



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ August 14, 2017 Charmaine Ponkratz, Committee on Ministry Co-Moderator

Greetings from the Committee on Ministry (COM),

Your ruling and teaching elders who serve on COM diligently, carefully and often quietly do the work to 'nurture, care and develop positive relationships among teaching elders, educators, congregations and Presbytery.' On occasion the work is celebrated with the welcome of a new pastor, associate pastor, interim pastor or educator being called to a shepherd a congregation in Peace River Presbytery. Even the work of calling a pastor involves 'behind the scenes' work that never sees the public's eye. Just ask any person who has ever served on a nominating committee. It is much like can be said about housework: it is what a person does that nobody notices unless he/she hasn't done it.

Today, I'd like to focus on another of those thankless jobs; that of Clerk of Session. Each year the Book of Order instructs the Presbytery to review the proceedings and actions...of the lower councils [sessions] within its jurisdiction. This year's workshops to review the Session Minutes and Records Book (Membership Register) have been scheduled. As a reminder to the clerks, the dates for the review workshops are below.

Clerks maintain the history of the faithfulness of the church through their careful documentation of minutes and records. They are interested in and knowledgeable about Presbyterian polity. Along with the moderator of the session, they are an important liaison between session and the Presbytery. They strive to be a servant to session, in the fullest New Testament sense, and are equipped spiritually to fulfill the servant role. And, on top of all that their work gets scrutinized annually.

To all of you reading this who are not Clerks, I encourage you to think about the other thankless jobs in our midst. Perhaps those who patrol the pews to make sure that the Bibles, hymnals and literature are in order. Or the sexton who makes sure the bathrooms are fresh and the windows are sparkling. The people who prepare communion or count the tithes and gifts each week. The youth group leader that takes special interest in the talents of a shy child. The list is long. God notices all of his faithful servants at work. To each of you...thank-you.

Now back to the Records Review Workshops; here are the dates:

Records Review Workshops (in conjunction with the summer Presbytery cluster meetings). *September 12, at 4:00 p.m., Wintergarden, Port Charlotte and *September 13 at noon First Presbyterian Port Charlotte.

Records Review Workshops (Saturday workshops; one in the south and one in the north, and *October 14, at 9:00 a.m., Covenant, Ft. Myers and *October 21 at 9:00 a.m., Northminster, Sarasota.

Select the date and location that are the most convenient. I look forward to seeing you there.

SPECIAL MEETING of PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

Thursday, August 17, 2017 at 1:00 p.m.
(Registration will begin at 12:15 p.m.)

Location: St. Paul's Presbyterian Church
5550 Sumter Blvd., North Port, FL 34287
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***Per Article IV, 4.3 in the Standing Rules of Peace River Presbytery,  
I, Douglas Pratt, call a special meeting of Peace River Presbytery  
at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 17, 2017 at  
St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in North Port, FL,  
to act on the contract to sell Presbytery owned property to  
First Presbyterian Church of Punta Gorda (ECO) negotiated  
by Peace River Presbytery Trustees.***

***Rev. Dr. Douglas Pratt, Moderator  
Peace River Presbytery***

***Rev. Dr. Randy Moody, Stated Clerk  
Peace River Presbytery***  
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The meeting packet is posted on the Presbytery's web site.
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Reminder: Members of Presbytery who cannot attend are required  
to request an excused absence from the [Stated Clerk](#).

**[THE NOMINATIONS and REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE'S GUIDELINES  
for Selecting Commissioners to the General Assembly](#)**

**FALL GATHERINGS**

**TOPIC: Radical Generosity**

**PRESENTER: Robert Hay, Ministry Relations Officer for the Presbyterian Foundation**

**Tuesday, September 12 - Wintergarden Presbyterian Church**

**1:00-4:00 p.m.**

***Smaller Sized Congregations***

(Wintergarden Address: 18305 Wintergarden Avenue / Port Charlotte, 33948)

(Lunch Reservations to Beckie: 941-743-5335)

**Wednesday, September 13 – First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte**

**9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

***Medium Sized Congregations***

and

**1:00-4:00 p.m.**

***Larger Sized Congregations***

(First, Port Charlotte Address: 2230 Harriet Street / Port Charlotte, 33962)

(Lunch Reservations to Tanga: 941-625-5045)

**Lunch is scheduled for 12:00-1:00 p.m. each day. Lunch Cost: \$10.00.**

**Reservations: Required by Wednesday, September 6. Call the Church Office, not the Presbytery Office.**

Letters with additional information, including suggested gathering dates and times for each church, were mailed to all Clerks of Session and Pastors at the end of June. Please check with those individuals for the details.

Churches are welcome to attend any and all sessions.

## **ARTICLES of INTEREST**

(chosen by Graham Hart)

### [How will the Church reckon with Charlottesville?](#)

The Atlantic: Religious communities are grappling with the racism that enabled violent attacks against protesters -- including the racism within their ranks.

### [After Charlottesville, will white pastors finally take racism seriously?](#)

The Washington Post: In the wake of the Charlottesville rally -- and the country's ongoing racial tension -- we look to the church and ask, "White pastors, will you now work to end white supremacy?"

The Daily Beast: [Time for all Christians to denounce white supremacy](#)

### [#Charlottesville, the Christian response, and your church's call](#)

Christianity Today: Silence on matters of hatred and bigotry is antithetical to the gospel, says Ed Stetzer.

Religion News Service: [Charlottesville: What I said from the pulpit yesterday](#)

### [Christianity does not justify Trump's 'fire and fury'](#)

The New York Times: Robert Jeffress' theology is shockingly uninformed and dangerous, and it is a sobering reminder of the power of misguided moral statements to influence matters of life and death in policy.

### [Progressive values can't be just secular values](#)

The Atlantic: New polls suggest liberals have an increasingly negative view of religion, despite the fact that most Democrats -- and Americans -- are religious.

### [What I learned from our seminary's conflict about hosting Tim Keller](#)

Christian Century: At times, the cost of theological diversity is painfully clear, says Craig Barnes.

### [A new, softer prosperity gospel still can't deliver on its promises of health and wealth](#)

Religion Dispatches: The prosperity gospel hasn't declined, but it has morphed and now operates in subtler, more culturally palatable ways.

### [What is wrong with white Christians?](#)

Religion News Service: A new survey from The Washington Post and the Kaiser Family Foundation offers the latest dispiriting news about the troubling state of white Christianity.

### [New manual guides church leaders in sexual abuse policies and prevention](#)

Religion News Service: New book is intended to help churches implement policies and procedures to protect children and other vulnerable people under their care.

### [Getting worked up about 'RIP' is itself an Orange indulgence](#)

The (London) Guardian: What makes the Orange Order's theological complaint so pointless is that most people who say 'Rest in peace' do not intend it as a prayer at all. The ideological infrastructure that made sense of such phrases has almost vanished.

## CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

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

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

### **2017 Events:**

- Challenge to Change - *A unique mission-trip program designed for a variety of groups.* Year-round
- Family Retreat - *Our annual family retreat and reunion event! Come and reconnect!* Sept. 1-3
- Silent Retreat – *A new retreat designed for folks who are seeking space to listen to God.* TBA
- Falltastic - *A special fall event designed for our elementary friends.* Sept. 29-30
- Senior Adults Retreat - *A day-event designed just for our senior friends.* Oct. 11
- Fusion - *A Cedarkirk event for middle and high school youth!* Nov. 10-12 & 17-19
- Christmas Retreat – *A little bit of summer camp at Christmas time!* Dec. 22-23

*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).

## BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.

*A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma*

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



PO Box 860 | Wimauma, FL 33598

Phone: 813-633-1548 ext. 223

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

[August Newsletter](#)

## MISION PENIEL

*A Ministry of Peace River Presbytery to the Farmworkers in Immokalee*

[www.misionpeniel.com](http://www.misionpeniel.com)

Please be sure to contact us to schedule your next visit and reserve a date to volunteer at Misi3n Peniel! Thank you for your ongoing partnership with this mission!

### **Staff Contacts:**

- Rev. Miguel Estrada, Pastor, P: 239-633-2181, E: [migustrada@hotmail.com](mailto:migustrada@hotmail.com)
- Ruth DeYoe, Mission Coordinator, P: 386-793-6151, E: [ruthdeyoe@gmail.com](mailto:ruthdeyoe@gmail.com)
- General Email: [misionpenielpeacriver@gmail.com](mailto:misionpenielpeacriver@gmail.com)

### **Addresses:**

- Facility Address: 208 Boston Ave., Immokalee, FL 34142 (not for mailing)
- Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1204, Immokalee, FL 34153
- Mailing Address for Contributions\*: Peace River Presbytery, 5600 Peace River Road, North Port, FL 34287

### **\*Contributions to Mision Peniel:**

- Mail to: Peace River Presbytery, 5600 Peace River Road, North Port, FL 34287
- Checks can be made payable to Peace River Presbytery or to Mision Peniel.
- Please note *Mision Peniel* in the memo section.

- Contributor information is provided to Mision Peniel each month.

**Other Information:**

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

**PRAYER NEEDS**

**Please continue to pray for:**

- Liz Countiss (Rev. Craig Countiss' widow) – in Hospice Care
- Beth-El Farmworker Ministry
- Kathryn Pendergrass (wife of Rev. Dr. Daniel Pendergrass) - diagnosed with a rare form of lung cancer
- Robert Berger – Rev. Dr. Jim Berger's 96-year old father. Hospitalized in PA from an apparent stroke
- Jim & Becky Beckwith – health
- Rev. Dr. Clint Cottrell (Pastor of Cypress Lake P.C.) - health
- Nathan Hart (Graham's son) and his family – health
- Rev. Dr. Lou Thompson – health
- Phil Kuehl (husband of Rev. Elizabeth Kuehl, Faith, Cape Coral) – health
- Rev. Dr. Paul Eckel - health
- Robert Dennis, son of Rev. India Dennis – mental health issues
- Greg Beckwith (son of Jim and Becky Beckwith) – on kidney transplant list
- 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

**PRESBYTERY PRAYER GUIDE: AUGUST 2017:**

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| August 6 | <u>Daniell &amp; Elizabeth Turk</u><br>PCUSA Mission Co-Workers Serving in Madagascar<br>Web: <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/dan-elizabeth-turk">http://www.pcusa.org/dan-elizabeth-turk</a> |
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| August 13 | <u>Palmetto Presbyterian Church, Palmetto</u><br>Pastor: Rev. John Foulkrod<br>Email: <a href="mailto:jfoulkrod@ppcfl.org">jfoulkrod@ppcfl.org</a>                                  |
| August 20 | <u>First Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte</u><br>Temporary Supply Pastor: Rev. Terri Jo Crego<br>Email: <a href="mailto:pastor@fpcpc.com">pastor@fpcpc.com</a>                   |
| August 27 | <u>Wintergarden Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte</u><br>Temporary Supply Pastor: Rev. Devon Beisser Andrews<br>Email: <a href="mailto:revdev08@gmail.com">revdev08@gmail.com</a> |

### CHURCH SUPPORT STAFF OPENINGS

[Director of Christian Education – Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers](#)

[Administrative Secretary \(Part Time\) – Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, N. Fort Myers](#)

### PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: AUGUST 2017

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

*All meetings are at the Presbytery Center location in North Port, unless otherwise posted.*

**Thursday, August 17**

Steering Committee (9:30 a.m.)

Special Meeting of Peace River Presbytery (1:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church)

**Thursday, August 24**

Congregational Vitality Team (12:30 p.m.)

### CHURCHES of PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

Please visit our web site, [www.peaceriverpresbytery.org/churches](http://www.peaceriverpresbytery.org/churches)

Click on the city, then the church, to visit their web site.



