



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ April 25, 2018

The 223rd General Assembly

by Wayne Largent, Ruling Elder Commissioner

The 223rd General Assembly will meet in St. Louis, Missouri from June 16-23, 2018.

The General Assembly meets every two years to make decisions affecting the future of PC(USA). There will be approximately 540 Commissioners in attendance, with half being Teaching Elders (pastors) and half being Ruling Elders (laymen). Each Presbytery elects its own Commissioners with the number being based on the church membership within the Presbytery. This year, Peace River Presbytery is entitled to two Teaching Elders and two Ruling Elders.

In addition to the Commissioners, each Presbytery elects a Youth and Young Adult Advisory Delegate. General Presbyters, Presbytery Stated Clerks and other interested people also attend.

I think it is important to note that Presbyteries elect “commissioners”, not delegates, to the General Assembly. The Commissioners are charged to discern God’s will in matters that are presented and not to necessarily reflect the will of the people back home. This seems to be an awesome responsibility.

The General Assembly will convene with worship Saturday morning and then essentially meet morning, afternoon and evenings until the next Saturday’s closing worship.

Charmaine Ponkratz of Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda and current Moderator of Peace River Presbytery and I, as an elder of Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood, have been elected as Ruling Elder Commissioners. Rev. Ray Quiles of St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church, North Port and Rev. Dr. Jeff DeYoe of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Ft. Myers are the elected Teaching Elder Commissioners. Mariah Martin of First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota was elected as the Youth and Young Adult Delegate.

Personally, I have been involved in a variety of activities with Peace River Presbytery. That has given me the meaningful opportunity to see the impact of our denomination beyond our local church. I am looking forward to understanding that impact on a much broader scale as a result of participating in this General Assembly.

Please keep your Commissioners and Advisory Delegate in your prayers as we prepare for this experience.

Wayne Largent

For more information at the 223 General Assembly, go to ga-pcusa.org

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**June 16-23, 2018**

## General Assembly of the PC(USA)

Location: St. Louis, Missouri



Our 2018 General Assembly Commissioners:

- Wayne Largent, Ruling Elder – Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood
- Charmaine Ponkratz, Ruling Elder - Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda
- Jeff DeYoe, Teaching Elder – Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers
- Ray Quiles, Teaching Elder – St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, North Port, and
- Mariah Martin, Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD) – First Presbyterian, Sarasota,

will join with other commissioners and advisory delegates from all 170 PC(USA) presbyteries, and other delegates and observers from around the world. All will converge on the America's Convention Center in downtown St. Louis for celebrations, deliberations, and inspirations in support of the denomination's biennial gathering.

[Click here to link to the 223<sup>rd</sup> home page.](#)

[The Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy](#) will serve as host to the 223rd General Assembly, united under the theme, **"Renewing the Vision: Kindom Building for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,"** from Matthew 6:25-33. The meetings will include rich worship services, the election of the Moderator and Vice Moderator or Co-Moderators, action on a plethora of overtures, and much more. View the [proposed docket](#).



**FLORIDA  
PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE  
NETWORK**  
In Partnership with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PCUSA)



**Wednesday, May 2, 2018**

**1:30-3:30 p.m.**

**Hurricane Preparedness Workshop with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**

**Location: First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte**

Last year Hurricane Irma rudely reminded us that hurricanes still happen, even though we had gone ten years without one affecting us here in Southwest Florida.

Several congregations have asked the Presbytery to host a hurricane preparedness workshop, just so that in 2018 we are ready. Many congregations found themselves, as Irma was approaching, dusting off old preparedness plans, which were found to be outdated. Kathy Broyard, Director of Florida Presbytery's Disaster Preparedness Network will be leading the workshop. She will share best practices and learnings from other congregations. Please send members of your Disaster Preparedness team, or a designated team, to this workshop so we all can be ready. As they say, it is better to have an umbrella and not need it than to be caught in a rain storm without one.

### **OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS**

Mark your calendars and pass the following on, so that the right folks in your congregation will have this information and be able to attend:

THE PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY AND CHURCH OF THE PALMS  
*invites you to the*



*Service  
of  
Ordination and Installation*  
**Laurie Ganz Haas**

TO THE MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

*Sunday, May 6, 2018*

*4:00 pm*

CHURCH OF THE PALMS  
3224 BEE RIDGE ROAD, SARASOTA FL. 34239

*Reception will follow in the Palms Center.*



Please RSVP to Pastor Hmingi Browne  
[hbrowne@churchofthepalms.org](mailto:hbrowne@churchofthepalms.org)



**Thursday, May 17, 2018**

**Stated Meeting of Presbytery**

**The Welcoming Congregation: Roots and Fruits of Christian Hospitality**

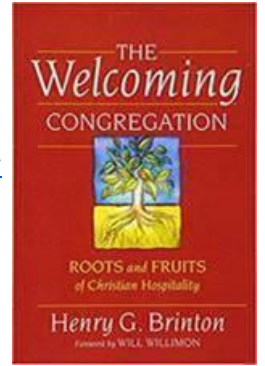
**Location: St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, North Port**

**8:00 a.m.** – Registration Begins / **9:00 a.m.** – Stated Meeting Begins

**8:30 a.m.** – Financial Forum for anyone interested in learning more about the Presbytery's budget and finances, or with questions for your own church.



At our regular stated meeting, we will continue in our series on: Things that make for Vital Congregations focusing on Compassionate and Inclusive Outreach. We are pleased that the Rev. Henry Brinton, author of the new book, *The Welcoming Congregation: Roots and Fruits of Christian Hospitality*, will be our keynote speaker. Henry is Senior Pastor of Fairfax Presbyterian Church in Fairfax, Virginia. He is a regular contributor to



USA Today and the Washington Post, as well as the author of several books, including *Balancing Acts: Obligation, Liberation, and Contemporary Christian Conflicts*. This will be a great meeting to bring several members from your mission, fellowship, and outreach committees of your congregation.

**Lunch Reservations are REQUIRED BEFORE noon, Friday, May 11<sup>th</sup>**

Email or call Lori Doyal at the Presbytery Office:

[lori@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:lori@peacriverpresbytery.org) / 941.426.8421, ext. 401

Include the names of each person in the reservation, the church name, and your contact information.

The boxed lunch is \$10.00.

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Thursday, May 31, 2018

10:00 a.m.- 1:30 p.m. (lunch included)

The Transition to Retirement:

A Seminar on Shifting from an Acting Working Life to the Gift of Retirement

Location: Presbytery Office – North Port

Speaker: Paul T. Reiter, Spiritual Director

Three years ago, COM hosted a workshop entitled: *Ending Well and Finishing Strong* for those within 10 years of retirement, which was very well received. This is being offered as a Part II on that theme.

CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

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

www.cedarkirk.org



Mark your calendars for a FREE afternoon of fun at your camp and conference center. Cedarkirk opens its doors on Saturday, May 12 from 1-5pm and all are welcome. We invite new campers to have a glimpse at what summer camp looks like as well as old friends who just want to spend some time in this special place apart. The zip line, climbing wall, and pool will be open, and there will be camp tours, hayrides, s'mores, and prizes. No reservation is needed – just show up for an afternoon of fun! More information is available at www.cedarkirk.org/program/open-house.

Matthew Shick
Program Director
Cedarkirk Camp & Conference Center
A place apart to build up the body of Christ in love.

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*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*



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

[April Newsletter](#)

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry has the following employment opportunities:

- Part-time Worship Music Leader - Must be bi-lingual with good teaching and musical skills to lead newly formed music group for Sunday Worship.
- Summer Programming Assistant - Part time position working Beth-El staff in coordinating summer youth programming.

For more information, or to apply, [email info@beth-el.org](mailto:info@beth-el.org)

**MISION PENIEL**

*A Ministry of Peace River Presbytery to the Farmworkers in Immokalee*  
[www.misionpeniel.com](http://www.misionpeniel.com)

**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: [misionpenielpeacriver@gmail.com](mailto: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 (checks or online):**

- 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.
- Click on the "Donate" button on the Mision Peniel web site.
- Contributor information is provided to Mision Peniel each month.

**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**September 26 - October 3**  
**PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY IS RETURNING TO CUBA**  
**To Engage in the Next Steps of our Peace River - Matanzas Partnership**

**Who:** Up to 24 Members with/without Clergy from churches interested in establishing partnerships with area churches or the seminary in the Matanzas Presbytery. Each church is limited to four reservations.

**What:** Establishing Partnerships within the Matanzas Presbytery, including the seminary and local churches. Visiting local churches, engaging in ministry practices with that church and beginning the process of partnerships.

**When:** Wednesday, September 26 - Wednesday, October 3, 2018

**Where:** Varadero, Cuba

**Expenses:** Will include airfare (from either Tampa or Miami), visa, seminary lodging (dormitory style), meals, transportation during the week, and home stays at local church communities.

**How:**

1. *Reply* to Lori at the Presbytery Office ([lori@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:lori@peacriverpresbytery.org)) by **April 15th** with initial interest.
2. *Return* registration form\* indicating a firm commitment with \$100 deposit per person by **May 15<sup>th</sup>** (to begin the visa process which requires at least 90 days) to Peace River Presbytery, 5600 Peace River Presbytery, North Port, FL 34287, *Attention:* Lori Doyal.
3. *Direct* questions to Cuba Partnership Task Force Co-Moderators:  
Kevin Morris: 813-713-5117 | [pastor@hopeunitedchurch.net](mailto:pastor@hopeunitedchurch.net) or Ruth DeYoe: 386-793-6151 | [ruthdeyoe@gmail.com](mailto:ruthdeyoe@gmail.com)

\* **Registration Forms were emailed to churches by Ruth DeYoe two weeks ago.**

**WALK with the BIBLE**

Pastor Bill Teng of First Presbyterian Church in Arcadia, FL is organizing and leading a group in a *Walk with the Bible* tour of Israel and Jordan on October 5-18, this fall. The total cost is only \$4,945 from Tampa. More detail is available here: <http://bit.ly/2Fc2RiA>. If interested, please contact him at [TengPresby@aol.com](mailto:TengPresby@aol.com) or 703.899.0725.

## ARTICLES of INTEREST

*(selected by Graham Hart)*

### [The ugly coded critique of Chick-fil-A's Christianity](#)

Bloomberg: The fast-food chain's "infiltration" of New York City ignores the truth about religion in America. It also reveals an ugly narrow-mindedness.

GetReligion: [Still thinking about Chick-fil-A, as well as the emerging face of world Christianity](#)

### [A Cassandra cry against Pope Francis](#)

The Atlantic: Ross Douthat's views on the pope are intensely unpopular. But has he identified a fundamental tension in the Church?

### [Willow Creek promises investigation amid new allegations against Bill Hybels](#)

Christianity Today: "We are sorry," elder board says, as more women claim misconduct.

### [Catholic groups use 'social innovation' to help refugees](#)

National Catholic Reporter: Catholic social innovation tends to repurpose existing resources and draw on existing relationships to address issues such as the refugee crisis, according to a study funded by Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities (FADICA).

Forbes: [It's never too late for innovation resolutions](#)

### [The gospel of climate change](#)

NBC News: While many evangelical Christians dismiss climate change as major concern, some scripture-citing environmentalists within their churches are on a mission.

### [Churches make a drastic pledge in the name of social justice: To stop calling the police](#)

The Washington Post: These churches believe the American police system, criticized for its impact especially on people of color, is such a problem that they should wash their hands of it entirely.

Religion News Service: [Still evangelical? Literary festival panelists question label after Trump, #MeToo](#)

### [White evangelical support for Donald Trump at all-time high](#)

Public Religion Research Institute: A new PRRI survey finds white evangelical support for President Trump at an all-time high, with 75 percent holding a favorable view of the president and just 22 percent holding an unfavorable view.

### [Do entrepreneurs need a strategy?](#)

Harvard Business Review: Some start-up founders follow a business plan; others operate by the seat of their pants. Learn how to carefully craft a strategy in advance -- and whether you should.

### [A weekend at Cape Cod shows glimpses of a future church](#)

National Catholic Reporter: Gathering without a priest made the writer wonder about similar meals of remembrance

in the early church. And what future gatherings might be like as the number of Catholic priests continues its insistent decline.

[Building community by sharing books](#)

Stanford Social Innovation Review: Little Free Libraries draw neighbors together on street corners, on school campuses, and in police stations.

**PRAYER NEEDS**

**Please pray for:**

- The family of the Rev. Susan Rice-Waller, who passed away on April 21, 2018. Please note Memorial Service arrangements in Susan's [obituary](#).
- The Rev. Daniel Herlein - health

**Please continue to pray for:**

- Jim and Becky Beckwith, in the passing of their son, Greg
- Robert Dennis (son of Rev. India Dennis) – mental health issues
- Beth-El Farmworker Ministry (in Wimauma)
- Misión Peniel Farmworker Ministry (in Immokalee)
- 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: APRIL 2018:**

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|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| April 1  | <u>Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dawn Mayes<br>Email: <a href="mailto:revdawnmayes@gmail.com">revdawnmayes@gmail.com</a>                                                                                                   |
| April 8  | <u>Beth-El Farmworker Ministry</u><br>Executive Director: Rev. Dr. Kathy Dain<br>Email: <a href="mailto:kathy@beth-el.org">kathy@beth-el.org</a><br>Pastor: Rev. Tamara Leonard-Lara<br>Email: <a href="mailto:pastor@beth-el.org">pastor@beth-el.org</a> |
| April 15 | <u>Buckingham Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Randy Moody<br>Email: <a href="mailto:bpcpastor@comcast.net">bpcpastor@comcast.net</a>                                                                                              |



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| April 22 | <u>Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jeff DeYoe<br>Email: <a href="mailto:jdeyoe@covpcf.com">jdeyoe@covpcf.com</a> |
| April 29 | <u>Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Clint Cottrell<br>Email: <a href="mailto:clint@clpc.us">clint@clpc.us</a> |

### CHURCH SUPPORT STAFF OPENINGS

First Presbyterian Church, Arcadia:  
[Part-Time Children and Youth Director](#)

Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda:  
[Organist/Primary Accompanist](#)

### PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: APRIL-MAY 2018

*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.*

**Thursday, April 26**

Pastors' Meeting – Sponsored by the Congregational Vitality Team (1:00 p.m. at First, Port Charlotte)

**Wednesday, May 2**

Hurricane Preparedness Workshop with PDA (1:30-3:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte)

**Thursday, May 3**

Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team (10:00 a.m.)  
 Mision Peniel Team (10:00 a.m. in Immokalee)  
 Steering Committee (1:30 p.m.)

**Saturday, May 5**

Memorial Service for The Reverend Susan Rice-Waller (1:00 p.m. at Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples)

**Sunday, May 6**

Laurie Haas Ordination and Installation Service (4:00 p.m. at Church of the Palms)

**Monday, May 7**

Nominations and Representation Committee (10:00 a.m.)  
 Planning Team (1:30 p.m.)

**Tuesday, May 8**

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

**Wednesday, May 9**

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

**Thursday, May 10**

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

**Thursday, May 17**

Stated Meeting of Presbytery (at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, North Port)

**Thursday, May 24**

Records Review Planning Meeting (10:00 a.m.-12:00 n.)

Congregational Vitality Team (12:30 p.m.)

**CHURCHES of PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY**

Please visit our web site, [www.peacriverpresbytery.org/churches](http://www.peacriverpresbytery.org/churches)

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

