



# PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



**Weekly Presbytery Letter – September 24, 2015**

**Rev. Graham Hart, General Presbyter**

## Where 2 Or 3 Are Gathered

November 18<sup>th</sup> – the Next Regional Gatherings in Peace River

October 22<sup>nd</sup> – Mision Peniel Birthday Party

*Jesus said, where 2 or 3 gather in my name, I am there among them* (Matt. 18:20). I don't know about you, but personally I would like to experience more of that ... more of Christ's presence. While meeting to do business and make decisions are necessary tasks of any organization, including a presbytery, if that is all we do we will have missed the mark, and we will be missing our calling and purpose. The early church had organizational structures, as do we. They gathered to discern, decide and make hard choices, as do we.

However, they also created space for something else to happen. Gathering in Jesus' name, "*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers*" (see Acts 3: 41-47). As a result, as we read the rest of the book of Acts, something amazing happened.

As a presbytery, at each of the three recent regional meetings, we gathered together in Jesus' name. The desire, hope, and intent was that, in groups of 2 or 3, 8 or 80, something amazing would happen and that we would know of Christ's presence in some new ways. We made space, or more to the point, we cleared the space of the normal business of a presbytery meeting. We had time to just talk to each other, listen and learn from each other, and pray for each other.

The feedback, in the form of a survey that participants returned, was almost of one voice ... let's do more of this. The message was clear: we want and need to be communities where, even at a presbytery level, we intentionally gather as 2 or 3 in Christ's name. At each of the gatherings we took time to pray for each church present. At the central regional gathering, Chris Romig invited every congregation to name their joys and their needs, then he offered a deeply moving prayer on our behalf, as we lifted one another to the Lord of the Dance, who is Lord of the Church (see attachment).

## The Next Regional Gatherings

The Steering Committee has committed to do more of these gatherings. So, the next regional gatherings will be offered in three locations on November 18. The hope for these next gatherings is that session members, pastors, mission committees, and all who have a passion for missions will attend.



**175**  
**YEARS**  
OF PRESBYTERIAN  
WORLD MISSION  

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**1837-2012**



Hunter Farrell, the Director of Worldwide Mission, will be with us to share some perspectives on what God is up to in the world. The gatherings will be held on Wednesday, November 18 at the following times and locations:

- 9:30 a.m. - First Presbyterian Church, Naples (light refreshments)
- 1:30 p.m. - Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers (light refreshments)
- 5:00 p.m. - Church of the Palms, Sarasota (dinner starts at 5:00)
  - 5:15-6:30 p.m. – conversations with mission committees on how to make missions alive and vital in your congregations; Q&A
  - 6:30-8:00 p.m. – presentation by Hunter in the sanctuary

More details to follow. [Click here](#) to link to a more detailed re-printable brochure on the gatherings.

### Mision Peniel Birthday Party

Also, while this is not regional, at 2:00 p.m. on October 22 there will be a celebration of the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Peace River Presbytery assuming full responsibility for Mision Peniel. “2 or 3”, or 60 as it turned out to be – gathered in Jesus’ name in August 2013. On that day two years ago, when the Presbytery gathered informally at Covenant Presbyterian Church,

- we listened and prayed;
- we heard stories about the impact of Mision Peniel;
- we learned of how the Immokalee community values Miguel and this ministry;
- we heard an appeal from Lucas Benita, the founder of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers that we find a way to continue this ministry;
- we offered our gratitude to Beth El for beginning this ministry at our suggestion and request;
- and, that summer day, those who gathered made commitments of over \$60,000 to keep Mision Peniel operating, and thanks be to God we have.



Join us with the Mision Task Force and Miguel Estrada for our 2015 Celebration, at which time we will offer our thanks to God, hear of the continuing impact of Mision Peniel and what is next, and share conversation and food - including a birthday cake with 2 candles.

Looking forward to how Christ will be present among us, between us, and before us as we gather in His name....

Grateful to be on this journey with you!

*Graham*

Graham Hart  
General Presbyter  
[graham@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:graham@peacriverpresbytery.org)

## CHURCH PRAYER REQUESTS FROM THE AUGUST 20<sup>th</sup> REGIONAL GATHERING

[... Click for list ...](#)

### ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

[Pope Francis is not 'progressive' -- he's a priest](#)

The Atlantic: How to read the pontiff as he visits the United States of America.

The New York Times: [Pope Francis, the prince of the personal](#)

[Once shunned, papal meetings with American presidents now the norm](#)

USA Today: Few relationships in U.S. political history have changed more over time than that between presidents and popes.

[Pope Francis to find a church in upheaval](#)

The New York Times: Some U.S. churches are bursting with immigrant parishioners, while others struggle to stay open.

[Liberation theology, once reviled by church, now embraced by pope](#)

Aljazeera: Pope's emphasis on justice, not charity, reflects evolution of his thinking on radical social change for the poor

[The Archbishop of Canterbury: dissolving the Anglican Church to save it](#)

The Atlantic: Justin Welby will reportedly try to preserve the group of churches, shaken by fights over homosexuality, by loosening its ties.

CruX: [This pope is keeping hope for change alive](#)

[How to stay sane in church](#)

Christian Today: Before you know it, your church life becomes an endless list of chores that drain your energy and your sanity.

[Religious history complicated in communist Cuba](#)

USA Today: Little by little, religion has made a comeback in recent years on the island of 11 million people.

[Dissolving the Anglican communion would simply be a recognition of reality](#)

The (London) Guardian: The archbishop of Canterbury proposes to loosen the communion's ties. Since it hasn't really existed for three decades, that seems sensible, says Andrew Brown.

[Will we listen to Pope Francis?](#)

National Catholic Reporter: What effect the pope's visit might have, in a sense, all comes down to whether we will listen to him or not. There are a number of barriers in the way of our really hearing what the pope says.

[Clergy are people too](#)

Phoenixville (Penn.) Reporter & Item: Distracting socks, wrong-color towels in the restroom, unscrambled eggs and other complaints that clergy receive from parishioners.

[Give Me Sex Jesus: young evangelicals' struggles with sex and church teaching](#)

The (London) Guardian: A new documentary casts a critical eye on the purity culture within evangelical Christianity.

**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](#))

**UPCOMING EVENTS!**

Friday, October 2, 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. ~ Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church, Sarasota  
Book Sale

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Thursday, October 22, 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!

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Saturday, October 24, 9:30 a.m. ~ First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota  
Guest Speaker: Rev. John Buchanan, Editor of *The Christian Century*  
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Saturday, January 23 ~ 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

### **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: OCTOBER 2015 (1<sup>st</sup> Week)**

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

**October 5**

Planning Team (1:00 p.m.)

**October 6**

Committee On Ministry (9:00 a.m.)

**October 8**

Board of Trustees / Finance Team (9:30 a.m.)



**CHURCHES OF PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY**

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

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <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="#">Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church,</a><br>North Fort Myers                                                           |                                                                                                    |
| <a href="#">Faith Presbyterian Church</a><br>Cape Coral                                                                         | <a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Lehigh Acres                                         |
| <a href="#">Buckingham Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Fort Myers                                                                   | <a href="#">Covenant Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Fort Myers                                        |

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <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 |