



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – November 9, 2016
Rev. Graham P. Hart, General Presbyter

Post-Election Reflections - Pre-Presbytery Meeting Hope
Speaking from the Hart

I believe what makes America great is not a campaign slogan, a person, or one political party or the other. Rather, our greatness is in our values, the people and a process that gives voice and power to the people, allowing for change, and the orderly and democratic transfers of power.

Today, half of our country is disheartened, stunned, afraid and sad. But a majority in our country has spoken, whether their vote was motivated by a desire for change, a political perspective, or against perceived short-falls in a candidate. We also know that what was voted in, because of what makes America great, in 4 years can be voted out. That has been our nation's history and underlies our greatness.

As Reformed Christians, we also believe that at the end of the day, "in life and in death, we belong to God." Ultimately, our trust is in a God who created us, loves us, and who in the end desires to make all things new, redeeming us and the world God so loved.

Life will go on. Change will come as it always does. Our values still must guide us. What is not acceptable and repugnant before an election is also so after an election.

As reformed Christians, at the heart of our theology, is this understanding: for God so loved the world that God sent (incarnated) his Son to us... to our world (i.e. the material, social, physical, political, relational world) in which we live. We matter to God. Also, as Christians, as much as loving God, we are to love our neighbor. That means, personally (and corporately), we do what we can to express and live from the perspective of love of neighbor.

How we treat others, what is acceptable behavior and what is not, still must guide us. There may be differences in how, from a political policy perspective, that gets lived out; never-the-less, I believe love of God and neighbor is what – whether we are Republican or Democrat or Independent – must guide us. We can look across the landscape of history, and when Christians stopped being "leaven and salt" in a broken world, when we did not speak up and out against injustice and abuse, as in Nazi Germany, when we accepted the unacceptable, our "neighbor" suffered ... and ultimately all suffered.

I know that this election cycle has been troubling and divisive. I hope and pray that what will encourage and guide us as Reformed/Presbyterian Christians is reminding ourselves of who we are, and living out of our core beliefs, such as those found in the Brief Statement of Faith which says:

*In life and in death we belong to God.
Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit,
we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel,
whom alone we worship and serve.*

*In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage
to pray without ceasing,
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.
In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,
we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks
and to live holy and joyful lives,
even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth,
praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"*

*With believers in every time and place,
we rejoice that nothing in life or in death
can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Pre-Presbytery Hopes – November 10, 2016

Tomorrow, with the Moderator of the 222nd General Assembly joining us, we will Celebrate: the 25th Anniversary of Peace River Presbytery, the 60th Anniversary of the ordination of women in ministry (honoring Margaret Towner), the 10th Anniversary of Mision Peniel (PRP mission to the migrant farmworker community in Immokalee), and the 40th anniversary of Beth El.

If you can't come to the whole meeting, which starts at 9:30 a.m., be sure to join us at 2:00 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, Bonita Springs, for a Festive Worship Celebration! We will have a joint choir from 14 congregations, a brass band, and a coming together in gratitude and hope as a presbytery.

In Gratitude and Hope,
Graham Hart

Graham

General Presbyter
Peace River Presbytery

graham@peacriverpresbytery.org

Peace River Presbytery 25th Anniversary Celebration: A Festival of Worship and Thanksgiving

**Thursday, November 10th, 2:00 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church of Bonita Springs**

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Join us for a wonderful celebration, including a Mass Choir, Brass Band,  
Processional of Banners, Displays from Our Churches, and much more!  
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This celebration will follow the

**Stated Meeting of Peace River Presbytery,
9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. (including lunch)**

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8:00 a.m. ~ **Registration** for the Stated Meeting Begins

9:00 -9:25 a.m. ~ **Financial Forum** with the Presbytery's Board of Trustees and Treasurer  
(*This is a great opportunity to ask questions of the Presbytery's proposed 2017 budget,  
Three Streams of Funding, and more.*)

9:00-9:25 a.m. ~ **Committee On Ministry** Forum

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Lunch is \$12.00 and payable at registration. The cost includes morning refreshments.

**** Lunch Reservations were required by last Friday.****

If you missed making a reservation, check at registration for an opportunity to get on the list.

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**We will also be celebrating the:**

\*60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Ordination of the first woman into the denomination,  
our Rev. Dr. Margaret Towner

\*40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Beth-El Farmworkers Ministry

\*10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Mision Peniel

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Special Guest: Rev. Dr. Jan Edmiston, Co-Moderator of the General Assembly

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Letters were sent several weeks ago to Pastors, Clerks of Session, and Church Offices  
with details. Emails and newsletter bulletins have also been sent for several weeks.

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**BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.**

*A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma*

**40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration: Saturday, November 5th ([flyer and reservation form](#))**

\*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.

\*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.

*Kathy*

Kathleen Dain  
Executive Director

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

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**CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER**

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

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

*The dust from summer camp has settled and the singing and laughter of exuberant campers and summer staff have been replaced by the twitter of crickets and cicadas. We are entering our fall ministry of hospitality and look forward to welcoming all of the guests and retreat groups who call this place a home away from home.*

*We invite you to join us as we celebrate 45 years of camp and conference ministry during our annual Homecoming Weekend, September 2-4, 2016. Whether you can spend the weekend or visit us on Saturday only, we'd love to welcome you back to this special place as we fellowship and worship together.*

*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](#))

### **Prayer Update – Nathan Hart**

Again, I want to thank all of you for your on-going prayers for Nathan, and the support the Presbytery. The good news is that, based on a PET scan, the 5 different chemotherapy drugs he is receiving - in his week-long hospital stay - are reducing the size and density of his tumors. The challenge, as you can imagine, is the toll the massive doses that he is getting is having on his body. He says it feels like a bad case of the flu. But his spirits are good. At this point, the doctors have told him he is to go thorough 6 cycles of this chemotherapy regimen, and then they will evaluate and decide if other treatments are necessary.

~ Graham

## **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 & 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: NOVEMBER 2016:**

|             |                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| November 6  | <u>Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Clinton Cottrell<br>email: <a href="mailto:clint@clpc.us">clint@clpc.us</a>                            |
| November 13 | <u>Hope United Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Kevin Morris<br>email: <a href="mailto:pastor@hopeunitedchurch.net">pastor@hopeunitedchurch.net</a>         |
| November 20 | <u>Chapel By The Sea, Fort Myers Beach</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Stephen Adkison<br>email: <a href="mailto:skypilot_mddiv@hotmail.com">skypilot_mddiv@hotmail.com</a>            |
| November 27 | <u>Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, N. Fort Myers</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Valerie Bell<br>email: <a href="mailto:pastorvaleriebell@gmail.com">pastorvaleriebell@gmail.com</a> |

**PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: NOVEMBER 2016**

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

**November 10**

Stated Meeting of Presbytery and 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

**November 11**

Veterans' Day

**November 17**

Steering Committee (9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.)

Mision Peniel Team @ Covenant Presbyterian, Fort Myers (10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.)

**November 21**

Nominations and Representation Committee (10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.)

**November 24**

Thanksgiving – PRP Offices Closed

**November 25**

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><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>                                  |

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <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                                                                 |                                                                        |
| <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       |

