



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Presbytery Weekly E-Newsletter ~ August 6, 2021

Wintergarden Presbyterian Church

Over the past few years, Wintergarden has been expanding our understanding of food insecurity in the Port Charlotte community. Although our food pantry has been providing food to the community for over 3 years, we recognized that there are structural barriers that are leading to the food insecurity that we see. Throughout this past year, we have had a growing need to feed more people in our community. Our pantry went from serving 45 families a week to over 260 families a week, now averaging 1,100 individuals every week. In addition, we now have almost 18 gardeners from the community and congregation who are growing their own food and providing food for their families. In order to address some of these structural barriers, such as lack of knowledge about gardening, nutrition, and cooking, we have been expanding our “Garden of Eatin’” to get to more of the root causes of food insecurity. We have also been learning how racism, mass incarceration, and affordable housing are connected to food insecurity as well. Because of this we have implemented more programs into our “Garden of Eatin’ that can help address some of the issues.

We have seen our garden expand into a food forest as we have planted over 30 fruit trees that when mature, will provide abundant nutritious produce for our food pantry recipients. In addition, if anyone is hungry who comes onto our property, they will be able to pick something to eat. However, there still exists the issue of many of our recipients not knowing what to do with produce from the food bank, garden, and food forest, so we are building partnerships to help grow in understanding of nutrition and skills in cooking. Namely, we have been working with the NUDGE program through the University of Florida Extensions Program. This program has given us the tools and resources to provide families with the benefits of fresh produce both through colorful, innovative boards during our pantry days, but also with informative fact sheets with nutrition benefits and recipes available on our website. The implementation of this program has definitely increased interest in produce and the recipes give our food pantry users tangible and delicious ways to enjoy fruits and vegetables. Additionally, in May, we started the “Faithful Families, Thriving Communities” program run through the Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County. This will implement weekly classes that will help families plan, shop for, and prepare healthy meals from a faith-based perspective. This class will continue in September 2021.

Beyond our work to spread healthy and sustainable behaviors to tackle the root causes of food insecurity, we have also been expanding programs elsewhere in our pantry and garden. For our Pantry, we have started the Care & Share program through our local food bank to provide monthly food boxes to our food insecure seniors. Additionally in our garden, we are doing bi-monthly “Lettuce Learn” classes for homeschool families so that we can introduce children and their parents to the benefits of gardening and plants while they are young. In the coming months, we plan to complete our sensory garden including a water feature and communal garden beds to grow fresh produce for the pantry. We hope this space can serve as a spiritual and relaxing place for our community.

As we think back to when we felt called to embrace our new mission and vision for our community, we truly didn't know where God would be taking us. Feeding people physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally in our community has been a huge undertaking for our small congregation, but we believe we are truly making a difference in the lives of our members, friends, volunteers, gardeners, and more.

From Hemal Patel, VISTA volunteer with Wintergarden Presbyterian Church

College and Young Adult Sunday - August 8, 2021

Please read and share the following information

provided by UKirk Collegiate Ministries:

[Letter from the UKirk Collegiate Ministries Association](#)

[Ways to Pray With and Support Young Adults](#)

Board of Pensions Benefits Webcast

To assist congregational decision-makers as they consider their benefits decisions for 2022, The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will host a one-hour webcast, **What's Possible? Strategies to Serve Better.**

Those interested may register either for Wednesday, August 25, 12:00 – 1:00pm ET or again on August 26, 3-4pm ET.

Information regarding the webcast content, as well as the registration link, may be found at <https://www.pensions.org/our-role-and-purpose/the-connectional-church/gatherings-for-congregations/church-benefits-webcast/>

T. Clark Simmons
Senior Church Consultant



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Peace River Presbytery Church Leadership Retreat

at

Cedarkirk Camp & Conference Center
Wednesday, November 17 and Thursday, November 18
Registration Deadline: Thursday, September 9, 2021

[Registration and Information Packet](#)

Includes:

Letter from the Communication, Connection, and Community Team
Registration Information and Schedule
Registration Form

Blessing Grants



Have you considered any new mission and ministry opportunities for your congregation?

Apply for a Blessing Grant to help fund your project or program.

Visit www.peaceriverpresbtery.org and download the information packet about Blessing Grants today.

Applications are due by September 1 but can be turned in by August 1

if you would like your information to be reviewed by our committee.

We look forward to learning more about how the Spirit is moving in your community!
We hope the funds available will help you move forward. - Outreach and Nurture Team



The
Outreach
FOUNDATION™

Cuba Appeal

Cubans are now experiencing the gravest economic crisis in 30 years. With food and medicine in short supply and available goods priced beyond the reach of most people, our Presbyterian family there (the Presbyterian

Reformed Church in Cuba) has an urgent need to assist its 60 congregations – most of which are found in small towns with few resources – to meet their basic needs.



In addition, when the Pediatric Hospital in Matanzas reached capacity at the end of June, our seminary partner there, the Evangelical Theological Seminary, was asked to open their large dorm to accommodate the overflow of children who were testing positive from Covid-19 and a family member for each child. This facility is now running at full capacity and, each day, the kitchen staff feeds 140 patients and medical personnel. Although the government supplies food, the seminary is needing to cover kitchen and cleaning staff plus utilities, such as water and electricity, which have both risen in cost by more than 130%.

In response, The Outreach Foundation is seeking support for our partners in Cuba to aid during this time of crisis.

The Outreach Foundation
381 Riverside Drive, Suite 110
Franklin, TN 37064

<https://www.theoutreachfoundation.org>

Visit the web site for information on how you can give to the “Cuba Emergency Appeal”.

Around the Presbytery

Position Openings:

**Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers
Spanish Pastor (Temporary Part-Time)**

[Job Posting](#)

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**First Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte  
Organist**

[Job Posting](#)

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**Siesta Key Chapel, Sarasota
Administrator**

[Job Posting](#)

[Position Description](#)

Music Director

[Job Posting](#)

[Position Description](#)

Lely Presbyterian Church, Naples

Music Director

[Job Posting](#)

Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers

Director of Christian Education

[Job Posting](#)

[Position Description](#)

Misión Peniel: a Ministry of Peace River Presbytery

Web Site: www.misionpeniel.org

As a mission of the Presbytery, we rely on the churches of Peace River Presbytery for 100% of our budget. Thank you for your faithful support of this presbytery ministry.

For the latest updates, visit us on Facebook (Mision Peniel), Instagram (misionpenielimmokalee) and subscribe to our quarterly newsletter via our website.

Contacts:

Rev. Miguel Estrada, Pastor – miguel@peacriverpresbytery.org

Ruth DeYoe, Mission Coordinator – ruth@peacriverpresbytery.org

Presbytery Calendar: August 2021

You may view the entire calendar on the Presbytery web site: www.peacriverpresbytery.org

Please email corrections or additions to lori@peacriverpresbytery.org

Thursday, August 5

- Mision Peniel Team (10:30 am by Zoom Conference)

Sunday, August 8

- College and Young Adult Sunday

Monday, August 9

- CCC Team (3:00 pm by Zoom Conference)

Tuesday, August 10

- Committee On Ministry (9:00 am by Zoom Conference)

Wednesday, August 11

- Committee on Preparation for Ministry (10:00 am by Zoom Conference)
- Human Resources Team (3:00 pm by Zoom Conference)
- Cuba Partnership Task Force (5:00 pm by Zoom Conference)

Thursday, August 12

- Finance Team (9:30 am by Zoom Conference)

Team, Committee, and other meetings are being conducted via Zoom Video Conference.
Please check the web site calendar regularly for additions or changes.

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
- Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center: www.cedarkirk.org
- Presbyterian Homes & Housing Foundation of FL: www.phhf.com

Prayer Needs

Please pray for:

- Rev. Eddie Bellis and Family – loss of his father

Rev. Bellis' address for cards is:

Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church

8260 Cypress Lake Drive | Fort Myers, FL 33919-5118

- Rev. Dr. Harry Schill – health
- Our Nation
- The Congregations and Pastors of Peace River Presbytery
- The people of Myanmar
- 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

Go to [Peace River Presbytery Churches](#)

to visit each of the church's web sites.



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.