



# THE INTERPRETER

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

APRIL 2006

## SPEAKING FROM THE HART Finding Hope- Giving Hope - Dialing Hope

Hope...along with faith, love of family, the Holy Spirit, and doctors...is what brought healing when I was a 24-year-old newly-wed senior at Princeton Seminary, and the doctors told me the week before Christmas that I had cancer. The "C" word, I thought at the time, was only supposed to be said to old people. I was angry, scared, yet loved and hopeful. Looking back --- 31 years and 3 children later --- there were many things that made a difference. One was a wise doctor who at the time said "three things will affect your cure, none of which I have ultimate control over: 1) your faith, 2) your attitude, and 3) your body's reaction to all we can do medically which included 3 surgeries, 2 ½ years of chemotherapy, and radiation treatments. What was it Dr. Growney gave me? It was a will to partner with the medical team, my family, and God to do my part. In a word he gave me HOPE. Linda did not give up... the doctors and my church were not giving up... so I was not about to give up. They all helped me find hope. As we come to Easter, hope is central to our Christian faith... it is also what we, as Christ's disciples, are invited to share with others.

One Great Hour of Sharing is really about giving HOPE. Through the Self-Development of People and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, which is where OGHS offerings go, we are sharing HOPE with those who need it most. Peace River is the recipient of the trust of thousands of Presbyterian from across the country who through PDA gave us over \$350,000 since Charley blew through. In 2005, Peace River Presbytery helped rebuild 125 homes, and hosted 2500 volunteers. Additionally, 8 congregations were assisted with grants. In short, through OGHS we have been given HOPE, and we in turn have shared HOPE with others. I encourage each of us to generously share HOPE by giving to OGHS.

Roger Kunkel, Parish Associate at First, Sarasota gets up at 4:00 a.m. every morning to record a daily message for a ministry called DIAL HOPE (866-528-4673). This ministry, which he began in 2001, has been so well received that even soldiers in Iraq, through the military, can access that daily message. Many thanks to Roger for the HOPE he shares every day, and to those who initially saw the vision of how OGHS could restore HOPE, and to the many people in my life and yours who continue to give us HOPE.

Grateful and Hope-filled,  
Graham Hart

## Please Join Us in Prayer for the Following Churches:

<a href="#">First, Bradenton</a>	April 2
<a href="#">Kirkwood, Bradenton</a>	April 9
<a href="#">Palma Sola, Bradenton</a>	April 16
<a href="#">Westminster, Bradenton</a>	April 23
<a href="#">Faith, Cape Coral</a>	April 30

Also, please be in prayer for the upcoming General Assembly that meets from June 15 to June 22 in Birmingham, Alabama.



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- April 12** – Deadline for the Summer Issue of P.R.I.M.E. Times
- April 20** – Joining Hearts and Hands National Steering Committee meets with pastors in Naples. (For more information, e-mail [andrea@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:andrea@peacriverpresbytery.org).)
- April 22** - Super Saturday of Super Mission Beth-El Farmworker Ministry 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. [dave@beth-el.info](mailto:dave@beth-el.info); <http://www.beth-el.info>

## Highlights February 23, 2006 Stated Meeting Peace River Presbytery



The members and staff of First, Lehigh Acres welcomed the presbytery and set the tone for an informative and upbeat meeting. John (Mike) Loudon and Kathleen Weller led the Presbytery in worship. With humor and thoughtfulness, Loudon reported on the work of Peace, Unity, and Purity Task Force. A copy of this report is posted on [www.peacriverpresbytery.org](http://www.peacriverpresbytery.org) under Presbytery Meetings.

Following in the pattern of using part of its time to learn more about ongoing work, the Presbytery broke into groups on: 1) Preparation for Ministry; 2) Records and Overtures; 3) Camp and Conference Ministry, 4)

Presbyterian Women; and 5) Question and Answer Time with Mike Loudon.

The Presbytery welcomed the following new members: Deva McQueen, member-at-large (from Olympia Presbytery); Sally Bull, HR (from Central Florida Presbytery); George Chorba, HR (from Newton Presbytery); and Ron Miller, Parish Associate for First Sarasota (from Wabash Presbytery).

The "2005 Accomplishments and Reports of Peace River Presbytery" contributed to the upbeat news of the day. The past year brought about involvement and progress in many areas of our corporate life – expansion of the Beth-El Farmworker Ministry, ongoing hurricane recovery work, the Mission Partnership in Guatemala, the beginning of the Joining Hearts and Hands Capital Campaign, and work in new church development.



There was great joy and much excitement in the vote to organize the 38<sup>th</sup> church in our Presbytery – Christ Church of Longboat Key! A "busload" of the members of this congregation was

present to share in this special moment. This congregation was organized with 107 members and 22 affiliate members.

Presbytery Moderator Elaine Barnett was honored for her years of creative and devoted service to the church by the educators of Peace River Presbytery. Elaine was selected as the 2006 Educator of the Year by the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators.



As we welcomed Christ Church of Longboat Key and celebrated Elaine Barnett's recognition as Educator of the Year, Bill Hull reminded us that along with these positive events, at least two of our congregations are celebrating special anniversaries this year: First Sarasota is 100 years old and Kirkwood in Bradenton is 25 years old!

In an effort to improve the meetings of Presbytery, the Presbytery Council distributed a feedback sheet with three questions. Just a few of the responses were:

1. What did I learn today?
  - a. "Something of what is going on in other churches in the Presbytery."
  - b. "Lots about P.U.P. Task Force. Having occasional and appropriate hymns between reports is excellent."
2. What do we need to learn as a Presbytery?
  - a. "How to bring minorities (Hispanic, African-American, etc.) to know about reformed theology and to increase membership of minorities in our congregations."
  - b. "The importance of attending Presbytery meetings."
3. For what are you thankful about Peace River Presbytery (committees, congregations, pastors, staff, Presbytery, etc.)?
  - a. "Our connection with other churches."
  - b. "Keeping churches focused on mission throughout SW Florida."

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### "Great News" ...A Message for Everyone

A new communication for all 23,000 worshipers in Peace River Presbytery was delivered to all 38 churches the week of 3-13-06. Entitled "[Great News](#)", the four page color publication was scheduled to be inserted in the Sunday bulletin prior to Easter.

There were three primary messages in this landmark publication: 1) to inform us that laity, clergy and staff all are an integral part of our ministry which gives life and meaning to our effort to transform lives through Christ down our streets and around the world; 2) to tell of the good works both completed and begun over the past year, and 3) to cast a vision of the future of ministry for our presbytery and of the initiatives already started to make that vision a reality.

It is intended that this will be published annually so all who attend any one of our churches receive a first hand account of the scope and breadth of the works of Peace River Presbytery. This is an integral piece of a broader communication plan designed to target our various constituencies with actionable messages that help connect us all to the one ministry for which we have been charged by Christ. Your feedback on this important new initiative is welcome.

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### NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

**REMINDER:** [First Presbyterian Church of Punta Gorda](#) has a new address - **25250 Airport Road, Punta Gorda, 33950**. The church will hold a dedication service of worship on April 2 at 3:00 p.m.

## Halftime Summit at Venice Presbyterian

Have you wondered how you or members of your congregation can translate the talents, passions and interests developed through a successful career into something new, challenging and satisfying? Each of us is being called by God to do something of significance with the rest of our lives.



On Thursday, April 27, **Venice Presbyterian Church** will host a "Halftime Summit." The purpose of this event is to help people discover what it is that God is now calling them to do or to be. Lloyd Reeb, author of "From Success to Significance – *When Pursuit of Success Isn't Enough*," will facilitate the event.

This is a one-day event which will begin at 7:30 a.m. and conclude at 3 p.m. Cost is \$40 per person which includes continental breakfast, lunch and all program materials. Participants may register either by visiting our website [www.venicepresbyterian.org](http://www.venicepresbyterian.org) or by calling the church office (941) 488-2258.

**"So Great a Cloud of Witnesses" (Heb.12:1-2)**  
**This is the theme for General Assembly PC(USA) in Birmingham, Alabama in June 2006.**

A **Choir from the Democratic Republic of the Congo** (DRC) is scheduled to perform at General Assembly, Birmingham, AL on June 18, 2006. The choir is sponsored by Congo Mission Network - Partnership in Mission, Worldwide Ministries Division, PC(USA).



Prior to General Assembly, the Congo Choir - US Tour is to be launched at **Our Cultural Connections (OCC)** on June 17, 2006. OCC is a Sarasota multicultural festival June 16-18 with a goal of educating, understanding and celebrating our common humanity. The Congo Mission Network plans to feature the Congo Choir Tour in **twelve** PCUSA presbyteries, church, or community Host Sites this summer to educate the public about the devastation and needs in the DR Congo. For the itinerary in Peace River Presbytery (PRP) area June 11-17, 2006, please go to the following website: [www.ourculturalconnections.org](http://www.ourculturalconnections.org).

Sarasota Host Site needs your **help** and **suggestions to raise \$5000 Seed Money now** to pay our share of Choir travel to US. Together, with fervent prayer and financial support provided by the people in 38 Churches and PW groups within the vicinity of Peace River Presbytery, we can reach the \$5000 needed to bring the Congo Choir Tour to our area! **"God is able."**

Please make checks payable to: **The Congo Choir Tour General Fund** and mail to: Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, 7950 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34231. Attention: Mrs. Dorothy Kirkpatrick.

On behalf of Congo Mission Network, PC(USA), sincere thanks to all in Peace River Presbytery area for your prayers and support.

Blessings,  
Muriel J. Maxwell, Sarasota Host Site  
Coordinator (941) 377-3588

## 1<sup>st</sup> Naples Hosts National Steering Committee "Joining Hearts and Hands"



We are proud to announce that the 25 member National Steering Committee for "Joining Hearts and Hands" will be in Naples April 19 and 20 to hold their bi-annual meeting and hear the story of the Peace River campaign initiatives. John J. Detterick, Director of General Assembly Council and Bill Saul, Chair of the Steering Committee of the Mission Initiative will be among those attending.

The Committee will hear from the Peace River Campaign Committee as well as from the initiative stakeholders for the presbytery causes we are supporting which include New Church Development, a Cedarkirk facility upgrade and our Beth-El Farmworker Mission expansion into Immokalee. A highlight of the two days will consist of a day trip into Immokalee via tour bus with designated stops and talks by local officials and Hispanic Coalition members.

The Peace River "Joining Hearts and Hands" Executive Steering Committee thanks the folks of First Naples for volunteering to host this significant event. This will be a wonderful occasion to share our dreams, tell of the many good works of this presbytery, and form bonds that will inevitably help both the National and Peace River objectives to be realized.

[Gary Miller](#)  
Capital Campaign Director, Joining Hearts & Hands

## Long Term Volunteers Needed Peace River Presbytery Disaster Response For June and July, 2006

- 1) Experienced Construction Volunteer, Monday through Friday to help supervise work teams and get construction supplies to work sites, assist in the assessment of houses. Training provided.
- 2) Volunteer for Receptionist/ Computer Data Entry and other Office Work two days a week.
- 3) Volunteer to set up and maintain a web site.



[ddr1ann@yahoo.com](mailto:ddr1ann@yahoo.com) or 863-494-1000

## Peace River Presbytery Disaster Response: What's Happening?

These have been busy days in disaster recovery. Just this year thirty three homes have been repaired. Five houses have been completed and the cases closed. Another fourteen homes are in the construction process. We have hosted 22 work teams: 263 volunteers, totaling 7008 work hours, and \$122,990.40 in volunteer labor. We are now completing repairs on a building that will allow us to house 50 more volunteers per week. We celebrate these successes!



Yet our hearts still ache for the losses of those we serve, and the work that still needs to be done. Bill and Nancy lost their home in hurricane Charley. Not long after that Susan died from cancer. Then Bill's father died. Then FEMA told Bill they were going to remove the FEMA trailer he was living in on February 14th. Instead, they removed it on February 13th, before he could get all his personal possessions out. They only left his dog, Molly's food strewn across the yard. Bill and Molly spent one of the coldest nights of the year in his truck. Our case manager went "dumpster diving," and found some of his possessions in a dumpster. His story was on the front page of the paper for two days, and FEMA called and said they had made a mistake! Bill is living in a trailer donated by a stranger while his house is awaiting our construction.

### Presbyterians Seeking Purpose-Driven® Ministry

Since 1998, Trinity Presbyterian Church of Satellite Beach, Florida has been adapting the purpose-driven® model of ministry in ways that are appropriate for Presbyterians. **The 4<sup>th</sup> annual PSPDM Conference will be held April 26-28, 2006 in Satellite Beach.** The Conference will again feature the *Foundational Seminar* for those who are new to the PD concept for ministry, and the *Already-In-Transition Seminar* for leaders already utilizing the Purpose-Driven® model. For more information, contact the Conference Administrator Kim Register, call 321-777-2047 or e-mail [info@purposedrivenpresbyteriansnetwork.net](mailto:info@purposedrivenpresbyteriansnetwork.net).

### CAMPUS MINISTER NEEDED

The Sarasota Association for Campus Ministry is seeking a part-time Campus Minister who can devote 10-15 flexible hours per week, Monday thru Friday, in ministry to students, staff and faculty on the campuses of **New College, Ringling School of Art and Design, and University of South Florida.** The Campus Minister serves as a staff person



of the Board of Directors, supported by it, and is accountable to it, for reporting and supervision. An Ordained Minister is preferred with experience in Campus Ministry. A Seminary graduate, Ordained Elder or Deacon with experience in youth and college age adult ministry may be considered. Please send resume with at least three references. E-mail or telephone for more information to:

Rev. Dr. Lee D. Snyder, President, Board of Directors  
941 46th St., Sarasota, Fl., 34234  
Telephone: 941-355-4513 Email: [LLDSnyder@aol.com](mailto:LLDSnyder@aol.com)

### SUMMER YOUTH TRIPS

There is still space available for Middle School Youth and Senior High Youth to participate in the exciting opportunities for hands on mission this summer, not to mention a great deal of fun and fellowship. For more information, check the PRP website or refer to the registration forms which have been mailed to all churches. **For more details, contact Candy Reid, [candy@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:candy@peacriverpresbytery.org)**



### NEW ADULT STUDY RESOURCE AVAILABLE

Peace River Presbytery's Resource Center has purchased a one year subscription to the exciting new adult study resource: *THE THOUGHTFUL CHRISTIAN*. This study material ranges from one to four sessions and is available online at [www.TheThoughtfulChristian.com](http://www.TheThoughtfulChristian.com). Topics include: Bible Study and Theology, Christian Living, Spirituality, Contemporary Issues, Popular Culture: Books and Movies.

Individual church subscriptions can be purchased at a reduced rate from now until September 2006 or you may go online, determine which study units you would like to use, and call Candy at the Resource Center to download study units which can then be mailed or faxed to your church.

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY  
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[www.peacriverpresbytery.org](http://www.peacriverpresbytery.org)

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[Craig Countiss](#), Stated Clerk  
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