



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ August 24, 2017

Speaking from the Hart – A Word of Affirmation

*A word of appreciation and affirmation to the churches, pastors, sessions and members of Peace River who in recent weeks have spoken clear word against the unbridled hatred, violence, racism and anti-Semitism we saw in tragic display at Charlottesville. In a church I visited Sunday, I appreciated their lifting up of the Belhar Confession, written for such a time as this; in a sermon, I appreciated the reminder that within the political arena we may disagree over solutions, but hatred, whenever and however sown, never leads to a solution; and on one of our congregation's church sign, I appreciated seeing: **Hate has no home here.***

I am praying for each of you that you may have the courage, wisdom and love to continue to speak words of truth, love and grace in the communities to which we are called to be "salt and light."

*With appreciation,
Graham Hart*

Lillian Rea, Steering Committee Co-Moderator

Things That Go Bump in the Night

It is a well-known fact that we, all Floridians, live in the lightning capital of the country, maybe even the world. These past few weeks there has been a report of a lightning strike almost daily. I have come to appreciate the beauty and majesty of our thunderstorms, but as a child, if we had a storm, especially at night, I was terrified. I would lie awake with a pillow clutched over my head and hold my breath and count the seconds between the flash and the thunder clap. One thousand one, one thousand two, etc. far enough away not to get me. Of course, I was inside in an apartment building with a lightning rod on top and NYC apartments were not generally targets.

Today's storms make me wonder about the other things that make us afraid like lightning and thunder in the night. The unexpected cancer diagnosis, the loss of employment, the death of a family member or friend, the end of a relationship or lifestyle these and many other events cause us to react with fear. Maybe it is the abruptness of the unexpected that causes our physiological and/or emotional response, which is often a sense of darkness. Sometimes, as with the thunderstorms, our fear may be uncalled for, but our reactions are always valid experiences.

What should we do with our real or imaginary fears? How can we respond? I recently read Barbara Brown Taylor's "Learning to Walk in the Dark", an exploration of facing our fears and recognizing that God is present in both darkness and light. Our culture tends to equate evil, loss and pain with darkness and goodness with light, but Brown says that it is in the darkness that we often meet God and have an opportunity to learn and grow. She suggests that "Step 1 of learning to walk in the dark is to give up running the show. Next you sign the waiver that allows you to bump into some things that may frighten you at first. Finally, you ask darkness to teach you what you need to know." I don't think any of these steps are easy, but learning to let go and trust God even in the darkness is an important lesson.

The phrase "allow yourself to bump into some things that may frighten you" reminded me of the term "things that go bump in the night". A quick Google search discovered that "Things that Go Bump in the Night" is a compilation of ghost and haunted house stories from New York State published in 1959. It is also the title of a children's book to help children deal with their fear of the dark. But the earliest reference to these words comes from an old Scottish prayer:

“From ghoulies and ghosties,
And long-leggedy beasties
And things that go bump in the night,
Good Lord deliver us.” Amen

~ Lil Rea, Steering Committee Co-Moderator

**[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)

[What obligation do white Christian women have to speak out about politics?](#)

The Atlantic: Jen Hatmaker says the "days of silence are over" in polite evangelical culture.

[Irish church aims to end stigma for the children of priests](#)

Associated Press: Bishops in Ireland have created detailed guidelines to address an issue the Roman Catholic Church has tried to keep under wraps for centuries: the plight of children born to Catholic priests and the women who bear them.

[Saint's statue defaced amid Confederate monuments debate](#)

Religion News Service: As the battle over Confederate monuments suggest, one person's saint is another person's sinner.

[How religion motivates people to give and serve](#)

The Conversation: World Humanitarian Day is reminder of the role that faith plays in people's desire to give and serve.

How should we protest neo-Nazis? Lessons from German history

After Charlottesville, many people are asking themselves what they should do if Nazis rally in their city. Should they put their bodies on the line in counterdemonstrations? Some say yes. But as Laurie Marhoefer writes at The Conversation, [history says no.](#)

How one man convinced 200 Ku Klux Klan Members to give up their robes

Daryl Davis is a blues musician, but he also has what some might call an interesting hobby. For the past 30 years, Davis, a black man, has spent time [befriending members of the Ku Klux Klan](#). He says once the friendship blossoms, the Klansmen realize that their hate may be misguided.

UPCOMING RETIREMENT

Darlene Rayhart, Office Manager for First Presbyterian Church of Lehigh Acres, will retire on October 26, 2017, after 22 years of service.

CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

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

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.

BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.

A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma

www.beth-el.org



PO Box 860 | Wimauma, FL 33598

Phone: 813-633-1548 ext. 223

Web: www.beth-el.org

[August Newsletter](#)

MISION PENIEL

A Ministry of Peace River Presbytery to the Farmworkers in Immokalee

www.misionpeniel.com

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

Staff Contacts:

- Rev. Miguel Estrada, Pastor, P: 239-633-2181, E: miguestrada@hotmail.com
- Ruth DeYoe, Mission Coordinator, P: 386-793-6151, E: ruthdeyoe@gmail.com
- General Email: misionpenielpeaceriver@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; awaiting insurance approval for a new drug that is the most likely to help her type of 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) – going through chemotherapy

- 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:

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

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: SEPTEMBER 2017

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

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

Monday, September 4

Labor Day – Presbytery Offices Closed

Thursday, September 7

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

Mision Peniel Team (10:00 a.m. in Immokalee)

Monday, September 11

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

Planning Team (1:00 p.m.)

Tuesday, September 12

Committee on Ministry (9:00 a.m.)

Fall Gathering at Wintergarden, Port Charlotte (1:00-4:00 p.m.)

Records Review Workshop at Wintergarden, Port Charlotte (4:00 p.m.)

Wednesday, September 13

Fall Gatherings at First, Port Charlotte (9:00 a.m.-12:00 n. & 1:00-4:00 p.m.)

Records Review Workshop at First, Port Charlotte (12:00-1:00 p.m.)

Thursday, September 14

Finance Team (9:30 a.m.)

Monday, September 18

Cuba Partnership Gatherings with Cuban Pastors (Faith, Cape Coral & Pine Shores, Sarasota)

Thursday, September 21

Steering Committee (9:30 a.m.)

Monday-Wednesday, September 25-27

Stewardship Kaleidoscope (St. Pete Beach)

Thursday, September 28

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

CHURCHES of PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

Please visit our web site, www.peaceriverpresbytery.org/churches

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



