



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ July 20, 2017

Rev. Elizabeth Deibert
Congregational Vitality Team Moderator

Because we are constantly barraged with information, which makes it challenging to remember everything, I want to remind you again of our **Vitality Themes for Presbytery** this year: In May we considered Inspiring and Engaging Worship. Many of you found the panel discussion helpful. Others are beginning to use our pre- and post-presbytery scripture readings and questions for Session meetings to keep the whole presbytery learning together.

Our September 12-13 Gatherings in Port Charlotte will focus on Radical Generosity. To help us do that Robert Hay of the Presbyterian Foundation will lead three different sessions, each for a half-day with special attention to small, medium, and larger congregations. Please send members of your churches who are involved in stewardship and finance, or any ministry related to giving.

Here is a scripture reading and set of questions to share at Session meetings in August:

2 Corinthians 9:7-15 Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. ⁹ As it is written, "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." ¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; ¹² for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. ¹³ Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, ¹⁴ while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! (NRS)

What words or phrases stand out to you today?

How can you cultivate the attitude of abundance -- having enough of everything?

When have you been especially cheerful in your giving and why?

At the May meeting of Peace River Presbytery, a new funding initiative was approved called **Blessing Grants**. This fund will be replenished using earnings from the invested corpus and any gifts designated for this purpose from organizations or individuals. So we invite your gifts to this great fund for Peace River Presbytery. We also invite your applications for projects that "support church development, redevelopment, and/or transformation:

- By initiating, altering or expanding outreach ministries in their local communities or;
- By creating PCUSA new church developments or worshipping communities.

The full description of the Blessing Grant Initiative and Application is available on the website, www.peaceriverpresbytery.org, and will be mailed to clerks and pastors. **The deadline for applications this year is October 1** and the amount available is up to \$25,000 for this first cycle.

Please carefully consider what new projects God might be calling your congregation or presbytery entity to engage. Remember that grants are ordinarily one-time gifts, not on-going nor emergency financial aid, so demonstrating the sustainability and innovation of your project will be key.

All correspondence about applications and questions should be directed in written form via email to those of us on this Blessings Grants Review Task Force:

Graham Hart: graham@peaceriverpresbytery.org

Alan Penick: adpenick@comcast.net

Jamie Jameson: jfjameson@comcast.net

Elizabeth Deibert: edeibert@peacepcusa.com

Wally Johnson: revwallyjohnson@gmail.com

Grace and peace,
Elizabeth M. Deibert, Leader of the Congregational Vitality Team of PRP

REGIONAL GATHERINGS

TOPIC: Radical Generosity

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

Tuesday, September 12 - Wintergarden Presbyterian Church

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

1:00-4:00 p.m.

Smaller Sized Congregations

Wednesday, September 13 – First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte

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

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

Medium Sized Congregations

and

1:00-4:00 p.m.

Larger Sized Congregations

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.

INSTALLATION SERVICE
of The Reverend Walter Johnson

Sunday, July 23, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.
Northminster Presbyterian Church
3131 61st Street, Sarasota
Reception to follow in the Fellowship Hall.

[STEWARDSHIP KALEIDOSCOPE 2017](#)
Deadline to register: August 1

[OVERVIEW OF STEWARDSHIP KALEIDOSCOPE](#)

ARTICLES of INTEREST
(chosen by Graham Hart)

[Rev. Barber: An open letter to clergy who prayed with Donald Trump](#)

ThinkProgress: The Scripture cautions us to lay hands on no man suddenly, lest we become a party to his sins.

The Charlotte (N.C.) Observer: [Conservative clergy attack Barber for saying prayers for Trump 'border on heresy'](#)

[Conservative evangelicals revel in their 'unprecedented' access to the president](#)

Religion News Service: While religious conservatives are getting such intimate contact with the chief executive that they can literally "lay hands" on him, other faith leaders are being kept at arm's length.

[Party members told to give up religion for Party unity or face punishment](#)

Global Times (China): The head of China's top religious affairs regulator said that Party members should not seek value and faith in religion, and that those who have religious beliefs should be persuaded to give them up, with experts saying this is meant to maintain Party unity.

[Black clergy arrested while protesting Trump administration policies](#)

Religion News Service: Hoping to steer national politics in a different direction, black clergy from several denominations came together for the first-ever "African American Clergy Advocacy Day" on Capitol Hill to protest federal budget cuts proposed by the Trump administration.

[Why Christians should stop caring about so many causes](#)

Christianity Today: True transformation takes focus, not capricious compassion says World Vision president Richard Stearns.

["Evangelical" is not a political term](#)

Religion & Politics: New book reveals the persistent habit of secular journalists to see evangelicals chiefly as monolithic political actors who only become visible (and relevant) every election cycle.

[Revisiting Ayn Rand's anti-religious philosophy](#)

Religion News Service: Why and how do so many Christians buy into a philosophy which is opposed to religious faith and manifestly contradicts all the stories, counsels, commands, and promises of Christianity?

[Real story on Dolan and Tobin in NY? Try 'America past acrimony'](#)

Crux: What got lost in the shuffle in NY Times story is that both men are deeply respectful of others and their ideas, and in that sense act as a counter-example in a deeply polarized time in America, John L. Allen says.

Religion News Service: [Catholicism's two-party system](#)

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

The worshipping community of Beth-El would like to add Christian banners to its worship space. If your church or congregation has a banner, vestments or other worship supplies that you would like to donate, please contact Kathy@beth-el.org. Gracias!



PO Box 860 | Wimauma, FL 33598

Phone: 813-633-1548 ext. 223

Web: www.beth-el.org

[July Newsletter](#)

***** Beth-El Farmworker Ministry needs your help!** Every year the mission distributes over 500 backpacks and back to school supplies to children and youth in our community, but we cannot provide this service without your help. Right now our resources are very low and time is running out. All donations must be received by July 31st to insure students get their backpack in time. To learn more, call Beth-El at 813-633-1548 ext. 227.

Gracias!

The *Back to School Supplies Wish List* is included in the 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: migustrada@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:

- Alesia Sharpe and Family, in the passing of her mother.
- The Family, Friends, Church Family (Covenant Presbyterian, Ft. Myers) and Presbytery Friends of Jo Ann Leasure in the wake of her passing.
- 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: JULY 2017:

July 2	<u>PDA/FLAPDAN – Covenant Partner of Peace River</u>
July 9	<u>Lely Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Supply Pastor: Rev. Dr. Harry Schill III Email: h_schill3@verizon.net
July 16	<u>Moorings Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Doug Learned Email: jsullivan@mooringschurch.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Jaci Smith Patman Email: jpatman@mooringschurch.org
July 23	<u>Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Interim Pastor: Rev. Bob Sheldon Email: rsheldon@vpcnaples.org
July 30	<u>St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, North Port</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Rafael (Ray) Quiles Email: chaprafi@gmail.com

CHURCH SUPPORT STAFF OPENINGS

[PT Director of Congregational Care & PT Music Director
\(2 Positions\) – Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood](#)

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

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

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: JULY-AUGUST 2017

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

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

Sunday, July 23

Installation Service for Rev. Wally Johnson (4:00 p.m. at Northminster Presbyterian Church, Sarasota)

Thursday, August 3

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

Monday, August 7

Planning Team (1:00 p.m.)

Tuesday, August 8

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

Wednesday, August 9

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

Thursday, August 10

Finance Team / Board of Trustees (9:30 a.m.)

Monday, August 14

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

Thursday, August 17

Steering Committee (9:30 a.m.)

Thursday, August 24

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.

