

2008

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND REPORTS OF
PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY**

**from
Committees and Boards**

**CONNECTING AND SUPPORTING CONGREGATIONS
TO ADVANCE CHRIST'S MISSION**



Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever.

Amen.

Ephesians 3:20, 21

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PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT
General Presbyter – Part I
Graham Hart

“State of the Presbytery”

As we begin 2009, the state of the economy is dominating national headlines as well as affecting the work and mission of the Presbytery and each congregation. As a Presbytery we are faced with some hard decisions, even coming from a theological perspective that says God is Sovereign, God is a God of abundance, God will provide for that which God calls us to. We are called to be responsible, generous, and faithful stewards of the resources with which we have been entrusted. Needless to say, there are some tough choices amidst significant opportunities before us.

I would like to offer my appreciation to an extremely competent Presbytery staff, the 200 folks who through committees, task forces and teams do the work of the Presbytery, and the members in the pews who through their congregation and session allocations support the mission and ministry of Peace River and the larger church. Thank you.

In summary, because we are God’s people, and people of faith, hope and love, in spite of the challenges before us, the state of the Presbytery is good.

Looking back, there were 6 significant issues/projects/decisions that shaped much of our life in 2008, some of which will continue to shape our life together in 2009:

1. The Presbytery’s work through Committee on Ministry (COM), the Trustees, and the staff, alongside key members of Covenant, helped to heal and restore Covenant Presbyterian Church from the schism and divisions that they went through in 2008. Thanks be to God for a new spirit, healing, and new leadership, including a new session and pastor at Covenant!
2. In the past 5 years, the Presbytery has called 24 new pastors and heads of staff, including several in 2008. We welcome their new energy and commitment as we work together to shape a common mission and witness as a Presbytery.
3. The good news in our continuing effort to share the gospel is that the Presbytery helped Peace New Church Development find and buy land, and we watched New Life New Church Development reinvent itself and refocus its mission and ministry around a store-front model. However, with sadness and due to immigrations issues, the economy, and many families moving back to Brazil, the Evangelism and Church Development Committee had to recommend that the Presbytery close the Brazilian Portuguese-speaking fellowship.
4. The COM continued its new 3-year-cycle triennial visit model. 2008 was the second year of the new cycle.
5. In the area of congregational transformation, the Evangelism and Church Development Committee continued to work with 21 churches in the Acts 16:5 Initiative.
6. Personnel, the Trustees, and the General Presbyter developed an interim staff design for 2009 following the retirement of the Designated Associate General Presbyter and the Program Coordinator. With the anticipation of continuing budget pressure, the Personnel Committee has decided not to hire any replacements for those two positions, saving the Presbytery over \$125,000 this year, a 21% reduction in staff cost amid overall expense reductions of 26%.

As we look to 2009, I believe the following are 10 significant issues that the Presbytery, its leadership and committees, each clergy member, and the 38 congregations need to have on our radar screens:

1.	Find resources, develop workshops, and create opportunities for the ongoing development of healthy pastors, educators, sessions and congregations.
2.	Find helpful and strategic ways to support and connect the 38 congregations in PRP, so together as a presbytery and as individual congregations we can advance Christ's mission near and far. Essential in this effort is continuing to develop communication strategies and vehicles among sessions, pastors, and members in the pews.
3.	Deal with the financial challenges of our current national economy and its impact here in Southwest Florida on members, congregations, and the Presbytery. With these current economic realities, decide how we can continue to fund PRP's mission and that of the Synod and General Assembly (GA).
4.	Determine the essential tasks that need to be done by a down-sized Presbytery staff. How do we fund and staff the Book of Order responsibilities for a Presbytery, i.e., revise our interim staff design.
5.	Strengthen the connection and involvement of COM with every church, especially those in transition with vacant pulpits.
6.	Continue to support Cedarkirk, Misión Peniel and Beth-El, even in this time of economic challenge, and better communicate mission needs and opportunities to each congregation.
7.	Find new models to do new church developments (NCDs) even as we continue to support the remaining two NCD pastors and congregations.
8.	Develop and strengthen the relationships among Synod, GA, Presbytery, pastors, educators, and congregations.
9.	Grow the Church Deep and Wide – continue to learn from our Acts 16:5 Initiative, and look at other ways we can encourage church development/transformation, evangelism, global mission awareness, and support. Note: It is not our denomination that is losing members, it is individual congregations. So what can we do here?
10.	Determine the ramifications of Amendment B to the Book of Order for Peace River.

So for what was, and is, and will be - with all God's people I say: Thanks be to God... as we continue to work together in the mission and ministry of Peace River Presbytery.

Graham Hart
 General Presbyter
 Peace River Presbytery

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT
General Presbyter – Part II
Graham Hart

Summary of Major Activities and Involvements in 2008

Whenever I am on a plane and someone asks me what I do, I do not have a simple answer. When someone says, Oh, you're like the bishop; I have to say, no, I am more like the bishop's chauffeur. For those who, after I explain what I do say, Oh, you're like the executive director of a non-profit, I say yes and no, but not really.

The following is meant for those who may want a bit more detail than a just a metaphor of job title. I do a quarterly report like this for the four-member coaching team with whom I meet. Last year the team encouraged me to share my more detailed report so that the Presbytery was better informed as to the scope of my work as General Presbyter. This is not meant to be a complete list, but only highlights and a summary of major activities.

1. **Connections and Conversations and Support**
 - a. Sunday church visits - 25 opportunities to preach or share a minute for mission in worship and preaching the Sunday after a pastor retired or went on to a new call
 - b. 46 visits with pastors for one-on-one conversation, prayer, encouragement and support
 - c. Local congregations (in addition to Sunday morning visits)
 - i. Led 3 leadership retreats
 - ii. Met with sessions as requested
 - d. Staffing PRP committees, task forces, teams - (average 8-12 meetings a month)
2. **Committee on Ministry - congregational transitions, listing only major involvement**
 - a. Along with the COM liaison met with the PNCs to give an overview of the PNC process, as well as leading them through some exercises to build an effective team - 10 congregations (Note: the COM liaison normally attends all the PNC meetings or is in contact with the PNC chair weekly)
 - b. Met with PNCs to train the committees in how to interview prospective candidates in a way that gets the PNC the information that will be helpful in making a decision
 - c. Worked with the COM liaisons to the 10 PNCs including doing the Presbytery's reference checks on prospective candidates
 - d. Covenant PC - from 2007 through March 2008 (until the Presbytery's Administrative Commission was elected) met weekly with the members of COM, the Trustees, and the "loyal PCUSA members" to coordinate the Presbytery's response to Covenant's internal conflicts
 - e. Worked with COM in follow up to the new triennial visit model
 - f. Facilitated the creation of an assessment team for Wintergarden
 - g. Helped with the design of the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Workshop
3. **Congregational Transformation**
 - a. Evangelism and Church Development – worked with Acts 16:5 ministry team and the 2 churches involved
 - b. Acted as convener/coach for a cluster of Acts 16:5 pastors
 - c. With ECD and Trustees, planned a one-day New Church Development workshop on alternative models for developing NCDs in Peace River
 - d. Worked with the Trustees and Peace NCD to secure property and funding for it
4. **Other Presbytery activities**
 - a. Staff support and coordination
 - b. With Personnel and Trustees, developed an interim staff design for 2009 (following the retirements of the Designated Associate General Presbyter and Program Coordinator)

- c. Council and Presbytery meeting planning and committee support
 - d. Writing/Communications - article published in Presbyterian Outlook, weekly pastoral letter, monthly newsletter, Great News, speaking at churches and Presbytery, wrote Learnings document for bringing Joining Hearts and Hands to a conclusion
 - e. With the Trustees and staff, worked on 2009 mission interpretation materials, including a 16-page brochure for mission or budget preparation committees of churches
 - f. Worked with the Council to examine how it functions. A task force was appointed
 - g. Meeting with and serving on the Florida Cabinet for Campus Ministry
5. **Self Care** - biking, morning and evening walks, periodic golf (but I'm not very good), kayaking, and family vacation time (Note - a first grandchild is coming!)
6. **Continuing Education**
- a. I was invited to attend the Board of Pensions CREDO workshop--- this is a must for any pastor who gets an invitation --- it was a very helpful, insightful, clarifying week.
 - b. Ongoing participation in the Advanced Clergy Clinic on Family Systems (LMPC)
 - c. The Church Unbound Conference at Montreat, and a workshop on "Coaching (pastors) in Church Transformation" sponsored by PCUSA
7. **Partnerships, grant writing, denominational networking, and other leadership activities**
- a. Florida Executive Staff meetings for coordination and information sharing-1 ½ days in March and October (FLAPDAN, New Beginnings, finding alternative hurricane insurance coverage, and swap-shop are all part of this ongoing required meeting of the executive staff from the 6 Florida presbyteries)
 - b. Planned New Beginnings Workshop for new pastors sponsored by the 6 Presbyteries of Florida
 - c. Synod Executive Forum - 1½ days in October and March. Networking, information sharing, coordinating the NCD and racial-ethnic grants and funding in the Synod, and consultations are all part of this ongoing required meeting of the executives from the 18 Presbyteries in the Synod of South Atlantic
 - d. Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN) meeting -1 day
 - e. Beth-El Annual Consultation
 - f. Annual Consultation at Cedarkirk - 1 day
 - g. Attended the 218th General Assembly, gave an orientation for our commissioners prior to GA, and met them while at GA for support and encouragement
 - h. Elected to a 1-year term on the GAC-MGB Advisory Board (meets for one day in May and November). The GA executive staff and Presbytery leaders meet to talk about how GAC can be more helpful and supportive of Presbyteries. This is the first year.
 - i. Attended annual meetings and workshops for Association of Executive Presbyters – last year I was honored to be nominated President. This commitment is mostly by conference call, and the aim of the association is to help Executive and General Presbyters find the support, education and ongoing training necessary to do this work.
 - j. Wrote successful grant proposal (\$20,000) to the Board of Pensions for developing a Healthy Leader - Healthy Congregations series of workshops (15) over a 2-year period in the Presbyteries of Florida. Peace River held the workshop in January.
 - k. On behalf of our Presbytery Disaster Preparedness and Response Team and I HOPE, submitted a grant to PDA which resulted in receiving \$250,000 for I HOPE and \$18,000 for one of our churches still affected by the hurricanes of 2004 and 2005.

**PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT**

Council
Steve Smith

The year 2008 has been eventful, to say the least. The Report of Council from the Presbytery meeting minutes and the Council's own minutes of its meetings provide the details of the many actions undertaken. I would refer the interested parties to these documents. Rather than reiterate, I would prefer to discuss the broader scope of the Council's deliberations and actions, plus some suggestions for the future.

The Council began the year by engaging in a number of very useful exercises in reviewing the functions and directions we are currently using, with a view toward identifying those that were working well, those that were not, and those that needed to be dropped or materially modified. The results of those meetings and exercises came generally to two conclusions.

First, the overall functions of the Council seemed to be serving the needs of the Presbytery rather well. Actions were being coordinated, and information flow to and fro from the committees seemed to be effective. The only need identified was a review and updating of the standing rules, which has been accomplished. So, no major changes in the basic structure and function of the internal workings of Council seemed necessary.

Second, the same could not be said for the effectiveness of the Council in its relationships with the individual churches. To keep this from going seventeen pages, I will simply list a few of the problems identified, all of which appear to have sprung from the Council's less than superb ability to communicate with local congregations:

1. Council needs to improve demonstrating how it helps individual churches in their daily struggles, even though it has programs designed to do just that;
2. Council has not always been an effective body in fostering communication among the churches of the Presbytery;
3. Council has not always been at its best at encouraging and publicizing events or programs which would benefit the life and activities of local congregations. This is not to deny that most Presbytery committees do a good job - we just need to keep searching for the best possible ways to spread the word.

We have thoroughly reviewed these problems, and, typical of all Presbyterian efforts at remediation, formed a committee. In contrast to what often happens, however, this committee really has been good at coming up with solutions. Thanks in large part to Bill Oehler and the Presbytery staff, much has happened to make communication clearer, more prolific, and interactive. Council still has a way to go, but the groundwork seems to be in place.

We have also registered successes with New Church Developments, though not in every case. Peace and New Life abound, but the Brazilian Fellowship failed through the intervention of forces beyond our control. We should not give up though - even when resources are slim! Remember, it only took five loaves and some fishes! Now if we could just find Jesus.....!

Finally, this has been a year the Trustees would like to forget, and the Council, too, when it comes to money - or, rather, the lack thereof. Readjusting the budget with discouraging frequency and severity has not been an entertaining activity, but a necessary one. It has impacted every aspect of the life of the Presbytery, and no doubt will continue to do so until the economy improves significantly. However, let me remind all of us that times of difficulty often bring out the best in people. Entrepreneurship hits new highs, and new beginnings are at every hand to replace what has been lost. So, we need to look to the future with hope and our intelligence turned up to the maximum. With His help, we shall find new ways to go forward and upward in furthering His kingdom and in feeding His sheep.

God bless you all,
Stephen D. Smith

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Board of Trustees

Alan Penick

With the unsuccessful conclusion of the “Joining Hearts and Hands” campaign at the end of 2007, the Board of Trustees’ primary goal for 2008 was to rethink the funding of the Presbytery and its mission projects.

The following is what was adopted:

1. **Shifting the cost of administrative staff positions into the per capita budget** gradually over the next couple of years; thus making the “Unified Giving” gifts truly mission oriented. *This process was started with the 2009 budget.*
2. **Conducting an annual Presbytery Stewardship Celebration** during worship at the November Presbytery meeting. *Communication of this program was accomplished with the help of pastors contacting pastors. We did receive many 2009 pledges at the November Presbytery meeting, but the response was not what we had hoped, probably because of the financial stress the economy has placed on many congregations. We believe the idea was good and currently plan to do the same thing this fall.*
3. **Establishing an Endowment Fund** to provide education, mission and other support. Our plan was to ask each church to take one special offering each year to set the foundation for this fund. *The Endowment fund was established in 2008 with the Mary Alice Murphy Scholarship gift of \$21,000, but we did not go through with our plan of asking for the special offering. We felt there were currently too many conflicting requests for congregational offerings. We will look at this again in 2009.*
4. **Asking congregations to adopt specific Presbytery missions** for their support. The idea was that congregations would be more willing to support a specific mission than to send money to the Presbytery. *We did not do this in 2008, but it will be considered again for 2009 since we are failing to even come close to our commitments to the Presbytery’s mission covenant partners.*

Also in 2008:

1. We purchased a five-acre parcel of land in Lakewood Ranch to be the future site of the Peace Presbyterian Church.
2. We began working with Willis of Florida, a large insurance broker, to evaluate opportunities to make group windstorm coverage to our churches in combination with the Presbytery of Tampa Bay. (This is still in progress, and information should become available in late February.)

Respectfully submitted by:

Alan Penick

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Evangelism and Church Development Committee

Clint Cottrell

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times” is probably a good description of the Evangelism and Church Development Committee for 2008. It was the best of times in that, thanks to the help of First Sarasota, we received reports and have begun funding a possible new church development in Sarasota, reaching out to the Hispanic community. We also saw a continuance of the Acts 16:5 ministry, helping to lead growth and redevelopment within our Presbytery. On the sad end, we had to say good-bye to the Naples Brazilian Fellowship as immigration and financial issues just decimated our hopes for a new church development, as well as the ministry there for the Rev. Silvana Franca. And of course, we sent our best wishes to our friend and guide, the Rev. Dr. Bob Rea who retired, yet again. Much more happened, but through it all, God has provided and we are excited to see what the Lord has in store for 2009!

Respectfully submitted by:

Clint Cottrell

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT
Committee on Ministry
Kathleen Weller

During 2008 the Presbytery had a total of 12 new members with whom our COM liaisons and the Presbytery staff have been closely involved. We rejoice with the following ministers, and we welcome these colleagues into membership in Peace River Presbytery:

February, 2008

- Rev. Gerald Wise
- Rev. Benjamin Keller
- Rev. Ellis Graves, HR

August, 2008

- Rev. Thomas Beech, HR

May, 2008

- Rev. Dr. Maynard Pittendreigh
- Rev. Walter Griffith

November, 2008

- Rev. Dr. Wayne Blaser
- Rev. Dr. Stephen McConnell
- Rev. Dr. Edward Thompson

Congratulations to newly ordained ministers who were welcomed into membership and who are serving in our Presbytery:

Rev. Samantha Keller
Rev. Silvana Franca
Rev. Tricia Dillon Thomas

Also, congratulations to the pastors who accepted new calls within the Presbytery:

- Rev. Daniel Hagmaier
- Rev. Scott Wilson
- Rev. Steven Grant

We give thanks for the Interim, Designated and Temporary leadership of the following ministers:

Rev. Dr. Robert Bohl
Rev. John Cairns
Rev. Craig Countiss
Rev. Dr. G. Russell Hickman
Rev. Dr. Taylor Hill
Rev. Stephan Nagy

Other committee accomplishments:

- ▶ On April 8 and October 30, 2008 the Committee held its annual Sexual Misconduct Prevention Workshops. Pastors and educators are required to attend one of these workshops yearly. Thanks to the pastors and educators who attended.
- ▶ Completed Triennial Visits with sessions and pastors
- ▶ Approved the retirement of Rev. C. William Hull
- ▶ Acknowledged the retirement of Rev. Dr. Robert Rea
- ▶ Approved the retirement of certified Christian educator Candy Reid

Church Triumphant

Rev. Ellis Graves and Rev. Ormond Hampton

Respectfully submitted by:
Kathleen Weller

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT
Mission and Justice Committee
Emilie Kimbrough

The primary goal of the Mission and Justice Committee in 2008 was to gather information about all of the areas for which we have been assigned responsibility, educate ourselves, and put the information in a form that could be shared with the churches.

We made an effort to meet with the chairs of the Mission Committees at each church, share this information with them and gather from them the mission projects in which each church is participating. In some instances, we met with the entire Mission Committee. We shared with each Mission Chair the name and phone number of the mission chairs of all of the churches, and furnished a list of missions that were being serviced by several churches with the anticipation that the churches would communicate with each other about the work being done.

We reviewed the budget with Bill Setchel, Financial Secretary for Peace River Presbytery, and recommended some changes. We revised the standing rules to better reflect the work of the committee. We compiled the list of organizations with which Peace River Presbytery has a covenant relationship and tried to confirm that we were carrying out our responsibility.

The members of the Mission and Justice Committee are committed to mission and it was a pleasure to serve with them.

Respectfully submitted by:
Emilie Kimbrough

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT
Records and Overtures Committee
Ray Angle

The Records and Overtures Committee (R&O) is composed of dedicated members representing the geographical areas of the Presbytery. In 2008 they consisted of Bobbi Bancroft, Rev. Phil Bliss, Dick Fernstrum, Dee Dressler, and Ray Angle, Chair.

During 2008 we arranged for the 2009 Presbytery meetings to be held at the following:

Trinity PC, Venice	Thursday	February 26, 2009
Pine Shores PC, Sarasota	Thursday	May 28, 2009
Cypress Lake PC, Fort Myers	Saturday	August 22, 2009
Venice PC, Venice	Thursday	November 19, 2009

We finalized the Pine Shores Presbyterian Church overture for presentation to the Presbytery meeting on February 28, 2008, which, following presentation and debate, was defeated.

On May 22, 2008, we held a stated meeting breakout session entitled "Problem Solving for Clerks of/to Session" wherein ten clerks were present. We had a lively meeting and questions concerning procedures were discussed.

During October, 2008, we reviewed Session records for 35 of the 38 churches in Peace River Presbytery, with the remaining 3 churches being followed closely to have their records reviewed. We were assisted in this reading by Rev. Bob Hultz, Susie Smith, Sue Borst, Carolyn Magarro, and Kris Doyle, and we thank them for their cooperation.

During July we received from General Assembly the Proposed Amendments to the Constitution of the PC (USA), as well as the Proposed Ecumenical Statements for review with recommendations to be made at the stated meeting on February 26, 2009.

During this time, R&O, through the Council and Theology and Worship (T&W), arranged to have five cluster meetings throughout PRP to be conducted by T&W for periods of discernment regarding the overtures in question. These were ably led by Rev. John Cairns and Sally Bull, and attendance and interest was excellent.

Respectfully submitted by:
Ray Angle

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT
Nominations Committee
Bill Oehler

The job of the Nominations Committee is to seek out and nominate qualified persons for the leadership of Presbytery and its mission. To that end we are pleased to list a few of the accomplishments in 2008.

- The work of Peace River Presbytery is done primarily through its 11 standing committees, commissions and boards and 3 partner entities, involving approximately 130 laypersons and clergy. In 2008 the Nominations Committee:
 1. Selected and presented for election as members of standing committees and boards:
 - 28 persons to serve a first term on a Presbytery committee/board
 - 22 persons for re-election to a second term
 2. Presented for election as officers in 2009
 - Elder Mary Lee Mann, First Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers, Moderator
 - Rev. Dan Hagmaier, Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers, Chair of Council
 - Rev. H Tim Halverson, Faith Presbyterian Church, Cape Coral, Moderator-in-Nomination
- Maintained communication with committees through a liaison system whereby a member of the Nominations Committee served as a contact with each of the committees in order to determine the persons who would be best suited for the work of a particular committee.
- Presented Rev. Dan Hagmaier, Westminster (at that time) and Elder Bill Witney, Cypress Lake as Commissioners to Synod of South Atlantic.
- Refined brief descriptions of the work of each committee for use in helping a prospective committee member understand the responsibilities of the committee on which he/she is asked to serve.
- Through in-depth research and discussion, began the process of refining procedures for the selection of General Assembly commissioners.
- Recommended the integration of the Committee on Representation with the Records and Overtures Committee.

During the year we received with regret the resignation of Rev. Jane Jones-Norris from the Nominations Committee, and we give thanks to Rev. John Hunt, Honorably Retired; Bill Oehler, Vanderbilt, chair; and Kris Doyle, Moorings, secretary, who have completed their terms and are not eligible for re-election.

Continuing members of the committee into 2009 are:

Dottie Kattell, Pine Shores, Sarasota
Dick Fernstrum, First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota
Mary Lee Mann, First Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers
Bob LeSage, Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers
Rev. Steve Mock, First Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda

Newly elected to the committee at the November 20, 2008 Presbytery meeting are:

Rev. Russ Hickman, Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, North Fort Myers;

Rev. Ruth Schaaff, Church of the Palms, Sarasota;

Reid Richmond, Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church, Naples

Barbara Church, First Presbyterian Church, Naples

Respectfully submitted by:

Bill Oehler

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Personnel Committee

Kathi Wiggins

The committee drafted job descriptions for a proposed Interim Staff Design for the Presbytery and presented it for Presbytery's approval. Although approved, only one position has been filled due to 2009 budgetary restrictions.

The committee created and sent out evaluation forms for all elected staff.

The committee assisted the General Presbyter in the review of support staff and conducted the annual performance review of the General Presbyter.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kathi Wiggins

2008 Vice-Chair of the Personnel Committee

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Preparation for Ministry Committee

Jo Ann Leasure

This past year the committee was hard at work trying to make the process for Inquirers, Candidates and Sessions clearer. We did this by completing the "Covenant Journey: The Process of Discernment for Ministry of Word and Sacrament". This was presented to Presbytery and accepted. The plan gives Sessions and prospective Inquirers a good overview of the process and responsibilities of those involved. The members of the committee have met with Sessions to review the process before they take someone under care. It seems this procedure is working well, and Sessions are very appreciative of our meeting with them.

The committee worked on keeping our records up to date. We have developed a form to document each time we have contact with Inquirers, Candidates and Sessions.

The committee is really trying to keep in contact with those in our process. We continue to develop relationships with not only our Inquirers and Candidates but also with Sessions.

This has been a good year for our committee as we learn and grow.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jo Ann Leasure

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT
Leadership and Congregational Development Committee
Chris Adams

Members: Chris Adams, *chair*, Sue Gooding, *vice-chair*, Debbie Carney, Rachel Carrier, Bill Clough, Terri Jo Crego, Max Furbringer, Diane Jansen, Lou Thompson, Jonathan Lange, James McDonald, Don Roth, Tom Webber.

Mission

The purpose of the Leadership and Congregational Development Committee is to connect and support our 38 congregations as partners together to advance the mission of Jesus Christ both near and far. (*from the PRP Mission Statement*)

Re-Organization

During the past year, the LCD committee spent significant time re-organizing into ministry action teams that would carry on the many responsibilities given our committee. Each member of the committee oversees an area of ministry and is empowered to recruit and include as many others from PRP as necessary to accomplish its goals.

THE MAIN EVENT

In February, LCD sponsored a leadership and training event highlighting ministry with families in Florida. Our keynote speaker was the Reverend Rich Melheim, founder of Faith Inkubators. In addition to the theme, several important officer training workshops were held.

Retreats/Events/Cluster Groups

A workshop was offered in February to educate congregations on how to establish and promote a meaningful Health Ministry Program.

Various opportunities were provided for youth ministry in 2008: the West Virginia High School Mission Trip, Middle School Urban Mission Camp, and Presbyterian Youth Council Middle School Retreat. Cluster groups also conducted several youth ministry events together in all three cluster areas, North, Middle and South. Presbyterian Youth Council will be taking some time to re-organize and plan during 2009 before launching additional opportunities next year.

The Older Adult Ministry Team is working hard to plan some retreat opportunities in 2009. Look for more information to come on these events and resources.

CARE-Actors

Recognizing the need for additional opportunities to connect the needs and resources of congregations, the LCD committee has begun work on identifying and training individuals who will attend congregational events, get to know key leaders and programs in congregations, and then suggest and offer ways congregations can connect for shared ministry. Look for more information to follow in 2009.

Respectfully submitted by:
Chris Adams

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT
Theology and Worship Committee
Larry Yerger

We made plans to address amendments passed at GA at Presbytery-wide meetings to inform members of Presbytery of the consequences of either ratifying or declining the acceptance of all the proposed Amendments to our Book of Order. Reflection and discussion groups for the Fall, based on the book *Death by Suburb* by David L. Goetz, were held, led by several different people in a presentation/discussion format. We hope that this reflection/discussion paradigm will segue into discussion groups concerning various theological matters that have emerged from General Assembly prior to the votes on such matters coming before presbytery.

We also studied a proposal to submit to Presbytery which suggests that the Sacrament of the Eucharist be celebrated at every stated meeting of the Presbytery. It is the (tentative) consensus of the committee that such celebrations of the Sacrament, considering also the fact that we will soon be celebrating the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin, will help to build community and strengthen the bonds we have within the Presbytery during these days of difficult, and potentially divisive, theological discernment. A firm recommendation to the Presbytery will hopefully be forthcoming from the Theology and Worship Committee after additional dialogue and refinement of the proposal.

Any suggestions that will help the committee's discussions in the months and years ahead as we minister in Southwest Florida are always welcome. This is my final report for the Theology and Worship Committee as I am leaving the Wintergarden Church as Pastor to accept a new Call to Ministry in Palo Duro Presbytery in Texas - so may God's peace be with you all as you continue to serve Him in Peace River Presbytery.

Respectively Submitted,
The Rev. Lawrence D. (Larry) Yerger

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT
Presbyterian Women
Faith Battan

The 18th Annual Gathering of Presbyterian Women was held on February 2, 2008 at Faith PC, Cape Coral. Our theme was "Gifts of Love" and featured prayer shawls. 315 women attended. Rev. Dr. Laura Mendenhall, President, Columbia Theological Seminary, was the keynote speaker and she related her journey to us.

Our Spring Retreat was held at DaySpring Conference Center, Parrish on April 28-30, 2008. "Clowning Around" was our theme. Peace River Presbyterian Women were in charge; Tampa Bay Presbyterian Women co-chaired. Total attendance was 164. The Horizons Bible study, "Jubilee! Luke's Gospel for the Poor", was led by Martha Huntley, Hope PC, Clearwater.

At the September 4, 2008 meeting of the Peace River Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team in North Port we were fortunate to have Rev. Noelle Damico, representative of Campaign for Fair Food, address us. She was very informative and updated us on the current situation with Whole Foods and Burger King. Time was provided for questions and answers.

The Helpshop was held on October 18, 2008 at Trinity PC, Venice. A play, "Do We Believe In Miracles?" was presented. The Helpshop provides an opportunity for Presbyterian Women to attend classes to learn about the positions of Moderator, Treasurer, Historian, Together in Service (Mission Opportunities) and Spiritual Life.

On several occasions this year, Graham Hart, General Presbyter, spoke to us on current subjects of interest, e.g., Immokalee, Rev. Miguel Estrada.

This year has been very rewarding for everyone involved. Our programs have been challenging and the attendance has been good.

Respectfully submitted,
Faith T. Battan, Moderator
Peace River Presbytery Presbyterian Women

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT
Beth-El Farmworker Ministry
Dave Moore

A brief overview for Beth-El Farmworker Ministry in 2008

We are very blessed to be in covenant with three Presbyteries for prayers, volunteer support and benevolences. At Misión Peniel in Immokalee, there were only two Fridays in the entire year that we did not have volunteers assisting us with the Friday meal distribution and outreach. Thanks be to God!

Being a place for spiritual comfort for the farmworker community has been a real blessing for Pastor Miguel. He has countless stories of those that we have been able to assist...and this is only available through your support, the support of the other Presbyteries, and through support from our General Assembly in the form of a financial grant. Each Friday, in addition to providing clothes or toiletries to the farmworkers, we provide a simple meal to those that labor so hard in the fields.

Pastor Miguel has a weekly Sunday morning radio call-in show on the Coalition of Immokalee Workers low wattage FM station. He is the only non-Coalition-member to host a program. A group of those that worship with Misión Peniel each week recently distributed blankets to various labor camps in Immokalee. These all had been donated by a church within Peace River Presbytery.

In the main campus in Wimauma, four summer programs were held for youth. At Christmas time we distributed toys to over 700 children. The youth group of the worshipping congregation continues to grow. They have recently attended two Synod events for Hispanic youth. The women's group continues to be the leader of all groups within the congregation.

We began our second expansion into Arcadia in late July for two days a week. Even though this was suspended in mid November due to financial restraints, we are pleased to announce that the last week in January, 2009 we began to go forth again as we are commanded in Matthew 28.

Our food pantry in Wimauma saw an increase of almost forty percent in those applying for a weekly food basket. Every Tuesday we distribute over 325 baskets. The need is great.

Thanks to Peace River Presbytery we are able to make a difference in so many lives of those poor, oppressed, and marginalized members of the communities that we serve.

Respectfully submitted by:
Dave Moore
Executive Director, Beth-El Farmworker Ministry

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
2008 ANNUAL REPORT
Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center
John Reiter

In 2008 Cedarkirk, your camp and conference center, celebrated a year filled with both positive changes and continued commitment to being a place apart. Cedarkirk welcomed thousands of guests, including nearly 900 campers in our summer camp programs, as well as 107 for the Confirmation Retreats, 192 for the seasonal elementary-age retreats, and 27 for the Christmas Camp Retreat. In addition to our ministries of hospitality with the guest groups and Christian education programs, Cedarkirk also provided mission programs. Through the generosity of individuals and churches, we were able to offer a Christmas retreat for the women residents of Metropolitan Ministries, a local shelter for the homeless. We also provided 19 international college students a program of peacemaking and hospitality with the Christmas International House. Our Challenge to Change program, which provides meaningful mission experiences for youth groups, was a special highlight this year. The participation doubled in attendance and provided Beth-El and Metropolitan Ministries with assistance. The new Retreat House has become a tremendous asset to the facility offerings which many smaller groups are appreciating. The Board continues its work on the Master Site Plan, and the first phase of permitting and construction is underway. The new Retreat Cottage should be completed by the end of 2009. This year was one of many changes in the staff family as Cedarkirk welcomed Karin Dale (Office Manager), Jackie Butler (Food Service Director), John Reiter (Executive Director), and Matt Shick (Program Director) to new positions. The Board and staff are particularly excited about the gifts that have been assembled and look forward to a year of excellence in ministry and growth. We are so grateful for the blessing of being a blessing in the lives of so many children, youth and adults. Thank you for your ongoing mission support, your active participation in Cedarkirk's ministry. Most of all, thank you for your prayers.

Respectfully submitted by:

Rev. John Reiter, Executive Director
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