



# PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ September 29, 2017

Rev. Dr. Kathleen Weller

## “Be Still”

Dear Peace River Friends,

As I sit here this afternoon, the Washington Palms just outside my window are bowing to the breeze out of the north. It was just shy of three weeks ago now - that those same fronds were being whipped and beaten by winds that seemed to come from all directions at one time.

While for those in the north part of our Presbytery Irma was a scary storm...for those in the central area and south it was much more. The images break our hearts. The losses still incalculable. The toll on our emotions, on our spirits, indelible.

Such non-forgetting can be a good thing. It's a good thing when it spurs us to action. It's a good thing, when it reminds us of both our blessings and responsibilities. It's a good thing when it makes us restless for the good that we know to be within our abilities and possibilities.

But not forgetting can also be harmful to the very emotions and spirit that contain it. Not-forgetting can keep us from thinking straight. It can jumble our thoughts in its distractions. It can hinder us from moving on or moving ahead in helpful ways. In meditation we call all of this “monkey-mind.”

I've met a lot of people in the last few weeks that haven't been able—quite yet—to escape post Irma monkey-mind. For them time is still a little fluid—what day is it? They haven't been able to get back into a routine...or to put in place something that feels like the new normal. Physical realities aside, Irma stung deeply. And we're all trying to cope and put words to this post Irma reality.

It wouldn't be normal to simply go on as though nothing happened. But let me encourage you who still are not sleeping through the night—toward something other than mental chaos. Let me encourage you and invite you towards peace.

The week after Irma, I had been invited to preach at Siesta Key Chapel. (When I agreed, she wasn't even a named storm). The text I chose was Psalm 46 with special attention to verse 10: “Be still and know that I am God...” and my sermon title was “Swirling.” How's that for the spirit knowing what we need before we ask?

I want to leave those same 8 little words with you this day. “Be still and know that I am God.” Say them in the morning, before your feet hit the floor. Say them when you notice your mind isn't on what it is you are doing. Say them when you are cleaning up storm debris, or ripping out drywall, or sharing food. Say them as you are falling asleep. In fact, say them until the mental Irma hangover subsides. Until you realize that you are in fact still...and that your heart is once more planted surely on the only One who can still all sorts of storms.



My prayers for you are embedded in this little note. My hope is that as you find both stillness and knowing, it becomes that which you share with others. For indeed we are our brothers and sisters keepers... may we all be kept in perfect peace.

Yours in the still Name of the Three,  
Kathleen

## BLESSING GRANTS APPLICATIONS

Realizing that Hurricane Irma has disrupted our lives and schedule, the Steering Committee has **extended the date for the submission of your Blessings Grant application to November 1, 2017**.

If you have already decided to submit a grant proposal, and have your concept developed, but due to the hurricane, need more time to finish the application, e-mail your extension request by October 1, 2017 to Wally Johnson, Moderator of the Blessing Grants Task Force ([revwallyjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:revwallyjohnson@gmail.com)) and the Presbytery office ([alesia@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:alesia@peacriverpresbytery.org)).

Please submit a brief description of your proposal and concept with your request for an extension.

Thanks!  
Lil Rea, Co-Moderator of the Steering Committee

**Presbytery leaders from each presbytery in Florida continue to have** 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**

Last week we were 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 with us. Next week, October 5-10, 18 members of Peace River and their spouses, will be going to Matanzas Presbytery 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](#). We invite your prayers as we continue this conversation and explore developing a partnership relationship with Matanzas Presbytery.

**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*.



## **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.

---

## **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)**

## [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](mailto: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](mailto:office@wintergardenpres.org)

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

## **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
- 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 continue to pray for:**

- The people of Puerto Rico
- The family and loved ones of Liz Countiss, who recently passed away
- Rev. David King, in the recent loss of his wife
- All who are affected by Hurricane Maria
- All who are affected by Hurricane Irma
- All who are affected by Hurricane Harvey
- 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: <a href="mailto:gbell@firstpressarasota.org">gbell@firstpressarasota.org</a>          Associate Pastor: Rev. Kelly Fitzgerald          Email: <a href="mailto:kfitzgerald@firstpressarasota.org">kfitzgerald@firstpressarasota.org</a></p>
<p>October 8</p>	<p><u>Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda</u>          Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Stewart          Email: <a href="mailto:sunburn1320@mac.com">sunburn1320@mac.com</a></p>
<p>October 15</p>	<p><u>PRP Elected Staff</u>          General Presbyter: Rev. Graham Hart          Email: <a href="mailto:graham@peacriverpresbytery.org">graham@peacriverpresbytery.org</a>          Stated Clerk: Rev. Dr. Randy Moody          Email: <a href="mailto:statedclerk@peacriverpresbytery.org">statedclerk@peacriverpresbytery.org</a>          Treasurer: Elder Alan Penick          Email: <a href="mailto:adpenick@comcast.net">adpenick@comcast.net</a></p>
<p>October 22</p>	<p><u>PRP Support Staff</u>          Office Manager: Alesia Sharpe          Email: <a href="mailto:alesia@peacriverpresbytery.org">alesia@peacriverpresbytery.org</a>          Financial Secretary, Administrative Assistant, Web Site Mgr.          Email: <a href="mailto:lori@peacriverpresbytery.org">lori@peacriverpresbytery.org</a></p>
<p>October 29</p>	<p><u>Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota</u>          Co-Pastor: Rev. Dr. Bruce Wismer          Email: <a href="mailto:bruce@pineshorespres.org">bruce@pineshorespres.org</a>          Co-Pastor: Rev. Karen Wismer          Email: <a href="mailto:karen@pineshorespres.org">karen@pineshorespres.org</a>          Associate Pastor: Rev. Cori Rigney          Email: <a href="mailto:cori@pineshorespres.org">cori@pineshorespres.org</a></p>

**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.peacriverpresbytery.org](http://www.peacriverpresbytery.org)

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

### **Monday, October 2**

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

Planning Team (1:00 p.m.)

### **Thursday, October 5**

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

Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team (10:00 a.m.)

### **Tuesday, October 10**

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

### **Wednesday, October 11**

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

### **Thursday, October 12**

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

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

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

