



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



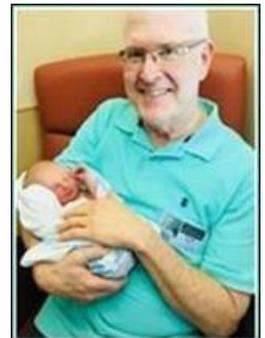
Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ March 8, 2018

Peace River's Annual Report: as a Half-Time Locker Room Conversation

This is the time of year businesses and organizations offer the traditional annual report. Using a sports analogy, an annual report could be understood as a half-time exercise. In the locker-room during half-time a team quickly looks back at the first half, talks about what went well, and what needs to change. Sometime the coaching staff calls for radical adjustments. Half-time is not long, but long enough for a team to recalibrate the game plan, to finish the game strong and well.

An annual report provides that same opportunity for a church or presbytery to collectively look back, do some reflection, and look ahead with anticipation and hope. My friends, the game Peace River Presbytery and each congregation is called to live and play, if I could be so simplistic, is "loving the world that God so loves in Christ." That game is far from over. There is much work to do. This Presbytery and each member, pastor, elder and congregation has a small, never the less important, role to play. At our recent Presbytery meeting, I shared with the Presbytery my half-time talk and reflections, which I have attached for you. I am grateful for what we have been able to do, how God is at work, and what is yet to become ... [Click here](#) for those reflections.

On a personal note: On February 24th, our youngest daughter, Katie, and her husband, Matt, welcomed into the world Eleanor Hartley McCausey. She is a beautiful baby, but I am not biased! Katie and Matt recently moved back to Sarasota which, for Linda and me, makes her birth an extra special blessing since we can be an active part of her life.



So, as we look back and look ahead, I am...

Grateful to our God... Who is the Wind in our Sails... and the Rudder to Guide us along the Way!

Graham Hart

General Presbyter

Peace River

Presbytery

graham@peacriverpresbytery.org

Thanks to members of First Sarasota for hosting our February Stated Meeting of Presbytery!



At the meeting, we approved a partnership covenant with Matanzas Presbytery in Cuba. Rev. Ary Fernandez preached and, while with us, met with members of churches in Peace River interested in a partnership with a congregation in Matanzas Presbytery. [Click here](#) to link to the partnership agreement.

Also, at the meeting Debbie Rundlett led us in a workshop on Incarnational Leadership and organizational health. [Click here](#) to download her presentation.



Board of Pensions - Benefits Connections: Tampa

Who Should Attend?

If you are responsible for benefits decisions and managing benefits or work with those who are this day is for you!

Registration is open to anyone who would like to attend.

Why Attend?

Learn about theological values that shape the Benefits Plan. Preview changes for 2019. Ask questions of Board of Pensions leadership and staff. Meet other benefits decision-makers in your area. Participate in a panel discussion with your peers.

You'll gain a better understanding of the plan, new peer relationships, and new strategies for being the best employer you can be. Take away suggestions and solutions for churches of all sizes — small and large.

When

Wednesday, April 18, 2018

Where

The Westshore Grand – Tampa
<http://www.cvent.com/d/ktqt8s>

ARTICLES of INTEREST

(selected by Graham Hart)

[Could there be another Billy Graham?](#)

The Conversation: Current trends suggest that evangelicalism is out of step with younger Americans. But, a scholar says, evangelicalism has been here before.

[What does faith have to do with sports? A lot, it turns out](#)

ARDA: Philosophers and ethicists are directing their lofty attention to the connection among sports, faith and the common good.

[A rabbi, an imam and a pastor walk onto a stage...](#)

The Economist: How three men of different beliefs are advocating religious tolerance.

[One way to get people to church on Sunday: Give away free cars](#)

The Washington Post: Randomly giving away cars to people who show up to worship demonstrates God's unbelievable, no-strings-attached goodness, pastor says. And it sure helps get people in the door on a [Sunday morning](#).

[Newlyweds church group still together after 64 years](#)

Associated Press: A newlyweds group from the First United Methodist Church in Sioux Falls is still together after 64 years.

[Responding to American Christianity's obsession with youth](#)

Religion News Service: In an interview, Andrew Root discusses how American Christians can understand and respond to our obsession with youth.

['Anticipatory mourning': America's youth on death, guns and dissent](#)

Baptist News Global: For the church, if ever a gospel of Christian hope was needed in American society it is now, Bill Leonard says.

[Sojourners: Churches must follow students' lead on #ThoughtsPrayersAction](#)

[#MeToo reaches Vatican as magazine hits out at clergy's exploitation of nuns](#)

The (London) Telegraph: A Vatican magazine has denounced how nuns are often treated like indentured servants by cardinals and bishops, for whom they cook and clean for next to no pay.

[Billy Graham's Christian Right?](#)

History News Network: Is modern Christian conservatism the product of Graham's politicking or a repudiation of his values? Perhaps it is a mix of both.

[The hopeful, ordinary Catholicism of Lady Bird](#)

Religion & Politics: Lady Bird, Greta Gerwig's directorial debut, is a different kind of Catholic film.

[Billy Graham warned against embracing a president. His son has gone another way.](#)

The New York Times: Evangelicals like the Rev. Franklin Graham are locked in a tight embrace with the president and the Republican Party. Some are now asking if the movement has gone astray.

[As religious practice declines, religious charities scramble for resources. Here's what that means](#)

Deseret News: In recent months, calls for help have piled up. But it's becoming harder for religious groups to answer them.

[Antisemitic incidents in US soar to highest level in two decades](#)

The (London) Guardian: Largest year-on-year increase since 1979 comes as Trump administration is accused of failing to condemn bigotry.

[How a theologian from the past can help us confront our 'cultural disintegration'](#)

Religion News Service: Here is Martin Marty's favorite analysis of "cultural disintegration," by a theologian who points to four signs.

MISION PENIEL

A Ministry of Peace River Presbytery to the Farmworkers in Immokalee

www.misionpeniel.com

Staff Contacts:

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

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

[March 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)

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.

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 or 703.899.0725.

PRAYER NEEDS

Please continue to pray for:

- The Community of Parkland, FL
- Rev. Susan Rice – health and treatment for cancer

- Jim and Becky Beckwith, and their son, Greg – 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: MARCH 2018:

March 4	<u>Palma Sola Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u> Pastor: Rev. India Dennis Email: pspcpastor@verizon.net
March 11	<u>Cedarkirk Camp & Conference Center</u> Executive Director: Rev. John Reiter Email: john@cedarkirk.org
March 18	<u>Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u> Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. John Wintringham Email: friartuk@wcc.net
March 25	<u>Faith Presbyterian Church, Cape Coral</u> Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. H Timothy Halverson Email: tim@fpcfl.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Kuehl Email: elizabeth@fpcfl.org

KENNETH BAILEY RESOURCES

Rev. Dr. Margaret Towner has a set of Kenneth Bailey's study lectures on "Jesus and Women" and "Presbyterian History", produced by Harvest Publishing, that she would like to give to a church or group who would use them. They are short, 20-30 minute lectures by Bailey, with time for discussion. If interested, please contact Dr. Margaret E. Towner, margtet@comcast.net or 941-924-4413.

CHURCH SUPPORT STAFF OPENINGS

First Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte:

[Church Secretary](#)
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Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda:

[Organist/Primary Accompanist](#)  
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Faith Presbyterian Church, Cape Coral:
[Graphic Designer and Marketing Coordinator](#)

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: MARCH 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, March 8

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

Tuesday, March 13

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

Wednesday, March 14

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

Thursday, March 15

Steering Committee (9:30 a.m.)

Thursday, March 22

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

Thursday, March 29

Maundy Thursday

Friday, March 30

Good Friday – Presbytery Offices Closed

CHURCHES of PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

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

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



