



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – September 1, 2016
Rev. Elizabeth Deibert

CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY & GROWTH

Summer is ending, and it is time to roll toward the busier season of life in the church. But will our busy-ness transform life or just make us tired and wishing again for summer? How can we as church leaders help our congregations to grow in vitality? The Congregational Vitality and Growth Task Force met last week, and did some brain-storming on what it means to be a Vital and Growing Congregation. Our initial answer to that questions is as follows: *A vital and growing church is one that celebrates the Great Commandment through inspiring and life-transforming worship, nurturing discipleship, compassionate and inclusive outreach, and radical, grace-filled generosity.*

We discussed the value of learning from one another, and rejoiced that we would be gathering for regional meetings very soon to have such a meaningful time of sharing good ideas.

The Planning Team will be working in October to organize the 2017 Presbytery meetings around four themes related to Congregational Vitality and Growth: Inspiring Worship, Nurturing Discipleship, Compassionate Outreach, and Radical Generosity.

While we might want to add our own favorite adjectives, we believe that any church that is thriving must be engaging enthusiastically and prayerfully in these essentials: Worship, Discipleship, Outreach, and Generosity. When we read the early description of the church in Acts 2:42-48, we see a church energized in the Spirit's power as they worship through Word and Sacrament, and as they live a life of gratitude, fellowship, prayer, and generosity.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. (NRS)

We are eager to hear how the Holy Spirit is moving in all the churches of Peace River Presbytery. God is at work – in you, in me, in our neighbors. We simply need to tap into that work, and humbly, prayerfully, and enthusiastically go with God, just as Jesus did, just as the early church did on the wings of the Spirit.

*Rev. Elizabeth Deibert
Pastor, Peace Presbyterian Church
Moderator, Congregational Vitality & Growth Task Force*

SEPTEMBER REGIONAL GATHERINGS

THEME: DISCIPLESHIP

All are invited to attend any of the following gatherings. These are not Presbytery Stated Meetings, but rather a chance to gather with other PRP churches in your region and share, encourage, and be encouraged..

Thursday, September 1: South Region

Location: Hope United Presbyterian Church
7470 Hickory Rd SE, Fort Myers, 33912
Time: 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Reservation: Yes ... by Thursday, August 25. Contact church office at 239-267-3331.
Meal: Breakfast - \$5.00 per person

Wednesday, September 7: Central Region

Location: St. Paul's Presbyterian Church
5550 Sumter Blvd., North Port, 34287
Time: 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Reservation: Yes ... by Wednesday, August 31. Contact church office at 941-426-2552.
Meal: Breakfast - \$5.00 per person

Thursday, September 8: North Region

Location: Oak Pointe Church (*formerly Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church*)
7045 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, 34243 (the address of Whitfield Estates)
Time: 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Reservation: Yes ... by Thursday, September 1. Contact church office at 941-355-0440.
Meals: Light morning refreshments & light lunch - \$10.00 per person

SPECIAL CALLED MEETING of PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

Thursday, September 8, 2016

1:00 p.m.

Oak Pointe Church, Sarasota (same location as Regional Gathering)

Purpose:

Examining Candidates for Ordination
Approving Pastoral Relationships/Validated Ministries

[View announcement of meeting.](#)

ANNUAL SESSION RECORDS REVIEW

Three Records Review sessions are being offered in conjunction with Presbytery cluster meetings held in three different locations.* Additionally we will offer two other review sessions, both on Saturdays.

Clerks of Session can select the date and location most convenient. Please email or call the contact person listed for the meeting date selected so that we can plan accordingly.

As a bonus, Rev. Dr. Randy Moody, Peace River Presbytery Stated Clerk, has agreed to provide a training workshop at Covenant, Fort Myers in conjunction with the Records Review Workshop on October 22. The training will begin at 9:00 with the Records Review to follow at 10:00.

Additionally, Clerks may obtain a copy of the Handbook for Clerks of Session by calling the Presbytery office or may pick up a copy at the review meetings. This is especially helpful for newly elected clerks. There have been no changes made to the Handbook since last year.

***Records Review Workshops (following Presbytery Fall Regional Gatherings):**

September 1, 1:00 p.m., Hope United, Fort Myers, Charmaine Ponkratz, ponkratz@comcast.net

September 7, 1:00 p.m., St. Paul's, North Port, Charmaine Ponkratz, ponkratz@comcast.net

September 8, 2:00 p.m., (note time change due to called meeting of Peace River Presbytery) Oak Pointe, Sarasota, Sally Kirby, kirbyjack5030@comcast.net, 941.351.3115 (former Whitfield Estates location)

Records Review Workshops:

October 8, at 9:00 a.m., Northminster, Sarasota, Sally Kirby, kirbyjack5030@comcast.net, 941.351.3115

October 22, at 9:00 a.m., Covenant, Ft. Myers, JoAnn Leasure, tcup166@embarqmail.com, 239.995.5625

BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.

A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma

40th 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.

Job Opportunity: Mission Outreach Resource Coordinator ([click for job description](#)).

*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.

Kathy

Kathleen Dain
Executive Director

www.beth-el.org
[August Newsletter](#)

CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

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

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.

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:

- Collection Centers for Mision Peniel Supplies ([click for information](#))
- Critical Needs List ([click for information](#))

PRAYER NEEDS

Please continue to pray for:

- Rev. Dr. Lou Thompson – recovery from neck surgery.
- Phil Kuehl (husband of Rev. Elizabeth Kuehl, Faith, Cape Coral) – recovering from injuries sustained (and subsequent surgeries) when he was hit while bicycle riding. Also, pray for Phil and Elizabeth’s niece and husband, Priscilla and Ron Kosedner, through the loss of their 2 ½ year old son, Elias.
- 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: SEPTEMBER 2016:

September 4	<u>Braden River Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u> Pastor: Rev. Glenn Buzbee, Jr. email: revglennb@gmail.com
September 11	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u> Pastor: Rev. Dino Rustin email: dino@firstpresbradenton.com
September 18	<u>Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u> Pastor: Rev. Hope Lee email: hope@kpcbradenton.org

September 25

Palma Sola Presbyterian Church, Bradenton

Pastor: Rev. India Dennis

email: pspcpastor@verizon.net

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: SEPTEMBER 2016

You may view the entire calendar on the Presbytery web site: www.peacriverpresbytery.org

September 1

Fall Regional Gathering @ Hope United Presbyterian Church, Ft. Myers (8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.)
Session Records Review Workshop @ Hope United Presbyterian Church (1:00 p.m.)

September 5

LABOR DAY – PRP Office Closed

September 7

Fall Regional Gathering @ St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, North Port (8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.)
Session Records Review Workshop @ St. Paul's Presbyterian Church (1:00 p.m.)

September 8

Fall Regional Gathering @ Oak Pointe Church, Sarasota (8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.)
Special Called Meeting of Presbytery @ Oak Pointe Church (1:00-2:00 p.m.)
Session Records Review Workshop @ Oak Pointe Church (2:00 p.m.)

September 13

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

September 14

Committee on Preparation for Ministry (10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.)

September 15

Steering Committee (9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.)
Mision Peniel Team @ Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers (9:30 a.m.)
Finance Team / Board of Trustees (1:00-3:00 p.m.) *This is a change from the normal day and time.
Personnel Team (1:00-3:00 p.m.)

September 19

Nominations/Representation Committee (10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.)
Planning Team (1:00-3:00 p.m.) *This is a change from the normal day.

September 22

Congregational Vitality and Growth Task Force (1:00-3:00 p.m.)

September 27

"Funding Your Ministry" Workshops @ Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota (9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.)

September 28

"Funding Your Ministry" Workshops @ First Presbyterian Church, Bonita Springs (9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.)

September 29

Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team (10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.)



CHURCHES OF PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

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

Braden River Presbyterian Church, Bradenton	First Presbyterian Church, Bradenton
Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, Bradenton	Palma Sola Presbyterian Church, Bradenton
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bradenton	Palmetto Presbyterian Church, Palmetto – office@ppcfl.org
Christ Church of Longboat Key Longboat Key	Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch
Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church, Sarasota	Church of the Palms, Sarasota
First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota	Northminster Presbyterian Church, Sarasota
Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota	Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, Sarasota
Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church, Sarasota	Siesta Key Chapel, Sarasota
Trinity Presbyterian Church, Venice	Venice Presbyterian Church, Venice
Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood	First Presbyterian Church, Arcadia

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, North Port	Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda
Wintergarden Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte devon.ducheneau@gmail.com	First Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte
Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, North Fort Myers	
Faith Presbyterian Church Cape Coral	First Presbyterian Church, Lehigh Acres
Buckingham Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers	Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers
Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers	
Hope United Church (PCUSA), Fort Myers	Chapel by the Sea, Fort Myers Beach
First Presbyterian Church, Bonita Springs	
First Presbyterian Church, Naples	Lely Presbyterian Church, Naples
Moorings Presbyterian Church, Naples	Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples