



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ January 17, 2018

New Year's Resolutions

We have made it to mid-January and hopefully are still on our diets, keeping up our exercise programs, answering emails more diligently or fulfilling whatever our New Year's resolutions were. Or maybe we have already given up on such hopelessly idealistic character improvements.

The earliest history of resolutions comes from the ancient Babylonians who made promises to their gods at the start of each new year that they would return borrowed objects and pay their debts. During the Roman era each year began with promises to the god Janus and in medieval times the knights took special vows at the end of the Christmas season. For early Christians, the first day of the new year became the traditional occasion for thinking about one's past mistakes and resolving to do and be better in the future. In 1740, the English clergyman, John Wesley, created the Covenant Renewal Service, most commonly held on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day, also known as the watch night service.

Taking time to assess the previous year and look towards the coming empty calendar as an opportunity to start afresh is a good exercise. But what tools should we use to make our assessments? One of the blog's I read, "The Modern Mrs. Darcy" says she uses only two questions to reflect on the past year.

1. "What worked for me last year?"

and

2. "What *didn't*?"

When we review our spiritual journey these 2 questions may not be adequate nor may a "one annual review" provide us with the direction we need. Years ago at a church wide retreat I was introduced to the practice of "Praying the Experiences of Our Everyday Lives, Examen.

The Daily Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern God's direction for us. The Examen is an ancient practice, begun by St. Ignatius that can help us see God's hand at work in our whole experience. The daily question of assessment and renewal becomes:

"Where is God in this?"

There are many variations on praying Examen (just google it for more information) but here is a simple five-step Daily Examen that St. Ignatius practiced.

- 1. Become aware of God's presence.**
- 2. Review the day with gratitude.**
- 3. Pay attention to your emotions.**
- 4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.**

5. Look toward tomorrow.

6. Give thanks to God for whatever you have experienced.

My New Year's resolution is to be more faithful in the prayer of Examen.

Blessings,

Lil Rea, Co-Moderator of the Steering Committee

A Special Invitation to a Special Presbytery Meeting ~ February 22nd ~ First, Sarasota

At the February 2013 Presbytery Meeting, Debbie Randlett (pastor, author, seminary professor, coach, presbytery leader) was our key note speaker as we formally launched our presbytery's new organizational design. Many still remember her skit which related to what/who was driving our congregation's organizational bus ... who/what was in the driver's seat (i.e Vision, Relationships, Structure, or Goals/plans). Also at the meeting, Debbie shared with us material that many sessions used over the next year called: The Journey (note - that eventually became a book many congregations and church leaders have used).

Five years later, as we continue in our Presbytery's focus on "things that make for vital, alive, and growing congregations", we have invited Debbie back to be with us at the February 22 Presbytery Meeting at First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota. We are encouraging every session to have at least 2-4 current ruling elders who are on the session, in addition to the regular elder commissioners, to come and be part of the workshop Debbie will be doing as a part of our meeting. Also, for worship, we will have a mass choir as well as the group *First Brass* in worship leadership. More details to follow.

... FROM the PRESBYTERY OFFICE ...

1. Clerks of Session or Church Offices, please send your updated list of Ruling Elders to Lori (lori@peacriverpresbytery.org), to be included in the Presbytery's newsletter email distribution list. Include name, email address, and class.
2. Clerks of Session and Church Offices, the deadline for lunch reservations for the Stated Meeting of Presbytery will be Thursday, February 15th. Please remind your Elder Commissioners, other Elders, and Staff of this reservation deadline. Lunch details will be published soon.
3. The *Presbytery Directory* (formerly *Handbook*) is being updated for 2018. As soon as it is completed, Lori will send notification to you with the link to the Directory on the web site.
4. The next Stated Meeting of Presbytery will be held on Thursday, February 22, at First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota. A mass, combined choir will be featured! Watch for an invitation to your choir and details from Rev. Bill Teng, PRP Planning Team Moderator.

BETH-EL FARMWORKER MINISTRY, INC.

A Ministry to the Farmworkers in Wimauma

www.beth-el.org

Beth-El
Farmworker Ministry, Inc.

PO Box 860 | Wimauma, FL 33598

Phone: 813-633-1548 ext. 223

Web: www.beth-el.org

[January Newsletter](#)

*Beth-El is looking for donations of furniture for its office and dental clinic.
Please contact their office if you have desks, tables, or bookcases.*

CEDARKIRK CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

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

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.

MISION PENIEL

A Ministry of Peace River Presbytery to the Farmworkers in Immokalee

www.misionpeniel.com

OPEN HOUSE 2018 (click for details)

Sunday, February 11, 2018

Staff Contacts:

- Rev. Miguel Estrada, Pastor, P: 239-633-2181, E: migustrada@hotmail.com
- Ruth DeYoe, Mission Coordinator, P: 386-793-6151, E: ruthdeyoe@gmail.com
- General Email: 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:**

- 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.

PRAYER NEEDS

Please continue to pray for:

- Rev. Dr. Jim Berger and Family, in the loss of his 97-year old father, Robert Berger.
- The communities affected by the winter storms.
- Rev. Dr. Bruce Porter and Family, in the loss of his sister.
- Rev. Dr. Daniel Pendergrass and Family, in the loss of his wife, Kathy.
- Jim and Becky Beckwith, and their son, Greg – health
- Rev. Dr. Lou Thompson – health
- Phil Kuehl (husband of Rev. Elizabeth Kuehl, Faith, Cape Coral) – health
- Robert Dennis (son of Rev. India Dennis) – mental health issues

- The communities, across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, recovering from the hurricanes and fires
- 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: JANUARY 2018:

January 7	<u>Peace River Presbytery</u> 37 Congregations and 131 Ministers
January 14	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Arcadia</u> Pastor: Rev. Bill Teng Email: pastor@FirstPC.church
January 21	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Bonita Springs</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Doug Pratt Email: dpratt@fpcbonita.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Steven Grant Email: sgrant@fpcbonita.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Bradley Rogers Email: brogers@fpcbonita.org
January 28	<u>Braden River Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u> Pastor: Rev. Glenn Buzbee, Jr. Email: revglennb@gmail.com

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2018

You may view the entire calendar on the Presbytery web site: www.peaceriverpresbytery.org

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

Thursday, January 18

Steering Committee (9:30 a.m.)

Thursday, January 25

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

Thursday, February 1

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

Monday, February 5

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

Planning Team (1:00 p.m.)

Thursday, February 8

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

Sunday, February 11

**Open House – Mision Peniel (2:00-4:30 p.m. in Immokalee)

Tuesday, February 13

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

Wednesday, February 14

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

Thursday, February 15

Steering Committee (9:30 a.m.)

Deadline: Lunch Reservations for Stated Meeting of PRP

Thursday, February 22

Stated Meeting of Presbytery at First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota

CHURCHES of PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

Please visit our web site, www.peacriverpresbytery.org/churches

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



