



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ September 15, 2017

Rev. Graham P. Hart, General Presbyter

“We Are Not Alone – Part 2”

Yesterday, I read this quote: “God is not in the storm, but in our response.”

We could have some profound and interesting theological discussion on that quote. Nevertheless, this week we have seen neighbors helping neighbors, even when they don't agree on politics. The outpouring of support from other states has been huge. Many of our churches that have electric or a generator have opened their doors to become respite centers for those without a hot meal or air conditioning, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has sent a team to be with us to do a first assessment and help us figure out what needs to be done as a presbytery.



God is here!
God is with us!
Thanks be to God!

Graham Hart
graham@peacriverpresbytery.org

Updates:

The biggest impact of Irma was in the south. However, every community within Peace River has been affected in some way with trees down, debris all over, minor structural damage (i.e. soffits and some water intrusion, etc.), and loss of electric. As of today, at least 10-13 churches are still without electric. Some have generator, and many churches have become respite centers for their members and community that do not yet have electric.



Churches that have had some significant impact, primarily roof related, or as the case of Hope United, the steeple blew off include: Buckingham, Lely, First Arcadia, and First Lehigh Acres. The Presbytery Center in North Port also sustained major roof damage.



Mision Peniel A major impact of Hurricane Irma has been to the Immokalee community and our Presbytery's ministry there. Mision Peniel suffered severe damage to their roof (ceiling collapsed over the office area) and has no water

(water line broke when an oak tree uprooted). A member of of Cypress Lakes got a generator to the Mission to power the coolers and freezers that hold food for the mission. Miguel Estrada, Presbytery Evangelist and Pastor to the Immokalee farmworker community, is playing a major role in the recovery efforts and is closely working with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW). We are working with other relief agencies and Mision Peniel has been become a warehouse and distribution center for providing food and clothing. Additionally, there has been significant damage to the mobile homes used (rented) by migrant farmworkers, which will be major issue to be addressed.



Beth-El and Cedarkirk – at first report – have lost lots of trees, but the buildings seem intact. Beth-El is providing direct relief to the farmworker community in the Wimauma area, and Cedarkirk may be used by FPL to house crews from electric companies from out of the state. We will share more as reports become available.

And we were saddened by the death of David King’s wife during the storm. David is a retired member of Peace River Presbytery. She was at a special needs shelter during the storm, and took ill, and died. So, our thoughts and prayers are offered up for David at his loss.

Our Cuba Guests are with us:

Among the many things that our Presbyterian brothers and sisters in Matanzas Presbytery have in common with us is they went through Hurricane Irma as well. The impact was significant. They made it to the states prior to the storm to attend the Cuba Partnership Network meeting that originally was to be in Houston, but Harvey necessitated a move to the Cenacle Retreat House in Chicago. They arrive in Peace River today and will be preaching at: Faith, Cape Coral; Peace, Lakewood Ranch; and Covenant, Fort Myers.

Peace River Presbytery Dialogue and Conversation with Leaders from Matanzas Presbytery, Cuba

Monday, September 18, 2017 will still be held at:

Faith, Cape Coral ~ 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Address: 4544 Coronado Parkway, Cape Coral, 33904

and ...

Pine Shores, Sarasota ~ 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Address: 61365 Beechwood Drive, Sarasota, 34231

- Please come to meet:
 - Ary Fernandez–Moderator of the Synod of Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada en Cuba (their General Assembly), Professor at the Evangelical Seminary at Matanzas, and Pastor of Central Presbyterian Church of Matanzas,
 - Beidy Casas Aragón- Associate Pastor of Matanzas Presbyterian Church and Pastor of several mission congregations
 - Alison Infante Zamora– Moderator of Matanzas Presbytery and Pastor of the Juan Hall Presbyterian Church in Juan G. Hall Presbyterian Church in Cardenas.



- The Program will focus on the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Cuba, the current political situation, future hopes they have for the church, the people of Cuba, and developing a partnership with Peace River Presbytery and its congregations. Dialogue surrounding your questions Fellowship with refreshments.

IMPORTANT RECOVERY INFORMATION FROM FLAPDAN:

Please share widely!

Volunteer Teams are needed for tarping, debris removal and muck outs.

Florida VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) has recently adopted a national platform called **Crisis Cleanup** to coordinate the efforts of volunteers who want to respond after a disaster.

Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN) is a member of Florida VOAD and is asking our church volunteer teams to use the Crisis Cleanup platform.

Crisis Cleanup is a collaborative disaster work order management platform that helps relief organizations help more people. It improves coordination, decreases duplication of efforts, enhances efficiency, and improves the volunteer experience. Crisis Cleanup works best when many voluntary organizations with a lot of volunteers, work together to help many people over a wide area, all at the same time.

Volunteer teams need to register with Crisis Cleanup and watch the training video.

Introductory Video (right side of screen): <https://www.crisiscleanup.org/training>

To Register: <https://www.crisiscleanup.org/register>

Mandatory Training Video: <https://www.crisiscleanup.org/training>

Individuals wanting to volunteer need to register at:

<https://www.volunteerflorida.org/irma/>

or join with a local trusted disaster organization such as the American Red Cross or a church volunteer team that is using Crisis Cleanup (see above).

Survivors with property damage, trees down, etc. need to call [800-451-1954](tel:800-451-1954) to register their need for assistance.

Information provided by:

Kathy Broyard

Executive Director / Emergency Management Specialist

Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN)

Phone: [941-483-0675](tel:941-483-0675)

Email: fla.pdan@pcusa.org

www.FLAPDAN.org

www.facebook.com/FLAPDAN

In partnership with: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

PC(USA) <http://pda.pcusa.org/>

Member: Florida Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)

PRESS RELEASE FOR BRASS FEST 2017 & HURRICANE IRMA RELIEF:

The First Brass has rescheduled BrassFest 2017 according to the list below:

Sunday, September 17, 2017 @ 7:30 p.m.
Church of the Redeemer, [222 S. Palm Ave., Sarasota](#)

Saturday, September 23, 2017 @ 4:00 p.m.
Palma Sola Presbyterian Church, [6510 3rd Ave. W., Bradenton](#)

In addition, there will be a collection received for victims of Hurricane Irma. Sarasota was spared Irma's direct hit, but there are citizens that require expensive cleanup and repairs. The First Brass is collaborating with the churches to provide funds to those in need.

After going through a storm there is nothing like live music to lift your spirits. Take a break for a few hours and come to hear the largest group of professional brass musicians in Florida. They will revise the roof with tunes like Sing, Sing, Sing, American Patrol, and St. Louis Blues March. Trumpet, French Horns, Trombones, Euphoniums, Tubas will be joined by the organ and percussion.

Don't miss this show and help us to help our community recover.

Tickets are \$20.00 - Group Tickets (6 or more) are \$15.00 - Students are always free.
For tickets go to www.TheFirstBrass.org, call [941-928-0296](tel:941-928-0296), go to the church office, or pick them up at the door.

Gary Reinstrom, Artistic Director [\(941\) 350-0271](tel:941-350-0271)

Nance Guth, Executive Director [\(941\) 928-0296](tel:941-928-0296)

The First Brass of [Sarasota](#)

[4565 Northlake Drive, Sarasota, FL 34232](#)

www.TheFirstBrass.org

TheFirstBrass@yahoo.com

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

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
- 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

[September 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: 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 pray for:

- Rev. David King, in the loss of his wife this week.

Please continue to pray for:

- All who are affected by Hurricane Irma
- All who are affected by Hurricane Harvey
- 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: SEPTEMBER 2017:

September 3	<u>Upcoming Fall Gatherings</u>
September 10	<u>Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Stewart Email: sunburn1320@mac.com
September 17	<u>Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u> Interim Pastor: Rev. Penny Pitts Email: pennypitts6@gmail.com
September 24	<u>Church of the Palms, Sarasota</u> Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Stephen McConnell Email: smcconnell@churchofthepalms.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Dr. Hmingi Browne Email: hbrowne@churchofthepalms.org

CHURCH SUPPORT STAFF OPENINGS

[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: 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 18

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

Tuesday, September 19

Committee on Ministry – Rescheduled from September 12 (9:00 a.m.)

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.



