



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Presbytery Weekly E-Newsletter ~ September 17, 2021

From the General Presbyter

Dear Friends,

This weekend Devon and I will be working with the volunteers for our Vital Congregations Initiative. We are very excited at the response we have received from several churches who are interested in engaging the 7 marks and discovering who God is calling them to be. Change is difficult, but also part of our growth as disciples.

Terri Jo Crego shared a story with me a couple weeks ago that she is using in her October newsletter article. I asked her if I could share it with you and she agreed.

~ *Melana*

OCTOBER 2021 PASTOR'S ARTICLE FOR THE BUZZ (from Rev. Terri Jo Crego)



For over 20 years...well...for over 30 years...well...for over 40 years+ I have played a G chord on my guitar the way my cousin taught me, placing my index finger on the second fret-fifth string; my middle finger on the third fret-sixth string; and my pinky or fourth finger on the third fret-first string. THAT is how you play a G chord! That is the ONLY way to play a G chord, right? It is! That is how “most” guitar kind of people play it and that is how I have played it for 40+ years. I don’t even have to THINK about it when the music calls for a G chord; I just play it. My fingers go into place automatically and naturally without any awareness of the cogs in my brain turning. Then somehow, the guitar sounds decent as the harmonic sounds that make up the chord are strummed.

Is there an activity in your life you just do so automatically and naturally, you aren’t even aware of any thought process taking place to make it happen? Playing some of the basic guitar chords are like that for me.

Playing some of the basic guitar chords are like that for me: automatic and natural...UNTIL... a guitar teacher and pro tries to teach me a new way to play it that will help me progress to be a better guitar player. Let me tell you...IT IS PAINFUL relearning a 40-year+ way of doing things. Now, not only are all the new things I was learning difficult, but also all the old things I thought I had mastered. There was a whole week that went by where I just held my guitar, frozen in my chair with this suddenly completely unfamiliar instrument in my

hands, not having a clue how to play it. And when I did thaw out a moment or two from my frozen state of mind, I played it with a new insecurity of what I thought I knew which now felt minimally, awkward. I even cried in the middle of one of my guitar lessons out of frustration (which brought back childhood piano lessons through which I cried a lot).

While I wouldn't say the new way of playing is automatic or natural yet, I have begun to see what my teacher is trying to get me to experience; I have begun to experience a noticeable difference in transitions between notes and my accuracy has increased, making the music that comes out of that instrument sound more promising. But wow, it is difficult (even painful) to learn a new way of doing things, especially when we have done them one way FOREVER. And, it is worth it. At least it will be.

At the end of October, we will celebrate Reformation Sunday – that Sunday we remember when a stubborn monk and towering thinker, Martin Luther, published his 95 theses or complaints against the Catholic Church and launched the Protestant Reformation, a momentous religious revolution whose consequences we still live with today. The Church changed and continues to change. The Presbyterian Church itself often has a subline that states: *Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda!* Reformed and Always Reforming! Even to this day, these ancient words are a rallying cry for Presbyterians and other Reformed Christians. It is a motto that reminds us of who we are and who we intend to be. We don't change for change's sake, singing the newest songs and using the newest toys and equipment. We don't even change ourselves. We change because we open ourselves up to God's constant leading in our lives, teaching us deeper ways to play the "G chords" in our ministry so we can reach out in deeper ways, faithful to God's leading and Word. We change, because we keep striving to live more faithfully as a church, recognizing we make mistakes sometimes, so strive to find ways to express the ministry we participate in and our very lives in more faithful ways. We open ourselves up to change, because our God is a living God, not bound to tradition or a contemporary context. It is exciting, though sometimes it means learning a new way, grounded upon the strength of 40 years+ (and much more).

I will keep pushing through this part of my guitar learning journey, because I am motivated to be the guitar player I believe I can be. I am sure there will be tough weeks as I learn new ways of playing. But I also have a great foundation – a foundation built over a lifetime upon which to build.

As we explore our future as God calls us to the next chapter of being the church God is leading us to be, we do so, building on a great foundation, faithfully venturing into the future, trusting God will make harmonic music through us as the Instrument of Christ in the world.

Blessings to you,
Pastor Terri Jo

Valuable and Important Meeting for Clergy on October 6th

Guest Speaker: Dr. Paul Simeone
VP-Medical Director of Behavioral Health at Lee Health
Clinical Assistant Professor, FSU College of Medicine.

Topic: Living, Learning & Growing In A Time of Great Unrest: A Brief View from the Frontlines

Date/Time: October 6, 2021, 12:00-1:30 pm

Where: Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church
8260 Cypress Lake Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33919

Cost: [Free. A boxed lunch will be provided. *Click here to reserve a meal and to confirm you are attending.*](#)

This may be one of the most important meetings we have had in years! COVID has hit us hard and the clergy are on the front lines helping others cope with the pandemic. This has created stress on the clergy and on those we work with day to day.

Dr. Simeone has a presentation that will help the clergy in clear and practical terms in helping themselves deal with the stress of the pandemic but also help clergy in helping others. It is fully expected that much of the socio-psychological fallout of the pandemic has yet to happen, so this is a meeting not to be missed as it will directly help you and those you serve!

Who is Dr. Paul Simeone?

Paul Simeone, Ph.D. is currently the VP-Medical Director of Behavioral Health at Lee Health, and Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Behavioral Sciences & Social Medicine, Florida State University College of Medicine.

Dr. Simeone received his M.A. in experimental psychology from Mount Holyoke College, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in clinical psychology from The Institute for Advanced Psychological Studies at Adelphi University in New York.

Dr. Simeone has a long list of qualifications including extensive work at Harvard and in Cambridge and is uniquely qualified to speak on the issues we are facing with COVID unrest.

Peace River Presbytery
Church Leadership Retreat

at

Cedarkirk Camp & Conference Center

Wednesday, November 17 and Thursday, November 18

Registration Deadline Extended To: Thursday, October 7, 2021

All are welcome!

[Registration and Information Packet](#)

Includes:

Letter from the Communication, Connection, and Community Team

Registration Information and Schedule

Registration Form

Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance (IFHA)

The Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance has purchased 10 acres of land on Lake Trafford Road in Immokalee, where it plans to build safe, affordable rental units for farmworker and other low income families in Immokalee. Approvals have been obtained and architectural and engineering plans are in progress.

Currently these close-knit families are living in dilapidated shacks and trailers, often with another family or single men in the same unit.

For more information and to learn how you can help, email: ifhaf1@comcast.net or go to the website: www.immokaleefairhousing.org, click on "Get Involved", and complete the contact form.

Haiti Earthquake

Information on the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Response

[Click to read the article.](#)

Around the Presbytery

Events:

Rev. Dr. Cleo LaRue Preaching Seminar

Saturday, October 16, 2021

Sponsored by Church of the Palms and Light of the World International Church

[Information Letter](#)

[Event Flyer](#)

In Need Of:

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church

is in need of an Advent Wreath and Stand.

If you have these items that you would be willing to give to or share with St. Paul's, please call Debbie at 941-426-2552.

Position Openings:

Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers

Spanish Pastor (Temporary Part-Time)

[Job Posting](#)

First Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte

Organist

[Job Posting](#)

Siesta Key Chapel, Sarasota

Music Director

[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@peaceriverpresbytery.org

Ruth DeYoe, Mission Coordinator – ruth@peaceriverpresbytery.org

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:

- Afghanistan, Haiti, Cuba, Myanmar, and all those affected by Hurricanes Ida and Nicholas
- Rev. Winston Lawson & Family, in the loss of his brother in Jamaica this week
- Graham & Linda Hart, in the loss of her stepfather, Al Knox, member of Church of the Palms
- Rev. Dr. Taylor Hill – health
- Rev. Dr. Harry Schill – health
- Our Nation
- The Congregations and Pastors of Peace River Presbytery
- 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.



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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.