



# PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ June 16, 2017

Rev. Graham P. Hart, General Presbyter

## **Sparking Our Imaginations (Through the Blessing Grants)**

In a congregation, or in the broadest sense - in life, how does something new get started? How do those ideas, programs, inventions or initiatives that change the world, or positively impact someone's life emerge? How can and does change happen?

Often, it comes down to one thing: someone had a good idea, or a group of people took the time to talk, brainstorm, and dream.

After a year's worth of work, at the May Presbytery meeting, the Presbytery approved a permanent invested fund called the "Blessing Grants", the earnings from which will be given as grants to support church development, redevelopment, and/or transformation. The goal is to raise at least 1 million dollars, which will generate \$50,000 a year in income to be made available for such grants. This fund will be replenished using earnings from the invested corpus and any gifts designated for this purpose from organizations or individuals.

It is the prayer and hope of the Presbytery's Steering Committee and leadership that the possibility of this grant money will spark the imagination of every session in Peace River Presbytery. Specifically, we hope the Blessing Grants will accomplish the following objectives (this is from the document the Presbytery adopted):

To invite the members and congregations of Peace River to dream new dreams, imagine new ways, and begin new initiatives that lead to the development, redevelopment and renewal of congregational life, ministry and outreach. (Joel 2:28-29)

To encourage innovative attempts to develop and expand hands-on ministries that serve the people of our local communities in Christ-like ways. (Ephesians 4)

To encourage members and congregations to become more involved in the wholeness and well-being, (*Shalom*) of their communities. (Jeremiah 29:7)

To seek to make disciples across all economic, racial and ethnic boundaries. (Galatians 3:20)

To foster innovation in PCUSA new church developments, worshipping communities and other evangelistic endeavors. (Acts 2:46-49)

To encourage congregations and Presbytery entities to rethink their ministries for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (Romans 12:1-2, Acts 9:31)

In the next couple of weeks, a Task Force that the Steering Committee is creating will send a letter to all sessions, inviting them to take time to imagine if their congregation, maybe in partnership with other congregations, could do something that would be impactful and make a difference in accomplishing the above directives. The Board

of Trustees has set aside \$25,000 (from an anonymous, undesignated gift the Presbytery received) to be made available for the first grant cycle (application deadline will be October 1).

The world around us has changed, and continues to do so at an ever increasing pace. The needs of that world, including the people in our own back yard, continue to be real and deep. If there was ever a time the message of the Gospel and the love, mercy, grace and peace of Christ were needed, it is now. So how will the world know and experience that there can be and there is a different way? In one sense, that is why the church is here; it seems that is our job.

So, I can't wait to see what new dreams each of our congregations will dream, and how God will be at work in us and through us, for the sake of the world God so loves!

*Thanks be to God...  
who continues to be the wind behind our sail  
and the rudder to guide us in our way;*

*Graham*

Graham Hart  
General Presbyter  
Peace River Presbytery  
[graham@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:graham@peacriverpresbytery.org)

## ARTICLES of INTEREST

(selected by Graham Hart)

### [The work we leave for others](#)

Young Clergy Women International Magazine: Be mindful of what you are asking clergy women to do, writes the Rev. Kelly Boubel Shriver. "This issue of not being mindful of the work you leave for others is a deep, entrenched, and often invisible issue. It's a hard cycle to break, especially for clergy women, because by refusing to do this work, we're often left with the bad outcome of being seen as uncooperative or allowing unjust situations to stand uncontested."

### [Seven theology books for your summer reading](#)

Patheos: They might not be beach reads, but these theology books are worth your time and attention, writes Kyle Roberts.

### [Vatican tailors, cobblers try to adapt to Francis's 'papal athleisure'](#)

Crux: Pope Francis's emphasis on simplicity and frugality is a hit all around the world, but it's produced just a bit of backlash among fashion-conscious Italians, including an exclusive club of tailors and shoemakers who outfit pontiffs -- some of whom are a little nostalgic for the days when being pope also meant dressing to the nines.

### [Why you need a writing group](#)

Chronicle of Higher Education: A writing group, and other forms of peer mentoring, can play a role in countering the pressures of academic life.

### [7 leadership lessons you can learn from Travis Kalanick's response to Uber's culture crisis](#)

Inc.: Travis Kalanick is one of the world's most-disliked CEOs right now, and Uber is one of its most-disliked companies. But a better future may be ahead for both, because there are many things he and Uber's board are doing right. The company's response to its current crisis provides leadership lessons for us all.

[Mark's Gospel provides a legal loophole for providing sanctuary. Will Christians use it?](#)

Religion News Service: Christian communities offering sanctuary to undocumented immigrants can look to the Gospel of Mark, which provides one saying of Jesus directly applicable to this situation, writes the Rev. Roger Vermalen Karban.

[Hundreds of nuns trained in Kung Fu are biking the Himalayas to oppose human trafficking](#)

Business Insider: Five hundred nuns from the Buddhist sect known as the Drukpa Order on Saturday complete a 2,485-mile bicycle trek from Nepal's Kathmandu to the northern city of Leh in India to raise awareness about human trafficking in the remote region.

[Religious giving holds steady](#)

Insights Newsletter: Giving USA, the longest-running and most comprehensive report on philanthropy, found that giving to religion in 2016 increased 3 percent (1.8 percent adjusted for inflation). It represents an estimated \$123 billion in contributions across all faith traditions. Despite decreasing attendance patterns and rising religious disaffiliation, religious giving continues to hold its own.

## NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

### We think we can!

That was the motto of **Buckingham Presbyterian Church** in Fort Myers, going into our April fish fry, which we dedicated to sending children from Mision Peniel to summer camp at Cedarkirk. With the help of forty volunteers and some special donations and working with Cedarkirk we were able to raise enough money to send 11 children.

When Mision Peniel was unable to provide campers we went to Tice Elementary School, a title one school in Fort Myers, through which we annually minister to families who live below the poverty level reflecting the same demographic Mision Peniel serves. The staff quickly secured eleven children for us helping us arrange with the parents for the necessary camp documents. We took them to Cedarkirk on Sunday, June 4th. When we picked them up from camp on Friday, June 9th, all we heard was what a great time they had. Many of these third and fourth graders even commented on how good the food was. They all had large smiles as each came to us to thank us for this opportunity.

As we delivered the children to their homes the parents came out, some of the mothers with tears running down their cheeks, and said what a blessing it was to have their children be able to do something they would never be able to offer them. One boy, Orlando, came home to a large welcoming party as his aunts, uncles and cousins had all gathered at his home. He excitedly named each of the vehicles and who they belonged to as we pulled up in front of his home.

Once again showing how God, with a few fish and some bread (in our case it was hush puppies), can do great things.

## 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:**

- Summer Camp - *Our traditional week-long residential camps for 1st-12th graders.* June 4-July 28
- 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)

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](mailto:Kathy@beth-el.org). Gracias!

### **POSITION OPENING:**

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry is a non-profit mission supporting farmworkers and our neighbors in need through hunger relief, education, health initiatives and spiritual care. The mission is currently seeking a director of children and youth ministries for the mission's worship communities, 20 to 35 hours per week. Candidate will be responsible for coordination of all children and youth activities including summer VBS, Christian Education curriculum, teen youth group and Sunday school. Ideal candidate must be fluent in both Spanish and English with background in education (Christian education preferred). Valid driver's license, background check and drug screening are required. Beth-El Farmworker Ministry is an equal opportunity employer.



PO Box 860 | Wimauma, FL 33598

Phone: 813-633-1548 ext. 223

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

[June 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!

### **UPDATE:**

We are planning an Open House at the new location very soon. In the meantime, please make note of the following updated contact and address information:

### **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: [misionpenielpeaceriver@gmail.com](mailto: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:**

- Rev. Dr. Glen Bell & Family – loss of his mother in May
- Beth-El Farmworker Ministry
- Pete Rodino – recovery from detached retina surgery
- Rev. Silvana Ferreira – recovery from eye surgery
- Linda Hart (Graham’s wife) – recovering from double knee surgery
- 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 – continued recovery from extensive neck surgery
- Phil Kuehl (husband of Rev. Elizabeth Kuehl, Faith, Cape Coral) – continued recovery
- 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
- Grandson of Tim and Martha Halverson - suffering from a rare autoimmune disease
- 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: JUNE 2017:

June 4	<u>Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch</u> Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Deibert Email: <a href="mailto:edeibert@mindspring.com">edeibert@mindspring.com</a>
June 11	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Lehigh Acres</u> Supply Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jim Berger Email: <a href="mailto:dowberger@comcast.net">dowberger@comcast.net</a>
June 18	<u>Christ Church of Longboat Key</u> Stated Supply Pastor: Rev. Dr. Norman Pritchard Email: <a href="mailto:revnmp@comcast.net">revnmp@comcast.net</a>
June 25	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Pastor: Rev. Craig Goodrich Email: <a href="mailto:PJACgood@verizon.net">PJACgood@verizon.net</a>

### 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: MAY 2017

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

#### **Thursday, June 22**

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

#### **Tuesday, June 27**

COM Records Review Team (10:30 a.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.

