



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – January 26, 2016 Rev. Graham Hart, General Presbyter

2016 Initiatives and Goals

The Sailboat Church is sailing into Peace River Presbytery on Wednesday and Thursday. I hope in your schedules that you and members of your congregations will have the opportunity to learn from and benefit from Joan Gray's wisdom and time with us. ([Click here for schedule](#)).

Since not everyone who receives the pastoral letter is a commissioner attending the meeting of Presbytery, I am including a brief summary of what I will be sharing at the Presbytery meeting this week (see attached for full report). **Part I** is offered as a reminder of what we said was important and the goals we set, so we can decide, as a presbytery, if we are in alignment with those goals. Are we making any progress? But life and being “fully alive” is not just about looking back; it’s about aspirations, dreams, and discerning where the Spirit of God is leading us now. **Part II** talks about what some of those dreams may look like, as well as lifting up some important issues that we are facing and would be wise to address. So I offer this very brief and cursory summary of those Hopes, Dreams, Issues and New Initiatives as we “Look Ahead”, and if you want to read the fuller details – just [click here](#) to read the full report. As always, I would love to get your ideas and feedback, and will pass on suggestions to the Steering Committee.

For the long term growth, health, and oversight of Mision Peniel, in 2016 the Steering Committee and the Presbytery will continue its work on clarifying the organizational relationship of Mision Peniel with the Presbytery.

Several teaching elders are deeply concerned about what is happening in our area with the working poor, and have been exploring how congregations in Peace River can respond.

Regional gatherings - continue to develop a culture in our presbytery in which we experiment and strengthen the “regionalization of our work” so that:

ruling elders in the same town can come together to be of support to one another,
or sessions can come together to strategically address common needs in their areas,
pastors are able to be of mutual support for one another.

Church Growth, Congregational Re-development, Pastoral Networking

New Approaches for Pastoral Transitions - In this time of rapid cultural, spiritual, and economic change, when congregational vulnerabilities get easily accentuated, especially in times of transition, is there another model for dealing with pastoral transitions that will help Peace River Presbytery better serve our congregations?

The Well – development of an internet based web-site to which a congregational leader can go to find out, for instance, who is involved in a mission project in Africa,

who has resources to share on developing child protection policies,
who has room on mission trip for members of other churches to go,
who has a program or Bible study which they are willing to share or give to another church,
who has created a new "worshipping community" as an outreach of that congregation.

Cuba –This past fall, Peace River was invited, with the other presbyteries in Florida, to consider meeting with the Presbyterian leadership in Cuba. That first meeting will be happening in February.

Presbyterian World Mission: Is it possible to find some way to endow one global mission co-worker as a presbytery? This is a BHAG...but wouldn't it be great if we could find a way to do that.

In 2016, the dream, hope and prayer are that, in Peace River, each of our churches, and all pastors would drink deep of the "Living Waters", which is our presbytery meeting theme for the coming year.

So as we look back and look ahead as a presbytery, I am...

Grateful to our God...

Who is the Wind in our Sails...

and the Rudder to Guide us along the Way!

Graham

Graham Hart

General Presbyter

Peace River Presbytery

graham@peacriverpresbytery.org

STATED MEETING OF PRESBYTERY:

Thursday, January 28, 2016

at Buckingham Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers
4241 Buckingham Road / Fort Myers / 33905

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. / **Meeting** begins at 9:30 a.m.
Finance Forum with the Presbytery's Board of Trustees, 9:00-9:25 a.m.
(All are welcome to attend the Finance Forum.)

**** The lunch reservation deadline was last Friday, January 22 ****

BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.

A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma

Every Thursday Beth-El prepares a dinner for our farm working community. This is a wonderful opportunity for our faith partners to do mission close to home. If your church or group would like to participate, please call Beth-El at 813-633-1548.

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[www.beth-el.org](http://www.beth-el.org)  
[January Newsletter](#)

**CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER**

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

[www.cedarkirk.org](http://www.cedarkirk.org)

### **Employment Opportunities at Cedarkirk**

Cedarkirk is currently seeking to fill a variety of positions (part-time kitchen and housekeeping roles and a full-time Capital Campaign Director). Please visit [www.cedarkirk.org/who-we-are/employment/](http://www.cedarkirk.org/who-we-are/employment/) for more information.

## **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](#))

## **ARTICLES OF INTEREST:**

### [Backing their colleague](#)

Inside Higher Ed: At Wheaton in Illinois, faculty members are asking the college to drop its case against a professor who said Muslims and Christians worship the same God. Will the administration listen?

The Washington Post: [Can Wheaton College survive its never-ending controversy over Muslim and Christian worship?](#)

### [Gender gap in clergy pay is 'shameful,' say some Baptist women](#)

Baptist News Global: Bureau of Labor Statistics data show that women clergy make 76 cents for every dollar that male clergy are paid.

### [Pope Francis opens foot-washing rite to women in gesture of inclusion](#)

Religion News Service: In a change that quickly set the Catholic world buzzing, Pope Francis is allowing priests to wash the feet of women and anyone else in the community on Holy Thursday and not just men, as church law had previously decreed.

### [Leading change through adaptive design \(link is external\)](#)

Stanford Social Innovation Review: Change is fun. Change is hard. Between those truths, there yawns a large gap that poses a challenge for would-be change makers. Yet by integrating two widely influential practices -- design thinking and adaptive leadership -- social innovators can manage transformative projects in a way that's both creatively confident and relentlessly realistic.

### [Beware the polls you read: Breaking down the problem with Pew's science & religion poll \(link is external\)](#)

OnBeing blog: To get good answers, you have to ask good questions. "Generally, do you think science and religion are often in conflict?" is not a very helpful question.

### [America is in the midst of a philanthropic revolution \(link is external\)](#)

Fortune: America's philanthropists aren't waiting any longer for politicians or businesses to solve the world's most pressing problems. They are committing massive amounts of their own money to solve the most difficult challenges in health, education, job creation and the environment. In doing so, they are elevating the importance of philanthropy in American society and across the world.

### [Religious groups focus on Flint's water woes \(link is external\)](#)

Religion News Service: Faith organizations are giving out water and food, but are also focused on a longer-term goal: to make sure the impoverished city is never so neglected again. "The most important role the church can have is to be the ethical

watchdog for the welfare of the community,” Bob Bruttell, chairman of the Inter Faith Leadership Council of Metropolitan Detroit, said Tuesday.

[How winning professionals manage the three eras of their careers \(link is external\)](#)

Forbes: Quick remedies aren't a regime for managing overall health. Nor for managing a career. You can power pose like Wonder Woman to boost your self-confidence or tweak your mornings to be more productive. Helpful stuff, but not the same as a conscious, long-term plan to develop professionally over a lifetime.

## **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

[Part-Time Bookkeeper / Accounting Clerk](#) – Northminster Presbyterian Church, Sarasota

### **PRAYER NEEDS:**

#### **Please pray for:**

- Beth-El Farmworker Ministry – the mission's bus was stolen and their van vandalized. The bus was recovered, but the mission is relying on rentals while both vehicles are in the shop for repairs.
- Ron Slagle – cousin of Wayne Blaser's (former pastor of First, Bradenton) wife – at the end of his life and in hospice care in Bradenton.

#### **Please continue to pray for:**

- Jim 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
- 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
- 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: JANUARY 2016:**

|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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| January 3  | <u>Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Hope Lee<br>email: <a href="mailto:hope@kpcbradenton.org">hope@kpcbradenton.org</a>                                                                                                                             |
| January 10 | <u>Palma Sola Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u><br>Pastor: Rev. India Dennis<br>Email: <a href="mailto:pspcpastor@verizon.net">pspcpastor@verizon.net</a>                                                                                                                         |
| January 17 | <u>Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Rob Swinsburg<br>Email: <a href="mailto:pastorrobwpc@verizon.net">pastorrobwpc@verizon.net</a>                                                                                                                   |
| January 24 | <u>Faith Presbyterian Church, Cape Coral</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Halverson<br>email: <a href="mailto:tim@faithcapecoral.org">tim@faithcapecoral.org</a><br>Interim Associate Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Kuehl<br>Email: <a href="mailto:elizabeth@fpcf.org">elizabeth@fpcf.org</a> |
| January 31 | <u>Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dawn Mayes<br>email: <a href="mailto:revdawnmayes@gmail.com">revdawnmayes@gmail.com</a>                                                                                                                            |

**PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: JANUARY 2016**

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

**January 27**

Joan Gray at First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte  
Joan Gray at First Presbyterian Church of Naples

**January 28**

Stated Meeting of Presbytery at Buckingham Presbyterian, Fort Myers

**February 1**

Planning Committee



**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, Sarasota</a>                                  |
| <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>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 |