



The Interpreter

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY APRIL 2007

SPEAKING FROM THE HART

As you may have heard, financial challenges in several congregations have resulted in a budget shortfall for the Presbytery. Yet as we enter this Holy Week, we are a people who know all is not as it first appears. For the disciples, what was a coronation parade on Palm Sunday, ended abruptly on Good Friday, only to change forever on Easter Sunday. I don't know how it all will turn out, but I do know that in the final analysis, we are an Easter people.

In that spirit I boldly suggest and ask you to be champion cheerleaders for the following:

- Beth-El's new ministry in Immokalee – Miguel Estrada is soon to arrive as the mission pastor. Currently Dave Moore and friends are serving a weekly meal and offering a Bible study based out of a motor home while funding for a permanent home is sought.
- Cedarkirk is finalizing plans with an architect for five adult-friendly cottages. Monies have been given for one. We just need other people whom God has blessed to fund the remaining four.
- Peace Presbyterian New Church Development of Lakewood Ranch has found the ideal parcel of land for their church. They need our help in raising \$900,000 to purchase the land for that growing congregation. Can you help?
- There are six mission co-workers ready to be sent to partner churches around the world waiting for them. \$250,000 will fund one mission co-worker and family for 5 years.
- And finally, as a Presbytery, we find ourselves in a shortfall of \$300,000 due to giving concerns in several congregations. The Presbytery Council has formed a Task Force to address this issue.

I don't have the answers to these challenges, but I know that God does! Out of God's abundance, He has blessed members in congregations with the resources each congregation and this Presbytery need for our work and the ministry we do together. At the heart of our Presbyterian polity is the notion that both wisdom and Jesus are present when 2 or 3 gather in His name, so to that end we will gather on April 18th (see next column) for prayer and conversation. If you can be a prayer partner or champion for the above, or if God has so blessed you that you can turn one of these visions for a particular ministry into reality, please let me know.

Grateful that we are an Easter people,

Graham Hart
graham@peaceriverpresbytery.org

Please Join Us in Prayer:



Church of the Week

Christ Church of Longboat Key
[Wintergarden, Port Charlotte](#)
[First, Naples](#)
Lely, Naples
[Moorings, Naples](#)

April 1
April 8
April 15
April 22
April 29

Please pray for Rev. Debbie Bronkema and her family as they leave Cedarkirk, and Debbie begins her ministry as Pastor of Pleasantville Presbyterian Church (400 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville, NY 10570).

TOWN HALL GATHERINGS

Town hall gatherings will be held in both the North and South ends of the Presbytery on **Wednesday, April 18** to discuss the funding of the work and mission of the Presbytery.

Church of the Palms, Sarasota will host the North meeting in the Chapel from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The South meeting will take place in the Chapel at First Presbyterian Church, Bonita Springs from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

HIGH SCHOOL EVENT



Peace River Presbytery is proud to offer an evening for high school youth to encourage them to consider what God has in mind for them in terms of life work. The event will take place on

Wednesday evening, April 18, 2007 at Pine Shores Presbyterian Church from 5:30-7:30 p.m. with free pizza.

Representatives of two Presbyterian seminaries will be present to get the youth thinking about their future.

For more information, contact Rev. Doug Gebhard, 941-924-1323 Ext. 48, or Candy Reid, 941-426-8421.

PEACE RIVER PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

Our 2008 Informational Handbook will include pictures of all members of Peace River Presbytery, as well as Directors of Christian Education. We will be taking simple black and white photos at the May 24 meeting of Presbytery with a make up session to follow at the August 25 Presbytery meeting. So put on your best smile and look for the photographer at Presbytery.



CHURCH NEWS

Labyrinth Dedication and Festival Saturday, April 28, 2007

The new Labyrinth at **First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota** (2050 Oak Street, Sarasota) is a communal tool and gift to the community. We hope you will join us for this celebration, while learning how to become acquainted with Labyrinth meditation. Guest speaker Tricia Senterfitt, from First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta, will give a Blessing and a Consecration Prayer at 10:30 a.m. There will be music, fun and refreshments for all at 11:30. Everyone is invited for this memorable occasion! For more information, please call First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota (941)955-8119.



Outreach to Families

Families enjoyed racing their remote-control cars followed by a cook-out during "The Vandy 500" on Wednesday, March 14 at **Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church** in North Naples. "The Vandy 500" was a special activity for families as a part of the Stepping Stones midweek program held at Vanderbilt the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays from 5-7pm. The Stepping Stones program is for families of all shapes and sizes. For more information call (239)597-5410 x 204.



BETH-EL MINISTRY IN IMMOKALEE

Rev. Miguel Estrada from Guatemala City will be coming to serve as Pastor for Presbyterian ministry in Immokalee soon. The Presbyterian Women of *Peace River Presbytery* have plans for congregations to welcome the Estrada family when Miguel's wife and son arrive the last of May.

Beth-El was begun over 30 years ago as a mission of the Westminster Presbytery (forerunner to Tampa Bay and Peace River Presbytery). A small group of people banded together to begin serving the farmworkers in

Parrish and surrounding areas. We had little money, just a call placed in our hearts by the Lord to serve the farmworkers. Today Beth-El encompasses many acres of land, provides service of all kinds, and houses a school and a Church. Our hope and prayer is that together we can bring a similar ministry to the Immokalee area. **YOUR GIFTS to the JOINING HEARTS AND HANDS CAMPAIGN**, either through your home church or individually, will ensure that this ministry will continue.

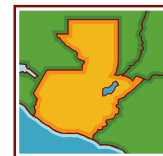
YOUTH SUMMER TRIPS

What will your teenager be doing this summer? Peace River Presbytery is offering Middle School Youth, High School Youth and Young Adults (ages 19-29ish) a chance to make a difference in this world through our summer Mission trips AND the 2007 Youth Triennium event at Purdue University outside of Indianapolis. Complete information is available on our webpage: www.peaceriverpresbytery.org

PLEASE NOTE: Deadline for all trip registrations is April 23rd. Thanks you in advance for your help in meeting this deadline.

SISTER CHURCH UPDATE

A delegation from Central Presbytery in Guatemala will be visiting our area the week of May 21, 2007 and will be present at our May 24 Presbytery meeting. A breakout luncheon will be held for Pastors, Elders and Educators from Sister Churches, as well as others who would like to consider becoming a Sister Church. For more information, please contact Rebecca Lipsie, Chair of our Sister Church Committee, at rebeccalipsie@hotmail.com.



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