



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Weekly Presbytery Letter ~ April 12, 2019

Buckingham Presbyterian Church Fort Myers



Buckingham Presbyterian Church enjoys Sharing God's Love through Fellowship, Ministry and Worship. Sunday morning is centered on serving God through inspiring worship, biblical preaching, moving music and weekly celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We serve many winter visitors who come back year after year. When new people come to our church for the first time many of them tell us, "We knew after our first Sunday with Buckingham Presbyterian Church that this would be our church."

BPC, like many congregations in Peace River Presbytery and the PCUSA, conducts a Kirkin' O' the Tartans with a bagpiper and after that service have a special Fellowship menu of Scottish goodies. Everyone is encouraged to wear their tartan which they wear as kilts, bow ties, scarfs, and other attire.



Holy Week always includes the proclamation of the Entrance into Jerusalem followed by children processing with palms to music and a BBQ dinner following worship plus a moving Maundy Thursday service preparing for Easter. The annual outdoor Easter Sunrise service is very popular as it is always scheduled for the congregants to see the sun rise behind

Pastor Randy, proclaiming the Good News that Jesus is risen! For Christmas, our very talented music director composed our Christmas Cantata which the choir presented (a music company is currently considering publishing it). BPC has an annual Pet Blessing. Multiple times each year a Healing and Wholeness Service is conducted, including at least one in the prayer garden (right picture).



We also have very active Christian Education and Fellowship programs. One is Wednesday Night Connection, dinner followed by Bible study (Pastor Randy taught *Other Gospels: Judas and Peter* during Lent). *The Daring Damsels* group is composed of widows who have a monthly event including a meal and an activity at various locations. A monthly Men's Breakfast takes place at The Mix Grill (they donate 10% of every check on which people write the name of the church, for every visit any day) offering discussion regarding how to live out our faith in the world.



BPC Mission programs transform lives in the community. We sponsor/mentor Tice Elementary School in Fort Myers (over 95% of their families live below the poverty level). At Christmas, their teachers select fifty students who come from the poorest of the families for which we wrap two presents for each child, one clothing and another a toy, providing them with a little Christmas joy. Our Stitch 'N Stuff sewing ministry starts their Pre-K students in the fall with handmade quilts to be used for nap time and then the children get to take them home after the school year. We also conduct an "Undie Sunday" program supplying backpacks, underwear, socks, shoes and school supplies. At Easter, BPC supplies fifty (some years more) dinners, complete with a ham for the families to enjoy a nice meal on this important Christian occasion.

Each of the last four years BPC has sent ten Tice children to Cedarkirk Summer Camp for a week (that's 40 young lives transformed to date). One of the children, "Andrew", had difficulty socially and performed poorly academically. After his summer camp experience he is a different person and graduates this year from Tice fifth grade as an honor student who now has friends and greets everyone he sees.



Another outreach to the community occurs through serving as a testing site annually for the International Baccalaureate program of Riverdale High School. Other community outreach includes hosting homeowner association meetings, serving as a polling site for elections, and serving as host site for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (the first congregation in the state of Florida to ever do so—a congregation in Florida Presbytery decided to become the second in Florida after Hurricane Michael because of the experience we shared with them).



A significant community outreach is the very popular Buckingham World Famous Fish Fry. Most of the congregants participate to make these events happen! They are an outreach (several members first came to BPC for a fish fry), a fellowship event for both the community and the congregation, a mission event (the fish fry leftovers, including homemade desserts, are delivered to a local soup kitchen where they feed the homeless who really appreciate receiving special food), and least of all (but also importantly) a fund raiser.

As do many of our Peace River Presbytery Churches, we make weekly donations of food, clothing, shoes, socks, blankets, etc. to Mision Peniel and work at their Friday Night dinners. We also use our "3 cents a meal" collections to supply them with beans and rice throughout the year.

Our Stitch 'N Stuff team donates over 5,000 handmade items each year to organizations such as Hope Hospice, Page Rehabilitation, Exceptional Student School and red, white and blue quilts to our veterans. They also have a very busy Prayer Shawl Ministry. We make cash donations to two of the Guardian Ad Litem programs as well as always participate in One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost, Peace Making and Christmas Joy offerings. BPC was a major contributor to the new Presbyterian Pastor Assistance Fund with donations of over \$11,000.00.

--Stan Bucher, Clerk of Session

*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.*

IMPORTANT!

[Faith Place Safety Seminar](#)

Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda

Tuesday, April 30, 2019, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

***Registration Deadline: Monday, April 22nd**

Required (COM Policy) to attend: Members of Presbytery, Ministerial Candidates and Inquirers

Also should attend: Pastors, Staff and Elders with roles in Christian Education and Personnel.

Please click on link above for more information.

NEXT STATED MEETING of PRESBYTERY

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples

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**OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND the PRESBYTERY:**

**Tuesday, April 30, 2019**

**[Faith Place Safety Seminar](#)**

Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda

**\*Registration Deadline: Monday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>**

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Wednesday, May 22, 2019

[POAMN Regional Conference](#)

St. Leo, FL

NOTICE – PCUSA PLANNING CALENDARS

The PCUSA Store is changing the format of the Planning Calendars to be a 16-month, rather than 18-month format to be more in line with the church calendar.

The calendars for 2019-2020 will begin with September 2019 (instead of June) and go through December 2020.

Orders will not be shipped from PCUSA until August 2019.

Church Offices and Clerks of Session, please watch for an email from Lori (PRP Office) within the next two weeks with the Order Form for Calendars.

If you order through the Presbytery Office, you receive a pass through discount because of the bulk order that the Presbytery Office places.

Questions? Please contact lori@peacriverpresbytery.org

Letter To Graham Hart from Rev. Dr. Jim Berger ...

Every Executive Presbyter is a controversial figure. People love you, and people hate you. It's a prerequisite of the job. "Welcome to Florida! Here's who wants to see you, and here's who wants you fired." Another day on the job.

In 2001, Dr Graham Hart arrived as the GP for Peace River Presbytery, and brought an extraordinary vision for new churches. Under his leadership the New Church Development Committee launched the Estero NCD, and the North Collier NCD. Then Peace Presbyterian Church NCD. A Brazilian NCD in Collier County, Christ Church Longboat Key,

and First Sarasota had a Hispanic congregation growing in its midst. We were looking at opportunities in northwest Cape Coral, Parrish, and around Venice. When I attended the national conference I discovered we were the only presbytery with 5 NCDs! Plus we had 3 discovery groups exploring more new churches.

Fast forward to today. The recession and immigration reforms hit us hard. Ministries with immigrant populations were gutted by deportations, loss of work and self-deportations. Graham held our hands through it all. Multiple hurricanes, multiple disasters, medical crises, retirements, relocations, and congregational transitions. And we're still here.

For three of us, our congregations are our legacy to the presbytery and to Christ's church. For the other pastors, he assisted them in their transitions. Graham doesn't let anyone down, and he doesn't leave anyone behind.

Few EPs can say they launched 3 new churches, and have more worshipping communities growing in their presbytery. Even fewer have overseen 3 racial-ethnic NCD's, sponsored Mision Peniel and co-sponsored Beth-El Farmworkers Ministries, established mission connections with churches in Guatemala and Cuba. Graham can.

Personally, we've had our disagreements and our conflicts, but we've worked through them. Now that you're accepting your pension, I wish you a year of rest and reflection. You'll be surprised at how much you like retirement, and how much you need it. You'll also be surprised at how fast you forget names. And issues.

After all we've shared through 17 years, I'm glad you've been my EP. And my friend. Enjoy your retirement, your rewards and your new title. Rev Dr Graham Hart, HR.

Your friend,
Rev Dr Jim Berger, HR

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

[April 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: migustrada@hotmail.com
- Ruth DeYoe, Mission Coordinator, P: 386-793-6151, E: ruthdeyoe@gmail.com
- General Email: misionpenielpeacriver@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

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT

Do you enjoy working with children and youth? Do you love playing and worshipping in the beauty of nature? Are you seeking to hear what God is calling you to do this summer – and beyond? Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center invites young adults at least one year beyond their high school graduation to consider serving as part of our 2019 Summer Staff. Visit www.cedarkirk.org/summer/employment to learn more about our life-changing summer community and how you might serve.



SUMMER CAMP CHANGES LIVES!

Are you looking for a summer program for your child that will provide him or her with opportunities for spiritual, physical, and social growth? Cedarkirk offers small-group, residential camp programs that allow children and youth to explore, learn, and just be themselves. Besides being fun, summer camps help kids: improve confidence and self-esteem; learn a new skill; improve critical thinking and decision-making abilities; experience the wonder of the natural world; learn to live and work as part of a community; and connect with God in a place where earnest discussions and honest dialogue allow them to make their faith their own. Send your camper to Cedarkirk this summer to discover how a single summer can last a lifetime! Visit www.cedarkirk.org for program dates, details, and registration.

*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.

POAMN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

(Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network)

[“Engaging Aging in Today’s World”](#)

May 22, 2019 in St. Leo, FL

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

[Building and Maintenance Worker – First, Port Charlotte](#)

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: APRIL 2019

April 7	<u>Rev. Graham Hart</u> Email: graham@peacriverpresbytery.org
April 14	<u>Buckingham Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Randy Moody Email: bpcpastor@comcast.net
April 21	<u>Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center</u> Executive Director: Rev. John Reiter Email: john@cedarkirk.org
April 28	<u>Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bradenton</u> Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. John Wintringham Email: friartuk@wcc.net

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: APRIL 2019

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

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

Thursday, April 18

Steering Committee (9:00 a.m.)

Friday, April 19

Good Friday (Presbytery Offices Closed)

Sunday, April 21

Easter

Monday, April 22

Registration Deadline for Faith Place Safety Seminar (April 30)

Tuesday, April 30

Faith Place Safety Seminar (9:00 am-1:00 pm at Burnt Store Presbyterian Church)

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.

