



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ October 11, 2017

Rev. John Reiter, Executive Director

~ Cedarkirk ~

Partners Make the Difference! ... by Cedarkirk Staff

Beyond financial and prayerful support, the churches we partner with often provide us with opportunities to serve different groups – to cast the net wider, as they say. This summer we were blessed with the opportunity to provide a summer camp experience for a new group of campers. Buckingham Presbyterian Church raised money to send kids from a neighboring elementary school to Cedarkirk for a transforming week of camp.

One story of transformation from this summer involved a boy from that school group – we'll call him Andrew – who came to us with very low self-esteem. A difficult home life, underachievement at school, and bullying from classmates had effectively stamped out any self-worth or value he felt for himself.

His counselors, who were more than effusive with their praise and encouragement, were rebuffed by Andrew at every opportunity. "You have to tell all of us we're special." "You just have to say that." These retorts became his common refrain.

Frustrated, but undeterred, his counselors pressed on, showering him with even more love, giving him new opportunities to shine, and highlighting aspects of his character they appreciated and wanted him to know were special and unique. None of it seemed to make any difference. He drifted through most camp activities with a certain lack of engagement and malaise.

Andrew did show interest in one thing, however: the ring game at the Pavilion. Each day during free time he would stand at the same post and swing a metal ring suspended by a piece of string toward its corresponding hook. Maybe he truly enjoyed it, or perhaps it was just a solitary activity that helped him pass time. Regardless, he became really good at it. One evening toward the end of camp, he hooked the ring ten times. Then fifty. By the time he hooked it for the hundredth time there was a bit of a crowd gathered around.

As he approached two-hundred, nearly everyone stood watching. All of the other junior campers, all of the senior high leadership campers, and all of the staff were encircling Andrew, cheering and chanting as he hooked the ring again and again. When he hit it for the two-hundredth time the assembled crowd went wild. People were screaming his name, jumping up and down, and clapping him on the back. Long-time high school campers were telling him they'd never seen anyone make that many successful attempts. Younger campers were eagerly debating whether he could do 200 – no, 500! – more before the end of free time. Andrew took a mere second to soak in the adulation and went back to the ring game.



That moment was unplanned – it happened organically and it happened because God was present. Every person in the community knew that rallying around that particular individual at that particular time was what needed to happen. The Holy Spirit was at work and the presence of God was intimately known. These are the kinds of transforming events that happen at camp – that stick with a person for a lifetime.



Scripture tells us that the voice of God is often a still, small whisper. But that night, when the whisper was amplified through fifty cheering campers, it became a roar. We may or may not see Andrew at camp again, but we pray and we trust that he will hold on to that moment, and that when he looks back on it, he will see God’s presence and love.

We are incredibly grateful to all of you for partnering with Cedarkirk in ministry. Together, we help to provide this special place apart where God can be encountered in new and transforming ways. We appreciate the campers and staff you send each summer, the retreats you plan and attend as church families, your financial support and help, and your prayers for this unique ministry.

Cedarkirk Irma Update

In calm and storm, we belong to God! We are incredibly grateful for the thoughts and prayers over the past month. Hurricane Irma passed by Cedarkirk and left quite a mess. We had a few trees hit buildings and the Alafia River crested at nearly historic levels. We have much to be grateful for as the storm damage could have been much worse. In the days following the storm, we had a tremendous response of volunteers who came to help clean up this special place apart. With their help and the work of our dedicated staff, we are back open and looking forward to hosting retreats and events in the coming weeks and months. Life has been temporarily disturbed, but we know that the God of peace who calms all storms is in charge and with us always. Thank you again for your prayers and support and please continue to pray for all those who have been effected by storms in the recent months.



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

FALL GATHERINGS

Due to the unwelcomed visit of Hurricane Irma, the **2017 Fall Gatherings had to be rescheduled.**

The **NEW** dates are:

Tuesday, October 24, 2017

First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte

2230 Harriet Street | Port Charlotte, 33952

Gathering #1: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. for *Medium Sized Congregations*

Lunch: 12:00 -1:00 p.m. (Note: **NEW lunch reservations are required**)

Note: Representatives of the Large Size Congregations are welcome to join in for lunch.

Lunch Reservations to Tanga: Phone: 941- 625-5045 or Email: tanga@fpcpc.com

Gathering #2: 1:00-4:00 p.m. for *Large Sized Congregations*

AND ...

Wednesday, October 25, 2017

Wintergarden Presbyterian Church

18305 Wintergarden Avenue | Port Charlotte, 33948

Gathering #3: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. for *Small Sized Congregations*

Lunch: 12:00 -1:00 p.m. (Note: **NEW lunch reservations are required**)

Lunch Reservations to church office: Phone: 941- 743-5335 or Email: office@wintergardenpres.org

Beginning at 1:00 an Invitation for Conversation with Pastors and Elders concerning the unique challenges facing smaller congregations.

ATTENTION: CLERKS of SESSION

Upcoming Records Review Workshops:

Saturday, October 14 – Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers

9:00-10:00 a.m. – Records Review

Saturday, October 21 – Northminster Presbyterian Church, Sarasota

9:00-10:00 a.m. – Clerk of Session Training with the Stated Clerk of Peace River Presbytery

10:00-11:00 a.m. – Records Review

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
- Silent Retreat – *A new retreat designed for folks who are seeking space to listen to God.* TBA
- 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

[October Newsletter](#)

MISION PENIEL

A Ministry of Peace River Presbytery to the Farmworkers in Immokalee

www.misionpeniel.com

Please be in prayer for the mission, which sustained considerable damage from Hurricane Irma. The mission office has damage from the roof falling in on the office area, and the farmworkers have a lot of damage to their residences, most of which are mobile homes.

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: 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:

- The family and loved ones of Eva Horn, who passed away this week. Services will be held at Faith Presbyterian, Cape Coral on Friday, October 13, at 10:00 a.m. Eve was a past president of the Presbyterian Women.
- The communities and responders affected by the fires in California
- The families and community of Las Vegas, NV
- The people of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, all devastated by Hurricane Maria
- All who are affected by Hurricane Maria
- All who are affected by Hurricane Irma
- All who are affected by Hurricane Harvey
- The Cuba Partnership Team from Peace River, traveling October 5-10 to/from Cuba
- 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. 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: OCTOBER 2017:

<p>October 1</p>	<p><u>First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Glen Bell Email: gbell@firstpressarasota.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Kelly Fitzgerald Email: kfitzgerald@firstpressarasota.org</p>
<p>October 8</p>	<p><u>Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Stewart Email: sunburn1320@mac.com</p>
<p>October 15</p>	<p><u>PRP Elected Staff</u> General Presbyter: Rev. Graham Hart Email: graham@peacriverpresbytery.org Stated Clerk: Rev. Dr. Randy Moody Email: statedclerk@peacriverpresbytery.org Treasurer: Elder Alan Penick Email: adpenick@comcast.net</p>
<p>October 22</p>	<p><u>PRP Support Staff</u> Office Manager: Alesia Sharpe Email: alesia@peacriverpresbytery.org Financial Secretary, Administrative Assistant, Web Site Mgr. Email: lori@peacriverpresbytery.org</p>

October 29

Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota

Co-Pastor: Rev. Dr. Bruce Wismer

Email: bruce@pineshorespres.org

Co-Pastor: Rev. Karen Wismer

Email: karen@pineshorespres.org

Associate Pastor: Rev. Cori Rigney

Email: cori@pineshorespres.org

CHURCH SUPPORT STAFF OPENINGS

[Administrative Assistant \(PT\) – First Presbyterian Church of Lehigh Acres](#)

[Financial Secretary \(PT\) – First Presbyterian Church of Lehigh Acres](#)

[Church Sexton – First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota](#)

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

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

UPCOMING RETIREMENT

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

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: OCTOBER 2017

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

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

Wednesday, October 11

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

Thursday, October 12

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

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

Saturday, October 14

Records Review Workshop (9:00 a.m. at Covenant, Ft. Myers)

Thursday, October 19

Steering Committee (9:30 a.m.)

Saturday, October 21

Clerks of Session Training Workshop with the Stated Clerk (9:00 a.m. at Northminster, Sarasota)

Records Review Workshop (10:00 a.m. at Northminster, Sarasota)

Monday, October 23

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

Tuesday, October 24

Fall Gatherings at First, Port Charlotte (Medium & Large Congregations)

Wednesday, October 25

Fall Gathering at Wintergarden, Port Charlotte (Small Congregations)

Thursday, October 26

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.

