



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ February 28, 2019

~ Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers ~

The Mission of Agriculture...

One of the exciting things that has happened in the life of Covenant Presbyterian Church can only be described as our *agricultural missions*. In the past few years, this has happened in two distinct ways.

- 1. Planting Olive Trees and Harvesting Olives in Palestine.** Beginning in 2014, groups of 10-15 Presbyterians from Covenant, along with PC(USA) members from around the nation, have been traveling to Palestine for the purpose of engaging in olive tree planting and olive picking in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). We have alternated between planting and picking every year and a half since, with tree planting in February and olive harvest in October. Our congregation has participated in four of these trips so far, and we are planning another planting trip for February 2020. Our groups have joined with an international team of planters and pickers from the U.K., Europe, and even Australia. The program, known as the Joint Advocacy Initiative (JAI) is under the direction of the East Jerusalem and Beit Sahour (Shepherd's Field) YMCA and YWCA. Because Palestinian farmers are often prevented from working their own fields in the West Bank by illegal settlers and the Israeli military, this international presence assures that the work will be completed (approximately 40-50 planters, and upwards of 120 harvesters each year) and families will continue in their livelihood. Whether it is planting or harvesting, each task is exhausting and dirty in its own unique way, and we spend over a week in the fields accomplishing this work. Different farm families apply to the JAI for this assistance and the program makes its determination about how many it can help in any given year. Trees to be planted are donated by both churches and secular organizations from around the world. Olives are sent off to presses to become oil. But we do not simply work. We have fellowship with Palestinian farm families, eat lunch prepared by them in the fields or in their homes, and listen to their stories. We have worked in the fields of both Palestinian Christian and Muslim families, finding this to be a mission in which we have been ministered to by them in powerful ways.



2. **“Together We Grow” Garden and Misiòn Peniel.** With the excellent guidance of two Covenant members who served as agricultural missionaries in Thailand and elsewhere for many years, our church now has a unique garden that grows food that is well-loved by migrant worker families in Immokalee. About twenty church members helped clear a section of our church lot and prepare the ground. They planted Pigeon Pea, Cassava, Malanga, Banana, Papaya, Mango and Avocado and have recently been harvesting items to bring to our presbytery’s mission in Immokalee to share with the locals on distribution Fridays. The named produce is an important part of the regular diet of locals, which they cannot find at the farmers’ market or in grocery stores. In addition, the two members at Covenant, Ellen and Rick Burnette, began a nonprofit known as “Cultivate Abundance” which is dedicated to establishing food security, most especially for farmworker families in the Immokalee area. This has expanded to establishing a garden at the Misiòn Peniel site, as well as helping other churches in our presbytery and in other denominations establish their own gardens. In addition, Cultivate Abundance has been helping families in Immokalee create their own “container gardens” where they can produce needed food items in the tight spaces where they reside.



Whether it has been across the world, or right in our own backyard, Covenant Presbyterian Church has been excited about missions that involve the economic well-being and food security of people who live on the fringes of the agricultural societies in which they find themselves!

~ Rev. Dr. Jeff DeYoe, Pastor
[www. covpcfm.com](http://www.covpcfm.com)

Each week, the newsletter will feature a congregation, covenant partner, or ministry of Peace River Presbytery. To learn even more, please visit the church or ministry web sites.

**THANK YOU!
 FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of SARASOTA
 for hosting the
 STATED MEETING of PRESBYTERY
 on Thursday, February 28, 2019**

Your staff and volunteers were very gracious and welcoming and everyone had a great time!

UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND the PRESBYTERY:

Sunday, March 3, 2019

[Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch - Dedication Service](#)

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**Sunday, March 10, 2019, 3:00 p.m.**

**Ordination Commission Service**

for Lynne Peter

Oak Pointe Church, Bradenton

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March 15-17, 2019

[Association of Smaller Congregations](#)

[Reclaiming Vitality: “7 Biblical Marks of Vital Small Churches”](#)

Epworth-by-the-Sea, St. Simon’s Island, GA

*Registration Deadline: Thursday, February 22nd

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**Monday, April 1-Tuesday, April 2, 2019**

[PRP Presbyterian Women’s Retreat](#)

Day Spring Conference Center, Ellenton

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Tuesday, April 30, 2019

[Faith Place Safety Seminar](#)

Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda

*Registration Deadline: Monday, April 22nd

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

[February 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

Facebook: "Misión Peniel"

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

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.

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.

PRAYER NEEDS

Please continue to pray for:

- Rev. Dr. Valerie Bell - health
- Jim and Becky Beckwith - health
- 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 2019

March 3

Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jeffrey DeYoe

Email: jdeyoe@covpcfm.com

March 10	<u>Christ Church of Longboat Key</u> Stated Supply Pastor: Rev. Dr. Norman Pritchard Email: revnmp@comcast.net
March 17	<u>Faith Presbyterian Church, Cape Coral</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Halverson Email: tim@fpcf.org
March 24	<u>Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood</u> Pastor: Rev. Dawn Mayes Email: revdawnmayes@gmail.com
March 31	<u>First Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Craig Goodrich Email: craig@fpcnaples.org Associate Pastor: Rev. Rex Childs Email: rexc@fpcnaples.org

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: MARCH 2019

*You may view the entire calendar on the Presbytery web site: www.peaceriverpresbytery.org
Please email corrections or additions to lori@peaceriverpresbytery.org*

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

Sunday, March 3

Peace Presbyterian Church Sanctuary Dedication Service (4:00 p.m. at Peace, Lakewood Ranch)

Monday, March 4

Nominations Committee - Go-To-Meeting Video Call (2:45 p.m.)

Thursday, March 7

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

Monday, March 11

Restructure Task Force - Go-To-Meeting Video Call (12:45-5:00 p.m.)

Tuesday, March 12

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

Wednesday, March 13

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

Thursday, March 14

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

Friday, March 15-Sunday, March 17

Association of Smaller Churches: "Reclaiming Vitality" (St. Simons, GA)

Thursday, March 21

Steering Committee (9:00 a.m.)
Congregational Vitality Team (12:30 p.m.)

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.

