



# The Interpreter

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

FEBRUARY 2010

## SPEAKING FROM THE HART

As I continue to watch the news, I cannot begin to fathom what conditions must be like for the majority of folks who live in Haiti. Our neighbors in Haiti are geographically closer to us than our friends and relatives in Chicago or Washington. They are 800 miles from us, yet they are a world apart. However, a significant Haitian population resides in our own backyard, within the bounds of Peace River Presbytery in Immokalee. Economics and the growing season drive the movements of the migrant population, so at this time of year, there are thousands of Haitians living in Peace River Presbytery hoping for work in the fields.

Yesterday I talked with Miguel Estrada, mission pastor at Misión Peniel (Beth-El, Immokalee). With the recent freeze, the fields had to be replanted, and for the next 6-8 weeks there will be no work, no money, and little food. The Friday night meal program has been feeding over 750 people, and since the earthquake, there has been an significant increase in the participation of folks from Haiti in Misión Peniel's outreach ministries.

Miguel said that a resource mentioned in the Presbytery's "Weekly Pastoral Letter and Updates" was extremely helpful. It was information that PDA provided for folks in the USA who had relatives in Haiti to help them make contact. The Coalition of Immokalee workers and Miguel have been making office space, time, and computer resources available to help people make those connections.

For all who contributed to the Fall "Special Appeal" to keep Beth-El, Misión Peniel, and Cedarkirk operating, THANK YOU. Your gifts, our mission, continue to impact the 700 -1000 folks to whom Misión Peniel ministers each week, as well as the thousands of folks who are touched by Cedarkirk and the ministry of Beth-El's main campus in Wimauma and their satellite ministry in Arcadia.

With gratitude, as well as sadness for our brothers and sisters in Haiti,

*Graham*

Graham Hart - [graham@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:graham@peacriverpresbytery.org)

## Presbyterians aid Haiti in earthquake's aftermath

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) and its partners responded quickly to the earthquake in Haiti. [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance](#) has already [sent \\$209,000](#) and is working with ecumenical partners to provide emergency support to earthquake survivors, including food, water, sanitation and medical supplies.



The PC (USA)'s partner church in Haiti, the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti, has sustained huge losses, but is faithfully [responding to the crisis](#). [Hospital Sainte Croix](#) (Holy Cross Hospital), a long-time focus of PC(USA) mission in Haiti, is standing but heavily damaged. [A nearby nursing school](#), which like the hospital is a ministry of the PC(USA) partner church, is providing medical care for quake survivors. The nursing school and the hospital have been [approved for a \\$200,000 grant from PDA](#). Those funds will purchase generators, a water pump, sanitary sewage lines and fuel for the generators and vehicles.

[All PC\(USA\) mission personnel are safe](#), though one of them, [Sharyn Babe](#), is recovering from injuries in a Florida hospital. [Carlos Cardenas](#), a mission worker with much experience in disaster relief, has traveled to Haiti from Nicaragua to help with relief efforts. Contributions for Haiti can be made to [PDA account number DR00064 online](#) or by phone at (800) 872-3283. Checks can be mailed to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. [Please continue to pray](#) for the people of Haiti and our partner church as they grieve their losses and begin to rebuild their lives.

## Message from Dennis Smith

Friends,

Here's an excellent update on Haiti from ACT, the global church emergency aid agency of which Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is a part. The piece was put together by Paul Jeffrey, a good friend and a Methodist missionary photojournalist. Thanks to PCUSA mission colleague Karla Koll for passing it along. You might want to use this video as a minute for mission this next Sunday, or post it on your church website.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrhHOSIMVZY&fmt=18>

Dennis A. Smith, Mission Co-worker in Guatemala  
[www.cedepca.org](http://www.cedepca.org)

Please join us in prayer for these churches:

February 7 Palma Sola, Bradenton  
February 14 Westminster, Bradenton  
February 21 Faith, Cape Coral  
February 28 Community, Englewood



## STATED MEETING NEWS

2010 marks the  
20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Peace River Presbytery

Thursday, February 25, 2010

Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, Sarasota  
9:00 a.m.

Along with the business portion of the meeting and breakout groups, the day's events will include:

- Presentation of the banners of each church during the worship service
- Keynote address by Dr. Steven Hayner, President of Columbia Seminary
- A birthday cake

## MAIN EVENT

Saturday, March 13, 2010

8:30 a.m. Registration

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Faith, Cape Coral

\$15 a person

**THEME:** *Aging as a Spiritual Journey*

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER:** Dr. Henry Simmons



Dr. Simmons is an ordained minister, recently retired from Union Seminary after 38 years of teaching. Simmons' major interests include the spiritual growth of older adults, ethics and aging, and congregational studies.

Dr. Simmons will present 2 keynote addresses (Mapping Aging and Getting There from Here) and lead 2 workshops (Spiritual Practice for Times of Transition and Online Resources).

*Other workshops include:*

- Transitions: A Grief and Loss Program for Your Church
- Equipping Lay People to Care
- End of Life Issues
- Faith and Fitness
- Camp is Not Just for Kids! Retreat Ministry for Senior Adults
- Elder Abuse
- Understanding and Responding to the Special Needs of Individuals with Alzheimer's
- Never Too Late: A.A. for the Older Alcoholic
- Facebook: Social Networking for Seniors
- Second Half Opportunities
- Spirituality Center
- Dry? Boring? No Way! Being a Deacon or Elder Changes Lives!
- Elders and Deacons 201: The Next Level
- Polity for the Local Church: How to Speak Presbyterian

**REGISTRATION MATERIAL HAS BEEN E-MAILED TO CHURCH OFFICES AND CLERKS OF SESSION. IT IS ALSO AVAILABLE ON OUR [WEB SITE](#).**

**ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND!!!**

## SENIOR HIGH RETREAT

Peace River Presbytery will sponsor a Senior High Retreat at Cedarkirk on **April 10-11, 2010**. Watch for more information!!

## 219<sup>th</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY



219<sup>th</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2010)

If you are interested in information about the upcoming 219<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, go to <http://www.pcusa.org/ga219/>.



The **Cents-Ability** money for 2010 will go to Misi3n Peniel and to St. Paul's Presbyterian Church for their Saturday Morning Breakfast Program.

## From Our Churches

**First, Sarasota:**

**Everything Starts from Prayer: A Lenten Retreat**

The liturgical season of Lent is deep in spiritual meaning. The focus on Lent is on rededicating oneself to the Christian life as preparation for the Easter season to come. It is a time for introspection, for slowing down our hurried lives, for seeking with others ways to draw to God's Son. The Spiritual Formation Ministry is planning a day when we can learn practices that bring us closer to

Jesus. We will explore some of the many ways of praying that will assist us in living a renewed life with God.

The event will be held at First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota (2050 Oak Street) on Saturday, February 20 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The registration fee is \$10.00 which includes morning coffee and lunch.

To register, call the church, 941-955-8119 by Tuesday, February 16. Registration will allow us to provide sufficient lunches and handouts.

Come and share this experience with us as we anticipate celebrating the resurrection of our risen Lord!

### **First, Punta Gorda Crossroads Wilderness Institute**

The Crossroads Wilderness Institute (CWI) is a non-profit organization located in east Charlotte County whose mission is to help at-risk boys ages 14-18, sent there by the Department of Juvenile Justice, to become productive members of society.

The remote location offers a wide range of opportunities for the teens to learn about their relationship with our environment on a large scale. The facility combines education, treatment, and behavior modification to provide a holistic, comprehensive approach to the needs of the teens, resulting in over 80% of them having a successful transition back into the community.

Members of the Mission Committee of First Presbyterian Church, Punta Gorda, were recently given a tour of the facilities. The director and staff were impressive and committed to helping these boys. As a result, the Mission Committee has decided to have a BOXERS and SOCKS SUNDAY for Crossroads Wilderness Institute.

To learn more, go to [www.cwi-fl.org](http://www.cwi-fl.org).

### **Committee Highlight of the Month Evangelism and Church Development**

*By Clint Cottrell, Chair*



**The Evangelism and Church Development Committee**, also known as ECD, has been charged by the Presbytery with two very important tasks: to help existing churches to grow and flourish and to plant new

churches within the bounds of Peace River Presbytery. The committee is made up of an equal number of elders and ministers, and is assisted by members of the staff of the Presbytery office as well as new church development pastors. Further, guests are welcome at any time.

In serving existing churches, the ECD works in several ways. First, it provides educational opportunities for churches and pastors to grow in their knowledge about evangelism, church growth and transformation. In the

past years we have provided subscriptions to Percept and more recently, MissionInsite, to allow our churches a ready access to information about the demographics of their communities. The ECD provided for a 2 year redevelopment opportunity known as Acts 16:5 whereby churches were guided through a process of growth and redevelopment. More recently, the ECD provided (thanks to the Lilly Endowment) a ministry known as "Unbinding the Gospel" whereby churches are encouraged to grow by reading God's word and praying, fervently. The ECD also stands ready to assist congregations with guidance regarding evangelism and outreach.

The ECD has led the effort to start new churches within the bounds of Peace River Presbytery. In 2009 we celebrated one of those new churches coming to fruition as we received Peace Presbyterian Church of Lakewood Ranch, the 39<sup>th</sup> church of our Presbytery. We have also supported new church developments in Naples, Myakka River, with a Brazilian Fellowship in Naples and a Hispanic ministry in Sarasota. Sometimes these fellowships or new church developments flourish and become full churches (such as Peace), sometimes we try but the timing or location is not right. The ECD works hard to be good stewards of our limited resources but yet is willing to take risks to share the Gospel of Christ with an ever growing segment of our population

The ECD is now poised for some major changes as the community of SW Florida has changed. The "if you build it, they will come" mentality no longer works and we have to work harder and differently. What worked for neighborhood evangelism 10 years ago may not work now. What worked for a new church development 10 years ago may not work now as well. The ECD is praying, studying, working hard to discern what God's will and desire is as we help each congregation, "Go and make disciples of all people." Please pray for us as we seek to do the Lord's work here in Peace River.

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

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