



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – March 10, 2016
Rev. Graham P. Hart, General Presbyter

COALITION OF IMMOKALEE WORKERS

Wendy's needs to join the party... help them help themselves make the right decision ([read more](#)).

Through the *Fair Food Campaign*, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, and those of us across the country that support their efforts, has made amazing progress over these past 10 years; but the work is not finished. We continue to stand with the farm worker community in Immokalee as they seek to earn a decent and fair wage.

Through the continued efforts of the [Coalition of Immokalee Workers](#) and the [Fair Food Campaign](#), positive changes have occurred in the fields. It was only 10 years ago that those of us in Peace River learned human trafficking and slave labor was occurring in the bounds of Peace River Presbytery. The first successful prosecution of the perpetrators occurred at the Federal Court house in Fort Myers. ([Read more on CIW Anti-Slavery Campaign](#)).

Abuses in the field were rampant; workers were continually being shorted wages; violence in the field was common, and working conditions were terrible. Has it made a difference? A resounding yes! This past year CIW received the Presidential Medal for Extraordinary Efforts in Combatting Modern-Day Slavery at the White House Forum. ([Click here](#))



Those changes have occurred because first, the workers decided to do something and organize themselves (CIW). Then the [Presbyterian Church](#), other denominations, and the public became aware, and the [Fair Food Campaign](#) began. Since then millions across America have learned what has been going on in the fields in our back yard. In the past 10 years fast-food companies (McDonald's, Yum Brands, Burger King, and Subway) and the three largest food service providers (Compass Group, Aramark, and Sodexo) have joined the fight, and become partners in the Fair Food Program.

However, in order for these changes to be lasting, for wages to be fair, and working conditions improved, companies like Wendy's need to be part of the solution. But as of now Wendy's does not see there is a problem. So ... CIW is asking us to boycott Wendy's as a way to put pressure on them to become aware, learn what is really going on, and invite them to be part of the solution. Right now hundreds of CIW members as well as hundreds of other supporters are on a 10 day Workers' Voice Tour to bring awareness of and invite others to join this effort ([click here for details](#)).

As a Presbytery, through the work of Mision Peniel and Pastor Miguel Estrada, we seek to be present, daily, in a pastoral way in the lives of the farm worker community, even as CIW works to bring systemic changes in the food supply chain

that may put cheap food on our tables, but denies those who pick and harvest that good food from being able to put food on their own tables.

The church has historically said that ministries of justice and mercy need to walk hand in hand. As we read in the prophet from old: "O Mortal, what is good? What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8).

To that end I invite you to join the effort: pray, act, walk and work so that someone's tomorrow is better because we cared, the church was there, and the good news of Jesus was shared.

Graham

Graham Hart
General Presbyter
Peace River Presbytery
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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 to learn more.

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

### [In the age of megachurches, sometimes less is more](#)

Religion Dispatches: Megachurches are not the only game in town. Smaller churches, operating in the urban context, are also attracting newcomers.

### [Face up to these five realities of church life today](#)

Baptist News Global: Mark Wingfield dispels some myths and misunderstandings about the state of the church in America today.

### [Deep rifts among Israeli Jews are found in religion survey](#)

The New York Times: A majority of Israeli Jews marry within their own religious or secular subgroups, and they inhabit largely separate social worlds, according to the findings of a survey exposing the deep gulfs over the role of religion in Israeli politics and society.

### ['The Good Death': Hard to find, and religion's role may be to blame](#)

Religion News Service: "The Good Death: An Exploration of Dying in America" takes a close-up look at end-of-life issues and how they are both helped and hindered by faith.

### [The Catholic Church in Michigan just made an important concession toward gay couples](#)

The Washington Post: The Michigan Catholic Conference is modifying its health coverage in a way that doesn't affirm gay marriage, but simply redefines who qualifies for health coverage in a way that could include same-sex couples.

### [Notre Dame rebukes ugly politics, gives award to Biden and Boehner](#)

Religion News Service: Vice President Joe Biden and former House Speaker John Boehner, devout Catholics and longtime political foes, will share a prestigious honor from the University of Notre Dame in a pointed rebuke to the polarization and ugliness of American politics.

### ['Trump's evangelicals': Who are they?](#)

Christian Science Monitor: Debates whether conservative Christians should support Donald Trump's presidential bid have revived a more long-term question: Who "counts" as an evangelical, anyway?'

The New York Times: [What does it mean to be evangelical today?](#)

## **EVENTS AROUND THE PRESBYTERY**

The following are hosted by Peace River churches and are open to all:

### [Missions Evening at First of Arcadia with Rev. Jan Dus of Diaconia in Moldova](#)

Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>

## **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:**

- Rev. Craig and Mrs. Liz Countiss – health for both; Craig is in Cape Coral Hospital

**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: MARCH 2016:**

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| March 6  | <u>Chapel By The Sea, Fort Myers Beach</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Stephen Adkison<br>Email: <a href="mailto:skypilot_mdiv@hotmail.com">skypilot_mdiv@hotmail.com</a>                 |
| March 13 | <u>Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, North Fort Myers</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Valerie Bell<br>Email: <a href="mailto:pastorvaleriebell@gmail.com">pastorvaleriebell@gmail.com</a> |
| March 20 | <u>Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Deibert<br>email: <a href="mailto:edeibert@mindspring.com">edeibert@mindspring.com</a>                 |
| March 27 | <u>First Presbyterian Church, Lehigh Acres</u><br>Temporary Supply Pastor: Rev. Winston Lawson<br>email: <a href="mailto:churchoffice@fpclhigh.org">churchoffice@fpclhigh.org</a> |

**PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: MARCH 2016**

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

**March 10**

Finance Team / Board of Trustees (9:30 a.m.)

**March 17**

Steering Committee (1:00 p.m.)

**March 20**

Palm Sunday

**March 22**

Committee On Nominations and Representation (10:00 a.m.)

**March 24**

Maundy Thursday

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

**March 25**

Good Friday

Peace River Presbytery Office Closed

**March 27**

Easter

**March 28-30**

Cedarkirk: Shepherds' Sabbath



**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 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|

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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 |