



# PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ September 22, 2017

Rev. Graham P. Hart, General Presbyter

## “We Are Not Alone – Part 3”

*Stories emerging out of Irma....*

### **Pastors, retired ministers, surviving spouses, and all church workers of PCUSA congregations:**

The Board of Pensions is providing \$1000 Emergency Assistance Grants for those persons who have been affected by Hurricane Irma (see note below in Hurricane Recovery Resources or [click here for link to additional Board of Pensions information, updates, and Hurricane support.](#)) Thank you to the Board of Pensions!

### **Churches**

First Naples and Moorings were both without electric on Sunday, so they decided to worship together in the gymnasium of Moorings, which was powered by a generator (since it was originally designed to be a First Responder Center.) Reports are that it was a great experience for all ... lots of good conversation, support, fellowship, and a wonderful worship service!

Church of the Palms, Kirkwood, First Lehigh Acres and more have opened their doors as respite centers for those who have been without electric and air conditioning.

We are applying to PDA for a \$5000 Church Damage Assistance Grant for four of the most damaged and affected churches, which are all primarily roof related: Hope United, First Lehigh Acres, Lely and Buckingham.

Last Friday, four members of the PDA team spent an afternoon in Immokalee and saw the deepest needs. Peace River applied for and has received a Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Grant for \$7500 that will be used for emergency needs at Mision Peniel, Cedarkirk, and Beth-El. Thank you to Jim Kirk, Associate Director of PDA, and to the whole PDA board and team!

### **Our Covenant Partners**

Farm Workers in Wimauma experienced significant damage to already meager homes. Beth-El is working to help meet needs there, but they are great.

Cedarkirk Camp has many trees down and damage to three buildings (Cedar Lodge, Pavilion and Retreat House).

Mision Peniel has been the staging area for relief supplies trucks coordinated through the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. They have also been in contact with World Vision and the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and have been able to share water, food, clothes and a hot meal with over 1500 migrant workers.



**Presbytery leaders from each presbytery in Florida** have been participating in a regularly scheduled conference calls hosted by FLAPDAN (Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network). We are being kept up to date on damage and recovery efforts in each presbytery.

**If you would like to make a financial contribution to one of our Covenant Partners or the work of PDA**, you can do so, knowing that 100% of your donation will go directly to the mission. Send to: Peace River Presbytery, 5600 Peace River Road, North Port, FL 34287. If you want more information on the hurricane recovery efforts through PDA - [click here for link](#)

We thank PDA for their generosity and support to Peace River and our congregations!



### **Update on our Cuba Partnership – Great Conversations ... Fellowship and Mutual Learning**

For the past five days, we've been blessed to have Ary Fernandez, Moderator of the Synod of Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada en Cuba (their General Assembly) and Pastor of Central Presbyterian Church of Matanzas, Beidy Casas Aragón, Associate Pastor of Matanzas Presbyterian Church, and Alison Infante Zamora, Moderator of Matanzas Presbytery and Pastor of the Juan Hall Presbyterian Church in Cardenas.

They preached and participated in worship at Peace, Cypress Lake, and Faith Churches on Sunday, met for a BBQ at the Harts' with the 18 participants who are going on the Pastor/Spouse retreat in Cuba, went from the south end to the north on Monday, doing presentations at Regional Gatherings at Pine Shore and Faith, and they had a day to visit ECHO and Mision Peniel.

## **Regional Cuba Partnership Gatherings**

We had pastors and members from 13 churches participate in the Regional Gatherings with our Cuban friends. One man from Faith Cape Coral, after the hour-long presentation on the historical, cultural, current political and economic situation, as well as the state of the church in Cuba, said: *In all my 66 years, I have learned more in 1 hour about Cuba than in all the previous 66 years.*

Please be in prayer for the 18 members of Peace River and their spouses, who will be going to Matanzas Presbytery from Oct. 5-10 to join the pastor of Matanzas Presbytery on a 3-day retreat, followed by preaching in the Presbyterian Churches of Matanzas Presbytery, and an overnight stay in the homes of pastors. [Click here to see a story of the impact on Irma in Cuba.](#)



**If you want to give to help the churches in Matanzas Presbytery in their Hurricane recovery work** please send your gift to Peace River Presbytery, prior to October 3<sup>rd</sup>, marked *Cuba Disaster Relief*.

With gratitude for the hope we have in Christ and the generosity of God's people!

Graham Hart

General Presbyter

[graham@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:graham@peacriverpresbytery.org)



## **Hurricane Recovery Resources and Assistance Information:**

- [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance PC\(USA\)](http://pda.pcusa.org/) - <http://pda.pcusa.org/>
- **Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network:**  
FLAPDAN - [www.flapdan.org](http://www.flapdan.org)  
[www.facebook.com/FLAPDAN](https://www.facebook.com/FLAPDAN)
- Florida Division of Emergency Management (**FEMA** contacts) - <http://www.floridadisaster.org/info/>
- [POD Locations](#) (Points of distribution for water, supplies, tarps, etc.)
- **Legal Aid** Hotline for Irma Survivors (free legal advice for those who can't afford an attorney): [866-550-2929](tel:866-550-2929)
- **Home Cleanup Hotline for Hurricane Irma:** [800-451-1954](tel:800-451-1954)
- Contact Information for 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](mailto:fla.pdan@pcusa.org)  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 491279, Leesburg, FL 34749-1279
- **Board of Pensions – from Dick Liberty of the Board's Assistance Team**  
The Board of Pensions is providing Emergency Assistance Grants for those persons who have been affected by Hurricane Irma. These grants will be for an amount up to \$1,000 per individual (only one grant per individual.) They are meant to give help with some short-term needs, rather than to help with

replacements/re-construction/re-modeling which might be more in the province of FEMA funds and homeowner's/renter's insurance settlements. These grants will be **available** through October 31, 2017.

Who's eligible:

- Active, regularly-paid employees (full-time or part-time) of a local church, agency, mid-council, or organization *under the direct control of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*.
- Retired ministers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- Surviving spouses of ministers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Email Graham Hart ([click here](#)) or call Graham to receive the form.

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## **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](mailto:fla.pdan@pcusa.org)

[www.FLAPDAN.org](http://www.FLAPDAN.org)

[www.facebook.com/FLAPDAN](https://www.facebook.com/FLAPDAN)

In partnership with: **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**

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

**Member: Florida Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)**

## BRASS FEST 2017 & HURRICANE IRMA RELIEF:

The First Brass has rescheduled Brass Fest 2017. Their second concert is:

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](http://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](http://www.TheFirstBrass.org)  
[TheFirstBrass@yahoo.com](mailto: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](http://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](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)





PO Box 860 | Wimauma, FL 33598  
Phone: 813-633-1548 ext. 223  
Web: [www.beth-el.org](http://www.beth-el.org)

### [September Newsletter](#)

## **MISION PENIEL**

*A Ministry of Peace River Presbytery to the Farmworkers in Immokalee*

[www.misionpeniel.com](http://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](mailto:miguestrada@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 pray for:**

- The family and loved ones of Liz Countiss, who recently passed away.

### **Please continue to pray for:**

- Rev. David King, in the loss of his wife this week.
- 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: <a href="mailto:sunburn1320@mac.com">sunburn1320@mac.com</a>
September 17	<u>Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u> Interim Pastor: Rev. Penny Pitts Email: <a href="mailto:pennypitts6@gmail.com">pennypitts6@gmail.com</a>

September 24

Church of the Palms, Sarasota  
Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Stephen McConnell  
Email: [smcconnell@churchofthepalms.org](mailto:smcconnell@churchofthepalms.org)  
Associate Pastor: Rev. Dr. Hmingi Browne  
Email: [hbrowne@churchofthepalms.org](mailto: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](http://www.peaceriverpresbytery.org)

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

### 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](http://www.peaceriverpresbytery.org/churches)

Click on the city, then the church, to visit their web site.





