



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



WEEKLY PRESBYTERY LETTER - JULY 30, 2015
Rev. Miguel Estrada, Pastor Evangelist for Mision Peniel, Immokalee

SMALL IS NOT ALWAYS A BAD THING

We live in a time when people are always looking for the bigger in many ways. They want you to believe that a bigger house, car, bank account, office, television, and many more things are the best status signs anybody can have.

Unfortunately, Christian ministry is not free of this kind of perspective. On the contrary, constantly we feel the pressure to be judged by this way of measuring success and, in many cases, we find ourselves playing that crazy game. Some of us believe a bigger sanctuary, congregation, mission program, staff, and more, are good signs of a successful ministry. Numbers become our idols and the only reason to work.

But, there is something we need to remember. The Kingdom measure is quite different, according to Scripture. Jesus reminds us that its presence among us can be as small as a mustard seed. A seed that can have a humble beginning, but can grow to become a space where many different kinds of birds are welcome to find a place to live and share.

Living among agricultural business and farmworkers, we, at Mision Peniel, had to learn a little about this kind of stuff. Plants do not always grow as fast as you want. There are more details behind what affects the development of a good harvest than those you can control all the time.

In the words of one of our faithful worshipers, "small is not always bad". Because, in his explanation of that statement, a plant that grows too fast and too much will consume most of the nutrients to sustain itself, namely its branches and leaves, but not necessarily to give fruit. Fruits are always what plants produce to be shared for the benefit of others.

Mision Peniel started a little over eight years ago. The plans for the ministry were great and there were a lot of good ideas for a BIG ministry. The Lord had a different plan for us. Early on, we learned that our beginning was planned to be small and humble. In many different ways, including two major funds crises that almost closed the place, we were reminded not to grow too fast nor too big.

Instead, we were guided to pay attention and to use resources to produce fruit to benefit those small ones and those in need around us. Then we grew, in some ways not as fast as we wanted, and not very attractive as a mission effort. Even so, we become a place that attracted "birds of all kinds" from the farmworker community and from the churches around. After all, small is not always a bad thing. It is something we used to tell some of those faithful churches around, that even being small congregations they have had a BIG impact on the ministry and in many lives. It is also true that isolated efforts can't do too much, but Mision Peniel is a very good example of what a connectional church means. With the participation of many, we are serving many.

In some ways, and without any presumption, we feel like a mustard seed that, after eight years, has grown. We're not really big, but we're just big enough, to provide a space where people from different contexts feel welcome and find sanctuary, communion, service opportunities, a sense of purpose, hope, love, the good news of the Gospel, and more than anything else, the Kingdom of God in a very simple but powerful expression, as a mustard seed. We all are invited to be part of this small, humble experience. You can pray, contribute, serve, and support Mision Peniel and become one of those "birds" that finds God's Kingdom among us.

Rev. Miguel Estrada
Pastor Evangelist
Mision Peniel, Immokalee

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

Thursday, November 19, 2015

at Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood

SAVE THE DATES!

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

FALL REGIONAL GATHERINGS:

Thursday, August 20 @ Venice Presbyterian Church, Venice

9:30 a.m. (with lunch)

Contact the Church Office, 941-488-2258, to make lunch reservations.

Thursday, August 27 @ Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples

8:30 a.m. (with continental breakfast)

Contact the Church Office, 239-597-5410, to make breakfast reservations.

Thursday, September 3 @ Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch

9:30 a.m. (with lunch)

Contact the Church Office, 941-753-7778, to make lunch reservations.

*Attendance and Lunch Reservations are to be made with the host churches,
not the Presbytery Office.*

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.

SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday, September 13, 2015, 3:00 p.m.

Installation Service for The Reverend Tamara Letts

Associate Pastor, Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples

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](#))

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, January 23, 2016 ~ Church of the Palms

[The Soul of Caregivers: Nurturing and Reorienting Our Lives](#)

with Rev. Marjorie Thompson



CHURCHES OF PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

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

[Braden River Presbyterian Church,](#)
Bradenton

[First Presbyterian Church,](#)
Bradenton

<u>Kirkwood Presbyterian Church,</u> Bradenton	<u>Palma Sola Presbyterian Church,</u> Bradenton
<u>Westminster Presbyterian Church,</u> Bradenton	Palmetto Presbyterian Church, Palmetto - kcooper@ppcfl.org
<u>Christ Church of Longboat Key</u> Longboat Key	<u>Peace Presbyterian Church,</u> Lakewood Ranch
<u>Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church,</u> Sarasota	<u>Church of the Palms,</u> Sarasota
<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Sarasota	<u>Northminster Presbyterian Church,</u> Sarasota
<u>Pine Shores Presbyterian Church,</u> Sarasota	<u>Presbyterian Church of the</u> <u>Covenant,</u> Sarasota
<u>Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church,</u> Sarasota	<u>Siesta Key Chapel,</u> Sarasota
<u>Trinity Presbyterian Church,</u> Venice	<u>Venice Presbyterian Church,</u> Venice
<u>Community Presbyterian Church,</u> Englewood	<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Arcadia
<u>St. Paul's Presbyterian Church,</u> North Port	<u>Burnt Store Presbyterian Church,</u> Punta Gorda
Wintergarden Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte devon.ducheneau@gmail.com	<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Port Charlotte
<u>Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church,</u> North Fort Myers	
<u>Faith Presbyterian Church</u> Cape Coral	<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Lehigh Acres
<u>Buckingham Presbyterian Church,</u> Fort Myers	<u>Covenant Presbyterian Church,</u> Fort Myers
<u>Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church,</u> Fort Myers	<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> 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) – Recovering from mugging.
- Rev. Graham Hart – recovery from prostrate surgery and back pain.
- Rev. Dr. Margaret Towner – recovery from hip revision surgery last week.
- 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: AUGUST 2015:

August 2	<u>Lely Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jim Kirk email: jimkirk1212234@gmail.com
August 9	<u>Moorings Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Doug Learned email: mink@moorings-presby.org
August 16	<u>Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jack Haberer email: jhaberer@vpcnaples.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Tamara Letts email: tletts@vpcnaples.org
August 23	<u>St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, North Port</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Ray Quiles email: stpaulspres1@comcast.net
August 30	<u>Palmetto Presbyterian Church, Palmetto</u> Pastor: Rev. John Foulkrod email: jfoulkrod@ppcfl.org

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: AUGUST 2015

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

August 11

Committee On Ministry

August 13

Finance Team / Board of Trustees
Steering Committee

August 20

Regional Gathering at Venice Presbyterian Church, Venice

August 27

Regional Gathering at Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples

September 3

Regional Gathering at Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch
Presbyterian Women