



The Interpreter

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

APRIL 2010

SPEAKING FROM THE HART

The Messiness in the Middle of Holy Week

This past Sunday it was all praise, palms, and hosannas. Some might say next Sunday, Easter, is God's victory lap. Between the two, beginning Maundy Thursday, we are in the middle of the messiness of Holy Week.

Before coming to Peace River I was pastor of three different congregations over 25 years, and my favorite services of the year were Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. The services were never packed like Palm Sunday or Easter; and in some church traditions, because of either low attendance or a low church liturgy, those traditions go right from Palm Sunday to Easter, missing the messiness in the middle. However, I believe they are missing something important and essential.

"Googling" on the internet on the topic "Holy Week", I came up with a preacher/writer of another tradition that I had not read before. Fleming Rutledge is one of the first women ordained in the Episcopal Church. To learn more about her story and background, go to: <http://www.generousorthodoxy.org/about.aspx> or <http://www.calvin.edu/worship/stories/proclaim.php>

What caught my attention was a quote from her collection of published sermons about Holy Week: *"The liturgy of Palm Sunday [and Holy Week] is set up to show you how you can say one thing one minute and its opposite the next. This is the nature of the sinful human being."*

In looking at the crucifixion, Rutledge writes: *"What we see and hear in Jesus' death is not just his solidarity with the victims of this world. It is that, but it is not only that. What we see and hear in the Cry of Dereliction ["My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me"] is Jesus' identification in his Cross not only with the innocent victims of this world but also with their torturers . . . What Jesus assumes on the Cross is not only the suffering of innocents but also the wickedness of those who inflict suffering."*

"And when Jesus says, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing' (Luke 23:34), 'he makes himself one, not only with my pain but with my sin—because I myself, and you yourselves, and all of us ourselves, are sometimes victims of others and sometimes torturers of others and sometimes both, and when we recognize this we are, as Jesus says to the scribe, 'not far from the kingdom.'"

Even though we might feel we are closer to the kingdom, or the kingdom is closer to us, on the bookends of Holy

Week (Palm Sunday and Easter), and even though we don't want to admit that we easily get distracted, or lose our way, the mid-week services of Holy Week can serve as a reminder that we are a fickle sinful bunch. By skipping over the messiness of Holy Week we may miss....

- Peter's Maundy Thursday late night "I don't know the man", which can teach us that we are never as good as we want others to believe;
- Or Judas' Good Friday denial that can remind us that we don't always get it right,
- Or reading of the disciples' weekend of hiding in fear that can instruct us that even with all our firm convictions of just the week before, we see through the glass darkly and we don't know it all.

As we go through Holy Week, may we rediscover ourselves for who we really are, and in so doing, like the first disciples, maybe then we can meet the Risen Christ anew!

May it be so...

Graham

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The [icon](#) of Christ the Bridegroom, sitting above the star at [Golgotha](#), the location where it is believed [Jesus died on the cross](#) in the [Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Jerusalem](#)

HE IS RISEN!



PRAYER FOCUS

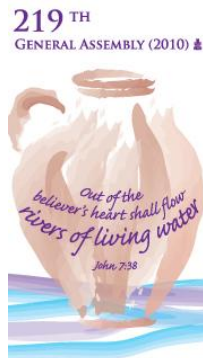
April 4	Hope United, Fort Myers
April 11	Chapel by the Sea, Fort Myers Beach
April 18	Peace, Lakewood Ranch
April 25	First, Lehigh Acres

Please also pray for:

- Peace River Presbytery's Senior High Retreat on April 10-11 at Cedarkirk.
- The upcoming **219th General Assembly**, to be held July 3-10, 2010 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Our delegates are:

Rev. Elizabeth Deibert, Peace
Rev. Karl Kling, Bee Ridge
Rev. Christopher Romig, Venice
Elder Christine Larson, Buckingham
Elder Cindy May, Kirkwood
Elder James Pratt, Presbyterian
Church of the Covenant
Young Adult Advisory Delegate
(YAAD) Nicholas Monette, Moorings



For more information about GA, please go to <http://www.pcusa.org/ga219/>.

PDA continues to respond to the Haiti earthquake

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, working in collaboration with partners, continues to provide basic humanitarian aid for those most impacted by the January earthquake and to assess ongoing recovery needs. More than \$6,000,000 has been raised and Stan Hankins, retired director of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has been asked to coordinate our long-term responses in Haiti. [Read situation reports and find printable and video resources.](#)

PDA is asking you to stand in the GAP for disaster survivors as you [Give](#), [Act](#), and [Pray](#).

Did you know?

The **Caring for Generations** offering is received on the second Sunday of May. The proceeds benefit residents of Florida Presbyterian Homes and Presbyterian Retirement Communities of Florida.



THE 2010 MAIN EVENT

On Saturday, March 13, 130 people gathered for The Main Event at Faith Presbyterian Church, Cape Coral. Much was learned about "Aging as a Spiritual Journey" from our keynote speaker Dr. Henry Simmons and the many workshop leaders.

Many thanks for all their hard work go to:

- the Leadership and Congregational Development Committee, particularly Jonathan Lange, coordinator of The Main Event;
- the workshop leaders: Chris Adams, Clint Cottrell, Judy Cross, Richard Edmunds, Elise Eifert, Tom Hafer, Graham Hart, Max Heeb, Ben Keller, Samantha Keller, Jon Nyberg, Pat O'Gorman, and Henry Simmons; and
- Faith Presbyterian Church, their staff and volunteers, who did such a great job hosting.

From Our Churches

Groundbreaking

On Sunday, March 14, more than 200 folks gathered to break ground for the new sanctuary for **Christ Church of Longboat Key**. It

was a good day! The congregation hopes to be worshipping in the new facility by Easter 2011. Rev. Dr. Bruce Porter continues to lead this enthusiastic congregation.



New Sign

Congratulations to **Peace Presbyterian Church, Lakewood Ranch**, who now have a new sign up on their Lorraine Road property. It is a wonderful advertisement and is readily seen from Lorraine Road, which has a great deal of traffic.



Misión Peniel



Beth-El Farmworker Ministry, Inc. will be hosting an **Open House** on **Sunday April 11** from 2 to 4:30 pm at their extension ministry, Misión Peniel in Immokalee. At 2:00 there will be a welcome and a snack luncheon. A large mobile grill will be providing hot dogs and snacks to the community that afternoon.

Tours of the facility and the local community will be given throughout the afternoon. Information will be displayed about their three ministry locations in Wimauma, Immokalee, and Arcadia. Staff members and the members of Board of Director will be present to answer any questions.

At 3:30 pm, the regularly scheduled worship service will be held, led by Pastor Miguel Estrada.

Come and enjoy this informative day. Join them in the ministry that is so important to the communities where they serve. Learn how you and your church can be an important partner to Misión Peniel and Beth-El Farmworker Ministry!

Cedarkirk

For the second year in a row, **Cedarkirk** is hosting a Shepherds' Sabbath, a free retreat for church professionals and their families from April 5 through 7. For more information, please contact Karin Dale at 813-685-4224, ext. 1 or karin@cedarkirk.org. To learn about other upcoming events or openings, go to www.cedarkirk.com.

On **Saturday, May 1st**, from 1:00-5:00 pm, they will open their doors and invite you and your family to come out for an **Open House**. This afternoon event offers fun for all ages with a taste of what summer camp is like. Join them for a great day of games, archery, climbing on the rock tower, hiking, tours, hayrides, s'mores, or just relaxing in a rocking chair. Whether you would like to try Cedarkirk for the first time this summer or have been coming to camp for years, please join them on this special Saturday.

Montreat

Each year, approximately 35,000 people visit **Montreat Conference Center** to reunite with family and friends, to attend conferences or church retreats, and to enjoy the breathtaking beauty of God's creation. Some of the upcoming events include a Christian Education Conference, Montreat Youth Conference, Proclaiming the Text Conference, and Montreat Women's Connection. For more information on these and other opportunities, go to www.montreat.org.

Mission and Justice Committee Report

Submitted by: Barbara Miles

The year 2010 has been extremely busy for our committee. We have an extensive and challenging portfolio of responsibilities including: Hunger, Migrant Ministries, Caring for Generations, Cedarkirk Camp, Guatemala and Sister Church Covenants, Global & Local Mission, Worldwide Mission Action Team, Campus Ministry, and Peace and Justice. Our dedicated membership successfully managed to develop and improve all of these areas over the past 12 months. .



A noteworthy visit took place during our January meeting, when Charles and Carol Haeussner from Pittsburgh made a presentation on the Kirkuk Presbyterian Church Kindergarten in Iran. Funds were needed to purchase the school and adjoining property so that this work could continue. Carol lived in Kirkuk as a child and her father started this ministry, so she felt close to the project. She gave a slide show as well as a talk on the background and progress of the school. The offering collected at our Presbytery Meeting in February was donated to this project and plans are being made for other special contributions throughout the year to ensure that the school continues.

Mission and Justice is also forming a subcommittee focused on human trafficking in Southwest Florida. Wayne Kindt, our Mission and Justice Chairperson, has a personal interest in this topic, and will continue working on the project at the end of his term in office. He is seeking additional volunteers to assist in this important task.

Altogether, members of the Mission and Justice Committee thank God for giving us the opportunity to serve our church and community in a very effective way. We look forward to doing great work in the future.

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