



PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Presbytery Weekly E-Newsletter ~ June 5, 2020

From the General Presbyter

Dear Friends,

It has been a difficult week in the life of our nation. Peaceful protests are an integral part of what brings change in a democracy and we have seen them work many times in our history. Rioting, looting, and violence are not the way to bring change and are not to be condoned. As Christians we are called to see people the way God in Christ sees them, as children of God who are so beloved that Christ gave his life for them. Genesis 1:27 states: "God created human beings; he created them godlike, reflecting God's nature. He created them male and female." (The Message) It does not say that God created some people better than others by virtue of the color of their skin or the job they do. Deciding that some people are better than others, by any metric, is a product of the fall of humanity, not of creation. The church is the place where education and practice of treating one another as children of God needs to happen. The parable of the separation of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25, states that what we do to or for any child of God, we have done to or for Christ himself. That is what it means to be the church.

My oldest daughter has a very close friend who is a twenty-something African American male who grew up in poverty. They had a difficult conversation over last weekend as her eyes were opened to just how differently they view the world. She has never seen an authority figure as a threat to her safety, in fact quite the opposite. She was overwhelmed by the way her friend is always on guard around authority because of his race and gender. The church is a place for education and change, for conversation and growth. I shared this [link](#) with her as a way for her to continue to learn a different view of the world so that someday we might not have that disparity. I invite you to consider reading or watching some of the resources that Myers Park Church, Charlotte, NC, has provided here. I invite you to share with me what your church, or you personally, are dealing with or trying to do in these times.

I invite you to pray for our nation, for our leadership, for those affected by the rioting, looting, and violence, and for those who daily face challenges simply because of the color of their skin.

Praying for peace,
Melana

Committee on Ministry: Update

Searching for a pastor in the midst of Covid-19? Seems difficult, but it is happening ... and right here in Peace River Presbytery with the support of able Committee on Ministry (COM) liaisons. Assisting and supporting churches in transition is a major part of the work of COM. Here are some of the latest results.

Interim Pastor Bill Sitterley began at Oak Pointe Church in April as did Bridge Pastor Bruce Hedgepeth at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church. Interim Pastor Tom Cook has retired at Siesta Key Chapel and Pastor Lyn Olson will be Bridge Pastor until a new pastor is selected. Pastor Tim Stewart is retiring at Burnt Store Presbyterian Church at the end of June, and Pastor RC Smith will begin in July as Interim Pastor. Pastor RC is leaving Westminster Presbyterian Church as that congregation begins "nesting" and worshipping together with Palma Sola Presbyterian Church this summer. Pastor Ted Land will provide pastoral leadership to both churches as they continue their search for a called pastor.

Other pastor searches in progress at this time include Siesta Key Chapel, First Presbyterian Church of Arcadia, Lely Presbyterian Church, and Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, while St. Paul's Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota are searching for Interim Pastors. While Covid-19 slows candidate visits and makes search team deliberations more challenging, the work goes on ... and lots of it in Peace River Presbytery's 37 churches.

Matthew 25 Program – June 10 at 2 p.m. Please pass on to your congregations. All are welcome.

Matthew 25 in the PC(USA):

A bold vision and invitation

Thank you for being among the 520 congregations, groups and mid councils that made the commitment to embrace the Matthew 25 vision in its inaugural year. We want to celebrate this bold invitation and your commitment to become a Matthew 25 church.

Don't forget to register for the first Matthew 25 Online Event

As a Matthew 25 church, you are invited to join us via Zoom on June 10th at 1:50-3:00 p.m. as we celebrate the common mission that calls all of us to actively engage in the world around us.

We want to:

- celebrate this bold invitation and your commitment to become a Matthew 25 church
- inspire you with amazing stories of the impact of Matthew 25 churches
- commission you to share the Matthew 25 vision so that others may wake up to the possibilities of serving God's people.

Learn how your congregation can go deeper with Matthew 25, even during this challenging time.

There are limited spaces available, so register today for this free online event.

[Register now](#)

Presbytery Calendar: June 2020

You may view the entire calendar on the Presbytery web site: www.peaceriverpresbytery.org

Please email corrections or additions to lori@peaceriverpresbytery.org

Tuesday, June 9

Committee on Ministry (9:00 am – Zoom Conference)

Cuba Partnership Task Force (10:00 am – Zoom Conference)

Wednesday, June 10

Human Resources Team (3:00 pm – Zoom Conference)

Thursday, June 11

Finance Team/Board of Trustees (9:30 am – Zoom Conference)

Monday, June 15

Outreach and Nurture Team (10:00 am – Zoom Conference)

Friday, June 19, Friday, June 26, and Saturday, June 27

224th (2020) General Assembly (On Line Meeting)

Team, Committee, and other meetings are being conducted via video conferencing during this time of the stay-at-home guidelines. Please check the web site calendar regularly for additions or changes.

A Reminder

The staff of the Presbytery Office continues to work diligently for you, while doing so remotely and safely. Mail is being picked up daily.

Please check the web site for the staff's cell phone numbers, should you need to reach any of them by phone.

[Contact PRP Staff](#)

COVID-19 Wish List for Beth-El Farmworker Ministry

Diapers, Size 4 and 5	Gift Cards	All Purpose Flour	Peanut Butter
Sanitizer	Deodorant	Spaghetti Sauce	Pancake Mix
Face Masks	Toothpaste	Powdered Milk	Granola Bars
Gloves	Feminine Products	Evaporated Milk	Apple Sauce
Paper Products	Adult Diapers	Boxed Cereal	Macaroni and Cheese
Sanitizing Detergents	Baby Wipes	Canned Meats	Maseca Tortilla Mix
Disinfecting Wipes	Bread	Canned Fruits	Rice and Beans
Bar Soap	Coffee	Pasta	Crackers
Toilet Paper	Oats	Rice	Canned Vegetables

If you can help provide any of these items, please call Beth-El at 813-633-1548.

Covenant Partners of Peace River Presbytery

Click on the links to visit each ministry's web site:

- Beth-El Farmworker Ministry – Wimauma: www.beth-el.org
- Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center: www.cedarkirk.org
- Presbyterian Homes & Housing Foundation of FL: www.phhf.com

Misión Peniel: a Ministry of Peace River Presbytery

Web Site: www.misionpeniel.org

Prayer Needs

Please pray for:

- Pete Rodino (Mision Peniel Team Co-Moderator) and Family in the loss of his Father-in-Law
- Barbara Stephenson (Elder, Siesta Key Chapel and Friend of Marg Towner) – hospitalized from a fall
- Elder Wayne Largent (PRP Moderator) in the loss of his wife, Anita (Clerk of Session, Community P.C.)
- COVID-19 and Economic Recovery
- Front Line Health Care Workers and other First Responders
- Beth-El Farmworker Ministry (in Wimauma)
- Misión Peniel Farmworker Ministry (in Immokalee)
- Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center
- Dan and Elizabeth Turk, PCUSA Mission Co-Workers in Madagascar

Ongoing Prayers for our brothers and sisters in Cuba:

- We have been asked to join them in prayer at 9:30 am each morning in solidarity during this difficult time.
- We also pray for their wellbeing and safety during this time of crisis, both physically and spiritually.

Churches of Peace River Presbytery

Please visit our web site, www.peaceriverpresbytery.org/churches

Click on the city, then the church, to visit their web site.



The Presbytery Newsletter is a weekly publication of Peace River Presbytery. If you wish to be unsubscribed from the distribution, or if you know someone who would like to receive the newsletter, please contact Lori Doyal at the Presbytery Office: lori@peaceriverpresbytery.org or 941-426-8421, ext. 401.

