Venice Presbyterian Church, Venice
Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood	First Presbyterian Church, Arcadia
St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, North Port	Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda
Wintergarden Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte devon.ducheneau@gmail.com	First Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte

Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, North Fort Myers	
Faith Presbyterian Church Cape Coral	First Presbyterian Church, Lehigh Acres
Buckingham Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers	Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers
Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers	First Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers
Hope United Church (PCUSA), Fort Myers	Chapel by the Sea, Fort Myers Beach
First Presbyterian Church, Bonita Springs	
First Presbyterian Church, Naples	Lely Presbyterian Church, Naples
Moorings Presbyterian Church, Naples	Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The following are position openings in PRP churches.
Click on the title for more information.

[Organist / Accompanist](#) – Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda

PRAYER NEEDS:

Please continue to pray for:

- Alex Herrera (Lil Rea's Son-In-Law) – mugged and beaten badly two weeks ago. Recovering up north.
- Rev. Graham Hart – recovery from surgery two weeks ago; also dealing with severe back pain.
- Rev. Dr. Margaret Towner – hip revision surgery, scheduled for July 16 (*note date change*) at Sarasota Memorial Hospital.
- Robert Dennis, Son of Rev. India Dennis – mental health issues.
- Anita Adkison, mother of Rev. Dr. Stephen Adkison, Pastor of Chapel By The Sea – undergoing treatment for breast cancer. Lives in Arkansas.
- Rev. Susan Rice, Associate Pastor of Faith, Cape Coral – health

- Greg Beckwith (son of Jim and Becky Beckwith) – on 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
- 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: JULY 2015:

July 5	Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Deibert email: edeibert@mindspring.com
July 12	First Presbyterian Church, Lehigh Acres Temporary Supply Pastor: Rev. Winston Lawson email: lehighacrespresbyterians@embarqmail.com
July 19	Christ Church of Longboat Key Stated Supply Pastor: Rev. Dr. Norman Pritchard email: revnmp@comcast.net
July 26	First Presbyterian Church, Naples Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. Will Browne email: willbrowne@yahoo.com

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: JULY 2015

You may view the entire calendar on the Presbytery web site: www.peacriverpresbytery.org

July 21

Committee On Ministry

July 27

Mision Peniel Task Force at Covenenat Presbyterian, Fort Myers

