



THE INTERPRETER

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

MARCH 2006

SPEAKING FROM THE HART

God is at work! At the Presbytery meeting on February 23, graciously hosted by First, Lehigh Acres, we officially organized Christ Church of Longboat Key as the 38th congregation of our Presbytery. We were encouraged and challenged by the thoughtful presentation by Mike Loudon from the General Assembly Task force on Peace, Unity and Purity. Mike's remarks can be found on our website, <http://www.peacriverpresbytery.org> after March 3. We welcomed Silvana Franca who has been called to work with our growing Portuguese-speaking Brazilian Fellowship in Naples, and we heard of the 11,500 work days given in 2005 by volunteers in our continuing hurricane recovery work. God is good!!!

Lastly, if you want to learn how we can better share our faith, please join us at the Leighton Ford Workshop (see the article to the right for details). Many times we lament that as a denomination we are losing members. The reality is some local congregations have been slowly hemorrhaging. Bring a group from your church and learn from one of today's most inspiring leaders, who for a lifetime has been helping individuals share their faith and helping churches grow.

Graham Hart

WELCOME CHRIST CHURCH

On Sunday, February 26, over 210 people attended services at Christ Church of Longboat Key at 10:00 a.m. on a blustery spring morning. Nothing dampened the spirits of those present, since an important part of the service was the delivery of a charter to the church as the 38th and newest member of Peace River Presbytery.

The charter and charge to the congregation were presented by General Presbyter, Graham Hart. A commemorative plaque was presented by Elaine Barnett, Moderator of Peace River Presbytery. A ceramic chalice and paten were presented by Stephen Smith, of the Evangelism/New Church Development/Congregational Transformation Committee.

The newly appointed stated supply pastor, and long time shepherd of that flock, Ray Woody, HR, conducted the service, with Bruce Porter, HR, delivering an inspiring sermon to the congregation.

This newest member of the Peace River Family seems charged with the Holy Spirit, and should be a growing presence in the future for Christ on Longboat Key.

Submitted by Steve Smith

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.

**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.

Please Join Us in Prayer for the Following Churches:

Venice Presbyterian , Venice	March 5
First, Arcadia	March 12
First, Bonita Springs	March 19
Braden River, Bradenton	March 26

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



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

March 25 – Peace River Presbytery Mission Day at Beth-El Farmworker Ministry
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

dave@beth-el.info; <http://www.beth-el.info>

May 25 - Peace River Presbytery's Stated Meeting
Venice Presbyterian Church

<http://www.venicepresbyterian.org>

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

On March 19, nineteen months of exile will be over for the members of [First Presbyterian Church of Punta Gorda](#) when they gather to worship in their new home on 25250 Airport Road in Punta Gorda for the first time.



FPC Punta Gorda was so severely damaged by Hurricane Charley that she had to be completely demolished. After determining that it would be impractical to rebuild on its historic location (105 years on Harvey Street), God

provided a former Italian-American Club building and 4.6 acres of land for a new home. Work began on renovating the building in the summer of 2005. On February 24, the official move to the new location began with the offices relocating from the double-wide modular in the parking lot on Harvey Street. After worshipping in the Fellowship Hall of Burnt Store Presbyterian since August 29, 2004, Pastor Steve Mock will lead worship at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 19. The church will hold a dedication service of worship on April 2 at 3:00 p.m. All this would not have been possible without the grace of God and the support of the Presbytery and Presbyterians from all over the country. The Session of FPC Punta Gorda and her members would like to thank God and all who have supported us in prayer throughout this time of displacement. We look forward with great excitement and anticipation to what God will do through us in the coming years.

Wintergarden Presbyterian Church is continuing their 2nd annual "Concerts at the Garden" series. The next concert is Friday March 10, at 7 p.m. with special guests, **The Sweet Adelines of Charlotte County**. There is no charge for this event. Refreshments and desserts provided. Bring family and friends for an enjoyable evening of musical entertainment. Wintergarden is located at 18305 Wintergarden Ave. in Port Charlotte between Pellam Blvd and Collingswood Ave. Call 941-743-5335 for directions or visit our website at www.wintergardenchurch.org

[Trinity Church of Venice](#) is pleased to announce that after a one year hiatus—due to construction—**Free University is back**. It begins on March 9th and continues for five consecutive Thursday evenings thru April 6th.



Free U is Trinity's gift to the larger community when its facilities are turned into a "university campus" offering college and graduate level learning opportunities.

Classes begin at 7 p.m. and conclude one hour later. A zesty meal of hearty soups & homemade breads is available at 6 p.m. **Trinity Church is located at 4365 State Road 776 in Venice.** You may call the Church Office at 493-0018 for more information.

Courses and faculty for 2006 are the following:

COMPARATIVE RELIGION:

Windows on the Muslim World with Rev. Jack Chapin

BIBLICAL ARCHEOLOGY:

The Search for Jesus with Dr. Steve Miller

SCIENCE & SCRIPTURE:

Intelligent Design with Dr. Jack Felch

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION:

Journaling in Prayer with Rev. Jan Bauer

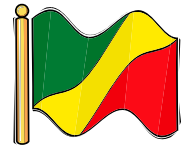
REFORMED THEOLOGY:

Calvinism at the Las Vegas Airport with Dr. Charles Wiggins

THEOLOGY & JURISPRUDENCE:

Guilty with Rev. Ron Kruzel

The Congo Choir Tour (PCUSA) to be launched at "Our Cultural Connections" Festival, in Sarasota, June 16, 2006



In September of 2005 the Congo Mission Network (CMN) held its Annual Meeting in Chicago. **Dr. Rick Ufford-Chase, (current Moderator of General Assembly), Doug Welch, (Coordinator of Central/West Africa – Worldwide Ministries Division PCUSA), and Rev. Gerald Stephens Jr. (Pastor, Birmingham, AL (PCUSA))** jointly proposed bringing a Congo Choir Tour (CCT) to the General Assembly, presbyteries, and churches in several US cities – including communities celebrating multicultural events.

The purpose of the CCT is to raise awareness of the vast needs of the Congolese people, and share their spirit, fortitude and optimism for a better life for their people through the joy and gift of music.

The selection of the Sarasota site (situated in Peace River Presbytery) is highly desirable as it meets the community event criteria, is aligned with the dates of General Assembly, and offers an ideal opportunity for CCT to witness at the Sarasota **"Our Cultural Connections" (OCC) celebration.**

We invite the church members and friends in the Peace River Presbytery to this event on June 16 at the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium, and to consider inviting the Congo Choir to your church.

For further inquiry or interest in this CCT please contact Muriel J. Maxwell, Host Site Coordinator, CCT, Phone: 941-377-3588; E-mail: dcm.mjm@comcast.net

BOOKS FOR PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, KENYA



Many persons and churches of Peace River Presbytery have sent books to the Presbyterian College, Kikuyu, Kenya. You will be interested in the distribution of these books as reported by Amos Maina, the librarian.

1. The library keeps three copies of each book on its shelves.
2. If a lecturer in the classes suggests a book, we keep ten of these books.
3. Remaining books are given to students to start their libraries.
4. Books and Bibles are given to churches and schools.
5. Five churches recently were given Bibles and hymnals.
6. Children's books are part of a library we are starting in the basement of the library.
7. There is a hunger for books by students and pastors in the Presbyteries which we cannot fulfill.



If you or your church have books or Bibles for the library and need information, call Neal Kuyper in Bradenton, 941-761-0179 or e-mail Neal_Christina@MSN.com

COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION

At the November 17, 2005 stated meeting of Peace River Presbytery in Punta Gorda, the Committee on Representation (COR) sponsored an Older Adult Sensitivity Program (OASP) called "The Secure Kit Project". Lee Memorial Health System for OAS had special OASP kits which we purchased and used at the meeting.

At break time, these kits were lent to pastors and elders who had signed up to try them. The kits included items to simulate visual handicaps to represent cataract problems, blindness, or astigmatism. The eyeglasses were worn throughout the break time. Walkers, crutches, and wheelchairs were also lent to others to be used through the meeting.



In addition, the COR invited Ms. Sue Maxwell, a social worker from Lee Memorial, who gave a presentation on "Older Adult Sensitivities". It was very well received by all.

The PRP Resource Center has sixteen OASP kits available on a loan basis. COR highly recommends

that a session or deaconate use the kits at a meeting to develop awareness of people's handicaps and to learn how to aid those with disabilities or particular physical problems.

Incidentally, Lee Martin, a member of PCOR from Palma Sola Presbyterian Church in Bradenton, informed us that the deacons will be introducing the OASP kits there this month. We congratulate them!

We urge others to borrow the OASP kits and have a unique, enriching, and educational sensitivity experience.

SOUPER BOWL TOTALS

As of February 27, we have heard from 30 of our churches who have forwarded funds totaling **\$19,676.04**. If you have not e-mailed your totals to Candy Reid, Program Coordinator, OR if your totals have changed, you may still report your amount at candy@peacriverpresbytery.org



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

It has been about a year and half since the first devastating hurricane hit our area. The ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING began to have a new meaning in our lives. Not only did we in this area receive financial help, but more importantly the offering began to take on a new face in the presence of George and Marian MacNeill, Jim and Katrina Anderson, Larry and Ann Graham-Johnson and the countless other PDA (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) volunteers who have worked so diligently to help us restore our lives.

The story is much the same in Southeast Asia where they are recovering from the tsunami, in Pakistan where earthquakes killed thousands, in the islands where the storms did even more damage, and in the Gulf Coast region that was so devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

We have been blessed beyond measure by the assistance we have received from PDA. Now it is our turn to pass on the blessings. We hope and pray that every church in our Presbytery will plan to receive the One Great Hour of Sharing offering sometime during the Lent/Easter Season.



SUMMER YOUTH TRIPS

**DON'T FORGET THE FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITIES
FOR MISSION THIS SUMMER!**

FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

Urban Mission Camp Experience

June 11-16

Based at Cedarkirk with opportunities for Mission with Metropolitan Ministries in Tampa and at Beth-El. For complete details, check our web site at www.peacriverpresbytery.org

FOR SENIOR HIGH

THE COMBO TRIP: Montreat and West Virginia

June 10-25.

An opportunity to experience the Montreat Youth Conference where you will feed your soul and then on to West Virginia where you will make a difference in the lives of those who live beneath the poverty level.



MONTREAT ONLY:

June 10-17

A chance for youth from smaller member youth groups to join together to experience the [Montreat Youth Conference](#).

WEST VIRGINIA ONLY:

June 17-25

Our 15th annual trek to the country roads of Cabell-Lincoln County, West Virginia, for the mission experience of a lifetime.

For more details, check out our website at www.peacriverpresbytery.org



NEW Peace River Presbytery Resources On Presbyterian Faith and Life

THE PRESBYTERIAN HANDBOOK:

This book provides historical and theological information about Presbyterian beliefs alongside fun-filled facts and practical tips on being a churchgoing follower of Jesus Christ.

THE BAPTISM OF YOUR CHILD: A book for Presbyterian families by Carol Wehrheim. One of a kind gift from Presbyterian pastors and Christian Educators to give to parents.

Both books may be also ordered from www.ppcbooks.com.

DATA ENTRY VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Peace River Presbytery's Disaster Response Office is in need of a volunteer to work 2 to 3 days a week for 2 to 3 months doing data entry in our office in Arcadia. If you are interested, please call Ann Graham-Johnson at 863-954-0626 or 954-732-8133.



THANK YOU!

We appreciate your interest in reading *The Interpreter!*

If you are not receiving your issues via e-mail and would like to do so (and are able to open attachments), please send your current e-mail address to joan@peacriverpresbytery.org.

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN VIEW THE INTERPRETER ON OUR WEB SITE? Go to www.peacriverpresbytery.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@peacriverpresbytery.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.peacriverpresbytery.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