



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter – March 9, 2017
Rev. Graham P. Hart, General Presbyter

THREE CLICKS:
**A Pastor's Well-Being,
Politics and the Church,
and The State of Peace River Presbytery**

The wonder of the internet is that through links we can travel the world without leaving our homes. Information that in past generations could be accessed only through journals, books or an afternoon visit to the library, now can be found with a click. So, for this week's pastoral letter, some suggested clicks and links.



CLICK/LINK 1 – A word for pastors - what is the key for doing well in ministry? Based on a recent research project at the [Clergy Health Initiative at Duke Divinity School](#), a recently published article, whose title provides the answer, suggests: [*Those who flourish in ministry are intentional about their well-being.*](#) The author, Kate Sarari, suggests that “challenges are part of any ministry, yet some clergy thrive despite the inevitable setbacks.” New research shows that their keys to success can be boiled down to a few simple strategies available to anyone. As we come into the height of season, which this year co-insides with Lent, I hope each of our pastors will [CLICK HERE](#).



CLICK/LINK 2 – We live, as in some way we always have, in a challenging moment politically, ethically, cultural, morally, and spiritually. Some are deeply concerned with the tweets and twitters of our new President that are meant to daily control the news cycle, some are delighted that everything is being disrupted, some are heart-broken at executive orders being issued, and some believe these policy changes are needed. For pastors and preachers, the challenge continues to be in any given time and generation:

- how to speak to moral/spiritual issues of the context and culture in which we are called to served;

- how do we render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and God what is God's;
- how do we live out the values of the Kingdom of God in a politicized and polarized world;
- how do we follow Jesus who in his inaugural words ([Luke 4:18-21](#)) said some things that are at the heart of what it means to be human, what is at the heart of the gospel, and what it means to follow Jesus, yet given the political climate of today, some might venture to say that Jesus has crossed the line and ventured into politics?

I encourage each and all of you to begin conversations that are rooted in prayer, seek to be faithful to Jesus, and are respectful of the other.

For pastors, [click here](#) for a serious but humorous perspective from a Baptist pastor, on how the president's tweets and week-end policy announcement have made it challenging to preach the suggested lectionary texts each Sunday since the inauguration. For ruling elders, [click here](#) for an interesting link to an article on the differing religious visions that shape ones understanding of the core identity of our American values.



CLICK/LINK 3 - Several years ago, we stopped having every committee and team of the Presbytery write an annual report; yet remembering where we have been being an essential part of knowing where God might be calling us to go next. For the past, several years my February report to the presbytery is meant to function as our summary organizational annual report. This report was distributed at the presbytery meeting, but to insure each of you as the opportunity to enter this conversation, and pray for our work together, [CLICK HERE](#) to link (or see the attachment) for my Annual Report on the State of the Presbytery, reflections on where we have been, and where God may be calling and leading us as a presbytery.

[CLICK HERE](#) if you want to share and email me your thoughts on any of these topics.

Grace and Peace,

Graham

Graham Hart
 General Presbyter
graham@peacriverpresbytery.org

Peace River Presbytery & Faith Presbyterian Church

cordially invites you to attend

the installation of

Rev. Elizabeth B. Kuehl

as

Associate Pastor

Sunday March 12, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.

Faith Presbyterian Church

4544 Coronado Parkway | Cape Coral, Florida 33904

Reception immediately following the service
Clergy are invited to robe and participate in the processional.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST (chosen by Graham Hart)

[AP-NORC Poll: Political divide over American identity](#)

Washington Post: A new survey finds Republicans are more likely to cite a culture grounded in Christianity and the traditions of early European immigrants as essential to U.S. identity. Democrats are more apt to point to the history of mixing of people from around the globe and offering refuge to the persecuted.

[I've worn ash on my head on ESPN for 16 years. This year was different.](#)

Washington Post: ESPN host Tony Reali publicly displays his faith once a year on Ash Wednesday. But this year that act cause him to "think of those whose beliefs and life are prejudged and silenced every day because their ash is a hijab or turban or yarmulke or a passport that has a foreign birth country."

[Is there a Christian double standard on religious violence?](#)

Daily Beast: Nearly 80 percent of Christians don't think a terrorist acting in the name of Christianity is Christian. But more than half say terrorists acting in the name of Islam are Muslims.

[Welcome refugees, churches say in a public challenge to Trump](#)

The New York Times: The fight against President Trump's executive orders to turn away refugees, deport undocumented immigrants and build a wall along the Mexican border is about to escalate in many American churches.

[Cardinal Cupich advises priests on immigration raids](#)

National Catholic Reporter: If immigration authorities without a warrant knock on the door of Chicago churches, rectories or Catholic schools, don't let them in, Cardinal Blase Cupich writes to his priests.

[Being quiet is part of being a good CEO](#)

The Atlantic: After interviews with 200 senior business executives, Hal Gregersen of MIT found that one of the virtues of good leadership is listening properly.

[Why so many evangelicals support Trump](#)

The Hill: It's not religion, but American civil religion that can help explain Trump's broader-than-expected voter base.

[Christians turn to podcasts to say things they can't say in church](#)

NPR: Toby McHargue's podcast The Liturgists and Mike Morrell's podcast Bad Christian appeal to a spiritual-but-not-religious audience. In an interview they explain why they left the church, how that changed their faith, and how podcasts like theirs could be affecting Christianity.

FAITH PLACE SAFETY WORKSHOP

To honor the policy that all ministers and ministerial inquirers and candidates shall be required to attend a seminar offered by the Presbytery **biennially** on the issues of sexual misconduct, a **Faith Place Safety Workshop** will be offered on **Tuesday, May 2nd** at First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte (2230 Harriet Street, Port Charlotte.)

Schedule:

Registration – 8:30 a.m.

Workshop – 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (lunch included)

Cost - \$10.00 payable at Registration

Who should attend?

All Pastors, Staff, and Elders with roles in Christian Education and Personnel, Inquirers, and Candidates.

Reservations are necessary. Email: alesia@peacriverpresbytery.org, call the Presbytery Office: 941-426-8421, or fax the Presbytery Office: 941-423-9412. Include the names and titles of those who will be attending.

If unable to participate in the Presbytery-offered training, the minister shall work with Presbytery to find a suitable alternative. Failure to comply may result in investigation and discipline.

We are fortunate that Patti Jung, Visiting Professor of Christian Ethics, St. Paul School of Theology, and author of "Professional Sexual Ethics", has agreed to facilitate the workshop. This year's offering will discuss: Child Protection to include such topics as mandatory reporting, confidentiality, two-deep adult leadership rule, screening of volunteers; background checks, and specific Florida law considerations.

Note: A notice and flyer for this important event were sent to all Churches, Members of Presbytery, Candidates, and Inquirers two weeks ago.

BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.

A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma



PO Box 860 | Wimauma, FL 33598

Phone: 813-633-1548 ext. 223

Web: www.beth-el.org

www.beth-el.org

[March Newsletter](#)

CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

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

www.cedarkirk.org

*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.

EXCITING NEWS FROM MISION PENIEL!

A Ministry of Peace River Presbytery to the Farmworkers in Immokalee

Misión Peniel has moved! The new location of the mission facility is 208 Boston Avenue, Immokalee.

They are excited to have more space and more visibility to the farmworker community!



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 continue to pray for:

- Jim 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
- 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

PRESBYTERY PRAYER GUIDE: MARCH 2017:

March 5	<u>Palma Sola Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u> Pastor: Rev. India Dennis Email: pspcpastor@verizon.net
March 12	<u>Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u> Pastor: Pulpit Supply Office Email: wpresbyterian@verizon.net
March 19	<u>Faith Presbyterian Church Church, Cape Coral</u> Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Halverson Email: tim@fpcf.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Kuehl Email: elizabeth@fpcf.org
March 26	<u>Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood</u> Pastor: Rev. Dawn Mayes Email: revdawnmayes@gmail.com

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: MARCH 2017

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

Thursday, March 9

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

Sunday, March 12

Installation Service for The Reverend Elizabeth Kuehl (4:00 p.m. at Faith, Cape Coral)

Tuesday, March 14

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

Thursday, March 23

Personnel Team (8:30 a.m.)

Congregational Vitality and Growth Task Force (12:30 p.m.)



CHURCHES of PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

(click on church name to link to its web site)

Braden River Presbyterian Church, Bradenton	First Presbyterian Church, Bradenton
Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, Bradenton	Palma Sola Presbyterian Church, Bradenton
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bradenton	Palmetto Presbyterian Church, Palmetto – office@ppcfl.org
Christ Church of Longboat Key Longboat Key	Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch
Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church, Sarasota	Church of the Palms, Sarasota

<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Sarasota	<u>Northminster Presbyterian Church,</u> Sarasota
<u>Pine Shores Presbyterian Church,</u> Sarasota	<u>Presbyterian Church of the</u> <u>Covenant, Sarasota</u>
<u>Whitfield Estates Presbyterian Church,</u> Sarasota	<u>Siesta Key Chapel,</u> Sarasota
<u>Trinity Presbyterian Church,</u> Venice	<u>Venice Presbyterian Church,</u> Venice
<u>Community Presbyterian Church,</u> Englewood	<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Arcadia
<u>St. Paul's Presbyterian Church,</u> North Port	<u>Burnt Store Presbyterian Church,</u> Punta Gorda
Wintergarden Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte <u>devon.ducheneau@gmail.com</u>	<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Port Charlotte
<u>Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church,</u> North Fort Myers	
<u>Faith Presbyterian Church</u> Cape Coral	<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Lehigh Acres
<u>Buckingham Presbyterian Church,</u> Fort Myers	<u>Covenant Presbyterian Church,</u> Fort Myers
<u>Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church,</u> Fort Myers	
<u>Hope United Church (PCUSA),</u> Fort Myers	<u>Chapel by the Sea,</u> Fort Myers Beach
<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Bonita Springs	
<u>First Presbyterian Church,</u> Naples	<u>Lely Presbyterian Church,</u> Naples
<u>Moorings Presbyterian Church,</u> Naples	<u>Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church,</u> Naples

