



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Presbytery Newsletter ~ May 23, 2019

PCUSA Mission Co-Workers Daniell and Elizabeth Turk Serving in Madagascar



The Ivato seminary campus is especially beautiful as the rains have turned the campus into a green haven. The four-story seminary building constructed last year to commemorate FJKM's 50th anniversary and the 200th anniversary of the first missionaries' arrival in Madagascar is an impressive reminder of FJKM's commitment to prepare more pastors to serve the growing church. The Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM), the PC(USA)'s partner church, is the largest protestant denomination in Madagascar, with over 6000 churches but fewer than 2000 pastors.

We are grateful as we reflect on the FJKM's desire to spread the Gospel by equipping their pastors with the ability to minister to the whole person. With over 80% of Madagascar's population living in poverty, pastors have to be prepared to meet a variety of needs when they go out to serve. In addition to traditional seminary coursework, FJKM seminary students study many non-traditional subjects like AIDS prevention, ministering to the homeless, as well as gardening and fruit tree production. We have been directly involved in some of these courses through our work with the Fruits, Vegetables, and Environmental Education (FVEE) project and the FJKM AIDS Committee. These trainings help pastors deal with real-world problems that their congregations face: not enough food, crops that fail, diagnosis with AIDS, among others. My recent experience with Pastor Clara Ranorosoahanitra who graduated in 2012 shows how these trainings can really make a difference to pastors and those they serve.

"I passed the test," Pastor Clara shared with church members who were attending the training in grafting that the FVEE project was conducting for her churches in rural Madagascar. My colleagues and I had come to the FJKM church in Ambalafeno east of Ambositra at Pastor Clara's request to help plant trees and do training in raising worms and grafting peach and nectarine trees. This is part of FVEE's new program to plant native and fruit trees at 50 churches per year. I explained to church members that we teach student pastors how to grow and propagate fruit trees, but we don't expect all of them to get interested — after all, their chosen specialty is theology and pastoral studies. Their pastor, I explained, was one of the ones who really got interested and adopted tree planting as part of her ministry. Then Pastor Clara stood up and explained that she "passed the test" because when she learned how to graft while in seminary, the peach tree she grafted grew successfully.

It took a while for Pastor Clara to get this level of confidence. She received the fruit tree and native tree training during her last year of seminary at Ivato. After graduating from seminary, Pastor Clara received 10

fruit trees to plant at her first church, as did the other graduating pastors. She planted the trees at her first post near Soavinandriana in central Madagascar. She pastored there for six years. However, after being robbed by armed thieves three times in their home with their children present, Pastor Clara and her husband Fetra (also a pastor) asked to be transferred to new posts.



In January, we met Pastor Clara at the FJKM New Year's worship service, and she asked if the FVEE project could work with her two new churches. So on March 1 at 5:20 in the morning, my colleagues Rolland Razafiarison and Germain Andrianaivoson and I, along with Pastor Clara, set out from Ambositra with a bag of worms, about 70 peach rootstocks, and bottles containing peach and nectarine scions. It took us almost four hours to drive the 26 miles from Ambositra to Pastor Clara's main church. When we arrived, we were warmly greeted by 48 members from both churches who had come to be trained. We began with a worship service in which Rolland preached from Ezekiel 36:30, "I will increase the yield of your fruit trees and your fields, so that there will be no more famines to disgrace you among the nations."

After the sermon, we divided the 48 trainees into three groups: Rolland led the training on raising worms, Germain led the training on grafting peaches and nectarines while I helped members plant fruit trees and native trees around the church. We rotated twice so everyone got a chance to take part in all three activities. Among the trees we planted were several species of native palms, a jaboticaba, a grafted nectarine, a longan, a litchi, and several varieties of citrus.

To provide follow-up for church trainings such as the one in Ambalafeno, we are developing a new program to have volunteer technicians at the synod level. They will visit churches and follow up with community members after we do trainings. We will train the volunteers and give them mother trees so that they can set up their own tree nurseries and thus gain experience and income while being available to help the synod with tree-planting and propagation activities.

Seeing Pastor Clara take what she learned about fruit trees in seminary and bring this knowledge to a second set of churches was very inspiring. The communities she is serving now are very poor. If people can gain some income from growing grafted trees, this will improve their families' lives. Fruits from the trees planted around the church may one day help pay part of the pastor's salary. Often, rural churches do not have enough money to pay their pastors. So pastors go without, and some eventually have to move on to new churches where they can earn enough to support their families. For seven years, Pastor Clara has been sharing what she learned about fruit trees with her church members — a very tangible way to share God's love.

Thank you very much for your support for our ministry with the FJKM church in Madagascar and for helping train pastors like Clara who are living out the Gospel in their communities. Without your ongoing prayers and financial support, these ministries would not be possible.

Peace in Christ,
Dan & Elizabeth

YOU ARE INVITED
to the
ORDINATION and INSTALLATION SERVICE
for **William Jordan**
Sunday, May 26, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.
Lely Presbyterian Church, Naples

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY WELCOMES:

Rev. Ralph "Tom" Brackbill (HR)

Tom is a life-long Christian and Presbyterian. He was born and raised in a Pastor's family in New Jersey, graduated from Maryville (TN) College (1975) and Princeton (NJ) Seminary (1980). Tom was ordained in 1980, and has pastored churches in Warner Robins, GA, Millerstown, PA, Bernardsville, NJ, Ross, OH, and Alma, MI. He retired on December 1, 2018. The PCUSA runs in his family, with three cousins and a brother-in-law having been pastors. Tom now lives in Cape Coral full time, though he plans to spend occasional time in the summer up north in Michigan and Ohio.

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY CONGRATULATES:

- Rev. Helen Heffington, on her retirement.
- Mrs. Alicia Rowland, on her certification as a Certified Christian Educator.

PRESBYTERIAN PLANNING CALENDARS

Order Forms and Information about the Planning Calendars was emailed to Clerks of Session, Church Offices, and Church Pastors this week.

The Order Deadline through the Presbytery Office is Friday, June 14.

If you need additional information, please contact Lori Doyal at the Presbytery Office:

lori@peacriverpresbytery.org / 941-426-8421, ext. 401

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

[May Newsletter](#)



MISIÓN PENIEL

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

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

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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: 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 worshiping 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.

PRAYER NEEDS

Please continue to pray for:

- The General Presbyter Nominating Committee (GPNC)
- 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: MAY 2019

May 5	<u>Trinity Presbyterian Church, Venice</u> Pastor: Rev. Dr. Chuck Wiggins Email: cjw049@gmail.com
May 12	<u>Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples</u> Pastor: Rev. Rob Marrow Email: rmarrow@vpcnaples.org
May 19	<u>Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood</u> Pastor: Rev. Dawn Mayes Email: revdawnmayes@gmail.com

May 26

Daniell and Elizabeth Turk, PCUSA Mission Co-Workers

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR: MAY 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.

Monday, May 27

Memorial Day

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.

