



THE INTERPRETER

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

AUGUST 2006

SPEAKING FROM THE HART

Reformed Theology- What is it?

Much prayer and energy has recently been spent on the question: "What is at the core of who we are as Presbyterians? What are our essentials?" The amended *Peace, Unity and Purity* report adopted at the 217th General Assembly was responding to some of those questions. Some would say our reformed way of thinking has three component parts: theology, polity, mission or praxis.

In summary form, the Book of Order¹ in Chapters 1 and 2 gives us our **theology**. Chapters 1 and 3 define our unique **polity** based on the radical principle of governance by elected representative bodies (councils), and a connectional relationship among those governing bodies with mutual accountability and responsibility. The third component is our **mission or praxis** (Chapter 3). Unless we are in mission, we are not the Church. Mission is not only what happens somewhere else; it is the inherent charter for every congregation and Presbytery. Jesus, in the Great Commandment and the Great Commission, states our mission. (*Go into the world and proclaim the gospel... teach... baptize... make disciples. And love God, others, self.*)

The conversation in the PCUSA these past several years has in part been around these three components: theology, polity and praxis. How broad can the strokes be before they are meaningless? How narrow can they be before we miss the reality of Jesus' life, work, word and Living Redeeming Presence? Will we become a new generation of Pharisees, and negate the importance and relevance of what the Holy Spirit did through the early church which was witnessed to in scripture and subsequently interpreted through our confessions?

In order to help give some focus to this important discussion, Cynthia Rigby², Professor of Theology at Austin Seminary, will be preaching and giving a keynote address on **What is Reformed Theology** at the August 26 stated Presbytery meeting at Chapel by the Sea, Fort Myers Beach. At this meeting, we will celebrate with Chapel by the Sea its recovery after hurricane Charley, hear the report of our commissioners to the 217th General Assembly, and rejoice in the witness of our youth through their summer mission trips.

I believe God is at work through this band of Presbyterians who share a common theology, polity, and mission; for which I say, Thanks be to God.

Graham Hart

¹ <http://www.pcusa.org/oga/publications/boo05-07.pdf>

² <http://www.pcusa.org/today/believe/past/apr04/mary.htm>
<http://www.pcusa.org/today/archive/believe/wpb0104.htm>
<http://www.pres-outlook.com/HTML/easter2005rigby.html>

Please Join Us in Prayer for the Following Churches:

Vanderbilt, Naples	August 6
Holy Trinity, North Fort Myers	August 13
St. Paul's, North Port	August 20
Palmetto, Palmetto	August 27

Please also pray for the Sister Church Mission Trip to Guatemala from August 10-14, 2006.



STATED MEETING

Saturday, August 26, 2006

[Chapel by the Sea](#)
100 Chapel St.
Fort Myers Beach
239-463-3173

From Joe Davis, Youth Advisory Delegate (YAD) to the 217th General Assembly

I want to thank everyone who prayed for me and helped me along the way. It's a good feeling to know you have a support group behind you. I also want to thank everyone from our presbytery who were there at General Assembly. I have to give a special thanks to Dick Fernstrum because he was the one who put my name out there to be Peace River's YAD.

I'm glad I had this opportunity. To be honest, at first I wasn't sure if I wanted to go or if I was the right one to go. It seemed that everything happened that week. There was the West Virginia mission trip that I hadn't missed yet and I had qualified for two national track meets. So I had to make a choice. I'm glad it was GA. It gave me a new outlook on our church as a whole. Even from what I heard, I didn't realize how big the General Assembly is. I also have a new appreciation for how church government works. If I didn't agree with a decision, I thought the process was fair, and know that things can always change in the future. Although there were long days and discussions, the experience of coming together with that many people to support the church is incredible. That many individuals making decisions is amazing, but that's why we are the body of Christ – everyone working as one.



NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

New Ministry started at Presbyterian Church of the Covenant

A Good Grief Group meets weekly on Mondays from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. and will continue weekly throughout the year. This group provides support for persons grieving the loss of a loved one. It is led by Dr. Fred Hummel, a Certified Psychotherapist and an ordained PCUSA minister. For information, please call (941) 925-4040 or e-mail dfhummel1@msn.com.

City Kids Mission Reaches Out to Teens



“City Kids,” [First Sarasota](#)’s summer mission to the young people of the Newtown area, delivers afternoon snacks to the County Recreation Center on Newtown Boulevard. This year the mission has expanded to include a coordinated program for teens funded by a grant from the Linnie Dalbeck Foundation.

Last summer a pilot program led by (FPC Member) Jo Keep, with her cohorts Alice Jones and Dee Walker, enriched the lives of 10 adolescents with daily learning programs and field trips funded entirely by donations and staffed by volunteers.

This summer’s teen program theme is *Welcome to the Career World*, with an emphasis on giving back to the community, and includes a job seminar, field trips, classes in food catering with Diane Johnston and Paul Smith, and work at The Pines. “City Kids” also encourages families to volunteer in the snack program as a team, giving your children an understanding of the lives of other children in the community who are less fortunate than they are.

Jo is now interviewing applicants for youth supervisors at the North County Library, across from the Newtown recreation center where the City Kids lunches and snacks are served. These supervisors will be charged with tutoring school subjects, coaching on domestic skills such as shopping, cooking and serving meals, chaperoning educational and recreational field trips, coordinating community service projects such as stocking the All Faiths Food Bank and volunteering at The Pines Nursing Home.

First Presbyterian, Bradenton, and Kenya

About 300 of our recently retired Bibles have been shipped to the Presbyterian College in Kikuyu, Kenya. They received our hymnals last year. Used Sunday School materials also were sent. [First, Bradenton](#) will set up a permanent collection of Bibles and Christian Education material to be sent periodically. For information on sending much needed Bibles, books, and other religious material for the college and Presbyterian Church in Kenya, contact Neal Kuyper, Bradenton, at Neal_Christina@MSN.com, or 941-761-0179.



Community Outreach

Recently the Grounds Committee at [Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church](#) in Sarasota hosted a neighborhood picnic as an outreach event. Members distributed invitations to 65 homes adjacent to the church. Many church members attended and provided desserts for the free meal. Several families attended from the neighborhood and were welcomed warmly.



Pianist to Perform at Burnt Store

[Burnt Store Presbyterian Church](#) continues its “Thank God, It’s Variety” series with pianist and child prodigy Jim Hendricks, at 7:00 p.m. on August 25. Doors open for this Christian concert at 6:30 p.m.



Hendricks served as professor of piano at the Chicago State University and has performed with Dave Brubeck, Della Reese, the Glen Miller Orchestra and many others. He has performed in hundreds of churches across the land and has been showcased on ABC, TBN, and PAX.

The public is invited to this family-friendly event that is free but limited to ticket holders. Tickets will be distributed on a first come, first served basis, and can be picked up at the church before or after worship on Saturdays and Sundays, and from the church office on weekdays during business hours, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. A free will offering will be taken. Proceeds from the event will benefit local charities supported by the church’s mission program.

Great Opportunity

N. Graham Standish, author of the best-selling Alban Institute publication "Becoming the Blessed Church: Forming a Church of Spiritual Purpose, Presence and Power", will be at Church of the Palms on September 8 & 9, 2006.

For more information, call the church at 941-924-1323 or visit their website at www.churchofthepalms.org.

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry, Inc.

Greetings to All!



We are now in the midst of our summer programs. Vacation Bible School officially started June 5 and continued through the end of the month. During the month of July our Back to School programs were held. They were in 2 two-week sessions.

At the end of each session, each child received a backpack with grade-appropriate supplies and also a new pair of shoes that they selected. Throughout both months was the Camp at Cedarkirk program. This summer, through donations, approximately forty youth participated in the Cedarkirk program.

Summer is also the time for work groups to arrive at Beth-El. TeamEdition, with whom we have had a long relationship, is once again with us. They will be bringing groups of high school students on a weekly basis for seven weeks this summer. We look forward to their presence on campus and the many accomplishments that they assist us with each summer.

Our Immokalee expansion continues to move forward. We recently interviewed a pastor regarding his interest in our expansion opportunity. We have also selected a building as a possible location in the central plaza area.

We now have products with the Beth-El logo on them. The following are now available: Bumper stickers, Mugs, Embroidered Shirts, Toddler Shirts, Pens, Key rings, and Folios with a legal pad. Pictures will soon be on our web site. Call or e-mail for more information.



And most importantly the congregation here at Beth-El continues to be active. Most weekends there are multiple events planned in addition to the Sunday Services. From youth groups, to couples retreats, to women's and men's group meetings, the power of our Lord is amongst the congregation, led by Pastor Ramiro. For more information, go to www.beth-el.info.

Put your faith into action— Help build a farmworker community center in Immokalee!



The farmworkers of the CIW have long had a dream of a community center in Immokalee, which would serve as the base for its human rights work, as well as its community outreach and education. The CIW has purchased a building and now is raising the \$1,000,000 required for the building renovation. Highlights of the new community center will include a large community room for educational events and meetings, a multi-lingual media center, a radio studio, a private anti-slavery office, a consumer cooperative, office space, and more.

You can help make the farmworker community center a reality! In the coming months, the CIW will need groups to paint, build shelving, landscape, and help with other pieces of the project.

Visit <http://www.ciw-online.org> and <http://www.pcusa.org/fairfood> to learn more about the CIW and the Presbyterian Church's involvement in their work for justice and dignity for farmworkers.

To plan a work trip or for more information, please contact Sarah Osmer at 239-986-9101 or sarah@interfaithact.org.

Created for Church Members, Columbia Faculty Journal Is Free Online

"Theology After Disaster" is the topic of the inaugural issue of *@ this point*, an online journal launched this May by the faculty of [Columbia Theological Seminary](http://www.columbia-theological-seminary.org). Designed with church members in mind and published twice a year, the journal is free and available only online at www.atthispoint.net. All the content can be downloaded and reproduced without charge. Founding editors are Columbia faculty members Mark Douglas, associate professor of Christian ethics, and Kathy Dawson, assistant professor of Christian education. The fall issue, on fear, will be published in late November.

Each issue of *@ this point* will focus on a particular topic from the perspective of a variety of theological disciplines and will include a lead article, response articles, and teaching resources to guide further discussion. The current issue, "Theology After Disaster," features a lead article by Douglas. Fellow Columbia faculty members Kathleen O'Connor and William Harkins contributed response articles. Resources provided in this issue





TOP 5 NEW RESOURCES IN YOUR PRP RESOURCE CENTER

include three lesson plans written by Dawson and an annotated bibliography by Andrew Richardson, a pastor and a student in the seminary's Doctor of Ministry program.

Coming in November, the fall edition is tentatively titled "Do Not Be Afraid???" Douglas says that the content will focus on a few essential questions: How can we pursue acts of Christian discipleship in a culture of fear? How is it that "perfect love casts out fear" but "fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom?" And what is it we're afraid of, anyway? The new issue will explore these and similar questions through articles by Scott Bader-Saye, author of the forthcoming "Following Jesus in a Culture of Fear," Bill Brown, Barbara Brown Taylor, and others.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Basic Officer Training:

- Sunday, October 8, 2006 from 2:30 to 4:30 pm
First, Bradenton
- Sunday, October 15, 2006 from 2:30 to 4:30 pm
First, Punta Gorda
- Sunday, October 29, 2006 from 2:30 to 4:30 pm
Vanderbilt, Naples

This class, which will be taught by Rev. Bob Rea, Designated Associate Presbyter, is designed to serve as a foundation for further officer training by the local church.

LeaderFest and Officers' Institute become **THE MAIN EVENT** on February 10, 2007. Watch for complete details coming to your church in the Fall!

IMPORTANT YOUTH INFORMATION



As the summer comes to a close and the memories of mission trips and conferences to Montreat, Cedarkirk, West Virginia, Arizona, Haiti, Brazil and a number of others places begin to fade, it is time to think about upcoming events. In September

churches will be receiving a Youth Leader Packet with complete details and registration forms for upcoming events as well as some changes in policy and procedures approved by Council. As you are beginning to plan, please keep these dates in mind:

- PRP Middle School Retreat
November 18-19 at Cedarkirk
- PRP Youth Connectional Jam
February 9, 2007 from 7-10 p.m. at Siesta Key
Chapel/Beach with Rodger Nishioka
- PRP Senior High Retreat
February 24-25 at Cedarkirk

5. "Body-Building Guide to Outreach: Stretching Out to Your Community". Part of the best practices series by GROUP publishing.

4. "40 Days of Transformation – More Than a Stewardship Program". A 40-day program to help individuals and congregations develop a lifelong devotion to giving as a means to grow spiritually. (Coming August 19th)

3. "Introducing the Uncommon Lectionary: Opening the Bible to Seekers and Disciples"

2."LIVE BIG" – a new interactive Sunday School curriculum for ages 3-13

1. FALL 2006 WE BELIEVE Curriculum from our own PCUSA denomination

Looking for a particular resource? Need some ideas of what to use with your youth classes....Call your PRP Program Coordinator Candy Reid at 941.426.8421 or e-mail her at candy@peacriverpresbytery.org

EDUCATORS LOOK!

The 2006 APCE-SOAP event will be held in Tampa this year – right in our own backyard! Our own Jim McDonald from Vanderbilt, Naples, has been instrumental in planning and implementing this retreat. Complete information, as well as registration forms, can be found on line at <http://www.apcenet.org>.

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

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www.peacriverpresbytery.org

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