



THE INTERPRETER

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

FEBRUARY 2006

SPEAKING FROM THE HART

Sweet, Converts, Christ Church, and You

I am a convert. I did not grow up Presbyterian. A generation ago that would have put me in the minority in many Presbyterian congregations. Today, in most of our churches, a majority of our members did not grow up Presbyterian. We are a church of converts. When I found my way back to church as a senior in college, it was not the church of my youth, but it was the Presbyterian Church in my home town of Doylestown, PA.

Why did I convert? At Doylestown Presbyterian, I experienced an amazing grace, God's sovereign love, Presbyterian order and ardor, a spirited worship, the way Calvin's prodigies at DPC engaged culture (personal faith necessarily leads to public involvement), and a form of government in which the council of elders discerned the will of Christ. These experiences captured my energy, imagination, intelligence and heart when I was a 20-year-old college student. I am grateful and thrilled that on Longboat Key a group of adults have come to that same decision and conviction. Thanks be to God.

As a Presbytery, we rejoice, and **we welcome Christ Church of Longboat Key as the 38th congregation of Peace River Presbytery.** After several months of dialogue, study, and prayer, a fellowship of about 100 previously nondenominational Christians on Longboat Key, recently led by the Rev. Ray Woody, will come to the February 23 Presbytery meeting seeking acceptance of their covenant and issuance of their church charter. Assuming the Presbytery approves their request, we encourage all who can to join them for their service of organization on Sunday, February 26 at 10:00 a.m. when they gather to affirm the great truths of our Reformed faith and tradition. A map to their worship location can be found on page 17 in the map section of the 2006 Peace River Presbytery Informational Handbook. For more information, call Ray Woody at 941-379-2943.

But that's not all God is doing in our midst at this time. One of the greatest theological minds of our times – Leonard Sweet - and one of the greatest Presbyterian evangelists of our age – Leighton Ford - will be with us at Presbytery events in February and March. Please register as soon as possible (see information in this issue).

Also, one of the other great life events is the marriage of a child, so my wife Linda and I rejoice as we prepare for the wedding of our daughter, Laura, in February.

With gratitude and in anticipation of all God is doing,
Graham Hart

HAVE YOU REGISTERED FOR OFFICERS' INSTITUTE YET?

Friday, February 10, 2006

Saturday, February 11, 2006

[Church of the Palms](#), Sarasota

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: [Dr. Leonard Sweet](#)

Dr. Sweet is a nationally and internationally known speaker at conferences and events, a noted author, and an ordained Methodist minister. For more information about Dr. Sweet, you can log onto his website at leonardsweet.com.

PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR CHURCH OFFICE OR GO TO www.peacriverpresbytery.org (Bulletin Board or Leader Development) FOR REGISTRATION FORMS. You may also register online.

SCHEDULE:

Friday evening: Cost \$7.00

7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Dessert and Conversation

Saturday: \$15 by February 6; \$20 after February 6

- 8:30 Registration
- 9:00 Welcome
- 9:15 Keynote Address by Dr. Sweet
- 10:30 Classes (**choose one**)
 - New Elder Training
 - New Deacon Training
 - Spiritual Practices for Church Officers
 - Productive Committee Meetings
 - The Clerk of Session
 - Conversations with Dr. Sweet
- 12:00 LUNCH
- 1:00 Dr. Sweet
- 2:00 Closing Worship
- 2:30 Event ends

Please Join Us in Prayer for the Following Churches:



Presbyterian Church of the Covenant,
Sarasota
Siesta Key Chapel, Sarasota
[Whitfield Estates](#), Sarasota
[Trinity](#), Venice

February 5
February 12
February 19
February 26

EVANGELISM EVENT

Keynote: Dr. Leighton Ford

"From the Crusade to the Coffee Shop: Fresh Images of Evangelism from a Lifelong Evangelist"

Saturday, March 4
Church of the Palms
8:30 to 3:00 p.m.
Cost: \$10 per person

Dr. Ford will have 3 presentations during the day, and lunch is included.

IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO REGISTER!!

If you register after February 28, lunch is not guaranteed.

Registration forms have been sent to each church.

You may also register online at

<http://www.peacriverpresbytery.org> and go to Bulletin Board, or call the Presbytery office at 800-736-4488.

CEDARKIRK NEEDS NURSES



Cedarkirk needs nurses to be on staff for a week at a time in the summer. In addition to free room and board, Cedarkirk will offer one scholarship for camp. For more information or to volunteer, please call Mark or Helen at 813-833-1548 or e-mail at camps@cedarkirk.com.

APCE EVENT in St. Louis, Missouri

Fourteen educators from Peace River Presbytery are attending the [ASSOCIATION OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH EDUCATORS](#) meeting the first week of February. Our Presbytery will undoubtedly have one of the largest groups at the meeting. Our own 2006 Moderator, Elaine Barnett, will be recognized by her peers and colleagues as the APCE EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR. This is a healthy sign of Peace River Presbytery's commitment to ministry with children and youth.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Since August of 2004, THE ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING, which provides funds for Presbyterian Disaster relief, has taken on a new and deeper meaning. We are well on the road to recovery in our area BUT the needs abound in the Gulf coast and elsewhere. For complete information on how your church can be a part of this fantastic offering opportunity, go to <http://www.pcusa.org/oghs/>. You will find all the resources you need to promote this offering.

First Presbyterian Church, Lehigh Acres, will host our February 23, 2006 Stated Meeting.

A huge thank you to youth groups from:

- o First, Bradenton
- o First, Arcadia
- o Whitfield Estates, Sarasota
- o Wintergarden, Murdock
- o Cypress Lake, Fort Myers (adult volunteers)



who worked in hurricane recovery on Saturday, January 21st in Arcadia. In a little over 3 hours under the direction of Rev. Larry Graham-Johnson, our Rebuilding Coordinator, the 60+ workers were able to clear out debris from a house that had been torn down.



Keyboard Excursions

An afternoon of music with
Joel Raney, pianist & Jane Holstein, organist

Sunday, February 19th, 2006
3:00 P.M.

First Presbyterian Church
1402 Manatee Ave. W.
Bradenton, FL 34221
941-746-6141

Tickets sold in advance at the church office and at the door.

Cost: \$8.00 each for adults and children
Doors will open at 2:00 P.M.
Reception to follow.

Free Hymnals Available!

All in excellent condition.

200 Presbyterian Hymnals (Blue)
Westminster/John Knox Press
200 The Hymnal (Burgundy)
The Presbyterian Church in the US



CONTACT: Mary Lee Jordan, Secretary at
Lely Presbyterian Church in Naples, 239-774-6151
for shipping information.

Traditions

What are the Lenten and Easter traditions in your church?

Please e-mail candy@peacriverpresbytery.org and we will share your traditions and ideas in the next issue of *The Interpreter*.

A CELEBRATION OF THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

March 9 – 11, 2006
First Presbyterian Church, Atlanta

Rev. Margaret Towner, member of Peace River Presbytery, will be one of the speakers. For registration information, contact Ruth Hicks at 404-898-0711 or rhicks@presbyteryofgreateratl.org.

YOUTH NEWS



High School Retreat at Cedarkirk

February 25-26, 2006
Cost: \$80

Check our website for more
information.

www.peaceriverpresbytery.org

Confirmation Retreats

Cedarkirk offers two weekend retreats for confirmation study. Check out their website at www.cedarkirk.org for complete information.

SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH IN PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

COMBINATION TRIP: MONTREAT YOUTH CONFERENCE AND WEST VIRGINIA WORK CAMP EXPERIENCE

DATES: June 10-25, 2006

COST: \$600.00 plus \$\$\$ for fast food meals
up and back

FOR: All Senior High Youth – Ages 16 and above
(You must be at least 16 to participate in the West
Virginia Work Camp due to insurance regulations)

WEST VIRGINIA WORK CAMP EXPERIENCE:

DATES: June 17-25, 2006

COST: \$350.00 (extra cost for chartered bus)

MIDDLE SCHOOL URBAN MISSION EXPERIENCE

DATES: June 11-16, 2006

**Space is limited to 20 folks for the Montreat/West
Virginia combo trip, 45 for the West Virginia trip
alone, and 25 for the Middle School Urban Mission
Camp.**

**For more information, go to
www.peaceriverpresbytery.org and click on Youth.**



Updates for the 2006 Peace River Presbytery Informational Handbook

The e-mail address of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church in Naples should be: info@vpcnaples.org

If you need to update your information in the 2006 Peace River Presbytery Informational Handbook, please contact Joan at joan@peaceriverpresbytery.org or 941-426-8421.

Peace River Presbytery Resources

Be sure to check out the resource section at www.peaceriverpresbytery.org, for great new Lent and Easter Ideas.



**DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN VIEW THE
INTERPRETER ON OUR WEB SITE?** Go to
www.peaceriverpresbytery.org/PresbyteryPublications.

You Can Be A Part of *The Interpreter!*

We would love to receive mission stories from your church for future issues of *The Interpreter*. The article may be 150 words and it would be great if you would include a picture. Please submit by the 15th of the month to joan@peaceriverpresbytery.org. If you do not have e-mail, you may mail the article to the Presbytery.

DEADLINE FOR THE SUMMER ISSUE OF P.R.I.M.E. Times: Wednesday, April 12, 2006

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY
5600 Peace River Road
North Port, FL 34287

941-426-8421 or 800-736-4488

www.peaceriverpresbytery.org

[Graham Hart](#), General Presbyter
[Bob Rea](#), Designated Associate Presbyter
[Candy Reid](#), Program Coordinator
[Craig Countiss](#), Stated Clerk
[Jim Barnett](#), Treasurer
[Alesia Sharpe](#), Office Manager
[Bill Setchel](#), Financial Secretary
[Joan Mock](#), Administrative Assistant
[Gary Miller](#), Capital Campaign Director
[Andrea Yerger](#), Administrative Assistant to CC Director