



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – September 29, 2015

Rev. Graham Hart, General Presbyter

Take-Aways from Pope Francis' Visit

In an era that fewer Americans are finding their way to church, and the next generation's denomination of choice is the "nones" ([i.e. no](#) religious affiliation), it has been refreshing and instructive to watch our American response to the Pope's visit. One pastor noticed that last Sunday's church worship attendance was significantly up. She wondered if it was the result of the Pope's visit ... call it the "papal effect".



As always, I would love to hear your thoughts on what the incredible interest in the Pope's visit may be saying about the spiritual hunger and yearnings of Americans, and what some of the learnings and take aways are from which we can learn. Send me your thoughts ([click here](#)), and if some of you want to gather at a local Starbucks or elsewhere to have this conversation, let me know.

In order to jump start the conversation, I have included 17 articles published this past week on Pope Francis' coming to America that address what others make of his visit and words to us (see below).

Learning and growing and serving with you,

Graham

General Presbyter

graham@peacriverpresbytery.org

PS ... Remember to mark your calendar for the Mission Peniel Celebration, October 22 at Covenant Presbyterian Church at 2:00 p.m.

PSS ... [Click here](#) to link to the brochure of Hunter Farrell's visit and the regional gatherings that we will be holding in a church near you, on November 18-19.

ARTICLES and IN THE NEWS:

[Pope Francis calls sex abuse cover-up by some bishops 'very ugly'](#)

Crux: Also defends conscientious objection on gay marriage, praises American 'warmth' and 'piety.'

Crux: [Pope Francis to bishops: Stop wishing for the good old days](#)

[Pope brings some new non-negotiables](#)

National Catholic Reporter: Francis vastly expands the previously narrow conception of what it means to be a countercultural Catholic in the United States and as a citizen of the world.

[5 leadership lessons from Pope Francis](#)

Fast Company: In his visit to the U.S. this week, Pope Francis showed off a leadership style we can all learn from.

[Thoughts on Pope Francis and his American 'Fantastic Four'](#)

Crux: John Allen offers four takeaways on the pope's "Fantastic Four" - two non-Catholics, Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr., and two Catholics, Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton.

[Embracing our limits](#)

Commonweal: Rowan Williams on the lessons of Laudato Si'.

Brookings: [The Francis climate homily](#)

[Listening to Pope Francis](#)

Mockingbird: Yesterday's address to Congress by Pope Francis may have been an historic first, but the analysis of his speech followed an all-too-predictable pattern.

[For the red pope, being pro-life is more about social justice than abortion](#)

The (London) Guardian: On his US visit, Pope Francis has talked more about climate change than anything else. One gets the impression that 'bedroom issues' don't bother him so much, says Giles Fraser.

[Pope Francis improves Protestant pastors' views of Catholic Church](#)

LifeWay: Pope Francis is boosting the reputation of the Catholic Church among Protestant pastors in America, although half of Protestant pastors say they do not value Pope Francis' opinion on matters of theology.

[Francis tells US bishops to be 'promoters of the culture of encounter'](#)

National Catholic Reporter: Pope Francis outlined what he wants from the U.S. Catholic bishops, telling them to be shepherds who never shy away from dialogue, do not fight with one another, and seek out opportunities for encounter.

[Don't politicize the pope!](#)

Politico: Peter Steinfels, a liberal Catholic, fears that Pope Francis fans will use his trip as a political bludgeon.

The Atlantic: [Why Pope Francis sounds like a Democrat](#)

[The pope's dark night of the soul](#)

CNN: This is the story of why Jorge Mario Bergoglio was exiled to a room -- and how the painful lessons he learned there are transforming the Catholic Church.

[Pope Francis and his little Fiat](#)

The New Yorker: That's how this Pope often operates -- through symbolism and gestures that convey his intentions in ways that words never could

[Lessons from Cuba on what to expect from Pope Francis in the US](#)

Crux: John Allen offers five take-aways from Pope Francis in Cuba with implications for what's in store for Americans.

[The Pope who caught us unawares](#)

Baptist News Global: Pope Francis is doing what we were supposed to be doing all along, says the Rev. Amy Butler.
The New York Times: [Pope Francis' popularity bridges great divides](#)

[Pope Francis inspires black Catholics, despite complicated church history on race](#)

NPR: Being black and Catholic means inheriting a complicated legacy.

[The first pope to address Congress isn't new to politics](#)

Washington Post: Beneath the gregarious, spontaneous Francis lies an unusually acute political mind.

[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.

ADDITIONAL RELIGIOUS NEWS ARTICLES:

[What happens when the 'Moral Majority' becomes a minority?](#)

The Atlantic: Conservative Christian communities are split between doubling down on their advocacy, or walling themselves off from mainstream culture.

[Obama: Don't use religion to deny constitutional rights](#)

USA Today: President Obama says he respects religious liberty, but it cannot be used to deny marriage licenses to gay and lesbian couples who are entitled to them.

[Author, religious scholar Phyllis Tickle dies at age 81](#)

The (Memphis) Commercial Appeal: Phyllis Tickle, an acclaimed and influential religion editor, writer and scholar died Tuesday. She was 81.

BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.

A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry is looking for transportation help. On October 16th we have the opportunity to transport up to 30 women from Beth-El to Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa for free mammograms. Then on November 23rd we need assistance bringing up to 60 kids to Beth-El for a special Advent workshop. Our existing bus can only fit 14 passengers at a time so we really need help! If a church has a bus we could use for those dates, or volunteers willing to help transport people, please call the mission and speak to Javier at 813-633-1548 ext. 228. ¡Gracias!

Kathy

Kathleen Dain, Executive Director

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

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. ~ Faith Focus Weekend at First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota
Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. John Buchanan, Editor of *The Christian Century*
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Wednesday, November 20 ~ Three Locations  
Rev. Dr. Hunter Farrell, Director of World Mission for the PCUSA  
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Thursday, November 19, 9:30 a.m. ~ Covenant Presbyterian Church, Englewood
Stated Meeting of Peace River Presbytery
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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: OCTOBER 2015:**

|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| October 4  | <u>Church of the Palms, Sarasota</u><br>Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Stephen McConnell<br>email: <a href="mailto:smcconnell@churchofthepalms.org">smcconnell@churchofthepalms.org</a><br>Congregational Care Pastor: Rev. Dr. Hmingi Browne<br>email: <a href="mailto:hbrowne@churchofthepalms.org">hbrowne@churchofthepalms.org</a><br>Discipleship & Outreach Pastor: Rev. Dr. Bruce Hedgepeth<br>email: <a href="mailto:bhedgepeth@churchofthepalms.org">bhedgepeth@churchofthepalms.org</a> |
| October 11 | <u>First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Glen Bell<br>email: <a href="mailto:GBell@FirstPresSarasota.org">GBell@FirstPresSarasota.org</a><br>Associate Pastor: Rev. Melanie Kim<br>Email: <a href="mailto:MKim@FirstPresSarasota.org">MKim@FirstPresSarasota.org</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| October 18 | <u>Northminster Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Christopher Carlson<br>email: <a href="mailto:pastorchr@npcsarasota.org">pastorchr@npcsarasota.org</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| October 25 | <u>Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u><br>Co-Pastor: Rev. Dr. Bruce Wismer<br>email: <a href="mailto:pastors@pineshorespres.org">pastors@pineshorespres.org</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

Co-Pastor: Rev. Karen Wismer  
email: [karen@pineshorespres.org](mailto:karen@pineshorespres.org)

## **PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: OCTOBER 2015**

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

### **October 2 & 3**

Whitfield Estates Book Sale

### **October 3**

Records Review Workshop (9:00 a.m. @ Northminster Presbyterian)

### **October 5**

Planning Team (1:00 p.m.)

### **October 6**

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

### **October 8**

Nominations / Representation Committee (9:00 a.m. at St. Paul's Presbyterian)  
Board of Trustees / Finance Team (9:30 a.m.)

### **October 10**

Records Review Workshop (9:30 a.m. @ Covenant Presbyterian)

### **October 14**

Committee on Preparation for Ministry (9:00 a.m.)

### **October 22**

Mision Peniel Task Force (11:00 a.m. at Covenant Presbyterian)  
Celebration of the Ministry of Mision Peniel (2:00 p.m. at Covenant Presbyterian)

### **October 24**

Guest Speaker at First Presbyterian, Sarasota (9:30 a.m.)

### **October 29**

Steering Committee (9:30 a.m.)



**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="#">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 |