

Peace River Presbytery

Stated Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2026

**United Presbyterian Church
Bradenton, FL**

Attendance

Teaching Elder Members Present

Scott Andrews	Melanie Kim-Hamill	Alex Regets
Steve Aguzzi	Jennifer Kirbas	Christopher Romig
Timothy Boggess	Paul Kirbas	Dino Rustin
William Browne	Michael Mansperger	Rebecca Schwandt
Lal Hmingliani Browne	Robert Marrow	Melana Scruggs
Rex Childs	Pam Masten	Ruth Smalt
Terri Jo Crego	Mary Beth McSwain	Sarah Sobeleski
Karla Dias	Ronald Miller	Lewis Trotter
Edward Dunn	Lynne Moffett	Gillian Weighton
Darryl Goldman	Randy Moody	Charles Wiggins
Aimee Goldmeyer	Kevin Morris	Holly Wildhack
Laurie Haas	Jay Mumper	Carolyn Wilson
Jonas Hayes	Conor Peters	
Scott Kenefake	Julia Piermont	

Temporary Members Present

Silvio Esteves
Matthew Shapton

Ruling Elder Commissioners Present

Janice Croley (Moderator)	Bill Kraft (Community/Englewood)
Steven Dear (Vice Moderator)	- (Community/Englewood)
John Warburton (COM)	- (Estero Community)
Mitzie McGavic- (1 st Arcadia)	- (Estero Community)
- (1 st Arcadia)	- (Buckingham)
Larry Christian-TCC Babcock Ranch	- (Buckingham)
Shawn Shapton-TCC Babcock Ranch	Richard Shafer (Covenant/Fort Myers)
Chris Dominik (1 st Bonita Springs)	- (Covenant/Fort Myers)
Glenn Korfhage (1 st Bonita Springs)	Marietta Meachem (Cypress Lake)
Matthew Wessendorf (1 st Bonita Springs)	Bill Stevens (Cypress Lake)
Margie Zenor (1 st Bonita Springs)	Uneeda Brewer (Peace)
Pamela Tuohey (Braden River)	Jason Bonafede (Peace)
Edward Tribe (Braden River)	- (First Lehigh Acres)
Paul Marziani (1 st Bradenton)	- (First Lehigh Acres)
Maggie Rieniets (1st Bradenton)	Dennis Piermont (Christ)
- (Kirkwood)	- (Christ)
- (Kirkwood)	Linda Gadkowski (First Naples)
- (Oak Pointe)	- (First Naples)
- (Oak Pointe)	Bonnie Hartley (Lely)
Ronald Dickerson (United)	Dinah Bampoe (Lely)
Donna Lesch (United)	- (Moorings)
Linda Ferguson (Faith)	- (Moorings)
Al Gross (Faith)	- (Vanderbilt)

Jack Tanner (Vanderbilt)
Janet Daly (Holy Trinity)
Vera Day (Holy Trinity)
- (St. Paul's)
-(St. Paul's)
Barbara Harrell (Palmetto)
Dale Harrell (Palmetto)
Claudette McLennon (First Port Charlotte)
Donna Young (First Port Charlotte)
-Wintergarden
-Wintergarden
Lois Gorman (Burnt Store)
Charmaine Ponkratz (Burnt Store)
Linda Frizzell (Bee Ridge)
Joyce Kelly (Bee Ridge)
Linda Getzen (Church of the Palms)
Marlene Petro (Church of the Palms)

- (Church of the Palms)
- (Church of the Palms)
- (First Sarasota)
- (First Sarasota)
Sandra M. Stiles (Northminster)
Sally H. Kirby (Northminster)
- (Pine Shores)
- (Pine Shores)
Diane Steiger (P. Church of the Covenant)
- (P. Church of the Covenant)
Pat Chanler-Smith (Siesta Key Chapel)
John Shubert (Siesta Key Chapel)
- (Trinity)
- (Trinity)
Coreen Curp (Venice)
Tom Saye (Venice)

Corresponding Members Present

Rev. Vinod Gnanaraj (UCC)
Tamara Leonard-Lara (Tampa Bay)

Candidates & Inquirers Present

Carson Brown

Teaching Elders Excused

Elizabeth Deibert
Richard Deibert
Courtney Ducharme
Silvana Ferreira
Chuck Moffett
Paul Reiter
Brad Rogers
William Sitterly
Margaret E. Towner

Voting Teaching Elders Present:	42
<u>Voting Ruling Elders Present:</u>	<u>48</u>
Voting Members Present:	90

Corresponding Members Present:	2
Preparing for Ministry Present:	1
Visitors Present:	17

Total Attendance:	110
--------------------------	------------

Total Excuses Approved:	9
--------------------------------	----------

Eligible Teaching Elder Voters:	133*
<u>Eligible Ruling Elder Voters:</u>	<u>79</u>
Total Eligible Voters:	212

*77 Retired Teaching Elders, appx. 50 unable to attend

*12 Validated Ministry, not in congregation

Congregations with Ruling Elder Representation:	25
<u>Congregations without Ruling Elder Representation:</u>	<u>11</u>
Total number of Congregations	36

Worship Offering for Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center: \$817.87

February 19, 2026 Stated Meeting Minutes

The Stated Meeting of Peace River Presbytery was called to order in the sanctuary of United Presbyterian Church, Bradenton, FL at 9:00 am by Moderator RE Janice Croley. Moderator Croley offered the opening prayer. A hymn was sung.

Moderator Croley called on the Pastor Host, TE Edward Dunn, to give greetings.

The Stated Clerk, TE Randy Moody, was recognized to present a report.

Motion by Stated Clerk Randy Moody: Presbytery approve the published docket, subject to adjustments at the Moderator's discretion to facilitate the business. **Adopted.**

Motion by Stated Clerk Randy Moody: Presbytery seat TE Tamara Leonard Lara (Tampa Bay Presbytery) as a corresponding member with voice. **Adopted.**

Motion by Stated Clerk Randy Moody: Presbytery grant excused absence to the Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders who submitted a request to be excused from the meeting. **Adopted.**

The investigation of an allegation of offense is concluded and no charges were filed.

Motion by Stated Clerk Randy Moody: Presbytery authorize the Moderator, General Presbyter and Stated Clerk to read and approve the minutes of this meeting. **Adopted.**

The Moderator recognized the General Presbyter TE Melana Scruggs to present a report. The General Presbyter will be on sabbatical for 12 weeks beginning the week after General Assembly.

TE Terri Jo Crego presented the Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report.

RE John Warburton presented the Committee on Ministry Report.

Motion from the Committee on Ministry: Peace River Presbytery, pending graduation from Fuller Seminary and successfully sustaining examination by the Presbytery, approve the ordination of Candidate Carson Brown to the office of Teaching Elder/Minister of the Word and Sacrament to be installed as Associate Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Bonita Springs on March 29, 2026.

Candidate Carson Brown was called to the microphone for an oral ordination exam by the presbyters. After multiple questions and responses, the candidate was escorted from the room during discussion by the body.

Motion restated by the Moderator: Peace River Presbytery, pending graduation from Fuller Seminary having successfully sustained examination by the Presbytery, approve the ordination of Candidate Carson Brown to the office of Teaching Elder/Minister of the Word and Sacrament to be installed as Associate Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Bonita Springs on March 29, 2026.

Adopted.

Moderator Croley offered a prayer for the candidate when he returned to the meeting.

The Moderator recognized TE Becky Schwandt to present the Steering Committee Report.

Nomination: The Steering Committee nominates RE Elaine Woods (First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte) to fill an unexpired term (2026) on the Human Resources Committee. **Elected.**

Motion: Presbytery amend the Standing Rules as proposed by the Human Resources Committee by deleting 6.1.3 from Standing Rule Article VI. Professional Staff of Presbytery and renumber Standing Rule 6.1.4 to 6.1.3.

~~6.1.3 the Treasurer who is elected to a three-year term by the Presbytery and eligible for successive terms;~~

Adopted.

Motion: Presbytery amend Standing Rule 7.2.1 by deleting “ex-officio” and inserting “advisory” and “as is the Treasurer”.

7.2.1 The Steering Committee shall be composed of the following: a representative, ordinarily the moderator, of each Committee and three (3) members-at-large, nominated by the Human Resources for election by the Presbytery for three (3) year terms beginning January 1, with the privilege of reelection to one (1) additional term, the Moderator of Presbytery, and the Vice-Moderator of Presbytery. The Stated Clerk, ~~the Treasurer~~, the General Presbyter, and any Associate Presbyters shall be ~~ex-officio~~ *advisory* members *as is the Treasurer*.

Adopted.

Motion: Presbytery amend Standing Rule 8.5.6.2 by deleting “(Blessing, Disaster, etc.)”

8.5.6.2 To promote, receive, and act upon all applications for Presbytery grant programs ~~(Blessing, Disaster, etc.)~~ according to each program’s requirements, then evaluate outcomes related to grants awarded.

Adopted.

Motion: Presbytery delete from Standing Rule Article VIII, 8.5.7 and renumber the rules following.

~~8.5.7 Overtures Committee. 4 members~~

~~8.5.7.1 The committee shall study and review all overtures with Sessions prior to forwarding to the Presbytery, Synod or General Assembly (as appropriate).~~

~~8.5.7.2 The committee shall present recommendations for Presbytery action on proposed constitutional amendments.~~

~~8.5.7.3 The members on the Overtures committee shall be the current General Assembly Commissioners.~~

Adopted.

Motion: Presbytery delete Standing Rule 9.5.

~~9.5 The Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN) is a mutually agreed upon partnership among the six PC (USA) presbyteries in Florida, the Synod of South Atlantic, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.~~

~~The purpose of FLAPDAN is to address the needs of the Body of Christ during times of disaster by providing communication links, addressing common issues of preparation and response, identifying resources and supporting training for presbyteries and their congregations.~~

~~9.5.1 The membership consists of eighteen (18) voting members, three (3) elected from each of the six (6) presbyteries, and a body of at-large members who participate in study groups and training events but do not have vote on motions before the elected body. FLAPDAN is required to maintain relationships with other disaster preparedness groups in the region.~~

~~9.5.2 The partnership reports annually and as needed to the Presbytery through its President or designee and/or Executive Director.~~

~~9.5.3 Members, who may be laypersons, ruling elders or teaching elders, are nominated by the Human Resources Committee for election by the Presbytery for three (3) year terms beginning January 1, with the privilege of re-election.~~

~~9.5.4 The Partnership shall be asked to inform the Human Resources Committee when a Peace River Presbytery member shall fail to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without an excused absence or submits a resignation.~~

~~9.5.5 The Peace River Presbytery member elected to FLAPDAN shall also serve as the disaster response team leaders for the presbytery.~~

Adopted.

RE Linda Getzen presented the Human Resources Committee Report.

Nominations: The Human Resources Committee nominates the following:

Communication, Connection, Community:

Alice Thomas, Deacon, Community Englewood, Class of 2027-1

Committee on Ministry:

Jeff Witte, RE, Lely Naples, Class of 2028-1

Melanie Kim-Hamill, TE, Palmetto, Palmetto, Class of 2028-1

Committee on Preparation for Ministry:

Ruth Smalt, TE, Siesta Key Chapel, Sarasota, Class of 2027-1

Permanent Judicial Commission:

Mary Lee Mann, RE, Covenant, Ft Myers, Class of 2027

Bill Kraft, RE, Community, Englewood, Class of 2029

Readers for Ordination Exams:

Steve Aguzzi, TE, Moorings, Naples

General Assembly Commissioner, Alternate:

Janice Croley, RE, First, Bonita Springs

Presbyterian Camp and Conference Ministries:

Nicolas Steed, Lay, First Bonita Springs

Haley Dent, Lay, First Bonita Springs

Treasurer of Peace River Presbytery:

Wilson Wheeler, RE, Covenant, Ft Myers - Three-year term (2028)

All nominees **elected**.

Motion from the Human Resources Committee: Approve the updated Treasurer Position Description attached.

Adopted.

The Viability Grant Special Committee's final report was presented by TE Jay Mumper. Initial grants awarded to Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda, and Palmetto Presbyterian Church were highlighted. Communication, Connection, Community Committee assume responsibility for the Viability Grants per the Standing Rules.

Moderator Croley recognized TE Kevin Morris who presented the Finance Committee Report.

Braden River Presbyterian Church, Bradenton, presented an overture for presbytery consideration.

Motion by TE Charles (Chuck) Wiggins: Peace River Presbytery adopt and submit to the 227th General Assembly the Overture to General Assembly Concerning the World Mission Agency which was adopted by the Session of Braden River Presbyterian Church at a special meeting on Sunday, September 28, 2024.

Adopted.

The Moderator recognized TE Tamara Leonard-Lara (Presbytery of Tampa Bay) to present the report from Mission Partner Beth-El Mission.

Moderator Croley recognized Mission Partner Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center's Executive Director Matt Schick to present a report.

The docketed business concluded, Moderator Janice Croley invited the presbytery to sing a hymn.

The Moderator announced that lunch after worship is provided by Westminster Bradenton. After thanking them for their generosity, she invited TE Holly Wildhack, chaplain at Westminster Bradenton, to address the presbytery.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 am. Moderator Janice Croley offered the closing prayer.

Randy Moody, Stated Clerk





**PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
STATED MEETING DOCKET
UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
BRADENTON, FL
FEBRUARY 19, 2026**



PROPHETIC IMAGINATION

9:00 am	Opening Prayer	Moderator, Janice Croley
	Hymn	<i>Here I Am, Lord</i>
	Greetings from Host Church	Edward Dunn
	Report of the Stated Clerk	Randy Moody
	Report of the General Presbyter	Melana Scruggs
	Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report	Terri Jo Crego
	Committee on Ministry Report	John Warburton
	Steering Committee Report	Becky Schwandt
	Human Resource Committee Report	Linda Getzen
	Communication, Connection, Community Committee	Julia Piermont
	Viability Grant Special Committee	Jay Mumper
	Finance Committee Report	Kevin Morris
	Overture from Braden River Session	Chuck Wiggins
	Misión Peniel Report	Miguel Estrada
	Beth-El Mission Report	Teresita Matos- Post
	Cedarkirk Camp & Conference Center Report	Matt Schick
	Hymn	<i>Let There Be Peace on Earth</i>
	Closing Prayer for Business	Moderator, Janice Croley
11:00 am	Worship including Celebration of the Lord's Supper	
	Preacher: Rev. Melanie Kim-Hamill, Palmetto PC Pastor	
	Offering Recipient: Cedarkirk (<i>Payable to United Presbyterian Church, memo: Cedarkirk</i>)	
12:00 pm	Lunch (Provided by Westminster Bradenton) and Fellowship	
12:45 pm	Continuation of Business, if required	

Peace River Presbytery Stated Meeting, February 19, 2026
Stated Clerk's Report

1. Approval of Docket
2. Appointment of Temporary Clerks
3. Seating Corresponding Members
4. Members of Presbytery who requested to be excused

Elizabeth Deibert	Brad Rogers
Richard Deibert	Bill Sitterly
Courtney Ducharme	Paul Reiter
Silvana Ferreira	
5. The Agreement for a union congregation with Florida-Bahamas Synod (ELCA) was signed on November 6, 2025, as authorized at the July Special Meeting of Presbytery.
6. Investigation of an allegation of offense is complete and no charges were filed.
7. **Motion:** Presbytery authorize the Moderator, General Presbyter and Stated Clerk to read and approve the minutes of this meeting.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report
Stated Meeting, February 19, 2026

Inquirers under care:

- Rachel Mallet – Church of the Palms

Candidates under care:

- Carson Brown (Certified Ready for a Call) – Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church
- Amy Cerniglia (Certified Ready for a Call) – Peace Presbyterian Church

For Information

At its meeting on November 3, 2025, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry approved Carson Brown as *Certified Ready to Receive a Call* pending graduation from Fuller Theological Seminary.

Note:

G-2.0103 Call to Ordered Ministry

The call to ordered ministry in the Church is the act of the triune God. This call is evidenced by the movement of the Holy Spirit in the individual conscience, the approval of a community of God's people, and the concurring judgment of a council of the Church.

G-2.0603 Purpose of Inquiry

*The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as **ministers of the Word and Sacrament to explore that call** together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry.*

G-2.0604 Purpose of Candidacy

The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This shall be accomplished through the presbytery's support, guidance, and evaluation of a candidate's fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination

When individuals who have been endorsed by a session and CPM are presented before the presbytery for examination, questions should be limited to the biographical statement of faith and their sense of call.

Committee on Ministry Report

Stated Meeting, February 19, 2026

We welcome:

Rev. Dr. Brad Clayton transferred from Florida Presbytery to become Pastor at Church of the Palms

We recognize the new relationships:

Rev. Melanie Kim-Hamill and Palmetto Presbyterian Church

Motions:

1. Peace River Presbytery, pending graduation from Fuller Seminary and successfully sustaining examination by the Presbytery, approve the ordination of Candidate Carson Brown to the office of Teaching Elder/Minister of the Word and Sacrament to be installed as Associate Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Bonita Springs on March 29, 2026. (Biographical information and Statement of Faith on last 2 pages of this report)

For information, only:

October 14, 2025 Meeting

- Approved the Parish Associate contract between TE Norman Pritchard and Church of the Palms.
- Approved pastor contract between TE Melanie Kim-Hamill and Palmetto Presbyterian Church effective Nov. 1, 2025.
- Reviewed progress of the Annual Review of congregations.

November 11, 2025 Meeting

- Approved the Mission Study from Peace PC and granted permission to elect a PNC
- Approved the MDP for First PC, Naples
- Transferred TE Ron Rand to the Presbytery of Cincinnati

December 9, 2025

- Announced Boundary Training events for ruling elders.
- Discussed Annual Review of congregations, noting proper insurance and ruling elder boundary training as the primary issues addressed.
- Elected RE John Warburton as 2026 Co-Moderator; other Co-Moderator to be determined.
- Candidate Carson Brown was presented by the First Bonita Springs Associate Pastor Nominating Committee for a call, pending seminary graduation; ITWBC will present to Presbytery for ordination examination in February.

January 14, 2026

- Elected TE Pam Masten as 2026 Co-Moderator with RE John Warburton.
- Noted Pine Shores PC Session called a Special Congregational Meeting for Jan. 18, 2026 to consider dissolution of the current pastoral relationship.
- Received TE Brad Clayton (Florida Presbytery) as a member of Peace River Presbytery and approved his installation as Pastor/Head of Staff for Church of the Palms, Sarasota, effective Mar. 18, 2026.

January 21, 2026

- Approved request from Pines Shores PC, Sarasota (congregational meeting on Jan. 18, 2026) to dissolve the pastoral relationship, including severance, with TE Alex Evangelista effective Jan. 31, 2026.
- Approved Bill Sitterly to serve as Bridge Pastor at Pine Shores PC, Sarasota from Feb. 22 through April 5, 2026.

Carson Brown Biographical Statement

To borrow the opening sentence I printed on seminary applications just over two years ago: “My name is Carson Brown; I am a curious Presbyterian student seeking to follow God’s call on my life.” My faith journey has reminded me much of 1 Kings 19, when God invites Elijah to stand on a mountain and wait for God to come to him. After silence in the mighty windstorm, earthquake, and fire, the “sound of a gentle whisper” fell upon the terrain, and Elijah instantly knew God was present. This has been my story. Like a constant rhythm of gentle whispers, God has drawn near to me with love and grace.

I was born in Fort Myers, Florida and baptized into the fellowship of Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church. After being skeptically dragged to confirmation class in seventh grade, I began to fall in love with Jesus Christ. In him, I allow my walls to come down; the intimacy of this relationship gives my life hope, meaning, and purpose. A year after being confirmed, I was asked to serve as a ruling elder. It was through this four year experience that the “gentle whisper” began to shape into a call to ministry. Over time, I have come to see it as God’s natural direction for my gifts and passions. In 2021, I accepted God’s call to begin serving as Director of Christian Education at Cypress Lake.

I am a graduate of Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers, where I majored in communication. In January 2024, I accepted a call from God (spoken through an unexpected voicemail from Pastor Brad Rogers) to serve as Pastoral Resident at First Presbyterian Church of Bonita Springs. This leap wasn’t just to a church thirteen times the size of my home congregation, but to new challenges that pushed me far from my comfort zone. And yet, the opportunities have been endless. I’ve grown to learn how valuable collaboration and teamwork are in ministry. I’ve found a passion for pastoral care. I’ve witnessed the Holy Spirit foster boundless expressions of community with other young adults. I’ve fallen in love with Jesus more, and with ministry anew.

Shortly before I began on staff at First Bonita, I enrolled at Fuller Theological Seminary, taking a slow courseload of online classes with the eventual goal of moving to Pasadena to complete my MDiv in person. In the early days of my ministry at Bonita Springs, I was certain it would be a short-term experiment, and that I would find my way to California eventually. But yet again, God whispered, and I found an unexpected blessing. I believe Fuller is charting the way for new understandings of ministry and leadership in today’s world, including through its exceptional online programs. At this truly global seminary, I met and learned from professors and peers living on every continent except Antarctica. Thanks to First Bonita, I was able to take these lessons and translate them into a practical ministry setting. I’ve grown so much as a result - as a leader, as a seminary student, and as a Christian.

A steady and great joy of mine has been my involvement with our presbytery, to which I began serving as a ruling elder commissioner in 2016, while fifteen years old. My capstone experiences have been serving as Moderator in 2023, which allowed me to worship with all of our incredible congregations. I am also currently serving on the General Assembly’s Unification Commission, stemming from my service as a YAAD to the 2022 GA.

Carson Brown Statement of Faith

I believe in one triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God always has been and always will be - infinite, all-knowing, and sovereign in being, wisdom, power, justice, and goodness. God is love, expressed through creating us in God's image.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, both fully human and fully God. Born of a virgin, he lived among us, sharing our joys and sorrows. He humbled himself to take on our humanity, perfectly embodying the obedient life to which we are called, and through that obedience, even to death, revealed God's redeeming love. Unjustly crucified by human hands, he bore our pain and sin, dying for us and taking the punishment we deserve. He rose from the dead by God's power, proving himself blameless, breaking sin's hold, and restoring humanity to God.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, God's gift to the church, who applies Christ's saving work, guiding us into truth through Scripture. The same Spirit who filled the apostles at Pentecost remains active today, breathing life and unity into the church and indwelling believers to grow us in faith and service.

I believe humanity was created for communion with God but fell through the disobedience of Adam and Eve. All humans sin, except Jesus Christ. Sin separates us from God, but grace restores us. Salvation comes solely by God's grace, accomplished through Christ, and is received by us through faith in him alone. While we were sinners, Christ acted to save us. Salvation, given by mercy, is lavished upon those who know themselves unworthy. In our faith we affirm that nothing in life or death can separate us from God's love. Christ will return visibly and gloriously to judge the living and the dead. Those found righteous by his sacrifice will dwell forever in God's presence in a new heaven and earth, fulfilling the covenant of grace; those who reject God will remain separated.

I believe the Bible, Old and New Testaments, is the inspired Word of God and our supreme authority in faith and life. We meet God in prayer and know God hears us. I believe that two sacraments - Baptism and the Lord's Supper - instituted by Jesus, guide the church and serve as visible signs of grace. Baptism marks the covenant of grace; the Lord's Supper nourishes and unites us with Christ.

I believe that faith in Christ naturally produces a life of joy and thanksgiving. Christ calls us to share this good news through word, action, and presence. Christians are called to spread the Gospel fearlessly and compassionately, live holy lives worthy of our calling, pursue justice and renewal, and walk humbly with God. We are called to participate in the local and universal church, ordained by Christ as our corporate worship and communion. Since God has shown eternal love for us, we are called to show love to others. This is the ultimate joy of creation - that in all things we rejoice in God's grace, which transforms, sustains, and empowers God's people to live for God's glory and the redemption of humankind.

Peace River Presbytery
Steering Committee Report
February 19, 2026

For Presbytery Action:

1. **Nomination:** The Steering Committee nominates RE Elaine Woods (First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte) to fill an unexpired term (2026) on the Human Resources Committee.
2. **Motion:** Presbytery amend the Standing Rules as proposed by the Human Resources Committee by deleting 6.1.3 from Standing Rule Article VI. Professional Staff of Presbytery and renumber Standing Rule 6.1.4 to 6.1.3.
~~6.1.3 the Treasurer who is elected to a three-year term by the Presbytery and eligible for successive terms,~~
Rationale: This Standing Rule originated when the Presbytery salaried staff included 8 individuals. The Treasurer is an officer of the Presbytery but has not functioned as part of the staff or participated in staff meetings since the current structure was adopted in 2012. This aligns the Standing Rules with the current practice. The three year term is defined in Standing Rule 5.6, therefore, currently redundant.
3. **Motion:** Presbytery amend Standing Rule 7.2.1 by deleting “ex-officio” and inserting “advisory” and “as is the Treasurer”.
7.2.1 The Steering Committee shall be composed of the following: a representative, ordinarily the moderator, of each Committee and three (3) members-at-large, nominated by the Human Resources for election by the Presbytery for three (3) year terms beginning January 1, with the privilege of reelection to one (1) additional term, the Moderator of Presbytery, and the Vice-Moderator of Presbytery. The Stated Clerk, ~~the Treasurer,~~ the General Presbyter, and any Associate Presbyters shall be ~~ex-officio~~ **advisory** members **as is the Treasurer.**
Rationale: This removes a potential conflict with Standing Rule 8.5.5.10.
4. **Motion:** Presbytery amend Standing Rule 8.5.6.2 by deleting “(Blessing, Disaster, etc.)”
8.5.6.2 To promote, receive, and act upon all applications for Presbytery grant programs ~~(Blessing, Disaster, etc.)~~ according to each program’s requirements, then evaluate outcomes related to grants awarded.
Rationale: The Blessing Grant program was discontinued in October. Listing specific grants which may change in the future is unnecessary as “Presbytery grant programs” specifies the role.
5. **Motion:** Presbytery delete from Standing Rule Article VIII, 8.5.7 and renumber the rules following.
~~8.5.7 Overtures Committee. 4 members~~

~~8.5.7.1 The committee shall study and review all overtures with Sessions prior to forwarding to the Presbytery, Synod or General Assembly (as appropriate).~~

~~8.5.7.2 The committee shall present recommendations for Presbytery action on proposed constitutional amendments.~~

~~8.5.7.3 The members on the Overtures committee shall be the current General Assembly Commissioners.~~

Rationale: Many General Assembly Commissioners have been reluctant to make recommendations for presbytery action on constitutional amendments, preferring to report on the Assembly actions and experience without exercising influence over the presbytery vote. Several commissioners also believe they should not influence Sessions regarding their overtures. It is possible in the near future the number of committee members will be reduced to 2 members the way it is currently structured.

6. **Motion:** Presbytery delete Standing Rule 9.5.

~~9.5 The Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN) is a mutually agreed upon partnership among the six PC (USA) presbyteries in Florida, the Synod of South Atlantic, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. The purpose of FLAPDAN is to address the needs of the Body of Christ during times of disaster by providing communication links, addressing common issues of preparation and response, identifying resources and supporting training for presbyteries and their congregations.~~

~~9.5.1 The membership consists of eighteen (18) voting members, three (3) elected from each of the six (6) presbyteries, and a body of at large members who participate in study groups and training events but do not have vote on motions before the elected body. FLAPDAN is required to maintain relationships with other disaster preparedness groups in the region.~~

~~9.5.2 The partnership reports annually and as needed to the Presbytery through its President or designee and/or Executive Director.~~

~~9.5.3 Members, who may be laypersons, ruling elders or teaching elders, are nominated by the Human Resources Committee for election by the Presbytery for three (3) year terms beginning January 1, with the privilege of re-election.~~

~~9.5.4 The Partnership shall be asked to inform the Human Resources Committee when a Peace River Presbytery member shall fail to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without an excused absence or submits a resignation.~~

~~9.5.5 The Peace River Presbytery member elected to FLAPDAN shall also serve as the disaster response team leaders for the presbytery.~~

Rationale: The FLAPDAN Covenant Agreement expired 31 Dec 2024 and financial commitment to FLAPDAN beyond designated giving received was discontinued in the Finance Committee Report at the October 18, 2025 Stated Meeting, effective 1 Jan 2026. By deleting this Standing Rule Presbytery has the freedom to enter into a Covenant Agreement without obligation. The relationship does not rise to the level of inclusion in the Standing Rules.

For Information Only:

Selected *Prophetic Imagination* as the theme for 2026 Presbytery Stated Meetings.

**Peace River Presbytery
Human Resources Committee Report
Stated Meeting, February 19, 2026
United Presbyterian Church, Bradenton**

For Presbytery Approval:

1. The Human Resources Committee nominates the following:

Communication, Connection, Community:

Alice Thomas, Deacon, Community Englewood, Class of 2027-1

Committee on Ministry:

Jeff Witte, RE, Lely Naples, Class of 2028-1

Melanie Kim-Hamill, TE, Palmetto, Palmetto, Class of 2028-1

Committee on Preparation for Ministry:

Ruth Smalt, TE, Siesta Key Chapel, Sarasota, Class of 2027-1

Permanent Judicial Commission:

Mary Lee Mann, RE, Covenant, Ft Myers, Class of 2027

Bill Kraft, RE, Community, Englewood, Class of 2029

Readers for Ordination Exams:

Steve Aguzzi, TE, Moorings, Naples

General Assembly Commissioner, Alternate:

Janice Croley, RE, First, Bonita Springs

Presbyterian Camp and Conference Ministries:

Nicolas Steed, Lay, First Bonita Springs

Treasurer of Peace River Presbytery:

Wilson Wheeler, RE, Covenant, Ft Myers - Three-year term (2028)

2. The Human Resources Committee moves approval of the updated Treasurer Position Description attached (additions in red and deletions indicated by strikethrough).

Peace River Presbytery Treasurer's Position Description

Position: Treasurer (volunteer)

Date: ~~December 14, 2022~~ February 19, 2026

Position Summary:

To ~~oversee~~ **coordinate and interpret** the financial operations of the Presbytery and to serve as a resource for the Finance Committee, the Steering Committee and the Presbytery in their objective to manage the long-term financial health of the Presbytery.

Position Requirements: Ability to read, understand and interpret financial statements. Have working knowledge of accounting. Familiarity with Peace River Presbytery bylaws, standing rules and structure.

Responsibilities: The responsibilities are:

1. Serve as the Treasurer of Peace River Presbytery, Inc.
2. Serve as an ~~ex-officio member with voice on~~ **advisory member, with voice but not vote,** on the Finance Committee and the Steering Committee.
3. Ensure that Presbytery's financial operations are properly administered in accordance with generally accepted accounting policies and procedures.
4. Ensure that all financial activities are reported monthly to the Finance Committee, Steering Committee, the General Presbyter and to the Presbytery.
5. Provide information about the Presbytery's finances to all relevant parties.
6. Recommend, in consultation with General Presbyter, appropriate accounting services providers to the Finance Committee for their selection and approval.
7. ~~Supervise~~ **Coordinate with** the accounting services provider **for reports and services needed.**
8. Recommend an appropriate audit firm to the Finance Committee for their selection and approval.

Specific Duties:

1. **Legal** — The Treasurer has responsibility for all financial operations of the Presbytery. The Treasurer serves as an officer of the corporation, registered with the Secretary of State as the Treasurer.
2. **Fiduciary Responsibility** — The Treasurer provides guidance regarding fiduciary responsibility for all committees, ~~teams~~, staff, and volunteers in governance of the organization. All staff, Finance Committee members, and Presbytery leaders have fiduciary responsibility for financial activities of the Presbytery. The Treasurer's role is to keep everyone informed. ~~Also,~~ **and** to be a resource for the Presbytery, Steering Committee, and Finance Committee members. The Treasurer works with all users of financial resources to ensure compliance with financial policies and procedures.
3. **Financial Goals — Long-term** — Assist the Finance Committee to establish and maintain oversight of long-term financial goals that reflect the strategic priorities of the Presbytery. Advise the Finance Committee, Steering Committee and the Presbytery to help them be sure current decisions are consistent with ensuring long-term viability of the

organization, including the financial strength to both survive unexpected events and provide financial capability to react to opportunities to achieve the mission.

4. **Financial Management — Short-term** — Responsible, in coordination with the Finance Committee and General Presbyter, for ~~directing~~ preparation of the annual budget and monitoring expenditures of all committees/~~teams~~/boards. Be supportive of finding solutions for the needs that were not anticipated.
5. **Audit:** Manage the annual audit or review. Deliver the report to the Finance Committee for their review.
6. **Reporting** — Responsible for:
 - A) Reporting financial results and performance against budget and prior year. Also, present longer-term trends
 - B) Ensuring the accounting service provider prepares the appropriate reports for the Finance Committee, the Steering Committee and the Presbytery.
 - C) Ensuring the accounting service provider produces any required government reports and certify to the Finance Committee their completion
7. **Investments** — Recommends to the Finance Committee, the appropriate investments for ensuring that all funds are prudently invested, with returns appropriate for risks acceptable to the organization. ~~Determines~~ **Evaluates** credit needs of the organization and ensures the required funds are available when needed.
8. **Financial Policies and Procedures; Effective Internal Controls** — Supports the Finance Committee in developing and/or updating the accounting and financial policies and procedures. Ensures compliance throughout the organization with policies that effectively implement adequate and appropriate internal controls. and enables and supports the Presbytery's stated mission.
9. **Relationships** - The Treasurer works cooperatively with the Finance Committee, leadership from other committees/~~teams~~/boards, the General Presbyter, accounting services provider and Presbytery staff. Maintains relationships with banks, auditors, investment advisors, and suppliers of services.

Evaluation: The Treasurer will be given an annual review by the Moderator of Finance in conjunction with the Human Resources Committee.

Selection: The Treasurer is nominated by the Human Resources Committee. In the nominating process the Human Resources Committee ~~will~~ **ordinarily** consults with the Finance Committee Moderator and General Presbyter. The Treasurer is elected by the Presbytery to a three-year term (renewable).

ACCOUNTABILITY: The Presbytery Treasurer is accountable to Presbytery through the Finance Committee. The Treasurer shall be bonded or covered with liability insurance and undergo a background check.

A REPORT to the PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

Viability Resource Grant Task Force

19 February 2026

The Viability Resource Grant Task Force was given the charge, by the Presbytery, to establish a process for churches to submit viable needs for financial assistance. Those finances were from the insurance payments to the Chapel by the Sea after it's unfortunate destruction from Hurricane Ian on September 28, 2022. We accepted this challenge with humble hearts.

Isaiah 61: 1,3 text became foundational:

“He has sent me to...provide for those who grieve in Zion- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair”

The Resource “Team” drew from this scripture to assure the funding from the invested \$1.7 million would be to “honor and preserve God’s legacy of service by the Chapel.” Not only financially but ministerially.

Therefore, we created an Application with Criteria consisting of the following documents: Historical Background, Application Process, Application and Criteria.

The task force believed a ‘pilot program’ would be advantageous to not only award immediate needed grants but to evaluate the process.

Applications were made available, on-line and hard copy, through the General Presbyter, Melana Scruggs.

Two church applications who received grants are Palmetto and Burnt Store.

Rev. Jaco Bester, of Burnt Store, will give a brief about his church’s grant.

I would like to acknowledge the Viability Resource Grant Taskforce team:

Elaine Wood, Mary Lynn Myers, Janice Crowley, Malana Scruggs,
Rusty Shunk and Jay Mumper

The Communication, Connection, Community Committee will be assuming responsibility for the Viability Resource Grant.

This is our final report.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jay R. Mumper, Moderator

Finance Committee Report

February 19, 2026

At the final 2025 committee meeting TE Kevin Morris was elected committee moderator for 2026. Also during the meeting the committee expressed appreciation for the dedicated service of Treasurer Charmaine Ponkratz as her term concluded on December 31, 2025. The committee also thanks Mary Lynn Myers for her faithful service as Moderator the last few years. The following is a very brief summary of 2025 operating financials.

2025 Per Capita Stream

Received

General Assembly	\$4,516.67
Synod	<u>416.67</u>
Total	\$4,933.34

Disbursed

General Assembly	\$5,035.17
Synod	<u>1,045.17</u>
Total	\$6,080.34

2025 Mission Stream

Received

Beth-El	\$13,458.89
Cedarkirk	13,099.33
PRP for Mision Peniel	99,737.96
Non-PRP/Mision Peniel	12,071.14
Turks (Madagascar)	1,975.39
FLAPDAN	5,488.49
Synod Mission	<u>2,636.19</u>
Total Mission Partner	\$148,467.39
Special Offerings	71,916.89
Total Mission Stream	\$220,384.28

Disbursed

Beth-El	\$17,000.00
Cedarkirk	17,000.00
Mision Peniel	99,737.96
MP Individuals/Funds	12,071.14
Turks	2,200.00
FLAPDAN	7,800.00
Synod Mission	<u>8,361.00</u>
Total Mission Partners	\$164,170.80
Special Giving	<u>70,604.39</u>
Total Mission Disbursed	\$234,775.19

2025 Presbytery Operations

Received

PRP Operations	\$278,227.97
----------------	--------------

Disbursed

CCC Committee Operation	3,420.86
-------------------------	----------

COM Operations	7,244.00
----------------	----------

CPM Operations	1,775.99
----------------	----------

General Operations	65,845.20
--------------------	-----------

Human Resource Operations	234,085.90
---------------------------	------------

Total Operations	\$312,371.95
------------------	--------------

The operating financials above only include the ordinary general fund numbers and do not include special funds through which grants are disbursed or the general investment account from which a 4% draw supports presbytery operations. Also, not shown above is \$500,000.00 from the Church Development Fund that was distributed to The Community Church, Babcock Ranch toward construction of their first building. More detailed information is posted regarding PRP finances alongside the meeting packet on the website.

OVERTURE TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONCERNING THE WORLD MISSION AGENCY

Whereas the final command of the Risen Christ declares that ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...’ **Matthew 28:18,19** and

Whereas the opening paragraph of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) states that: *The good news of the Gospel is that the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—creates, redeems, sustains, rules, and transforms all things and all people...in proclaiming to all people the good news of God’s love.* **F-1.01 God’s Mission** and

Whereas the first of the six GREAT ENDS OF THE CHURCH is *the proclamation of the Gospel for [all] humankind.* **Great Ends F-1.0304** and

Whereas, the Presbyterian Church (USA) is a connectional church that both sends and receives Mission Partners on a global level, and

Whereas, the recent elimination of the World Mission Agency would seem to undermine both the sending and receiving of our ecumenical Mission Partners:

Therefore, be it resolved that Peace River Presbytery respectfully overtures the 227 General Assembly (2026) meeting in Milwaukee, June 28-July 2, 2026 for our denomination to

- (1) Diligently seek restoration of our former mission co-workers as we renew those covenant relationships in support of world-wide missions and establish new relationships as appropriate.**
- (2) And be it further resolved that the work of these mission co-workers be supported and continued as consistent with the goals of the Presbyterian Church (USA) as put forth in Scripture, the Constitution and the Confessions of our church.**

Adopted by the Session of Braden River Presbyterian Church at a special meeting on Sunday, September 28, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Lois McGill, Clerk of Session

Charles J. Wiggins, Moderator

Report From: Beth-El Farm Worker Ministry, Inc.

Mission: Beth-El Mission: Feeding the Mind, Spirit, and Body of the farm working community and our neighbors in need through opportunities for hunger relief, education, healthcare, and spiritual growth.

Ministry Update: 50 Years of Faith in Action

Mission Gratitude: We are deeply grateful to the Presbytery and its churches for stepping up to ensure Bethel's financial stability in 2025 and our continued presence alongside families impacted by immigration enforcement. We begin the year with heavy hearts for families separated by deportation and travel barriers, and with gratitude for the \$6,000 raised to support our former team member, Raul Palacio, as he prepared for self-deportation and resettlement. We are also grateful that, thanks to your generosity, **568** children from farm-working families received over **2,700** Christmas gifts through La Posada Christmas Shoppe.

Ministry at a Glance: In 2026, Beth-El's work will focus on the **urgent needs** of the communities we serve. *Access to Food & Health:* In partnership with the Sprouts Foundation for Healthy Communities, we are expanding Beth-El con Sazón. This program offers culturally **responsive nutrition education**, cooking classes, multilingual resources, and a client-choice food market to help farmworkers and vulnerable families develop healthier eating habits and prevent chronic disease. *Access to Education:* With support from Allegany Franciscan Ministries and the Connecting with Community for our Common Home (3CH) program, Beth-El will launch *Voces del Campo*. This program supports farmworkers and outdoor laborers by addressing climate injustice, **protecting workers from extreme heat**, and advancing food security, access to health care, education, and community resilience. *Spiritual Growth:* Nuevo Camino at Beth-El has received an Investment Matching Grant from 1001 Worshipping Communities and PTB. This support will continue to build a bilingual, Reformed community that fosters faith, fellowship, leadership, and discipleship **with a focus on welcoming migrants** and neighbors to serve God and one another with dignity and care. *Accompaniment & Solidarity:* Beth-El supports families impacted by immigration enforcement with trusted presence, pastoral care, Know Your Rights workshops, notary services, translations, myth-busting, resource referrals, enforcement updates, and attention to psychosocial needs.

Governance Update: At our Annual Consultation on January 29, the Board and Covenant Partners approved **reducing the Board size**. Starting January 1, 2027, the Board will have **nine voting members—two from each covenant partner** and three at-large. The Board will comply with all applicable constitutions and laws of our Covenant Partners, and the number of voting members will never fall below three. We are also looking for a Treasurer-in-training to share treasury duties with our accountant by year's end.

Celebrate 50 Years of Ministry: Have your church, small group, family, and friends join in our "50 Acts of Solidarity" campaign—50 ways to serve, give, or bless farm workers in your own creative way. Whether it's 50 hours of volunteering or donating 50 cans of food, every act of solidarity counts and brings hope to those we serve. Show your impact and inspire others by sharing your story with **#BethEl50** and **#50ActsOfLove**! **SAVE THE DATE: 50th Special Worship Celebration, Saturday, October 3rd, 2026** at Beth-El.

2025 Impact Report: You can explore the full scope of Beth-El's 2025 ministry in our Annual Report, which highlights program impact, financial stewardship, and stories of faithful accompaniment. **[View the 2025 Annual Report here](#)**

www.canva.com/design/DAHASne6BV4/b7t1vfZzpn2KZks3tJmsyg/view?utm_content=DAHASne6BV4&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniqueLinks&utm_id=hebdce8d627

Immediate Needs: *Household Items:* Space Heaters, Pots/Pans, Towels, and Blankets. *Food Items:* Canned Meats, such as Chicken, Tuna, and Sausages. *Clothing Items:* Long-sleeve button-down shirts, bandanas, and socks.

Report respectfully submitted by Dr. Teresita Matos-Post, Executive Director.

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (EIN: 59-3004876)

Address: 18240 HWY 301 S. Wimauma, FL 33598

Phone Number: 813-633-1548

Email: info@beth-el.org

Website: <https://beth-el.org/>