



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



WEEKLY PRESBYTERY LETTER – JUNE 16, 2015 Rev. Graham P. Hart, General Presbyter

Running Hard and with Heart: The Relay Race Called Ministry

The tenure of ruling elders serving on a session is usually between 3-6 years.

The average national tenure of a pastor is around five years, and I have heard that for Presbyterian teaching elders it is seven. However, the most fruitful years in ministry are often from year seven to year fifteen. We have two pastors in Peace River who have reached the 25 year milestone, and we offer our congratulations to Tim Stewart and Mike Mansperger.

Job descriptions will vary, and the particulars of leadership are all contextual, but if we think of leadership in an organization as a track and field relay race, the task of every runner on that relay team is to run their leg of the race well, whether it is 5 or 30 years, and then hand off the baton to the next person, who runs their leg... and so it goes.

The key is for each runner, and every leader, to run as hard as we can, with as much heart as we can, or, in the words of our ordination vow, – to serve with energy, intelligence, imagination and love. When we have done our job, and finished our leg of the race, our responsibility then is to hand off the baton to those who follow. As pastors, sometimes the hand off is to an interim pastor, and for ruling elders, as we rotate off session, the hand-off is to the next class of ruling elders coming on to the session.

This past month three retired pastors (Paul Eckel, Bruce Porter, and John Cairns) and two pastors currently serving congregations (Tim Halverson, and Doug Pratt), in collaboration with the Committee On Ministry (Lil Rea - Moderator), led a workshop/conversation entitled: Finishing Well and Ending Strong. The invitation went to all pastors who are within 10 years of “possible” retirement. Three-quarters of our pastors in Peace River are within that range. It was a wonderful conversation for the 12 participants, and we all left with a lot to think about. Personally, listening to our retired pastors was energizing, hearing their stories was inspiring, and hearing what they felt they did well, and what they wished they had done differently as they neared retirement, was a gift to all.

Last Friday night, members of the Beth El Board, past and present, and Presbytery leaders from Peace River, Tampa Bay, and Grace Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church gathered in Wimauma to celebrate the retirement of Dave Moore as Beth El’s Executive Director. Dave has served faithfully for 10 years. With the help of a Mariachi Band, kind words were shared, good food enjoyed, and well wishes extended as Dave and his wife begin this next chapter in their life.

Dave was tireless in his love of Beth El and the migrant farmworker community, and was key in launching the ministry in Immokalee which became Mision Peniel. Dave drove the motor home to Immokalee every week in the first year of that ministry until Miguel came on board. In my words to Dave on behalf of Peace River, I thanked him for running with as much heart as he did, and as hard as he did for these 10 years, and passing the baton to Kathy Dain, the new Executive Director of Beth El.

Grateful that God is still the Rudder to Guide us in the Way and the Wind to Fill our Sails,

Graham

Graham Hart
General Presbytery
graham@peacriverpresbytery.org

PS ... In order for us to get to know our Presbytery's Covenant Partners and their leaders better, I have asked Kathy Dain (Beth El), John Reiter (Cedarkirk), Kathy Broyard (FLAPDAN), and Miguel Estrada (Mision Peniel) to each write one of the articles for the upcoming weeks of the *Weekly Presbytery Letter*.

~ ARTICLES OF INTEREST ~

[Where is the fire?](#)

Baptist News Global: Molly Marshall says this is arguably the most important question as schools and churches seek to kindle flames of renewal.

[Caitlyn Jenner says she's a Christian. What does that mean for Christianity?](#)

The Week: What if the "Americanization of Christianity" is just the latest in an endless succession of Christianities, each of them as legitimate as the last and the next?

[America's 'religious nones' are growing quickly. Should Republicans worry?](#)

NPR: Could a group defined by its lack of religious definition in any way be considered a cohesive voting bloc?

[Nones: a mixed bag](#)

National Catholic Reporter: Before the churches despair, they need to take a closer look at these nones, says Thomas Reese.

[Supreme Court's pending same-sex ruling to dominate Southern Baptist meeting](#)

Religion News Service: A pending Supreme Court decision about same-sex marriage is expected to dominate next week's meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

[2067: the end of British Christianity](#)

The Spectator: Projections aren't predictions. But there's no denying that churches are in deep trouble, says Damian Thompson.

[Pope Francis moves to hold bishops accountable in sex abuse crisis](#)

Religion News Service: Pope Francis has approved the first-ever system for judging, and possibly deposing, bishops who fail to protect children from abusive clerics.

[Unusual entrant in food truck scene](#)

Fort Worth Magazine: Fort Worth has an unusual new entrant in the food truck scene: Arlington Heights United Methodist Church.



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.

ADVANCE REGISTRATION THROUGH JUNE 19

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

<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 <u>devon.ducheneau@gmail.com</u>	<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
<u>Hope United Church (PCUSA),</u> Fort Myers	<u>Chapel by the Sea,</u> Fort Myers Beach
<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Bonita Springs	
<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Naples	<u>Lely Presbyterian Church,</u> Naples
<u>Moorings Presbyterian Church,</u> Naples	<u>Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church,</u> Naples

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.

- 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

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 or email: info@beth-el.info. Gracias!

[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](#)

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

[Part-Time Choir Director](#) – Palma Sola Presbyterian Church, Bradenton

PRAYER NEEDS:

Please continue to pray for:

- Robert Dennis, Son of Rev. India Dennis – mental health issues.
- Sue Angle and Family – following the passing of Ray on May 24.
- Dave & Lil Rea (COM Moderator) – following the passing of Dave's father on May 26.
- Rev. Dr. Margaret Towner – hip revision surgery, scheduled for July 24 at Sarasota Memorial Hospital.
- Rev. Norman Hutchinson – recovery from quadruple bypass surgery; also has congestive heart failure. If you'd like to send notes or cards, his address is: 822 South Pelham Road | Welland, ON L3C3E1
- 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
- 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: JUNE 2015:

June 7	First Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers Pastor: Rev. Paul de Jong email: paul@fpcfortmyers.org
June 14	Hope United Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers Interim Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Kuehl email: pastor@hopeunitedchurch.net
June 21	Chapel by the Sea, Fort Myers Beach Pastor: Rev. Dr. Stephen Adkison email: skypilot_mddiv@hotmail.com
June 28	Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, North Fort Myers Pastor: Rev. Dr. Valerie Bell email: pastorvaleriebell@gmail.com

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: JUNE 2015

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

June 16

Nominations / Representation Committee

June 25

Mision Peniel Task Force at Presbytery Center, North Port

