



# The Interpreter

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

NOVEMBER 2007

## Speaking from the Hart Thanksgiving and Migrant Workers

A friend of mine makes me think when he says grace. His prayer always expresses gratitude for the migrant farmworkers who gathered the food, the truck drivers who transported the food, and the grocery store workers who stocked shelves. With our abundantly supplied grocery stores, we take the food chain for granted. Yet without it, we would be like most people in the Third World whose day is organized around getting food.

We are a long way from the Thanksgiving when the pilgrims were saved from starvation by the generosity of their Native American neighbors. This Thanksgiving, our native Central American neighbors who have sought to better their lives by coming to this country are part of the reason we will have an abundance of food on our tables. However, anyone who has been to Immokalee knows migrant farmworkers have it tough. What can we do?

**Be aware:** McDonalds and YUM Food brands have taken notice of the Fair Food Campaign that the PCUSA, after an overture from Presbytery of Tampa Bay, passed at the 214<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. [www.pcusa.org/fairfood](http://www.pcusa.org/fairfood) These corporations now pay a penny more a pound for tomatoes. It is making a difference. Sadly, Burger King has refused to join them. Recently, Burger King's vice-president insinuated that CIW really just wants money under the table. That is not true! The Carter Center, YUM Foods, and the PCUSA have issued strong statements of protest. A peaceful protest is being planned by the CIW at Burger King Headquarters in Miami for November 30 – December 2. For more information: [http://ciw-online.org/BK\\_response.html](http://ciw-online.org/BK_response.html)

**Be involved:** Join with Miguel Estrada, Beth-El Farmworker Ministry's pastor in Immokalee, **newly renamed as Misión Peniel**, and serve a meal on a Friday night or Saturday morning. Misión Peniel is addressing the spiritual needs of the migrant farmworkers by gathering a worship community and offering a pastoral presence.

**Be supportive:** As a Presbytery, we have worked to have a holistic, comprehensive and cooperative presence in Immokalee working with organizations such as Fair Food, IHOPE, Coalition of Immokalee Workers, the Beth-El Farmworker Ministry, and the Interfaith Coalition. We are grateful for the many folks who labor hard on the spiritual needs as well as the ministries of justice for the marginalized and "least of these" that Jesus talked about. This Thanksgiving may we do what we can to express gratitude to God for our many blessings, as well as for those who helped gather the food that we enjoy.

Graham Hart - General Presbyter

## Stated Meeting

Thursday, November 15

9:00 a.m.

Hope United Church  
Fort Myers  
([Click here](#) for map)

## Please Join Us in Prayer for:



- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| November 4  | Community, Englewood                     |
| November 11 | Buckingham, Fort Myers                   |
| November 18 | <a href="#">Covenant, Fort Myers</a>     |
| November 25 | <a href="#">Cypress Lake, Fort Myers</a> |

Please pray for the members of Malibu Presbyterian Church in Malibu, California, whose church building was destroyed in the recent wildfires. We also remember those who lost loved ones, their homes or their businesses. <http://www.pcusa.org/pda/>

## New Web Site Facilitates Mission Giving An easy, quick and reliable way to support PCUSA mission workers

You can make a difference with just \$1 a day! So proclaims a new PCUSA web site rolled out last month to encourage the support of missionaries. Pass the word along: The world needs to know the transforming power of God's love - and you can help make it happen! Visit <http://www.pcusa.org/mission/>.

For other ways to support mission workers, go to [www.pcusa.org/missionconnections](http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections).

## 2-Cents-a-Meal Recipients for 2008 – 2010

Forms are now available for you to suggest recipients of the Peace River Presbytery hunger offerings for the next three years. The forms can be downloaded from the PRP website under Mission & Justice. **All applications must be completed and received at Peace River Presbytery no later than January 10, 2008.**



## Acts 16:5 Introduction Event

One hundred and sixty-two people from 31 churches and 3 new church developments participated in a two-day event under the leadership of Dr. Stan Ott, the director of the Vital Churches Institute, Inc. The purpose was to learn about a two-year program for transforming churches. There was much excitement about this program. The next step is for the teams from these churches to share with their session who will decide about participation in this process. At the November meeting of Presbytery all of our churches will receive the application manual, which gives specific details of how to implement this program if they wish to participate. We need a minimum of 15 churches.

## Do your Christmas shopping early!

That's right! You will have the opportunity to 'shop' at the November 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of Presbytery at Hope United. The Mission and Justice Committee will be selling FAIR TRADE baskets filled with coffee, tea, nuts and dried cranberries in an effort to promote FAIR TRADE PRODUCTS. Look for the bright blue tent, and come by and sample some fair trade items.

Looking for a way to celebrate the birth of Christ and help others? Looking for alternative ways at Christmas time to say "I love you" to someone who already has every "thing" they need and then some? Are you tired of spending hours shopping for just the right gift with the nagging feeling that perhaps consumerism is not the way to celebrate the birthday of the King?

**THEN...we have alternative gift ideas for you.**



For as little as \$12.00 or as much as \$250 dollars, you can support the ongoing work of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Your alternative Christmas gift might just change a life. For complete information, go to the PCUSA website [www.pcusa.org/pda](http://www.pcusa.org/pda) and click on the alternative gift market cards. You will be glad you did.

## Taking a mission trip that requires airfare in 2008?

Check out [www.mtstravel.com/groups](http://www.mtstravel.com/groups) which PDA (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) uses for travel arrangements. They can also be reached by phone at 877-908-8899.

MTS Travel provides

- advance booking with minimal deposit
- names only required 6-90 days prior to travel
- free \$250,000 life insurance with every ticket
- visa, travel insurance and emergency services

**The following is an article which was sent to the Presbytery office regarding rebuilding efforts in New Orleans.**

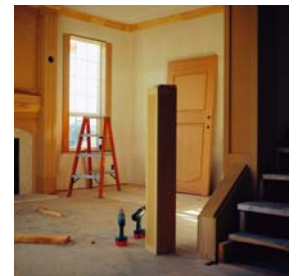
**Even if you haven't helped yet, you still can!**

## Come Join Us . . . AGAIN!

Project Homecoming, the rebuilding effort of The Presbytery of South Louisiana, would like to express our deepest gratitude for the tireless efforts of your group last year in helping to rebuild Katrina-affected New Orleans. We trust that it was a rewarding experience and would like to invite you to return to our city again. As you surely witnessed during your time here, there is still a lot of work to be done, so we are always delighted when volunteers revisit and continue to help us to rebuild. We hope that your group will be one of them...again. All skill levels are welcome.

To bring you up to date on our progress:

- We are no longer involved in gutting and cleaning homes, only rebuilding.
- Project Homecoming is currently working on 20 homes in various stages of restoration. We have hired two construction managers and four construction assistants to facilitate the reconstruction of these homes and to **work alongside you**. With these new folks, we can easily add your own skills to the rebuilding of these homes.
- We are providing all tools and materials and only ask those trades-people who wish to work with their own tools to bring what they need. We also have generators providing power to work homes.
- If you have stayed at John Calvin PC, they have changed room configurations and are only able to house up to 15 adults. All groups including younger helpers may call us at our Project Homecoming number for all housing availability including John Calvin PC. (Susan Wade (504) 942-0444, [susan@pslrecovery.org](mailto:susan@pslrecovery.org))



We appreciate your thoughts and prayers until we meet again. Bob Tobey and I look forward to working with your group again. God bless you with your continuing prayers and return to New Orleans.

**Richard Maag, staff member, Project Homecoming**  
[richard@pslrecovery.org](mailto:richard@pslrecovery.org)

## Presbyterians find ways to earn a “mission” return

*“Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown.” Luke 8:8*

There has been a lot of press in the last few years about Socially Responsible Investing or SRI. A growing number of individuals, churches and religious organizations are investing in a manner that expresses their heartfelt values – not just high returns. They are increasingly concerned about where their investment “seeds” are sown.

When we think about socially responsible investing, we normally think about “avoiding” certain investments like stocks in companies that produce products like alcohol, tobacco or gambling. Some individuals, churches and other religious organizations are taking it a step further. Instead of avoiding certain investments, they proactively search for investments in companies and organizations whose mission makes a difference in the lives of people and society.

One proactive option for Presbyterians – members, pastors, churches and middle governing bodies – is to invest a portion of their savings, reserve accounts or endowment funds in Term Notes with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment & Loan Program. Money invested in this program is used to make low-cost loans to Presbyterian congregations who are building, expanding or reshaping their ministry space. The investors earn a competitive rate of interest plus a “mission” return – knowing that their investment “seeds” are growing churches.



For more information, request an Offering Circular by calling Ben Blake at (800) 903-7457, ext. 5865, by email at [bblake@ctr.pcusa.org](mailto:bblake@ctr.pcusa.org), or by visiting their web site at [www.pcusa.org/pilp](http://www.pcusa.org/pilp).

## Leader Development It's Coming..... February 9, 2008

Mark your calendars for the **MAIN EVENT** at First Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte, featuring FAITH INKUBATORS with Rev. Rich Melheim.

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS FAITH INKUBATORS? Their **mission** is to incubate faith every night in every home. Their **vision** is to spearhead a Christian education reform that restores parents and grandparents as the primary faith teachers, mentors, and role models for their own children and grandchildren with church as reinforcement not replacement to parents and grandparents duties. <http://www.faithink.com/>  
In addition, the MAIN EVENT will offer many Officer Training classes for the “newbie officer” as well as the “seasoned officer”.

## Special World Communion Sunday Celebrated October 7

Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church celebrated World Communion Sunday by inviting to the pulpit Silvana Franca of the Brazilian Fellowship (one of Peace River Presbytery's new church developments) that meets at



Silvana Franca & Susan Rice

Vanderbilt Presbyterian on Sunday evenings. After graduating from Seminary in Brazil, Silvana lived in England for 4 years serving as a missionary. She has been in the U.S. for six years and has been working with the Brazilian Church full time since March of 2006. This was Silvana's first sermon presentation in English and it was a wonderful way to celebrate World Communion Sunday and our unity in Christ together.

## Middle School Retreat at Cedarkirk November 17-18, 2007

It's not too late to sign up for the annual Peace River Presbytery Middle School Retreat, November 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>. This is always a highlight for middle school youth groups around the Presbytery, and your group will not want to miss this. **The deadline for turning in registration forms and money is Tuesday, November 13** (in order to be fair to the Cedarkirk staff). The cost is \$80 per person. For complete information go to our website and click on youth. There you will find information about the event, registration forms and permission slips. [www.peacriverpresbytery.org](http://www.peacriverpresbytery.org).

## Youth Clusters

In the **Northern Cluster**, there is a consensus that no matter what we are doing, doing it together makes all the difference. Just about all our churches have come together in some form to play and worship at **The Connection** each Sunday night. We celebrate our connectionalism and worship Jesus Christ. So far, our preachers have been Richard Deibert from Peace NCD, Chris Adams from Westminster PC, Dennis Reid from Whitfield PC and Elizabeth Deibert from Peace NCD. Mark Jernigan from First PC will preach in the coming weeks. It should also be mentioned that this could not have happened without the work of our dedicated Educators, Martha Chaney from Whitfield, Sue Gooding from First, Bradenton, and Diana Shoemaker from Kirkwood. Joe



Sardo, musician extraordinaire from Peace NCD, has been our music leader. From these connections (*pun intended*), we are beginning to see all sorts of other ways we might work together, travel together, and continue to support one another. Mission trips have been discussed for next summer and maybe a joint trip among the churches to the Montreat Youth Conference. In addition, the YMCA of Manatee County and Teens At-Risk Coordinator, Pastor Jerry Parish, has preached and been involved in **The Connection**. We also enjoy our partnership with Youth for Christ of Manatee County. In all we do in the Northern Cluster, working together in the name of Jesus Christ is what makes the difference. In the words of Pastor Dennis Reid, who reminded us all just last week, "When others see our unity, they see our God." Thanks to all in the Northern Cluster for **The Connection**.

this conference. Peace River has a small amount of scholarship money that can be used for individuals needing assistance, and small scholarships are also available through our regional SOAP – APCE Association. For more information, please contact Candy Reid, [candy@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:candy@peacriverpresbytery.org).

### TOP 5 RESOURCES FOR NOVEMBER



**"Simply Wait: Cultivating Stillness in the Season of Advent"** by Pamela Hawkins

**"Let Us Go Over to Bethlehem"** – An advent study for adults by James Moore

**"In Search Of Christmas"** – A collection of Congregational Resources for Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas.

DVD Series:

**"Faith Lessons In the Dust of the Rabbi – Becoming a Disciple"** by Ray Vander Laan

**"Faith Lessons on the Prophets and Kings of Israel"** by Ray Vander Laan

**"Faith Lessons on the Early Church"** by Ray Vander Laan

### Mission Trips 2008



#### Senior High Mission Trip to Cabell-Lincoln County, West Virginia - June 14-22

"Repairing homes to make them safe, warm and dry"

#### Middle School Mission Trip – June 08 TBA

#### Intergenerational Mission Trip to Chinle, Arizona July 12-19

The group will be working with a Native American Presbyterian Church doing simple repairs, holding a VBS for the children and working with youth, and visiting in the homes.

**NEW OPPORTUNITY!** In the summer of 2008, PDA (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) will offer **Youth Weeks** to aid in the recovery and rebuilding efforts in the Gulf Coast area for youth ages 16+. For more information, go to the [www.pcusa.org/pda](http://www.pcusa.org/pda) and click on Current Responses.

This newsletter is available for viewing any time at [www.peacriverpresbytery.org](http://www.peacriverpresbytery.org) (follow link to "Presbytery Publications")

### APCE

The Annual APCE (Association of Presbyterian Church Educators) Event for 2008 will be held in San Diego, California on February 13-16 with keynote speaker Rodger Nishioka who was in Peace River Presbytery for our Main Event last February. This conference is for all persons serving in educational ministries. Complete information about this conference is available on the website [www.apcenet.org](http://www.apcenet.org).



A number of folks who are working in educational ministries in Peace River Presbytery will be attending

#### PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

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