



The Interpreter

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY FEBRUARY 2008

Speaking From the Hart The Presbyterian Dilemma

When I was a little boy of 4 or 5, I thought I knew where God lived; and I believed it was a Presbyterian Church. I grew up in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. On the way to Philadelphia we would pass Abington Presbyterian Church. It sits up on a hill. What captured my attention was the red door with gold trim that at night was lit with a spotlight. At the time, I thought that was where God lived, and much of the culture thought the same. Now I don't mean people thought God lived at that particular church, but in the 50's and 60's society supported churches and church-goers, including Presbyterians. When it came to new church development after World War II, build it and they would come. The Presbyterian Church had hundreds of new churches every year in the 50's and 60's.

During that time we didn't have to say anything; folks came to us. One of the first things Dwight Eisenhower did after he assumed office was to be baptized and become a member of the Presbyterian Church.

The Presbyterian dilemma is that, in some ways, we have become disciples anonymous. For the most part we Presbyterians are not presumptive or overbearing, and we are definitely not loud or obnoxious about our faith. We are a rather quiet bunch, and that was fine in the 50's and 60's. But today over 85% of folks who come to church and come into faith in Jesus Christ do so because someone invited them. So where do we begin?

As part of the **Acts 16:5 Initiative**, 16 churches so far have committed to explore how we can learn new ways to faithfully respond to Christ's call; how we can reach out to those near and far with the love of Christ; how we can be transformed from the inside out to become Missional in both our theology and practice of being the church in the 21st century. If you have observations, learnings, or ideas about how we do that, please e-mail them to me as we continue to be a learning community of faith, faithful to Christ's call as a Presbytery in 2008.

With anticipation,

Graham Hart
graham@peacriverpresbytery.org

Please join us in prayer for:

February 3	Holy Trinity, N. Fort Myers
February 10	St. Paul's, North Port
February 17	Palmetto, Palmetto
February 24	First, Port Charlotte



UPCOMING EVENTS

THE MAIN EVENT
February 9, 2008 at
First Presbyterian, Port Charlotte

DON'T ATTEND THIS EVENT IF:

Your **officers** know everything they need to know about: **Humble Leadership, Resolving Conflict in the Church, Running Effective One Hour Committee Meetings, Serving Communion to the Homebound**

OR your parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, mentors to children and youth know everything they need to know about effectively communicating the Gospel to the next generation

OR Effective Communication is not a problem in your congregation

OR your folks know everything they need to know about **teaching the Bible to children 24/7**, your **Youth Ministry** program is as effective as it can be or your folks know all about **Puppet Fever**.

Otherwise, we look forward to seeing you at the Main Event!

To download brochures and registration information, go to www.peacriverpresbytery.org and click on Leader Development.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ON FEBRUARY 9.

Candy Reid, Program Coordinator

Health Ministry in Your Congregation

Do you want to transform your congregation with a significant, relevant ministry? Health Ministry is the answer. It will touch people's hearts and address turmoil in their lives. To get started, find the person who is the SPARK in your congregation, and ask him or her to gather together a committee of folks that care about people and health. Next, sign the



group up for the one-day training event on **Saturday, February 23, 2008** at First Presbyterian Church, Arcadia from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Our educator is Suzanne Crews, RN, BSN, NSCN, and Parish Nurse Coordinator of Florida Hospital. Your team will learn how to begin health ministry in a professional, systematic way in your congregation. Each participant will receive a Training Manual called "Health Ministry Team Building." The chapters include:

- Medical Model and the Faith Community
- Building rapport and planning with the pastor
- Developing the Health Ministry Team
- Health Belief Model
- Congregational surveys
- Community resources
- Program coordination and implementation
- Health ministry development references

Suzanne puts all these pieces together and she provides follow-up so you are not alone. This is a blessed opportunity that will impact your church and your community with the love of Jesus!

Get registration forms at the Presbytery or at www.peaceriverpresbytery.org on the Bulletin Board. Cost is \$10.00 which includes a continental breakfast, lunch, and a comprehensive student manual. Deadline is February 15th.

NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

March 6, 2008

The Evangelism and Church Development Committee is sponsoring a workshop to allow us to think outside the box about creative alternatives to our current patterns of new church development. The cost of property and building buildings has increased, yet we need more new churches in our growing community.



Rev. Brian Clark has been recruited to be our leader and present alternatives to us that we will discuss in a brainstorming small group way. Brian is a new church development pastor in the Washington, D.C. area at Riverside Presbyterian Church, which has 500 people in worship per Sunday. He is also part-time staff to the General Assembly for New Church Development.

Please mark **Thursday, March 6 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** on your calendars. Lunch will be provided. Five dollar donations for the meal will be appreciated. *Watch for information on the location of this event.*

To register, please call or e-mail Joan Mock at the Presbytery office BY MONDAY, MARCH 3.

REMINDER

If your church has committed to the two-year **Acts 16:5** program or is considering this decision, please save the following date for Gathering 1:

MAY 1, 2008

Watch for more details!

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

Congratulations to Rev. Dr. Valerie Bell who recently received her Doctor of Ministry degree. Valerie serves as Associate Pastor at Burnt Store Presbyterian Church.

Congratulations to Northminster Presbyterian Church celebrating 50 years of ministry on February 3.

New Life Presbyterian Fellowship has a new website! www.newlifepaples.org.

On **Saturday, February 9, 2008 at 8 a.m.**, Habitat for Humanity of Lee County will team up with Lee County **Presbyterian Churches** to raise a home in Lehigh Acres. This is the fourth home in Habitat's '**Building on Faith**' campaign for 2007-2008. Habitat for Humanity of Lee County will raise one faith-sponsored home a month in Lee and Hendry County over the next year.

"It's a way to bring together the different groups of the Presbyterian church here in Lee County to live out scripture, and come together, using what each of the parts has to offer, to complete this great project. We are building camaraderie with each other and building a home for a deserving family," says Rev. Jason Smith, Habitat's Faith Relations Coordinator.

Approximately two dozen volunteers from various area Presbyterian Churches will take part in the build on Saturday, February 9.

Habitat's ministry is based on the conviction that to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ we must reflect Christ's love in our own lives by loving and caring for one another. Our love must not be words only—it must be true love, which shows itself in action. Habitat provides an opportunity for people to put their faith and love into action, bringing groups of people together to make affordable housing and better communities a reality for everyone.



MISSION NEWS

From Candy Reid, Program Coordinator

3 CENTS A MEAL



The Mission and Justice Committee has designated Misión Peniel in Immokalee as the 2008 recipient of the Peace River Presbytery Hunger Offering. Misión Peniel is the Beth-El Farmworker Ministry and Peace River Presbytery mission in Immokalee, Florida.

Watch for details on our hunger efforts in coming issues of *The Interpreter*.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

Weekend of February 2-3

The Souper Bowl of Caring is an example of compassion. It is a youth-led grassroots movement of caring, the results of literally thousands of young people joining together to fight hunger and poverty in their communities. They transform Super Bowl weekend into the nation's largest youth-led weekend of giving and serving.



Many of our churches in Peace River Presbytery participate but we are not at 100%. If you would like to know more about this offering, go to www.souperbowl.org. If your church does not have any youth or few youth, you can still make a tremendous difference in the lives of the poor and hungry.

Eco-Palm Project

A branch worthy of celebration

You can make social and environmental justice a part of your congregation's Palm Sunday celebration on March 16, 2008. Your congregation's commitment to purchase eco-palms plays an important role in protecting forests, local jobs and sustainable livelihoods in the harvesting communities of Mexico and Guatemala. For more information and to order, go to www.pcusa.org/palms.



Now I know what you may be thinking: are they crazy? We grow palms in Southwest Florida. Many churches do simply go out in the yard and cut their own palms, BUT many churches order palms for Palm Sunday. This is one way to make an impact on the lives of the poor and a way to protect our earth.

MISSION HANDBOOKS FOR EACH CHURCH

Mission handbooks for new Mission Committee Chairpersons are being developed by your Mission and Justice Committee. This resource will be full of helpful information in a variety of areas. Look for yours at the Presbytery meeting on February 28, 2008.

PCUSA INTERNATIONAL MISSION WORK

Recently, our PCUSA Moderator, Rev. Joan Gray, wrote the following e-mail about missionaries.

One of the questions I get frequently as I do "question and answer" sessions around the church is "Why isn't our denomination sending out missionaries any more?" I always take this question as a teaching opportunity. First, we do have more than 250 missionaries in countries all over the world right now. Second, we have requests from international partner churches for help and people who would go as missionaries in response to their invitations right now if we had the money to send them. Third, if you want our denomination to send out more missionaries, then you can make a difference by sending your money to fund worldwide mission efforts through the PC(USA). You can even designate whether you wish to support current missionaries or fund new mission positions.

There is no better time than right now to give to missions, and here's how:

** Dig deep down and write a generous check to the PCUSA clearly marked "for worldwide missions." Mail it to the Joining Hearts and Hands Campaign to renew the church for mission, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Individual Remittance Processing, P.O. Box 6437000, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700, please indicate account number MI900100 on your check;*

**Or go to www.pcusa.org/mission where you can learn more about our efforts around the world and give by credit card online.*

This is important; let's do it NOW!

*Grace and peace,
Joan S. Gray
Moderator, 217th General Assembly (2006)
P. O. Box 6437000, Pittsburgh, Pa 15264*



TOP FIVE LENTEN RESOURCES FOR FEBRUARY 2008

- **AWAKEN: The Art of Imaginative Preaching** - from Logos Productions. This book is full of creative ideas for preaching and worship during Lent-Easter that correlate with year A of the Lectionary.
- **THE LAST SUPPER** - DVD format. Filmed and dramatized entirely on authentic locations in the Holy Land and the Middle East, this resource emphasizes both its Christian tradition and Jewish roots. A recipe booklet with authentic Biblical recipes for the Seder meal is included in PDF format.
- **THE THOUGHTFUL CHRISTIAN: Reflections on the Lord's Prayer: A Lenten Study** by Ellsworth Kalas. This is a six- week course that invites participants to study and pray the Lord's Prayer in a meaningful way.
- **HOSANNA: A spiritual journey through Holy Week** from the folks at Kerygma. Hosanna invites you to explore the main texts in all four Gospels and in Paul's writings that deal with the last week of Jesus life and resurrection.
- **MISSION: EASTER** Youth programs and ideas for Lent.

THANK YOU to the Rev. Rosemary Gremban for her donation of the book "The Sutras of ABU GHRAIB: Notes from a conscientious objector in Iraq" by Aidan Delgado. This book gives a description of one person who was transformed by what he saw in Iraq.

YOUTH MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY offers great opportunities for youth to become faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. Check out the opportunities listed below:

YOUTH RALLIES

Friday, February 8 at Vanderbilt, Naples
Sunday, February 10 at Westminster, Bradenton

with Main Event leader Rev. Rich Melheim Games, Live Band, Energizers, Pizza and more. No pre-registration required. For more information, go to our website at www.peaceriverpresbytery.org, Leader Development or Youth pages.

SENIOR HIGH RETREAT

March 1 & 2, 2008

at Cedarkirk

An event sponsored by Peace River Presbytery Youth Council

What? An overnight event for all Senior Highs
Why? Take a break from the everyday rush, forget about everything else and enjoy meeting new friends, spending time with old friends, enjoying Cedarkirk, Climbing Wall, Low Ropes, Glow in the Dark night games, campfire, cookout, a live band, and best of all a chance to sleep in on Sunday morning.

For information, registration forms and permission slips, go to www.peaceriverpresbytery.org, Youth page.

SUMMER MISSION TRIPS

"What does the Lord require of you?...do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your Lord." Micah 6:8

Middle School Youth – June 15 to 20

"Challenge to Change" Urban Mission Experience in downtown Tampa – PLUS all the great things to do at Cedarkirk

Senior High Youth – June 14 to 22

To West Virginia and the hills of Appalachia

Chinle mission trip- July 12 to 19

Intergenerational family experience to a Native America community in Chinle, Arizona

For more information, go to www.peaceriverpresbytery.org, Youth page.

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