



# PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – December 15, 2016  
Rev. Dr. Kathleen Weller, PRP Steering Committee Moderator



Dear Friends,

Every once in a while, I get stopped by an image. Most often, I am reading or looking for something else when such an image seems quite simply to call my name. It insists I pay attention. It says, “look here,” or “this is important,” or “I’m what you were looking for.”

At least that’s what the image above said to me--when I saw it. Yet I didn’t stop. Because of course I was too busy. It’s December for heaven’s sake. There are concerts and teas and parties and gifts to be bought and wrapped. There’s traditional food to be made and cookies. Don’t forget the cookies.

Yet this particular image was persistent, so as is my habit I simply hit COPY and SAVE and it ended up in my bottomless folder of images that try to speak to me. The ones I save for someday. And some of them have been there a long time!

But as I read the first Chapter of John she called to me again, and I went to that folder with all those images and retrieved her. I put John chapter 1 down and when I found her John’s Good News leapt from the page: “What has come into being in Christ, was life, and the life was the Light of all people.” The Light of All People.

You know sometimes, or maybe most of the time, we can get tongue-tied when we read the poetry of John’s Gospel... but this image made it more real for me than I ever knew it to be. Christ, the light of all the people. Christ in me, my hope of glory. Christ above me, beneath me, shining through me and you, and you... Christ within me, illumining my heart and mind and yours. Blessings and grace penetrating all people.

A second barrage of thoughts came as I sat a little longer looking at the photograph. It was only then that it occurred to me that while illuminating, it would also be consistent that the sun would necessarily be melting those on which it cast its rays. And that similarly, when we allow the light of Christ into us... we do not control what may happen next. Melt me. Mold me. Fill me. Use me. Have Thine own way, Lord—

Many of us were not taught or encouraged towards the use of pictures, representations or icons in prayer. But I often find the quiet sitting with an image is much like the process of Divine Reading (Lectio Divina) except it is Visio Divina or Divine Seeing. Meditating on this image revealed much about God and God's relationship to us all in ways that words never could.

This year we have a particularly long season of Advent—a season of waiting. Let me encourage you to allow yourself to be stopped by something you see. And then to tarry there is prayer. Invite the Spirit to illumine your understanding. Take a moment to step away from all the busyness to just look and listen for a while. I'll be praying for whatever God might be ready to birth in you this year.

A very Merry Christmas to you and yours,

Kathleen

Rev. Dr. Kathleen Weller, Obl.SB  
Parish Associate  
Pine Shores Presbyterian Church

P.S. I think the above photo has all the invitations of Advent waiting. It is saying:  
“look here,” “this is important,” and “I AM what you were looking for.”  
To God be the glory.

### **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](mailto:dsa1546@aol.com) or Pastor Clint Cottrell with [Clint@clpc.us](mailto:Clint@clpc.us)

### **ARTICLES of INTEREST**

(selected by Graham Hart)

#### [Bearing agonizing witness to the Dylann Roof trial](#)

The New York Times: Each morning they flow into Courtroom Six, escorted by federal officials from a holding room reserved for survivors and families of the victims.

#### [Pastors tell Muslims: We will 'stand with you'](#)

The Christian Science Monitor: Messages of support marked interfaith services in Washington and Boston, where 2,600 people showed up at a mosque Sunday -- far more than organizers expected.

#### [How 2016's movies and TV reflected Americans' changing relationship with religion](#)

Vox: From Sausage Party to Silence, it was a banner year for religion onscreen.

[Christianity Today's 2017 book awards](#)

Christianity Today: Magazine's picks for the books most likely to shape evangelical life, thought, and culture.

[Jews at top of class in first-ever global study of religion and education](#)

Religion News Service: Jews are more highly educated than any other religious group, while Hindus and Muslims are the least educated, the first-ever global study of religion and education shows.

[Catholic thought can help entrepreneurs change the world](#)

Crux: Today's young people are skeptical of big institutions and their ability to solve today's problems. But they do care about making the world a better place through smaller, more nimble and creative organizations, often as entrepreneurs.

[Religion drives skepticism about evolution, but not climate change](#)

Religion News Service: While rejection of evolution is strongly associated with Americans' religiosity, the same is not true of climate change.

[Meet the new Christian right, same as the old Christian right](#)

Religion Dispatches: It may not be your father's Christian right, but it's still the Christian right and it's more empowered than it's been since the glory days of Ronald Reagan.

Deseret News: [Trump's outreach to evangelicals didn't end with the election](#)

[Festivals of light](#)

The Atlantic: A collection of recent images from different autumn and winter festivals, observations, and celebrations around the world, where illumination at night is a big part of the fun.

**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 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on November 5<sup>th</sup>!**

\*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.



PO Box 860  
Wimauma, FL 33598  
Phone: 813-633-1548 ext. 223

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

[www.beth-el.org](http://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](http://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](http://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 was at Rush Medical Center last week for his 5<sup>th</sup> 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 2 weeks his course of treatment after the 6<sup>th</sup> cycle which will begin on December 27<sup>th</sup>. 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](mailto: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/](http://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 – heart 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: <a href="mailto:edeibert@mindspring.com">edeibert@mindspring.com</a>
December 11	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Lehigh Acres</u> Pastor: Pulpit Supply church email: <a href="mailto:churchoffice@fpclehigh.org">churchoffice@fpclehigh.org</a>
December 18	<u>Christ Church of Longboat Key</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Norman Pritchard email: <a href="mailto:revnmp@comcast.net">revnmp@comcast.net</a>
December 25	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Pastor: Rev. Craig Goodrich email: <a href="mailto:PJACgood@verizon.net">PJACgood@verizon.net</a>

**PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: DECEMBER 2016**

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

**December 15**

Steering Committee

**December 22-26, 30**

PRP Offices Closed



## CHURCHES OF PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

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

<a href="#">Braden River Presbyterian Church,</a> Bradenton	<a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a> Bradenton
<a href="#">Kirkwood Presbyterian Church,</a> Bradenton	<a href="#">Palma Sola Presbyterian Church,</a> Bradenton
<a href="#">Westminster Presbyterian Church,</a> Bradenton	Palmetto Presbyterian Church, Palmetto – <a href="mailto:office@ppcfl.org">office@ppcfl.org</a>
<a href="#">Christ Church of Longboat Key</a> Longboat Key	<a href="#">Peace Presbyterian Church,</a> Lakewood Ranch
<a href="#">Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church,</a> Sarasota	<a href="#">Church of the Palms,</a> Sarasota
<a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a> Sarasota	<a href="#">Northminster Presbyterian Church,</a> Sarasota
<a href="#">Pine Shores Presbyterian Church,</a> Sarasota	<a href="#">Presbyterian Church of the Covenant,</a> Sarasota
<a href="#">Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church,</a> Sarasota	<a href="#">Siesta Key Chapel,</a> Sarasota
<a href="#">Trinity Presbyterian Church,</a> Venice	<a href="#">Venice Presbyterian Church,</a> Venice

<a href="#"><u>Community Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Englewood	<a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Arcadia
<a href="#"><u>St. Paul's Presbyterian Church,</u></a> North Port	<a href="#"><u>Burnt Store Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Punta Gorda
Wintergarden Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte <a href="mailto:devon.ducheneau@gmail.com"><u>devon.ducheneau@gmail.com</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Port Charlotte
<a href="#"><u>Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church,</u></a> North Fort Myers	
<a href="#"><u>Faith Presbyterian Church</u></a> Cape Coral	<a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Lehigh Acres
<a href="#"><u>Buckingham Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Fort Myers	<a href="#"><u>Covenant Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Fort Myers
<a href="#"><u>Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Fort Myers	
<a href="#"><u>Hope United Church (PCUSA),</u></a> Fort Myers	<a href="#"><u>Chapel by the Sea,</u></a> Fort Myers Beach
<a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Bonita Springs	
<a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Naples	<a href="#"><u>Lely Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Naples
<a href="#"><u>Moorings Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Naples	<a href="#"><u>Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church,</u></a> Naples

