



# PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – September 15, 2015

Rev. Dr. Kathleen Weller, 2015 Presbytery Moderator



The other morning, and not unusual for this time of year, there was a storm coming ashore from the Gulf to the west and the sun was rising brightly in the east. As is my habit, I was outside doing my morning ritual of meeting the new day and thanking God for it.

Up on the power lines between our house and the house behind us, several mourning doves were perched, taking it all in as well. I went back into the house and grabbed my camera to take a picture. All I really had in mind was how charming they looked all lined up together. See above...



But as I downloaded my camera and looked at the images on my computer I realized something else about those mourning doves. First I realized it was unusual to see them up so high, as I most often know them as ground birds. Maybe, I imagined, they instinctively knew something I was missing since now not only were there dark clouds gathering but thunder rolling in the distance. And then I took an even closer look...

It was only now, sitting at my desk that I realized the mourning doves were facing east into the sun. Knowing the storm is here. Knowing the darkness that was quickly over taking them. Knowing that they will soon need to take cover. These docile creatures faced bravely, calmly, beautifully and peacefully into the light. Their eyes were not fixed on the impending threat, but on the hope of the light.

Investigating these creatures a little further gave me some new appreciation for them. First of all it's estimated that there are 400 million mourning doves in the United States. They mate for life. Both mother and father feed the new born with a substance that's like cottage cheese, which is digested seed that the adults have already eaten. They are the same creature as what is sometimes called a turtle dove. And it is not unusual to find them on power lines. In fact, they are in all 50 states, but are never found in densely wooded areas as it seems they don't like trees much. The article I read said they have a short and difficult life. One half of all adults (age two) perish each year as well as two thirds of the babies.

And still they turn their back on what threatens... and to my untrained eye... seem to be in perfect peace as they cast their eyes towards the sun.

There are storms that rumble into each of our lives, aren't there? For some of us thankfully, the storms come intermittently and there are blue skies on the horizon. Others of us seem to be more nearly always living with the sound of rolling thunder close at hand. No one escapes this life without the rains coming. But I'm wondering today if we have the courage of these intrepid little birds who in the midst of the imminent darkness stand on tiptoes and look to the Light?

While I've framed this metaphor for individuals, we could ask the same of our families or our communities of faith. Is your congregation standing with the storm toward its back—or is it transfixed on it? Do you see blue skies close at hand—or are blue skies a distant memory? Maybe you feel as though you've had more than your fair share of things that threaten. Yet more important than the amount of rain that has fallen, or the frequency of the storms, is how we have met those things that are dark and threatening. Do we fix our gaze on the darkness or—in the face of the darkness—do we look toward the sun/Son?

Let me encourage you today with the intrepid Mourning Dove. God has given these commonest of docile birds something important to teach us. May we all have hearts open to their lesson.

In peace and joy,  
Kathleen

## **STATED MEETING of PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY**

Thursday, November 19, 2015

at Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood

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

*A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma*

[www.beth-el.org](http://www.beth-el.org)

[September Newsletter](#)

## **CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER**

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

[www.cedarkirk.org](http://www.cedarkirk.org)

## **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](#))

## **SAVE THE DATES!**

Saturday, September 19, 2015 ~ Covenant Presbyterian Church, Ft. Myers

["Hello God, It's Me" Prayer Retreat](#)

~~~~~

Thursday, October 22, 2015, 2:00-4:00 p.m. ~ Covenant Presbyterian Church, Ft. Myers

Mision Peniel Celebration

Please join us for the 2 year celebration of our Covenant Partner  
under Peace River Presbytery. We are excited!

~~~~~

Saturday, October 24, 2015, 9:30 a.m. ~ First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota

Guest Speaker: Rev. John Buchanan, Editor of *The Christian Century*

~~~~~

Saturday, January 23, 2016 ~ Church of the Palms

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

with Rev. Marjorie Thompson

---

## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

The following are position openings in PRP churches.

Click on the title for more information.

[Organist](#) – Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood

[Communications Coordinator](#) – Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples

[Director of Christian Education](#) – Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples

---

### **PRAYER NEEDS:**

#### **Please continue to pray for:**

- Rev. Dr. George and Merle Chorba – loss of his mother, Hilda.
- Rev. Dr. Kathleen Weller – healing of broken arm.
- Rev. Dr. Margaret Towner – recovery from hip revision surgery.
- 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.
- 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: SEPTEMBER 2015:**

|              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 6  | <u>First Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte</u><br>Pastor: Pulpit Supply<br>email: <a href="mailto:pastor@fpcpc.com">pastor@fpcpc.com</a>   <a href="mailto:office@fpcpc.com">office@fpcpc.com</a>                                                                                     |
| September 13 | <u>Wintergarden Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Devon Ducheneau<br>email: <a href="mailto:devon.ducheneau@gmail.com">devon.ducheneau@gmail.com</a>                                                                                                              |
| September 20 | <u>Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Stewart<br>email: <a href="mailto:sunburn1320@mac.com">sunburn1320@mac.com</a><br>Associate Pastor: Rev. Cassie Todd<br>email: <a href="mailto:pastorcassie@embarqmail.com">pastorcassie@embarqmail.com</a> |
| September 27 | <u>Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Karl Kling<br>email: <a href="mailto:KarlKlingdmin@gmail.com">KarlKlingdmin@gmail.com</a>                                                                                                                            |

**PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: SEPTEMBER 2015**

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

**September 17**

Steering Committee (1:30 p.m.)

**September 21**

Mision Peniel Task Force @ Covenant, Fort Myers



## CHURCHES OF PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

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

|                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Braden River Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Bradenton                                                                  | <a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Bradenton                                            |
| <a href="#">Kirkwood Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Bradenton                                                                      | <a href="#">Palma Sola Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Bradenton                                       |
| <a href="#">Westminster Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Bradenton                                                                   | Palmetto Presbyterian Church,<br>Palmetto – <a href="mailto:office@ppcfl.org">office@ppcfl.org</a> |
| <a href="#">Christ Church of Longboat Key</a><br>Longboat Key                                                                   | <a href="#">Peace Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Lakewood Ranch                                       |
| <a href="#">Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Sarasota                                                                      | <a href="#">Church of the Palms,</a><br>Sarasota                                                   |
| <a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Sarasota                                                                          | <a href="#">Northminster Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Sarasota                                      |
| <a href="#">Pine Shores Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Sarasota                                                                    | <a href="#">Presbyterian Church of the<br/>Covenant,</a> Sarasota                                  |
| <a href="#">Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Sarasota                                                              | <a href="#">Siesta Key Chapel,</a><br>Sarasota                                                     |
| <a href="#">Trinity Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Venice                                                                          | <a href="#">Venice Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Venice                                              |
| <a href="#">Community Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Englewood                                                                     | <a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Arcadia                                              |
| <a href="#">St. Paul's Presbyterian Church,</a><br>North Port                                                                   | <a href="#">Burnt Store Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Punta Gorda                                    |
| Wintergarden Presbyterian Church,<br>Port Charlotte<br><a href="mailto:devon.ducheneau@gmail.com">devon.ducheneau@gmail.com</a> | <a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Port Charlotte                                       |

|                                                                              |                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#"><u>Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>North Fort Myers |                                                                    |
| <a href="#"><u>Faith Presbyterian Church</u></a><br>Cape Coral               | <a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Lehigh Acres  |
| <a href="#"><u>Buckingham Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Fort Myers         | <a href="#"><u>Covenant Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Fort Myers |
| <a href="#"><u>Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Fort Myers       | <a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Fort Myers    |
| <a href="#"><u>Hope United Church (PCUSA),</u></a><br>Fort Myers             | <a href="#"><u>Chapel by the Sea,</u></a><br>Fort Myers Beach      |
| <a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Bonita Springs          |                                                                    |
| <a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Naples                  | <a href="#"><u>Lely Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Naples         |
| <a href="#"><u>Moorings Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Naples               | <a href="#"><u>Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Naples   |