



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – March 17, 2016
Rev. Dr. Kathleen Weller, 2016 Steering Committee Moderator



THIS IS THE DAWNING...

Dear Peace River Friends,

“When the moon is in the seventh house, and Jupiter aligns with Mars, then peace will guide the planet, and love will steer the stars.” If you know the next line you are officially old.

I found those lyrics running around in my head early, early this morning. I probably haven’t heard the song for 30 years—could it be 40? I can picture the house I was living in, the room I was in as I listened, the friends who listened, sang and danced along with me. Music carves itself not only into our mind but also into our emotional memory. When *The Age of Aquarius* was in its zenith [1969] I was young, daring, happy, precocious, hopeful and naïve. What was that time like for you?

It wasn’t the opening line I noted above that came to me first, however. The line that broke into my consciousness as I was just waking up was this: “Harmony and understanding, sympathy and trust abounding...” Funny, it sounds more necessary, more needed, more urgent to me today than it did then. In fact, it doesn’t sound like a pop song—but the Gospel. It sounds like what Jesus came to teach, that for which he died, that for which he hoped for us. It’s what His Spirit is about still—*harmony and understanding, sympathy and trust abounding.*”

If pushed, I’d say these thoughts came in response to the sense of expectation and deep awe that comes over me each year at this time. My conviction that during these 40 days we can indeed walk with Christ and that as we do grace flows. Surely our awareness of His gift waxes and wanes. But at this time in my own seeking, at this time on my own path, these are the exact manifestations of God’s Presence that are most real to me. It’s how I’m being called to live my becoming. Harmony to overcome the dissonance in the world. Understanding to be able to hear and really listen. Sympathy to comfort the woundedness within and all around. And trust abounding—not in myself—but in the One who died so that I might live. My sense of expectancy is almost

palpable going into Holy Week. Perhaps because God is near, perhaps because the need is great. What will come, is yet unknown.

As we pass the final leg of the season we call Lent, what is it that Your heart yearns for? What needs to die, so that it can be raised to new life? What qualities, virtues or strengths do you need to be raised by Christ's Spirit in you?

Harmony and understanding, sympathy and trust abounding ... are those things for me. May the God you seek grant you everything you need to continue on the journey to being all you were born to be.

With joy and blessings,
Kathleen

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):**

### [The problem of the half-churched Christian](#)

Religion News Service: David Gushee on the negative effects of the wafer-thin church commitment that characterizes many self-identified Christians.

### [The religious right: still not dead](#)

Religion Dispatches: As in the past, reports of its death have been greatly exaggerated.

### [On the left, new push to reclaim politics of morality](#)

The Christian Science Monitor: A North Carolina pastor is leading a movement to recast morality as a liberal issue. The election suggests the shift might already be happening in some ways.

Religion & Politics: [The moral vision of Bernie Sanders](#)

### [How Kasich's religion is hurting him with conservatives](#)

Politico: He might be the truest believer in the race; and it's come back to bite him.

### [Mother Teresa to be made a saint in September](#)

The (London) Guardian: Pope Francis announces elevation months after approving Nobel prize winning nun's second miracle.

### [Why Donald Trump is tearing evangelicals apart](#)

The Washington Post: Evangelical divisions over Trump appear to be a stand-in for a deeper identity crisis.

### [When religion turns hateful, it loses its moral voice](#)

Baptist News Global: As a Baptist, Molly T. Marshall gets very nervous when the political realm speaks too much about religion.

### [Give fear a chance, says Anglicanism's top cleric](#)

The Economist: At times of collective anxiety, people of many faiths and none might be receptive to some deeper reflections on the subject of fear and hope.

## **EVENTS AROUND THE PRESBYTERY**

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

### [Intensive Journal Workshop at Pine Shores Presbyterian](#)

April 8-11, 2016

## **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:**

· The family and other loved ones of Ruling Elder Phyllis Maisel, of Northminster P.C., who passed away on March 16. Phyllis was very active in the Presbytery.

**Please continue to pray for:**

- Rev. Craig and Mrs. Liz Countiss – health for both; Craig is being transferred to Hospice Care.
- 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
- 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

First Presbyterian Church, Lehigh Acres  
Temporary Supply Pastor: Rev. Winston Lawson  
email: [churchoffice@fpclehigh.org](mailto:churchoffice@fpclehigh.org)

**PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: MARCH 2016**

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

**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)

[Braden River Presbyterian Church,](#)

Bradenton

[First Presbyterian Church,](#)

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 |