



# PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ September 15, 2016  
Rev. Dr. Kathleen Weller, Steering Committee Moderator

Dear Peace River Friends,

Somewhere north of the Mason-Dixon line today, it looks like this. It's a fall day and folks are noticing the air is different, the light is different, the smells are different and yes, the colors. Nature is putting on a spectacular show in crimsons, goldens, chocolates and burnt oranges—even the weeds turn colors. The earth is truly showing forth the Glory of

God. Everything is different-yet, all is right with the world.



Dreaming about the transformation that is afoot (because I can only dream about it here in SW Florida) led me to wonder about my own inclinations as changes occur around me in other ways. Do changes in life naturally lead me to appreciation, introspection and delight? Are there other changes which I meet with expectation and excitement? There is always some degree of drama around change, isn't there. But we all know and likely have experienced changes that have made us hold our breath, rather than the changes that take our breath away.

Listening to folks at the Presbytery Fall Gatherings this month, I heard about a lot of things changing in the life of our congregations. To many of us, though we don't often speak of it in so many words, we've noticed in the Church that... "the air is different, the light is different, the smells are different..." Some of us have taken it personally, and we think it's only our congregation. Others move the issue (and sometimes the blame) up the ladder to the denomination, it's only the PCUSA. Still others have found, that like the coming and going of seasons, this is a time in the life of the Church (all churches) in which "Everything is different-yet, all is right with the world."

My experience is that our ability to be agile in times of transformation, especially in our faith community, depends on whether or not we have developed the spiritual capacity to see. When what should be green is turning to orange... and what should be full and lush is barren down to the branches...it takes spiritual eyes to see God at work and to join in the new dance God is inviting us into. It's a healthy spirit that will lead us to participate in our own transformation in breath-taking expectation.

Is this the fall season for you personally? In a relationship? In your faith community? We have a choice friends, on how to respond. We can see the colors and hues, smell the air and note all the differences and allow them to be signs of a faithful God, taking our breathe away...or we can simply not see beyond the necessary changes--brace ourselves and hold our breath. But only one of these ways gives life.

I have friends up north who take pity on me each year and stick a couple dozen colored leaves in an envelope and mail them to me ;-). I always put them on the dining room table and add a few gourds, a small pumpkin and a couple of candles. It occurs to me in writing this, that sitting with those icons of transformation—maples leaves and oak, beech and sugar maples—would be a wonderful spiritual practice. Let me encourage you toward this transformational ritual of gazing with God. And let me add my prayer: that in sitting with these symbols of transformation, God will give you the spiritual eyes to enter into the changes of your life with expectancy.



With joy and peace, Kathleen

#### **Update on Nathan Hart: Graham Hart's son ([click here](#) to Part I which was in last week's pastoral letter)**

The hope was that Nathan would have started Chemotherapy by the middle of last week, but the results from some specialized genetic tests needed to determine the particular kind of lymphoma were not completed till last Friday. The wait for Nate (and family) was frustrating, but as we have come to understand, diagnosing exactly what he has and beginning the right treatment plan is critical to his long term prognosis. The good side of the delay enabled Nathan to be discharged from the hospital over the weekend, so he was able to be of support to Eileen at the time of the funeral services for Eileen's mom.

Nathan was re-admitted to Rush Medical Center in Chicago Monday morning, and completed all the prep and lab work by last afternoon. He then began a 4-day continuous infusion of chemo-therapy drugs at 6:00pm Monday, after which he will receive 2 other drugs. If all is going well then he will be discharged for 2 weeks before beginning the treatment cycle all over again. He is receiving 5 different chemotherapy drugs.

Nate and Eileen are doing incredibly well and the best they can in some incredibly difficult circumstances. Family and friends are standing with them. As is true for anyone who has gone through this, the range of emotions is huge. Nathan is determined to fight this and not just live with cancer, but with prayer and God's help, and with all the doctors will be doing, come out on the other side of this whole and well.

I was glad to be able to be with him and help with their 3 young children. Nathan and I had some great Father-Son time and talks. I am just sorry for him that it was while he was in the hospital. Other family members our helping out, and their church has been very supportive. So we wait and pray.

I thank each of you for your support and prayers. I told Nathan that all the churches in Peace River were praying and rooting him on. He is extremely grateful for the out-pouring of love and support from so many old and new friends.

Grateful for your support and prayers!

*Graham*

[graham@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:graham@peacriverpresbytery.org)

## “FUNDING YOUR MINISTRY”

~ Sponsored by the Presbytery's Finance Team/Board of Trustees ~

Tuesday, September 27, 2016 ~ Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota

or

Wednesday, September 28, 2016 ~ First Presbyterian Church, Bonita Springs

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

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**Workshop Presenters:** Robert Hay, Jr. and John Elder Wray of the Presbyterian Foundation

**Workshop Titles:** (1) Culture of Generosity, (2) Planned Giving, Legacy Funds, and Endowments, (3) Capital Campaigns

**Who should attend?** ... Church Treasurers, Finance Secretaries, Finance Committee Chairs and Members, Clerks of Session, Elders, Pastors, and anyone interested in the financial and stewardship aspects of the church ministry. All are welcome!

**Cost?** ... No cost for the workshops / \$10.00 cost for lunch.

**Reservations are required** for the workshops AND lunch by Wednesday, September 21.

Contact Lori Doyal, PRP Financial Secretary: [lori@peaceriverpresbytery.org](mailto:lori@peaceriverpresbytery.org) / 941-426-8421

Download [informational brochure](#) for additional information.

### 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)  
[September Newsletter](#)

### 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 NEEDS**

### **Please pray for:**

- Barbara Church, Committee on Ministry member – loss of her husband earlier this week.

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

- Nathan Hart (Graham's son) and his family – (See Graham's update in this newsletter). Nathan was just diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. He has begun chemotherapy.
- Rev. Dr. Lou Thompson – recovery from neck surgery.
- Phil Kuehl (husband of Rev. Elizabeth Kuehl, Faith, Cape Coral) - 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: SEPTEMBER 2016:**

|              |                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 4  | <u>Braden River Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Glenn Buzbee, Jr.<br>email: <a href="mailto:revglennb@gmail.com">revglennb@gmail.com</a>    |
| September 11 | <u>First Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dino Rustin<br>email: <a href="mailto:dino@firstpresbradenton.com">dino@firstpresbradenton.com</a> |
| September 18 | <u>Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Hope Lee<br>email: <a href="mailto:hope@kpcbradenton.org">hope@kpcbradenton.org</a>             |
| September 25 | <u>Palma Sola Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u><br>Pastor: Rev. India Dennis<br>email: <a href="mailto:pspcpastor@verizon.net">pspcpastor@verizon.net</a>     |

## **PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: SEPTEMBER 2016**

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

### **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 (12:00-2:00 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)

|                                                                    |                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <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>                                  |
| <a href="#">Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Sarasota | <a href="#">Siesta Key Chapel,</a><br>Sarasota                                                     |
| <a href="#">Trinity Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Venice             | <a href="#">Venice Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Venice                                              |
| <a href="#">Community Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Englewood        | <a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Arcadia                                              |
| <a href="#">St. Paul's Presbyterian Church,</a><br>North Port      | <a href="#">Burnt Store Presbyterian Church,</a><br>Punta Gorda                                    |

|                                                                                                                                            |                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Wintergarden Presbyterian Church,<br/> Port Charlotte<br/> <a href="mailto:devon.ducheneau@gmail.com">devon.ducheneau@gmail.com</a></p> | <p><a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a><br/> Port Charlotte</p> |
| <p><a href="#">Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church,</a><br/> North Fort Myers</p>                                                             |                                                                       |
| <p><a href="#">Faith Presbyterian Church</a><br/> Cape Coral</p>                                                                           | <p><a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a><br/> Lehigh Acres</p>   |
| <p><a href="#">Buckingham Presbyterian Church,</a><br/> Fort Myers</p>                                                                     | <p><a href="#">Covenant Presbyterian Church,</a><br/> Fort Myers</p>  |
| <p><a href="#">Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church,</a><br/> Fort Myers</p>                                                                   |                                                                       |
| <p><a href="#">Hope United Church (PCUSA),</a><br/> Fort Myers</p>                                                                         | <p><a href="#">Chapel by the Sea,</a><br/> Fort Myers Beach</p>       |
| <p><a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a><br/> Bonita Springs</p>                                                                      |                                                                       |
| <p><a href="#">First Presbyterian Church,</a><br/> Naples</p>                                                                              | <p><a href="#">Lely Presbyterian Church,</a><br/> Naples</p>          |
| <p><a href="#">Moorings Presbyterian Church,</a><br/> Naples</p>                                                                           | <p><a href="#">Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church,</a><br/> Naples</p>    |