



The Interpreter

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY OCTOBER 2007

SPEAKING FROM THE HART

What is Your Missional Vocation or Calling?

Whatever you think about the phenomena of the purpose-driven books, tapes and churches, those of us who are reformed, whose whole theology is grounded in the Sovereignty of God, would have to agree with the first sentence in The Purpose Driven Life: ***It's not about you.*** Regardless of position, influence, age or education, it, meaning life, is not about us.

Nowhere is that clearer than in our reformed theology of vocation. God calls, equips, empowers, and sends us to join Him in His mission to the world. It's about God. It's God's call, and it always has been.

What makes life interesting is God calls us, just as He called a young woman named Mary, some fishermen named Peter, James and John, and a shepherd boy named David. These saints knew it was tough work, challenging work, important work, and they accepted the call without whining. Why? It's about God. It's God's call, yet He chooses to use us in His mission.

We will celebrate Reformation Sunday on October 28, yet 500 years after the birth of Calvin we still are dealing with some important unfinished reformation business. Every baptized Christian is both gifted and called to join with God in His mission to the world. Each of us has a way to be useful in God's Kingdom. As Protestants we distinguish ourselves from the Roman Catholic Church by affirming that we believe in the "priesthood of all believers." Yet in reality most Presbyterians still view ministry as the business we call the professionally trained clergy to do.

One aspect of **the Acts 16:5 workshop** (October 29-30) is to help congregations in Peace River reclaim our missional vocations. The church's work is about each of us doing what we can, where we can, as we can to fulfill God's mission in our neighborhoods and in the world.

The vision of **the Acts 16:5 workshop** (and project) is to transform congregations, so God's people are better equipped and prepared to grow healthy, vital congregations that share the good news of the Gospel for the sake of the world that "God so loves...."

Someone's calling! Thanks be to God!

Graham Hart

ACTS 16:5 INITIATIVE



Stan Ott

Has your church registered for the Acts 16:5 Introductory Seminar?

The deadline is Friday, October 19, 2007

This two-day seminar will be held on October 29 & 30 at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Venice. Each church may send the pastor and 6 other leaders as participants. Information and registration forms have been given to the pastor of each of our churches and new church developments. Brochures can also be found at www.peacriverpresbytery.org, on the Bulletin Board.

Please Join Us in Prayer for:



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| October 7, 2007 | Kirkwood, Bradenton |
| October 14, 2007 | Palma Sola, Bradenton |
| October 21, 2007 | Westminster, Bradenton |
| October 28, 2007 | Faith, Cape Coral |

GOOD NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

- ❖ [First Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte](#) is celebrating the completion of their three year rebuilding project after the church property suffered significant damage and destruction from Hurricane Charley.
- ❖ [Palma Sola Presbyterian Church](#), Bradenton, is celebrating their 50th anniversary.
- ❖ [Palmetto Presbyterian Church](#), Palmetto, now has a web site: www.palmettopresbyterianchurch.org.

Ham Radio Operators Discuss Disaster Preparedness at Peace River Presbytery

A group of ham operators met with Gayle Morris and Dick Cunningham at the Presbytery office to discuss how ham radio communications could be used within the Presbytery in the event of disasters, such as



hurricanes, floods, fires, etc. Ron Wetjen, a ham from the Sarasota Emergency Operations Center, demonstrated an emergency radio "jump kit" that can be easily deployed to a disaster area and quickly set up to provide communications.

Left to right: Dick Cunningham, Gayle Morris, Joyce Jacobs, Austin Pickering, WR4AP, Mary Ellen Pickering, KE4RXQ, Ron Wetjen, WD4AHZ, and George Wagner, K5KG

The group discussed possible uses for this type of a kit for church use as well as various other technical solutions that might be doable with limited resources. The group agreed to continue efforts to identify licensed ham operators within the Presbytery's 38 churches, draft a plan for the use of ham communications, and review their progress at a subsequent meeting. If you are interested in participating, please contact George Wagner at 941-400-1960.

MISSION & JUSTICE IN PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

Beth-El Immokalee Update

The ministry in Immokalee is going well. As many as 150-200 people are fed on Friday evenings – and this is not even the season. Also, there are Sunday services, prayer services, and a small group which gathers for Bible study during the week.

Volunteers are always needed to help with the feeding program, and donations of personal care items, good used clothing and small toys are welcome. For more information or to volunteer to help, please call Rev. Miguel Estrada at 239-633-2181.

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Thornwell Home for Children is a mission of the PCUSA Church located in Clinton, South Carolina. For many years now, the home has had a covenant agreement with the churches in the Synod of South

Atlantic which consists of presbyteries in South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. The school has ministered to children since 1875 and continues today to provide care for over 400 children. Churches traditionally receive an **offering for Thornwell on the Sunday prior to Thanksgiving**. For more information on how your church can support this vital ministry, please go to their website at www.thornwell.org.

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During the month of October and the early part of November, churches in Peace River Presbytery will be collecting shoeboxes as part of the **Operation Christmas Child** effort of Samaritan's Purse. Children, youth, and adults of all ages simply fill a shoebox with personal care items, small toys, and school supplies. Operation Christmas Child then inserts a simple pamphlet about Jesus Christ in the native language and sends these boxes around the world. Often this is the only 'gift' that children receive during the year. A number of churches in Peace River Presbytery participate. For more information on how your church can be a part of this awesome effort, go online to www.samaritanspurse.org.

LEADER DEVELOPMENT

Are you ready for the MAIN EVENT?

Peace River Presbytery's premier leader development event - the MAIN EVENT - will be held on **Saturday, February 9, 2008** at First Presbyterian Church, Port Charlotte, with auxiliary events to be held on Friday, February 8 and Sunday, February 10.

Our theme this year will focus on family ministry, and how parents and grandparents can once again become the primary faith transmitters instead of relying solely on the church.



Our leader will be the Rev. Rich Melheim, founder of Faith Inkubators. For more information on this incredible ministry, go to www.faithinkubators.com.

Watch for complete details and class offerings!

YOUTH NEWS

What's new in Peace River Presbytery?
Lots of exciting things! Check it out!

2007-2008 PRESBYTERY YOUTH CONNECTION COUNCIL COMMISSIONED AT THE PYC LABOR DAY WEEKEND AT CEDARKIRK

At the close of a fantastic weekend, youth, and adults who will serve on PYC were commissioned to take up the cross and to be the light of Jesus to all. Members of the PYC for 2007-2008 are:

Hannah Neeley (Moderator) and Alex Martin from First Arcadia; Rainey Blomgren (Vice Moderator), Joseph Brown and Sarah DeWyngaert from First Sarasota; Nyssa Gartley from Whitfield Estates; Allison Borque from Trinity; Catherine Deibert from Peace NCD; and Jennifer Cooper, Paige Lewis, Nic Monette and Barrett Zablo from Moorings. Adults who work with them are: Mary Brown, First Sarasota; Jay Mumper, Suzy Russell and Jen Farmer from First Port Charlotte; and Candy Reid, PRP staff.

YOUTH CLUSTERS FORMING



CLUSTERS OF PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH are forming throughout our Presbytery to connect with each other, to build trust, and to work together to reach other youth both inside and 'outside' the church.

Clusters that have formed already are:

- Bradenton area churches: Convener Rev. Chris Adams
- Charlotte County churches: Convener Jay Mumper
- Lee County churches: Conveners Dan Oedy & Melody Frazier

Clusters forming this Fall:

- Sarasota County: Convener Candy Reid
- Collier County: Convener James McDonald

Contact any of the above for more information about how your church can get involved.

MIDDLE SCHOOL RETREAT NOVEMBER 17-18, 2007

THEME: Change

COST: \$60.00 per person if registered and paid no later than October 31st (that means all paperwork & payments completed and in PRP office)

\$80.00 per person November 1st – 13th (that means all paperwork & payments received in the office by November 13th)

No registrations will be accepted after November 13th in order to be fair to the Cedarkirk staff.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING PAYMENT WITH YOU WHEN YOU COME TO CEDARKIRK.... It is too easily lost in the shuffle.

Information, registration forms, and permission slips are available online at www.peacriverpresbytery.org.

YOUTH MINISTRY and PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY – A YEAR OF DISCERNMENT

It has been over 18 years since the first Senior High mission team was sent to work in the hills of West Virginia through the Cabell-Lincoln County work project. Over the years, youth by the hundreds have returned with a newfound passion for mission in the name of Jesus Christ. Years later, groups of folks began going to a Native American Presbyterian church in Chinle, Arizona, first through the sponsorship of Peace River Presbytery and then through the efforts of individual churches, mainly in the Bradenton area. In the early part of this decade we were able to send middle school youth to Thornwell Home for Children in Clinton, South Carolina. Peace River Presbytery is recognized throughout the Southeast for their commitment to youth ministry.

Your LCD committee (Leadership and Congregational Development) feels that it is now time to take a look at what we have done and spend time in prayer & discernment about future youth ministry activities. Costs continue to rise. In 2003, the cost to charter a bus to West Virginia was approximately \$4,800. This year the cost exceeded \$8,000. Though trips are open to all churches in PRP, only about 1/3 of our churches participate. We ask for your prayers as we go about the Presbytery 'listening' to the various youth clusters about their needs, praying for God's guidance and wisdom as we chart a course in the years to come. For the summer of 2008 PRP will again sponsor the Senior High Mission trip to West Virginia BUT in 2009 there may be some new opportunities for mission.

LOOKING AHEAD:

Senior High Presbytery Retreat
March 1-2, 2008

Senior High Mission Trip to Cabell-Lincoln County, West Virginia
June 14-22, 2008. (Camp is actually June 15-21; we allow 2 days for travel)

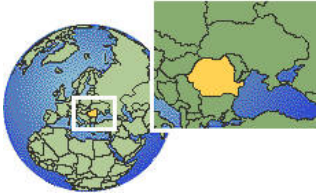
Middle School Mission Camp – TBA

Chinle Intergenerational Mission Camp
July 12-19, 2008 to Chinle, Arizona

WELCOME

We welcome **The Rev. David Wiseman**, PCUSA minister and missionary in Guatemala, who will be in Peace River Presbytery the week of October 5-11. For more information on when and where you can hear him speak, contact Candy Reid at 941-426-8421.

ROMANIAN MISSION --- AUGUST 2007



Charlie Morris, Bob Silver, and Phyllis Maisel from Northminster Presbyterian Church, Sarasota, joined 13 folks from the Howell Presbyterian Church, Michigan, traveling to

Chefa and Baracou, Romania. Members volunteered to work in many different areas.

Sunday:

- All participated in the worship services of 3 churches.
- Some organized the Bible School for the children.
- Some guided older youth as they individually read selected portions from THE UPPER ROOM in English.
- All participated in the distribution of food and cuddly toys to the needy families who take advantage of the winter food program.

Weekdays:

- Medical clinics at 5 churches - persons were given medications prescribed by a Romanian doctor and children were given fluoride treatments with eyeglasses available for some.
- Children's activities were offered.
- "Conversational" English was taught to primary and intermediate age children, as well as older youth at two churches.
- "Handy man" volunteers put wall board on the ceiling of a soon-to-be kitchen in one church and (for the very first time) painted the outside walls of the Gypsy Church and the school building, including the fence.

Upon our departure, medications were left for the local hospital pharmacy where shelves are nearly bare. The pre-school was given a yearly supply of supplies. The Home for Unwed Mothers received toys, and the orphan girls were excited to fill their refrigerator with our left-over food.

This newsletter is available for viewing anytime at www.peaceriverpresbytery.org (follow link to "Presbytery Publications")

CLIFTON KIRKPATRICK DECIDES NOT TO SEEK ANOTHER TERM AS STATED CLERK

LOUISVILLE—Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, shared with the staff of the Office of the General Assembly recently that he has decided not to seek another term as Stated Clerk.



Photo by Danny Bolin

Kirkpatrick's current term will conclude at the end of the 218th General Assembly (2008) in San Jose, California, next June.

"Serving as Stated Clerk has offered me a platform I would never have dreamed possible—to serve the church I love and to give expression to my passions, my sense of call, and my gifts for the things that really matter," wrote Kirkpatrick in a written statement.

He went further to say, "At the same time, I am also eager to have more quality time with my family, to be able to devote myself more fully to the responsibility I have undertaken since 2004 to serve as president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and to share in the life of the church, both locally and globally, in new and creative ways."

Kirkpatrick's successor will be determined through an election at next year's General Assembly. The Stated Clerk Nominating Committee, already at work for the past few months, will present their nominee to the assembly. Their timeline and materials for applicants will be available online this week at www.pcusa.org/ga218/statedclerk.

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 General Presbyter
[Candy Reid](#), Program Coordinator
[Craig Countiss](#), Stated Clerk
[Jim Barnett](#), Treasurer
[Alesia Sharpe](#), Office Manager
[Bill Setchel](#), Financial Secretary
[Joan Mock](#), Administrative Assistant