



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – April 14, 2016
Rev. Dr. Kathleen Weller, Steering Committee Moderator

Eastertide, 2016

Eastertide in the church coincides quite nicely with the season of spring. Although spring is a tad longer, Eastertide is the best of it...the heart of it...even as it gives way to summer.

If we were not reared in a church tradition that celebrated the church seasons, this time called Eastertide may be new to us. The short version is that it begins with Easter Monday and takes us to our observance of Pentecost. It covers 50 days which in fact is how “Pente (50) cost” gets its name—holy counting.

I found myself saying to the congregation last Sunday, as I explained our reading from the book of Acts as our “Eastertide Lesson,” that this is a pointedly happy time of the church year. Can you think of another season that begins with events like the glory of the resurrection and concludes with the giving of the Spirit? This church season corresponding as it does to the greening of grasses, the fledgling of animals, and the lengthening of days is a reminder of the holiness of life and the sacredness of all creation.

As such this happy season is also a reminder of the unity of all of life. Paul gave us a short list... “There is no longer Jew or Greek, male or female, slave or free for you are all one in Christ Jesus” While Paul’s list is a good start, it leaves out the falseness of our most pernicious dualisms. For the Church of the 21st century I'd add to Paul’s list... that there is no us or them, there is no black or white, there is no sacred or secular but all are one in Christ Jesus. Indeed, what a happy, beautiful world it would be if we could see all of creation as birthed in the resurrection and breathed upon by the breathe of Holy Spirit. Eastertide realized.

So think on these things friends in this season of Eastertide. Glory in God’s gift of newness. Wonder, as you look at all people and things just how it is that the Spirit imbues them. And give thanks. For thanksgiving is the substance of our accepting God’s gifts to us.

In gratitude for you,
Kathleen

STATED MEETING of PRESBYTERY

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Northminster Presbyterian Church, Sarasota

3131 61st Street / Sarasota / 34243

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Registration begins at 8:00 a.m.

Meeting begins at 9:30 a.m.

Finance Forum at 9:00-9:25 a.m., with the Treasurer and Board of Trustees,  
for everyone interested in learning more

about the Presbytery's budget and the *Three Streams of Giving*.

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**** Lunch reservations are required by Friday, April 22. ****

Lunch is \$10.00, payable at registration,
and is a sandwich lunch from Jason's Deli.

To make reservations, contact Lori at the Presbytery Office,

lori@peaceriverpresbytery.org / 941-426-8421.

*Include your name and your church name.

Group reservations must include the names of all included.

(Please note: reservations are only required for lunch, not for the meeting.)

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The packet for the meeting will be posted on the  
Presbytery's web site on Thursday, April 21.

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

*A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma*

Summer will be here before you know it! Beth-El has numerous mission opportunities for adults and youth. From leading Vacation Bible School, to work groups helping out in our community, to scholarships for kids to go to camp at Cedarkirk, there are many ways your church can help support this valuable mission. Call Javier today at 813-633-1548 ext. 228, or email him at [Javier@beth-el.org](mailto:Javier@beth-el.org) to learn more.

### Open House:

April 17th 2-5pm

The mission of Beth-El is committed to supporting the farm working community and our neighbors in need through opportunities for hunger relief, education, healthcare, and spiritual growth.

During the open house, guests will have an opportunity to learn more about these initiatives as well as see many of the new renovations around our campus. There will also be bus tours of the local community so that visitors can gain a first hand glimpse of the challenges many of our farmworkers face. For more information, please call us at 813-633-1548.

### Summer Employment Opportunity:

Beth-El is looking for an older teen or adult to lead the summer youth activities.

The position will lead all youth activities; serve as a liaison with Cedarkirk for our scholarship program, and assist the operations manager in coordinating incoming mission teams. A valid driver's license is required. For more information, or to apply, please contact Beth-El at [info@beth-el.org](mailto:info@beth-el.org).

*Kathy*

Kathleen Dain  
Executive Director

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www.beth-el.org
[April Newsletter](#)

CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

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

www.cedarkirk.org

Summer is coming soon! It is hard to believe, but summer camp preparations are already underway. This summer's theme, FEARLESS FAITH, will help campers focus on how they become part of, gain support from, and build their own

Christ-centered communities. By looking at leaders from the Bible who used communities given to them by God, campers will be empowered to draw courage from friends, family, and community, stand up to injustice and help change attitudes, forgive others, and connect to and welcome all people. Please help Cedarkirk by letting the children and youth of your church or community know about the unique opportunities available this summer. We are also looking for volunteer nurses and worship leaders for the week-long sessions.

If you have any questions, please contact the camp office at (813) 685-4224 or visit 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](#))

RELIGION IN THE NEWS – ARTICLES THAT HAVE COME ACROSS MY DESK OR BEEN SENT TO ME (Graham):

[A pastor to his people](#)

America: For Francis, the 'good of souls' comes first.

[Justin Welby is reinventing how to be a church leader in a skeptical world](#)

The (London) Guardian: After the revelations about his parentage, the Archbishop of Canterbury showed himself to be humane and generous, not an infallible messenger of an absolute truth.

Religion News Service: [Welby praised for "honesty" over paternity shocker](#)

[Faith's mysterious ways in the 2016 campaign](#)

The Washington Post: E.J. Dionne Jr. says the 2016 election is transforming the religious landscape of American politics.

[Francis' exhortation a radical shift to see grace in imperfection, without fearing moral confusion](#)

National Catholic Reporter: Pope Francis has asked the world's Catholic clergy to let their lives become "wonderfully complicated" by embracing God's grace at work in the difficult and sometimes unconventional situations families and marriages face -- even at risk of obscuring doctrinal norms.

America: [Top ten takeaways from "Amoris Laetitia"](#)

[The religion of the New Lost Cause](#)

Baptist News Global: What if recent legislative efforts, the rhetoric of certain presidential candidates, declining church attendance, and the growth of the "nones," are contributing to the rise of a New Lost Cause religion, particularly in the South?

[When religious groups do what the government won't](#)

The Atlantic: Are faith-based programs for the poor a problem when there's no secular alternative?

[Black youth are going church-hopping, and here's why](#)

Fusion: In the 1960s, the black church played a major role in the Civil Rights Movement, but today, the church is mostly absent from black and youth-led organizing efforts.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The following are position openings in PRP churches.
Click on the title for more information.

[Part-Time Employment Positions](#) – Chapel By The Sea, Fort Myers Beach

PRAYER NEEDS:

Please continue to pray for:

- Rev. Dr. Doug and Jeanne Pratt – Jeanne’s sister, Sue, passed away last week in Ohio.
- Rev. Dr. Lou Thompson – recovering from neck surgery; in rehab.
- Mrs. Liz Countiss & daughter, Terri Countiss – Pray for comfort and peace in the loss of Rev. Craig Countiss on March 25.
- The family and other loved ones of Ruling Elder Phyllis Maisel, of Northminster P.C., who passed away on March 16. Phyllis was very active in the Presbytery.
- Jim & Becky Beckwith - health
- 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
- Greg Beckwith (son of Jim and Becky Beckwith) – on kidney transplant list
- 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

CHURCH PRAYER GUIDE: APRIL 2016:

April 3	<u>Christ Church of Longboat Key</u> Stated Supply Pastor: Rev. Dr. Norman Pritchard Email: revnmp@outlook.com
April 10	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Pastor: Rev. Craig Goodrich Email: PJACgood@verizon.net
April 17	<u>Lely Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jim Kirk email: jimkirk12122234@gmail.com
April 24	<u>Moorings Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Doug Learned email: jsullivan@mooringschurch.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Jaci Smith Patman email: jpatman@mooringschurch.org

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: APRIL 2016

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

April 15-16

Cedarkirk Spring Bash

April 20

Mision Peniel Task Force @ Covenant P.C., Ft. Myers (9:30 -11:30 a.m.)

April 21

Personnel Team (10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.)

Church & Community Blessings Grants Initiative (11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.)

April 22-23

Cedarkirk Spring Bash

April 28

Stated Meeting of Presbytery at Northminster, Sarasota



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 – office@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
Trinity Presbyterian Church, Venice	Venice Presbyterian Church, Venice
Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood	First Presbyterian Church, Arcadia

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, North Port	Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda
Wintergarden Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte devon.ducheneau@gmail.com	First Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte
Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, North Fort Myers	
Faith Presbyterian Church Cape Coral	First Presbyterian Church, Lehigh Acres
Buckingham Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers	Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers
Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, 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