



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ November 1, 2018

CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY

There are many signs of vitality in churches, signs which we have discussed over the last two years together in Peace River Presbytery. Yet Jesus would remind us it all comes down to one sign – the sign of love. As Paul said to the Corinthians and as the Beatles sang in the 60's, "All You Need is Love." Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, strength, and soul, and love your neighbor as you love yourself. (Mark 12 – lectionary text for Sunday) As we reflect with dismay over the division and violence in our land, this love is the answer. As we respond to those with whom we disagree, "speaking the truth in love" is our way. As we cast our votes, love for all God's children and God's creation is what we seek in all leadership choices.

This love was expressed at the Monday night Vigil planned by the Sarasota Jewish Federation, where more than 2000 people of all faiths came together to honor the lives of the eleven who had gathered to worship at the Tree of Life Synagogue.

We will continue to gather in our houses of worship – people of all faiths – with the temptation to fear but the resolve to believe that love is the answer. As Archbishop Oscar Romero, canonized this month for his faithfulness as a Christian martyr, teaches us "You cannot reap what you have not sown. How are we going to reap love in our community, if we sow only hatred."

That great faith chapter in Hebrews 11 reminds all the saints of God that "faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." We may not see much evidence of love or much assurance of hope, but my friends, we are people of faith! The Holy Spirit is still with her church.

So Peace River Presbytery, let us continue to build one another up in faith, hope, and love, so that all of us can reach out more effectively and courageously in our communities to share Christ's compassion and grace. On this Reformation Day, let us pray to God with Calvin that God will "increase our hope when it is small, awaken it when it is dormant, confirm it when it is wavering, strengthen it when it is weak, and raise it up when it is overthrown."

Rev. Elizabeth M. Deibert
Pastor at Peace Presbyterian in Lakewood Ranch and Moderator of Congregational Vitality Team

Dear Members of Peace River Presbytery,

I share our deep grief of what happened at the Tree of Life Synagogue, and a deep concern for our nation, and who we are becoming. Recently someone shared with me a definition of compassion that is profound and instructive in a time like this: *Compassion is the quivering of the heart in response to suffering and the ability to respond with appropriate action.*

Many of our hearts are quivering; and many are trying to figure what is the next appropriate action.

For now, I think it is to pause and pray. In the tomorrows to come I trust and pray we will know what it takes for our better selves to emerge as individuals and as a nation and to begin taking the appropriate actions. But until then, I

offer these words shared by Rabbi [Jennifer Singer](#), spiritual leader of Congregation Kol HaNeshama in Sarasota, at the Sarasota community vigil in memory of those who were murdered at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh:

I have never been to Squirrel Hill. I've never even been to Pittsburgh. I don't know the three rabbis who serve the congregations in that building, and I had never met any of the eleven people who died there. But 11 branches were broken off the Tree of Life this Shabbat, and today something inside of me is broken because of this unthinkable act, and I worry more for my people, and for our nation, than ever before. ([Click here for the rest of her message](#))

Also, here is a link to the responses of Presbyterians across the country. ([click here](#)).

So, for now I join with you in Prayer ...
Graham Hart
graham@peacriverpresbytery.org

STATED MEETING of PRESBYTERY
Thursday, November 15, 2018
Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers
2439 McGregor Blvd. | Fort Myers, 33901

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8:00 a.m. – Registration Begins  
\* 8:30 a.m. – Finance Forum with the PRP Board of Trustees \*  
9:00 a.m. – Stated Meeting Begins

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Lunch reservations due no later than 10:00 a.m. Friday, November 9th.

Contact Lori Doyal at the Presbytery Office
lori@peacriverpresbytery.org / 941-426-8421, ext. 401
Lunch is \$10.00 payable at Registration (no credit cards).

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*\* The Finance Forum is a perfect opportunity to ask questions about the Presbytery budget, as well as the mission and ministry of the Presbytery.*

**UPDATE FROM THE GENERAL PRESBYTER NOMINATING COMMITTEE:**

During the process of searching for our next General Presbyter we have been blessed with a very capable group of candidates for the position. Facing this difficult task, we have already spent hours in prayer and discussion and have narrowed our selection to a top tier group of candidates with whom we have scheduled first round interviews. They represent a rich diversity and a wide range of relevant experience. Our next update will be provided at the November 15 Presbytery meeting. In the meantime we appreciate your prayers for the candidates as they seek to determine God's plan for their ministry and for the committee members that we may listen for God's guidance as we carefully consider the future of Peace River Presbytery.

Linda Getzen and Sung Lee, co-moderators. Serving on the team are Carson Brown, Gene George, Charmaine Ponkratz, Terri Jo Crego, Jeff DeYoe, Kelly Fitzgerald and Doug Pratt.

Respectfully submitted, Charmaine Ponkratz, scribe.

**HURRICANE MICHAEL RESPONSE**

The following information is from the  
Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN):

**HURRICANE MICHAEL: HOW YOU CAN HELP ...**

**DONATIONS:**

To donate, please go to <http://pda.pcusa.org/situation/hurricane-michael/>

Donate Responsibly! Watch this short video to see how powerful a cash donation can be.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12cNBNKIXv8>

**VOLUNTEERS:**

If you would like to volunteer during the response phase, please register at [www.volunteerflorida.org](http://www.volunteerflorida.org)

Once needs are determined by the Red Cross and the Salvation Army, Volunteer Florida will help organize and connect volunteers where the help is most needed.

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Kathy Broyard

Executive Director / Emergency Management Specialist

**Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN)**

Phone: 941-483-0675

Email: [fla.pdan@pcusa.org](mailto:fla.pdan@pcusa.org)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 491279, Leesburg, FL 34749-1279

**In partnership with**

**Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**

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

**PEACE FESTIVAL**

“Peace is grateful for a Blessing Grant, which is helping us with this Festival ([click link](#)) and with a Peaceful Path to welcome our neighbors and remember the saints.”

**CONGRATULATIONS!**  
**WESTMINSTER COMMUNITIES of FLORIDA**

For winning “Best of the Bay 2018”.

[Click to read the article.](#)

**CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER**

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

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

*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*

**Beth-El**  
*Farmworker Ministry, Inc.*

PO Box 860 | Wimauma, FL 33598

Phone: 813-633-1548 ext. 223

Web: [www.beth-el.org](http://www.beth-el.org)

[October Newsletter](#)

**MISIÓN PENIEL**

A Ministry of Peace River Presbytery to the Farmworker Community in Immokalee

208 Boston Ave., PO Box 1204, Immokalee, FL 34143

[www.misionpeniel.com](http://www.misionpeniel.com)

Facebook: "Misión Peniel"

**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)

**Contributions to Misión 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 Misión Peniel.
- Please note *Misión Peniel* in the memo section.
- Click on the "Donate" button on the Misión Peniel web site.
- Contributor information is provided to Misión Peniel each month.

**PRAYER NEEDS**

**Please continue to pray for:**

- Worshipping Community and Families affected by Tree of Life Synagogue tragedy
- Communities affected by Hurricane Michael
- Rev. Dr. Daniel Pendergrass – recovery from a badly broken leg
- Jim and Becky Beckwith - health
- Rev. Miguel Estrada's Father-In-Law, Mr. Castillo Fernandez - health
- The Rev. Daniel Herlein - health
- 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: NOVEMBER 2018**

November  
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Siesta Key Chapel, Sarasota  
Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. Thomas (Tom) Cook  
Email: [tcook1127@gmail.com](mailto:tcook1127@gmail.com)

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| November<br>11 | <u>PRP Stated Meeting on November 15</u><br>Location: Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| November<br>18 | <u>Drs. Les and Cynthia Morgan</u> – Covenant Partners of PRP<br>and PCUSA Mission Co-Workers<br>Web: <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/les-and-cindy-morgan">www.pcusa.org/les-and-cindy-morgan</a>                                                                                            |
| November<br>25 | <u>Venice Presbyterian Church, Venice</u><br>Senior Pastor: Rev. Christopher (Chris) Romig<br>Email: <a href="mailto:cromig@venicepres.org">cromig@venicepres.org</a><br>Associate Pastor: Rev. Carolyn Wilson<br>Email: <a href="mailto:cwilson@venicepres.org">cwilson@venicepres.org</a> |

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Sunday, March 3, 2019**

Peace Presbyterian Church - Dedication Service

**CHURCH SUPPORT STAFF OPENINGS**

Hope United Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers/Estero  
[Church Administrative Assistant / Office Administrator](#)

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Braden River Presbyterian Church, Bradenton
[Part Time Administrative Assistant](#)

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St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, North Port  
[Music Director for the Traditional Service](#)

**PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: NOVEMBER 2018**

*You may view the entire calendar on the Presbytery web site: [www.peaceriverpresbytery.org](http://www.peaceriverpresbytery.org)  
Please email corrections or additions to [lori@peaceriverpresbytery.org](mailto:lori@peaceriverpresbytery.org)*

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

**Monday, November 5**

Nominations and Representation Committee (10:00 a.m.)  
Planning Team (12:30 p.m.)

**Thursday, November 8**

Finance Team / Board of Trustees (9:30 a.m.)  
Stated Meeting Packet Posted Online

**Tuesday, November 13**

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

**Thursday, November 15**

Stated Meeting of Presbytery at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers

**Wednesday, November 21**

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

Presbytery Offices Close at 12:00 noon

**Thursday, November 22**

Happy Thanksgiving!  
Presbytery Offices Closed

**Friday, November 23**

Presbytery Offices Closed

**Thursday, November 29**

Steering Committee (9:00 a.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.

