



PEACE RIVER
PRESBYTERY



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

What time is it?

A TIME TO SAY THANKS – Reflections on last Saturday’s Presbytery Meeting

It was the dog days of summer and many folks were away, but as elders shared with me after the meeting, it was one of the most meaningful Presbytery meetings they had ever attended. They also said they have appreciated the keynote speakers we have had, but for them this meeting stood out. What was different?

First, Chapel’s hospitality was wonderful. Second, Maynard Pittendreigh’s sermon was moving, and, as many commented, the sermon got us all to think really deeply about who we are, living in a land of abundance, and what God is calling us to be and do. (The sermon is available on-line at the Chapel’s web site.) Third, people in attendance found this meeting different and powerful because the elders from Chapel shared their church’s story during the keynote address section of our meeting. They told their story of Chapel’s “missional” engagement with their community over the past 20 years, and it was a real, lived, honest, transformative, hopeful, and encouraging story of how one church was continuing to be the church even in this time of tremendous change and uncertainty.

Those who write and study on living in times of rapid change, uncertainty, lack of clear answers, and direction say that the best way to learn how to move forward in such a time is to come together in “learning communities”, communities in which we share with and learn from one another.

Ron Heifetz ([click here to link to interview with him](#)), who has written much on this topic, calls this kind of time one in which we are facing [adaptive change, rather than technical change](#). In times of technical change, we know the questions to ask and can easily find the answers. A generation ago the question for a church’s Christian Education Department was, what curriculum should we teach? Today the question is, where have the children and their parents gone?

In a time of technical change, just call the expert – it is technical – you can get the answer in a book. But in these times, we face adaptive challenges, meaning:

- the way we used to do things doesn’t work,
- or we don’t always know what the questions are,
- or we don’t have the answers,
- and everything is changing.

The best and maybe only way we find our way is to learn together in a “learning community.” That doesn’t mean we throw everything out. It means we can’t just depend on an expert; we can’t just depend on the pastor.

I believe that last Saturday elders were able to hear and learn from other elders who have been figuring things out over the last 20 years:

- What God is doing in their context (i.e., neighborhood),
- How God is calling them to respond to their context?
- And most importantly, how God is sending them into their neighborhood as 'salt and light' and as witnesses to the power of the Risen Christ.

As a Presbytery we have adopted a new mission/vision statement which is about adaptive work, not just technical work. We don't have all the answers, but the purpose we serve as a Presbytery is to:

- a. affirm congregations,
- b. connect disciples in mission
- c. be the body of Christ together.

I am thankful for what Chapel is doing in Christ's name, as well as the invitation Chapel gave us to be a learning community, and I believe that is one of the reasons so many people commented about our time together on one of the dog days of summer when we found ourselves together at a Presbytery meeting.

Next week I plan to share some perspectives on this time in the life of the PCUSA including reflections on the Fellowship Gathering in Minneapolis.

Thanks be to God who continues to be the wind in our sails and helps us steer into the future!

Peace,

Graham

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ATIME TO CELEBRATE – Look Who is 40

[Join us this weekend at Cedarkirk Celebrations -- September 2-4.](#)



The celebrations on Saturday, September 3, 2011 include:

8:30	Breakfast (for overnight guests)
9:30	Welcome at Pavilion
10:00	“Cedarkirk: Then and Now” Slideshow Friends of Cedarkirk Gathering Swimming Pool, Zip Line, and Climbing Wall (open from 10am – 12pm)
11:30	Guided Tours of Cedarkirk
12:30	Lunch
1:30	Worship Service of Rededication
2:30	Anecdotal stories / Reminiscences Swimming Pool, Zip Line, and Climbing Wall (open from 2:30-5:00)
2:30	Canoeing “Did You Know?” Slide Show (3-5pm) Pavilion
5:30	Dinner
7:00	Hayrides
8:30	Campfire and S’mores



Peace River Presbytery

Click logo to go to The Presbytery web site:

Click on logo below for the PCUSA Mission Yearbook of Prayer and Daily Office scripture reading:



Please add these concerns to your personal prayer list.

Please pray for:

Joan and Steve Mock on the loss of Joan’s mother on August 27

Please continue to pray for:

Rev. Dr. David Uhl, HR, as he deals with health problems

Rev. Dr. Jim Berger, Pastor at Hope United, as he recovers from surgery

Rev. Dr. Bob Rea

Pastors and Educators in transition

Those affected by natural disasters in the United States

Nations in crisis

Please also keep in your prayers:

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry

Misión Peniel

Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center

CONGREGATION OF THE WEEK:

September 4	Community Presbyterian Church, Englewood Scott Wilson, Pastor swwilson3@hotmail.com
September 11	Buckingham Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers Randy Moody, Pastor bpcpastor@comcast.net
September 18	Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers Taylor Hill, Interim Pastor
September 25	Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers Clint Cottrell, Pastor clint@clpc.us



News & Announcements

From the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Newly revised study encourages congregation-wide reading of Bible in its entirety as Bible literacy in U.S. sees steep decline

No more 'stinky talk'

PETERSON TELLS FELLOWSHIP JESUS HAS A PLAN, CALL IS TO FOLLOW IT

A new Presbyterian order?

MOUW TO FELLOWSHIP OF PRESBYTERIANS: TAKE A VOW OF THEOLOGICAL ORTHODOXY

The articles below may interest you. I have found some of them in my reading, and others have been passed on to me. *Just click on the underlined phrases.*

God no longer in the whirlwind

CNN Belief blog: One place where American society plainly seems to be growing less religious is in the realm of natural disasters.

Why certainty about God is overrated

USA Today: John Polkinghorne believes that quarks and God both exist, but he doesn't really know

for sure.

[A very muscular brand of Christianity](#)

The (London) Guardian: Why Jesus has undergone a macho makeover.

[Poll: U.S. split on MLK's dream](#)

Politico: Americans are closely divided over whether Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream of racial equality has been fulfilled.

[10 Years after 9/11 the question remains the same](#)

Sojourners, God's Politics blog: 10 years after 9/11, Martin Marty's answer remains the best, says Cathleen Falsani: "I don't know, and nobody does."

[Rembrandt chose Jewish models to depict a more realistic Jesus](#)

Jewish Daily Forward: Philadelphia art exhibit contends Rembrandt intentionally relied on Jewish models to depict an unprecedented "ethnographically correct" Jesus.

Financial Times: [Rembrandt and the face of Jesus, Philadelphia Museum of Art](#)

[Mark Noll on the foundation of the evangelical mind](#)

Christianity Today: Christian scholarship must be rooted in the person and work of Christ, says the Notre Dame historian.

[U.S. Muslims happy with their country despite pressure, study finds](#)

CNN Belief blog: U.S. Muslims say their communities are good places, that Americans are not hostile, and that American Muslims have a better quality of life than Muslims elsewhere.

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR (for more details, go to www.peaceriverpresbytery.org)

SEPTEMBER, 2011

1st

Records and Overtures

5th

Labor Day – Presbytery office is closed

6th

Mission/Vision Guide Team

8th

Board of Trustees

Presbyterian Women Coordination Team at St. Paul's, North Port

Personnel

Nominations via conference call

13th

Committee on Ministry

14th

Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Interim lunch

15th

Mission and Justice
Theology and Worship

18th

PYC at First, Port Charlotte

20th

Evangelism and Church Development
Disaster Preparedness and Response Team

22nd

Council

29th

Sexual Misconduct Prevention Workshop at Pine Shores, Sarasota