



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ May 10, 2018

~ Community ~

By: Rev. Elizabeth Deibert

Every week I take a 24 hour sabbath break from my computer (and the email on my phone). I have found this to be essential to maintaining a proper connection to Christ, who is the vine providing nourishment to my branch. Work so easily follows us wherever we are. The “ping” of another text message interrupts dinner because it *might* be more important than the person in front of us! American photographer Eric Pickersgill removed the smartphones and other digital devices from his portraits of everyday life. In his creative project “Removed” one can see our addiction to technology and hyper-connectivity. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6N_jVT9Frw8

The world has morphed so rapidly that future generations will have an interesting view on how we adapted. One thing is clear – we still need face-to-face human connection. Though one can hear any number of outstanding preachers on Youtube, worship in the community of faith – smiling in welcome, touching in the sharing of peace, tasting the bread of life – these happen in real-not virtual community.

At our next presbytery meeting, on May 17th, we have the opportunity to consider the meaning of real community, and how we can offer a true Christ-like, welcome to all people in our congregations and communities. Rev. Henry Brinton, pastor in Fairfax, VA, and author of *The Welcoming Congregation: Roots and Fruits of Christian Hospitality*, will explore with us the roots and fruits of compassionate outreach and inclusive love in the church.

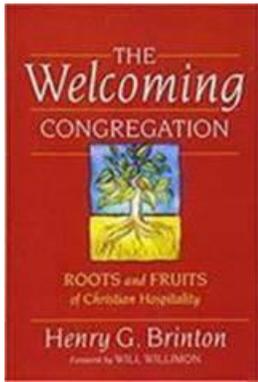
Over the last year and a half, Peace River Presbytery has considered these themes of Congregational Vitality: [Inspiring & Engaging Worship, Radical Generosity, Welcoming Relationships & Nurturing Discipleship, Organizational Health, and Compassionate & Inclusive Outreach](#). In preparation for our regional meetings September 5-6, we invite each congregation to consider how you hope to grow or strengthen your ministry in one or more of these ways. Discuss with the Session and/or staff of your church what you are currently doing or hope to do to build vitality. If you would like to see the final version of what Ray Jones presented to us on Vital Congregations, it is here: file:///C:/Users/Elizabeth/Downloads/Toolkit_Final-for-Web.pdf

Did you know that Peace River Presbytery has a Facebook page now? Not that I recommend spending your sabbath there, but let’s be friends and share the joys and needs of our congregations.

The Planning Team and Steering Committee have noticed that many feel a need to leave early on presbytery days, so we have shifted the start time to 9:00 so we can all beat the traffic and get back to our families or other church meetings sooner. Looking forward to that face-to-face encounter with you next week in North Port! Bring more than commissioners – bring anyone interested in exploring outreach and welcome! Non-commissioners can arrive at 11:00 and leave at 2:00, spending extra time with our guest speaker, if arriving at 9:00 is difficult.

In the Spirit of Christ,

Elizabeth M. Deibert, pastor for Peace Presbyterian of Lakewood Ranch and moderator of the Congregational Vitality Team of Peace River Presbytery



Thursday, May 17, 2018

Stated Meeting of Presbytery

The Welcoming Congregation: Roots and Fruits of Christian Hospitality

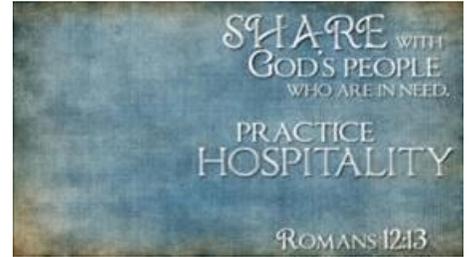
Location: St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, North Port

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 11th. ****

Email or call Lori Doyal at the Presbytery Office:

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, payable at registration (no credit cards).

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
- Bill Teng, Teaching Elder – First Presbyterian Church, Arcadia, 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 223rd 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 21st 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](#).

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)

[May 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: [migustrada@hotmail.com](mailto:migustrada@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 (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@peaceriverpresbytery.org](mailto:lori@peaceriverpresbytery.org)) by **April 15th** with initial interest.
2. Return registration form\* indicating a firm commitment with \$100 deposit per person by **May 15th** (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)

**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.

## PRAYER NEEDS

### Please pray for:

· SueAnn Cousar and family in memory of Rev. Robert “Bob” Cousar, who passed away on April 25, 2018. SueAnn shares: *I wanted to let the Peace River Presbytery know of the passing of the Rev. Dr. Robert Wilbur Cousar, Jr., honorably retired member of the Presbytery, on April 25, 2018, at Hope Hospice in Cape Coral. Bob and I live on Upper Captiva Island and started Upper Captiva Island Chapel in our Island home. Before moving here we served as missionaries in the Amazon Rainforest of Brazil from 1982 until 1995 in church planting. Although retired by the Presbyterian Church USA in 1991, we returned to Brazil where Bob joined the Presbytery of Amazonas-Roraima and we spent another four years planting another church in Tefe’, Amazonas. Bob served as organizing pastor of First Presbyterian, Brandon, FL; as well as pastor of a field of rural churches in Middle Tennessee Presbytery; pastor of Ray Memorial Presbyterian in Monroe, GA; taught Bible at King College in Bristol, TN. After receiving his PhD from University of Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1954, Bob went to Brazil and served four years as evangelistic missionary. He served in the Army Air Corp in WWII as a P-47 pilot and continued his love of flying in Brazil, piloting the mission plane in the northeast of Brazil in the 50’s.*

### Please continue to pray for:

- The family of the Rev. Susan Rice-Waller, who passed away on April 21, 2018.
- The Rev. Daniel Herlein - health
- 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: MAY 2018:

|        |                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| May 6  | <u>Hope United Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Kevin Morris<br>Email: <a href="mailto:pastor@hopeunitedchurch.net">pastor@hopeunitedchurch.net</a> |
| May 13 | <u>PRP Stated Meeting at St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church</u><br>May 17, 2018                                                                                            |
| May 20 | <u>Chapel By The Sea, Fort Myers Beach</u><br>Pastor: Rev. Dr. Stephen Adkison<br>Email: <a href="mailto:skypilot_mddiv@hotmail.com">skypilot_mddiv@hotmail.com</a>    |

May 27

Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, N. Fort Myers  
Interim Pastor: Rev. R.C. Smith  
Email: [revrc5@aol.com](mailto:revrc5@aol.com)

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

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



