



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – December 8, 2016
Rev. Graham P. Hart, General Presbyter



Note – Ray Jones, the Director for Congregational Vitality/ Evangelism area of the PCUSA will be the keynote speaker for our February Presbytery Meeting. Below is an Advent letter and invitation from Ray.

Dear Members of Peace River Presbytery,

I hope this Advent season is going well for each of you in Peace River. I am looking forward to being with you on February 23, 2017 at your Presbytery's stated meeting when you will launch your 2-year effort focusing on congregational vitality. To prepare for that, I would like to invite all pastors, congregational leaders, as well as the leadership of the Presbytery to our annual PCUSA Discipleship Conference ([click here](#)) that is held just an hour north of Peace River. On January 16-20, you are invited to put your feet in the ocean in St. Pete Beach Florida.

As 2016 comes to an end, we often take time to reflect on the past year. It is also time to think about goals for the new year. Maybe you are longing to get back into some spiritual practices or rhythms that will encourage your faith journey.

In the scriptures, we are encouraged to open our eyes; our heart, our mind and our soul to see the new things God is doing in our lives.

"I am creating something new. There it is! Do you see it? I have put roads in deserts, streams in thirsty lands." (Isaiah 43:19)

At the Discipleship Conference, you will enjoy the ebb and flow of the waves as you think about your own rhythm for the new year. During the afternoons, you can take time to play and discover, to read and pray about what "new thing" God is doing in you.

It will be a time to surrender as we all seek forgiveness and renewal in Jesus Christ. Through the morning teaching, worship, drama, and interaction with other participants we will have an opportunity to experience interior freedom in our faith journey. We will discuss the joy of being open to the Holy Spirit who is working in us as we thirst for something new in the coming year. During these four days, we will see how spiritual freedom can lead us to joyful expressions of love, grace, and mercy to others.

The [conference link](#) is: [Abide in Me... A Spiritual Purging](#).

Again, I am looking forward to being with you in February.

Grace,

Ray G. Jones III
Associate Director
Evangelism
Presbyterian Mission Agency
100 Witherspoon St.
Louisville, KY 40202
[502-569-5280](tel:502-569-5280)

PART TIME HELP WANTED - MISSION COORDINATOR at Mision Peniel, Immokalee, FL

Working a set schedule of at least 24 hours/week, this person will assist Pastor Estrada with routine office communication, purchasing, volunteer recruitment and management, food distribution, communications with donors, and other duties. The applicant needs to be bi-lingual in English and Spanish (trilingual with Creole or French is a plus), proficient in Office or its Mac equivalent, able to perform basic website management, possess a current driver's license, is able to work with culturally diverse guests, and be able to lift up to 50 pounds. Position is anticipated to be filled shortly after the start of 2017. Salary will be a minimum of \$15.00/hour. For a full description of the position or to apply for the position please contact (via email) either DeAnne Sawyer with dsa1546@aol.com or Pastor Clint Cottrell with Clint@clpc.us

ARTICLES of INTEREST

(selected by Graham Hart)

[Presbyterian Outlook - Guest commentary by Chuck Wiggins](#) *(This article was written by Chuck Wiggins – Pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Venice, FL)*

"I often wonder what kind of shape the Presbyterian Church would be in today if the Orthodox Presbyterians, the PCA, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and ECO had not departed," mused Joseph D. Small, former Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Theology & Worship director. Those particularly thought provoking words came during the recent Presbyterian Scholars Conference held October 18-19 at Wheaton College in Illinois.

[When you're the one in the captain's chair](#)

Religion News Service: As an interim pastor, David Gushee is learning that being the leader of an organization creates a whole different set of responsibilities -- and opportunities.

[Trump's religious deal making pays dividends](#)

Politico: The president-elect shrewdly courted evangelical leaders during his presidential run, and that transactional style appears likely to carry into the White House.

[How to make Christmas your best outreach of the year](#)

Christian Week: There may be no better time than Christmas to connect with those of your friends and neighbors who rarely, if ever, go to church.

[The disappointing victory at Standing Rock](#)

Religion News Service: A coalition of supporters on site and around the world can take satisfaction in a show of solidarity for indigenous rights and environmental protection. But we should be way past this point, Mark Silk says.

[Israel refuses visa to theologian over boycott and divestment activism](#)

The (London) Guardian: Isabel Phiri, of World Council of Churches, is first foreigner denied entry specifically for involvement with the boycott and divestment movement.

[Cardinal Cupich shoulders Chicago's Catholic future](#)

National Catholic Reporter: Chicago's new archbishop is a leader willing to take risks as his archdiocese contends simultaneously with falling numbers and greater diversity.

[The Guardian view on Christianity in Britain: neither here nor there](#)

The (London) Guardian: Britain struggles with the uneasy legacy of the much more religious country it once was.

[Two-thousand years of Grinches](#)

Slate: Hand-wringing over Christmas has been going on since the Christ child left the manger.

[Studies reveal 5 ways faith matters in the struggle to place spiritual before material goods](#)

ARDA: Here are five sometimes surprising findings that help reveal how the faithful cope with consumer pressures and resist defining themselves by their possessions.

[After Trump, what now for Christians in America? Obama faith advisor speaks out](#)

Christian Today: Speaking on a visit to the UK, Barack Obama's former faith advisor discusses the future for Christians in politics after the 2016 US election.

BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.

A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma

Thank you for your response!

Please [click](#) to read the update, "Offering Our Thanks".

Kathy

Rev. Kathleen Dain
Executive Director

Beth-El Celebrated its 40th Anniversary on November 5th!

*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 to learn more.



PO Box 860
Wimauma, FL 33598
Phone: 813-633-1548 ext. 223
Web: www.beth-el.org

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

CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

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

www.cedarkirk.org

*Thank you for supporting Cedarkirk and holding this ministry in your prayers for the last 45 years.
We look forward to witnessing God's handiwork here in the years to come!*

For additional information, 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 Team 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](#))

Update on Nathan Hart (Graham's son)

Nathan is at Rush Medical Center this week for his 5th week long chemotherapy infusion/cycle. The good news is the tumor has been reduced from a grapefruit size to a little larger than a quarter. The doctors will be determining in the next 3 weeks his course of treatment after the 6th cycle which will begin on December 27th. They are talking about radiation treatments and the possibility of a bone marrow transplant. His spirits are good, but this is taking a toll. He has lost 50 lbs. and he is pretty wiped out the week after each treatment cycle. Nathan is deeply appreciative, as am I, of your concern and on-going prayers.

~ Graham

graham@peacriverpresbytery.org

PRAYER NEEDS

Special Appeal:

Could YOU save a life? Kirkwood has been asked to help in the search for a living kidney donor for the husband of one of our members. Yes, we are in search of a healthy kidney. The family is working through Tampa General Hospital's Living Kidney Donor program. If you'd be willing to be tested to see if you might be a match, please call us at the church 941-794-6229 for details on the next steps. Also, please share this post as we need as many folks as possible to see it. Join us in prayer for this family and the family of God's chosen donor! Together we can save a life! Thanks, Hope Lee

www.tgh.org/living-kidney-donor-program/

Please continue to pray for:

- Nathan Hart (Graham's son) and his family – Nathan is undergoing chemotherapy for a rare and aggressive form of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma.
- Rev. Dr. Lou Thompson – recovery from neck surgery.
- Phil Kuehl (husband of Rev. Elizabeth Kuehl, Faith, Cape Coral) – continued recovery

- Rev. Dr. Paul Eckel - health
- Jim Beckwith - health
- 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: DECEMBER 2016:

December 4	<u>Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch</u> Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Deibert email: edeibert@mindspring.com
December 11	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Lehigh Acres</u> Pastor: Pulpit Supply church email: churchoffice@fpclehigh.org
December 18	<u>Christ Church of Longboat Key</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Norman Pritchard email: revnmp@comcast.net
December 25	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Pastor: Rev. Craig Goodrich email: PJACgood@verizon.net

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: DECEMBER 2016

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

December 8

Finance Team / Board of Trustees

December 13

Committee on Ministry

December 15

December 22-26, 30

PRP Offices Closed



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

<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>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

