



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – June 14, 2016
Rev. Dr. Kathleen Weller, Spiritual Director
Sanctuary House, Pine Shores Presbyterian

Dear Friends,

There is a short homemade video circulating in social media. In it a little girl receives a doll that she seems to have desperately wanted. But with some coaching from her mom she looks more closely at the doll, now out of its familiar dark pink box, and we see as she does that it has been fitted with a prosthetic leg. One just like hers. The little girl is an amputee.

In the video her mother tells her that she purchased the doll and then sent it away to a doll hospital. A letter in the box tells the little girl that her doll arrived safely and was comfortable in her room at the hospital where she was measured fitted with her prosthetic leg and then learned how to use it. It concluded that she has been released ready to do anything she chooses.

This little nine-year-old recipient began with age-appropriate shouts of joy in seeing her new doll, but when she realized that it really was just like her, deep sobs began. And those who watched, cried along with her. Me too.

Someone posted a comment: “tears of joy.” I didn’t think much about it the first time I saw it. However, now I’m not convinced that they were tears of joy. The little girl’s initial joy at seeing the doll, before she knew it had a prosthetic leg, were indeed squeals of joy. But something profound happened to her / in her when she learned that this coveted doll was indeed like her in every way.

Surely through this gift her little nine-year-old heart was somehow coming to terms with the reality of her disability. Her new doll shared more than her long blonde curls and blue eyes. It shared what made her different than most other little girls. It shared what caused her pain. It shared what was or would become a great learning in her life. It shared something she was just beginning to cope with and which would be with her her whole life. A very big job for a doll with long blonde curly hair and blue eyes.

There in that doll box that looks like the same one you and I gave our daughters or nieces or granddaughters, was a truth that was grave and inescapable. I wonder how many of us would like a gift of such an exacting mirror of something in us that is painful, that makes us different, or that will in some ways define us? No, I don't think they were tears of joy. It's just not that simple.

As she clutched the doll with the prosthetic leg to her chest something changed. What was a moment ago happiness or even gratefulness became more real, more authentic as they turned to heartfelt sobs that seemed to be saying to her new found playmate, “I understand. I will take care of you. I will love you just as you are. It will be okay now. I am with you.” It was a moment of grace that freely and spontaneously welled up inside of her little nine year old self...and if you believe in such things...that also healed her. Not her leg, but her heart. Not her disability, but how she will live with it. Indeed a witness to the mystery of God in a nine year old girl with an 18 inch doll.

That's the thing about God's grace—it's in places Luther and Calvin could never imagine. It may not give us what we want, but always what we need. It may reveal things we'd rather not dwell on, yet it does so in tender love. And as grace flows through us, and as we extend it to others, it also manages to heal us along the way.

Like this little girl we all have things in us that are broken. We all have things, some seen and some unseen, that are our particular disability. And also like her our Great God is willing to show up in surprising ways and places to bring grace and healing. We simply provide a childlike heart.

May you be surprised by grace soon, my friends. Me too.

In love and peace,

Kathleen

Rev. Dr. Kathleen Weller, Spiritual Director, Sanctuary House of Pine Shores Presbyterian

BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.

A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma

*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.

*Beth-El Farmworker Ministry is planning its 40th anniversary celebration for the week of November 5th-6th. In preparation, we are seeking individuals willing to donate their air miles to help support national speakers who will be traveling to Beth-El to speak at the event. For more information, or to donate, please contact Kathy Dain at 813-633-1548.

Kathy

Kathleen Dain
Executive Director

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

## **CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER**

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

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

**Summer is here!** 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](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](#))

## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

- [Pastoral Intern – Overview](#) – [Position Description](#) – Siesta Key Chapel
- [Finance Secretary \(part time\)](#) – Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood

### **PRAYER NEEDS:**

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

- Amy Dunn (daughter of Joyce Dunn, Administrator of St. Paul’s Presbyterian) – 38 years old; in Hospice care in Port Charlotte with stage 4 cancer; 3 children
- Joyce Geary (member of Committee on Ministry) – loss of her father on June 9.

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

- Jim & Becky 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: JUNE 2016:**

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|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| June 5  | <u>Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Stewart<br>email: <a href="mailto:sunburn1320@mac.com">sunburn1320@mac.com</a><br>Associate Pastor: Rev. Cassie Todd<br>email: <a href="mailto:pastorcassie@bspconline.org">pastorcassie@bspconline.org</a> |
| June 12 | <u>Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Karl Kling<br>email: <a href="mailto:KarlKlingdmin@gmail.com">KarlKlingdmin@gmail.com</a>                                                                                                                            |

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| June 19 | <u>Church of the Palms, Sarasota</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Stephen McConnell<br>email: <a href="mailto:smcconnell@churchofthepalms.org">smcconnell@churchofthepalms.org</a><br>Associate Pastor: Rev. Dr. Hmingi Browne<br>email: <a href="mailto:hbrowne@churchofthepalms.org">hbrowne@churchofthepalms.org</a>     |
| June 26 | <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>Interim Associate Pastor: Rev. Margaret Torrence<br>Email: <a href="mailto:MTorrence@FirstPresSarasota.org">MTorrence@FirstPresSarasota.org</a> |

**PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: JUNE 2016**

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

**June 14**

Committee on Ministry (9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.)

**June 15**

Cuba Partnership Team (time TBD)

**June 18-25**

222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly (in Portland, OR)

**June 20**

Nominations and Representation Committee (10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.)

**June 23**

Committee on Ministry Records Review Subcommittee (9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.)



**CHURCHES OF PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY**

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

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|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Braden River Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Bradenton | <a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Bradenton |
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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#"><u>Kirkwood Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Bradenton                                                                      | <a href="#"><u>Palma Sola Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Bradenton                                       |
| <a href="#"><u>Westminster Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Bradenton                                                                   | Palmetto Presbyterian Church,<br>Palmetto – <a href="mailto:office@ppcfl.org"><u>office@ppcfl.org</u></a> |
| <a href="#"><u>Christ Church of Longboat Key</u></a><br>Longboat Key                                                                   | <a href="#"><u>Peace Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Lakewood Ranch                                       |
| <a href="#"><u>Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Sarasota                                                                      | <a href="#"><u>Church of the Palms,</u></a><br>Sarasota                                                   |
| <a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Sarasota                                                                          | <a href="#"><u>Northminster Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Sarasota                                      |
| <a href="#"><u>Pine Shores Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Sarasota                                                                    | <a href="#"><u>Presbyterian Church of the</u></a><br><a href="#"><u>Covenant, Sarasota</u></a>            |
| <a href="#"><u>Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Sarasota                                                              | <a href="#"><u>Siesta Key Chapel,</u></a><br>Sarasota                                                     |
| <a href="#"><u>Trinity Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Venice                                                                          | <a href="#"><u>Venice Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Venice                                              |
| <a href="#"><u>Community Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Englewood                                                                     | <a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Arcadia                                              |
| <a href="#"><u>St. Paul's Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>North Port                                                                   | <a href="#"><u>Burnt Store Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Punta Gorda                                    |
| Wintergarden Presbyterian Church,<br>Port Charlotte<br><a href="mailto:devon.ducheneau@gmail.com"><u>devon.ducheneau@gmail.com</u></a> | <a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Port Charlotte                                       |
| <a href="#"><u>Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>North Fort Myers                                                           |                                                                                                           |
| <a href="#"><u>Faith Presbyterian Church</u></a><br>Cape Coral                                                                         | <a href="#"><u>First Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Lehigh Acres                                         |
| <a href="#"><u>Buckingham Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Fort Myers                                                                   | <a href="#"><u>Covenant Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Fort Myers                                        |
| <a href="#"><u>Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church,</u></a><br>Fort Myers                                                                 |                                                                                                           |

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| <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 |