



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Presbytery Newsletter ~ January 24, 2020

Dear Peace River Presbytery,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you about the needs of Misión Peniel, a critical mission ministry within the bounds of Peace River Presbytery.

Misión Peniel began in 2006 as an extension of the Beth-El farm worker ministry out of Wimauma, Florida, supporting farm workers with spiritual, emotional and material care - all with God's transforming love. In 2013 due to financial struggles, Beth-El made the decision to end its outreach in Immokalee. In response to a potential shutdown that would leave farm workers without the assistance Beth-El provided, Peace River Presbytery called a special meeting to discern whether or not it would assume the responsibility for total oversight and financial support of Misión Peniel. In August 2013 the churches that make up Peace River Presbytery voted to accept the responsibility for supporting Misión Peniel and its growing ministry to the farm worker community in Immokalee. Today, Misión Peniel continues to grow in the numbers of individuals and families it serves and in the type of assistance it can provide because of the support received from the churches of Peace River Presbytery.

Misión Peniel draws its name and purpose from the story in Genesis 32 where Jacob wrestled with God and called the place where he saw the face of God, "Peniel". The name "Immokalee" is the Seminole word for "my home". It is fitting then, that Misión Peniel has become not only a place where the face of God is shared, but through the kind of relationships built over the years, it is also a place where farm workers and their families feel "at home". Yes, we are their home!

This humble community of Immokalee, Florida is located in northeastern Collier County with a population of 30,000 that increases significantly at the peak of the growing season. Migrant and year round farm workers plant, harvest and process the food that we eat every day. These farm workers struggle with life-impacting issues such as low wages, health care expenses, dangerous working conditions (pesticides, high heat, long hours), dire living conditions, discrimination, exploitation and both physical and sexual abuse. Immokalee was ground zero for modern slavery until 2008. Housing for farm workers is primarily owned and controlled by a small group of Immokalee families who charge high rent for shoddy housing accommodations. The trailer park rental market is overpriced and unregulated. It is not uncommon for a small two-bedroom trailer in deplorable conditions to house 8-12 people. The important work our farm workers do combined with the unacceptable social and economic conditions they must endure is oppressive.

Misión Peniel has come a long way since it started but we continue to see the need and identify new ways to respond. We seek to follow the guidelines presented in Matthew 25. This growth has led us to strengthen our staff. In 2017 we hired a part-time mission coordinator (Ruth DeYoe). In 2019 Pastor Miguel Estrada returned to full-time work with the mission. Program and staff growth increased our budget to about \$200,000 per year. In 2019 we fell short of the needed income to meet our budget by \$29,300, which

required the use of reserve funds to pay all our expenses. *If we do not raise more money in the future, we could deplete our reserve funds in the next few years, which will jeopardize the future of Misión Peniel.*

How can you help? Commit to supporting your presbytery's mission in some way:

- If we are not in your church's mission budget, please prayerfully consider including us.
- If we are in your budget, THANK YOU for your ongoing commitment to our mission! Please help us to stay connected in any way we can. Your continued support is crucial to our future success.
- Invite us to visit you annually as part of your mission fair or at a special event or in worship.
- If you have a way to collect items from our needs list or would like to sponsor a special needs drive (backpacks, shoes, food, diapers, Christmas...) let us know.
- Encourage your church members to form a team of volunteers to serve at the mission a couple of times each year either on a Friday or for special midweek projects.
- Include Misión Peniel regularly in your prayers.
- Help us build a bridge to better communication between your church and the mission.

It is with thankful hearts that we remember the commitment that began in 2013 as our presbytery made a faith decision to continue this vital mission in Southwest Florida. We know the impact this has made on many lives throughout these years. Please know that we are always open to hearing from you and are happy to help interpret the importance of our ministry to your congregation in the ways that work best for you.

Peace and Grace,

Pastor Miguel Estrada, Misión Peniel
239-633-2181
miguestrada@hotmail.com

Peter Rodino, Co-Moderator, Misión Peniel Team
201-841-9977
pvrodino@aol.com



Around the Presbytery



Church of the Palms' Community Speaker Series will be on **Wednesday, January 29** at 6:30pm. The Guest Speaker will be Father Gregory Boyle, Jesuit Priest and the Founder of Homeboy Industries, the largest gang-intervention and rehabilitation program in the world. For more information, click on this link:

[Community Speaker Series: Father Gregory Boyle](#)

~~~~~

The Cuba Partnership trip is **February 6-11**. Please be in prayer for those who are traveling and for those they will meet in Cuba. The Presbytery has an opportunity to share in ministry with The Evangelical Reformed Theological Seminary in Matanzas by providing meals for students, faculty, staff, and some in the community. There is a \$7500 matching grant for each of the next three years. If you or your church would like to give toward this, please send the check to the presbytery marked for the Matanzas Seminary meal

fund. It would be wonderful if the group going over could assure the seminary that funds were available for 2020.

~~~~~

Did you know that there are several pastors in the presbytery who regularly participate in 5K/10K runs/walks? But, we've never done one all at the same time. So, we're inviting anyone who is interested to join us for the Robinson Preserve Twilight 5K/10K in Northwest Bradenton on **March 27th @ 5:30pm**. The cost is \$35 if you are registered by **January 27th**.

You can register here: <https://raceroster.com/events/2020/23043/robinson-preserve-twilight-5k-and-10k-run?fbclid=IwAR3aUth2ETeg-rp6zugY3--ttb5fddDikN6UThbQIPUNSSWGb2OE4ZLThVU>

Please contact Rev. Dr. Hope Lee or Rev. Terri Jo Crego if you have any questions. And, if you decide to register, please let Hope know at hope@kpcbrenton.org so we can organize a way to meet up at the event.

~~~~~



*~ Sunrise in Cuba ~*

~~~~~

If you have information you would like to share about your pastor or your church, please send an email to Lori Doyal, lori@peacriverpresbytery.org

~ SAVE the DATE ~

Stated Meeting of Peace River Presbytery

Thursday, February 27, 2020

Host Church: Church of the Palms, Sarasota

More information will be posted next week.

Presbytery Calendar: February 2020

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 noted.

Monday, February 3

Outreach and Nurture Team (1:00 pm)

Thursday, February 6-Tuesday, February 11

Cuba Partnership Trip

Wednesday, February 5

Interim Pastors (8:30 am – GoToMeeting)

Thursday, February 6

Mision Peniel Team (10:00 am in Immokalee)

Tuesday, February 11

Committee on Ministry (9:00 am)

Wednesday, February 12

Committee on Preparation for Ministry (10:00 am)

Cuba Partnership Task Force (3:00 pm – Conference Call)

Thursday, February 13

Finance Team/Board of Trustees (9:30 am)

Tuesday, February 18

Pastoral Care Team (11:00 am)

Communication, Connection, Community Team (2:00 pm)

Thursday, February 27

Stated Meeting of Presbytery (9:00 am at Church of the Palms)

Covenant Partners of Peace River Presbytery

Click on the links to visit each ministry's web site:

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry – Wimauma: www.beth-el.org

Mision Peniel Farmworker Ministry – Immokalee: www.misionpeniel.com

Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center: www.cedarkirk.org

Presbyterian Homes & Housing Foundation of FL: www.phhf.com

Prayer Needs

Please pray for:

- 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

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.



The Presbytery Newsletter is a weekly publication of Peace River Presbytery. If you wish to be unsubscribed from the distribution, or if you know someone who would like to receive the newsletter, please contact Lori Doyal at the Presbytery Office: lori@peacriverpresbytery.org or 941-426-8421, ext. 401.