

The Peaceful News

The Peace Presbyterian Church of Lakewood Ranch, Florida Newsletter

WINTER, 2016

People of faith sometimes need to look back to be reminded of the great providence of God. The Israelites looked back at the Exodus and saw how God rescued them from slavery and carried them through the wilderness to the Promised Land. They remembered in times of exile that God was with them, even in seasons of life that were difficult. The early church looked back and recalled the stories of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, composing books of good news (Gospels) and letters of encouragement to the Christians in various places and times.

“The transformation of lives is hard to measure, but we continue to see evidence that the goals of Peace are being fulfilled...”

When I look back on the previous three years, I am amazed at the new people who have come to Peace! All three of our newly elected elders are persons who have come to Peace in the last three years! They are significantly engaged in this ministry, as many of you are.

In the last three years, we have moved from a temporary rental site to this permanent home, added a second service, renovated and re-purposed this building and grounds, and received pledges of almost 2 million dollars in capital campaigns, half of which is already given. We have doubled our youth group, doubled our music groups, and doubled our small groups. We

have increased our operating budget to include property management and a mortgage, and we anticipate adding a more permanent youth pastor position to the staff. Our mission involvement and giving has increased by fifty percent.



But none of these figures means anything if lives are not changed. The transformation of lives is hard to measure, but we continue to see evidence that the goals of Peace are being fulfilled through inspiring worship, authentic relationships, nurturing discipleship, compassionate outreach, and responsive stewardship. Come to the annual meeting on January 31st at 9:45 to hear more news of God's blessings at Peace.

Peacefully yours,

Elizabeth

Rev. Elizabeth M. Deibert
Pastor, Peace Presbyterian Church

THANK YOU FOR GENERAL FUND PLEDGES

The Gratitude Team thanks the congregation for its generosity during pledge season. We have 7 new pledgers and approximately 20% of our pledgers increased their amounts this year.



There are still copies of *I Like Giving* circulating. It's a quick, but worthwhile read that may challenge you to think about your own generosity in all aspects of your life.

Please pick one up next time you're at the church!



Blood Drive

Our next blood drive will be on Sunday, February 14th. The bloodmobile will be in the parking lot from 9:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Have a heart this Valentine's Day...

Give the Gift of Life.

January Resolution Blahs? Answer—CROP Walk

Are you having problems holding true to your New Year's Resolutions,

specifically those related to exercise? We all know the feeling. However, one proven method to combat creeping lethargy is to exercise with like-minded people.



As such, the Mission Committee is offering to help (coax) you to renew your commitment by joining us in the two-mile Manatee County CROP Walk For Hunger held at the picturesque Green Bridge in downtown Bradenton. In addition to the exhilaration of a brisk walk, you will also have the opportunity to support the "Our Daily Bread" food pantry. The walk is scheduled for Sunday, February 28th after church service. Although the Bible cautions us about false pride, know that last year Peace had the second highest number of contributing walkers (37) and contributed the second highest dollar (\$2197.00) amount of twenty-one participating churches. (Not bragging, but just sayin'!)

Those unable to walk will have the ability to participate thru sponsorship of their selected walker(s). For the "how to," stay tuned.



Saturday Night Singles

All single women of the congregation are welcome to be a part of the Saturday Night Singles group. The current group is comprised

of women who are in the 40–70 age range, but new members of any age are welcome. Some of us are widowed, some have never married, and some are divorced. We represent many different faiths, and welcome all with open hearts.

The purpose of the group is simply to gather and have fun, and to share the positives about life as a single woman. While this is not a counseling group, we certainly support one another by sharing the journey and forming closer relationships with one another.

We meet on the 4th Saturday of the month, usually at 7:00 pm, with a group member taking responsibility each month for hosting or planning an outing. Watch the weekly bulletin for the location and exact start time. For further information, call or email Ivy Ruark at 941-704-7978 ivyruark@gmail.com

Beth-El Mission Thursday Evening Community Meal

Cena Comunitaria offers a weekly opportunity to get to know our neighbors through some of the things we Presbyterians do best: Food & Fellowship. Peace has agreed to prepare and serve the Thursday evening meal about every 3 months to the migrant farm working community @ Beth-El Mission in Wimauma. All are welcome to serve, even as a one-time commitment. On October 8, sixteen volunteers (including some of our youth) served 110 grateful farmworkers. It's quite a rewarding and fulfilling opportunity!



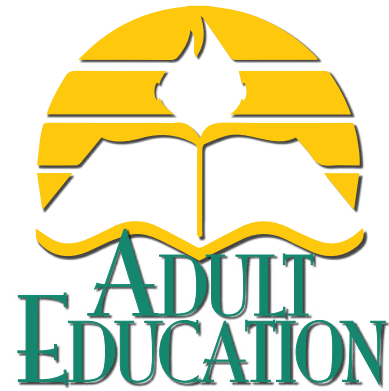
Ofelia Uribe led the bi-lingual prayer of thanksgiving before the meal and then teamed up with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office to provide support, resources, and education. We learned that most of the men are from Mexico, where there is very little work amid rampant violence. They are here legally on a work program (generally 6 months), are paid minimum wage, and consider themselves lucky to secure any type of work in the U.S., allowing them to support their families back home. They often fall prey to swindlers in the community, aware that they are farmworkers who do not always understand the language well or complexity of the system here. The police officer who spoke to the group is an immigrant himself, originally from the Dominican Republic, who rose to the rank of sergeant. Very knowledgeable regarding the migrant community, he warned these humble and hard working men of the potential dangers, specifically crimes they may be subjected to such as theft of their visas or cash that they are trying to send home.

I noticed how silent and observant the farmworkers were during Ofelia's and Pastor Walter's prayer, and then just how thankful they were for a simple home-made hearty bowl of soup. If you would like to benefit from warming the hearts of others, consider joining us as we serve the next meal on January 28.

Sally Schoeffel, Mission Team Co-Leader



Serving Cena Comunitaria at Beth-El in October.



The Adult Education Team is presenting three powerful classes this winter. Gordy Hyde's class is considering the transformative topic of how to engage in truly effective ministry to the poor and disadvantaged without distorting or limiting the Gospel. Richard Deibert and Barbara McIlwain will take up the topic of how, through prayerful and careful preparation, to make the most important and inevitable decisions of life. Finally, a team of facilitators will lead a discussion of the lively nature of faith, how it grows over time as we make the road by walking it.

In addition, Chip Schaaff has generated some flyers for independent study and reflection on various helpful topics for positive change in life. The first one is guidelines for setting New Year's (or any) helpful goals. These flyers will be available from time to time at the entrance to the church, stay tuned for more to come in the spring.

Adult Education coming in February

You Are Invited to Attend
ACTIVE PARENTING NOW!

As parents we are given one of the most important jobs on earth but many parents learned their parenting skills by trial and error (with emphasis on "error"). Coming in February, Active Parenting Now! will look at:

- Goals of children's misbehavior
- Logical and Natural consequences
- Effective communications
- Who "owns" the problem - parent, child or both
- How to handle power struggles
- And other areas of interest that class participants may bring up.

This class will be led by Chip Schaaff; a former Elementary school teacher, a parent, and a mental health counselor. Chip believes that this is the best parenting program around so we hope that those in our congregation who are interested will attend and spread the word to neighbors and friends. Oh, of course - this is FREE!

Stay tuned for the announcement of our starting date!



February 12, 2016

Salmon Fishing in Yemen

Discussion Leaders: Diane and Dirk Brinkmeyer

Refreshments:

When Britain's leading fisheries expert (Ewan McGregor) is approached by a consultant (Emily Blunt) to help realize a sheikh's (Amr Waked) vision of bringing the sport of fly-fishing to the desert, he immediately thinks the project is both absurd and unachievable. But when the Prime Minister's overzealous press secretary (Kristin Scott Thomas) latches on to it as a "goodwill" story, this unlikely team will put it all on the line and embark on an upstream journey of faith

March 11, 2016

Color of Paradise

Discussion Leader: Bill Clough

Refreshments:

In this Iranian film, Mohammad is a student at a special school for blind children in Tehran. The summer vacation in the country is a joyous experience for Mohammad, until he discovers his father is thinking about remarrying and considers his handicapped son to be a stumbling block.

April 8, 2016

Places in the Heart

Discussion Leaders: Peg Papsch and Richard Deibert

Refreshments: Barbara Staton

After her husband is killed, Sally Field is forced to take over the debt-ridden Texas family farm herself. She accepts the help of African-American Danny Glover and blind boarder John Malkovich. Despite almost insurmountable odds, Field manages to bring in the cotton crop and to hold her farm together.

May 13, 2016

Timbuktu

Discussion Leader: Roger Kragt

Refreshments:

Not far from the ancient Malian city of Timbuktu, now ruled by the religious fundamentalists, proud cattle herder Kidane (Ibrahim Ahmed aka Pino) lives peacefully in the dunes with his wife Satima (Toulou Kiki), his daughter Toya (Layla Walet Mohamed), and Issan (Mehdi Ag Mohamed), their twelve-year-old shepherd. In town, the people suffer, powerless, from the regime of terror imposed by the Jihadists determined to control their faith. Music, laughter, cigarettes, even soccer have been banned.

The Thomas Faith and Film group invites you to come to any and all of these very interesting movies on the second Friday of each month. We gather in the café at 6:30, movie begins at 7:00. Popcorn and drinks are provided. The theme of cross-cultural understanding guided the selection of this year's list.

Our **Christmas Angel Tree** was once again a huge success. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to give over 85 gifts of clothes, shoes, toys (including four bicycles) and gift cards to four needy families and three employees of Beth El. Thank you for making Christmas brighter for these people.



Amanda and Nancy serve as Santa's elves, packing up Angel Tree Christmas gifts for Beth-El.



Peace Music Ministry Growing

The Music Ministry at Peace is growing. The Ringers of Peace have been blessed with 3 octaves of Malmark Bells from Whitfield Presbyterian Church in Sarasota. We still need two more octaves of bells to finish the set. Whitfield also gave Peace a lovely Steinway Grand Piano which is in the chapel.

All our music groups have started—Voices of Peace, Ringers of Peace, Gospel Guys, Harmonizing Women, Seekers of Peace. In February we will be starting two new groups. Check the bulletin for more information.

During Advent, the Ringers played on Christmas Sunday and the Orchestra and all Choirs participated on Christmas Eve, along with the youth.

All church members are invited to sing, play instruments, or act in the Music Ministry. We do this to honor God, share time with our musical family and have fun with other music team members

To join, contact Gia after services or at diapason08@verizon.net



On December 20 the Ringers of Peace played at both services.



The Seekers of Peace joined in worship in November.



Peace members caroling for John Blossome on December 20.

UPCOMING PEACE SPRING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

LENTEN BIBLE

a study of the Scripture reading for each Sunday in Lent, led by Bill Clough.

DREAM CLASS

an exploration of dreams both in the Bible and contemporary ways of looking at and interpreting dreams, led by David Mullen

CHRISTIAN ETHICS and ALICE

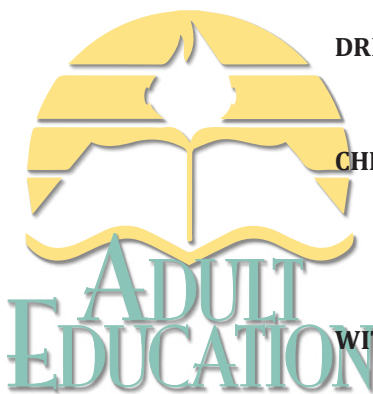
an exploration of making moral decisions and the concern for Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed individuals (ALICE, the working poor). Based on Presbyterian traditions, the class will employ a case study approach and a primer in learning how to think ethically, led by Shannon Jung.

WITH ME—BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

learn how a person can meet Christ and be an apostle “to do His work and be His witness” in the family, in a Christian fellowship and in the workplace, led by Peter Miller

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

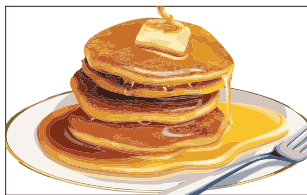
led by Kathleen Hardesty



Children, Youth and Family Activities

Youth Plans for the New Year

Children, Youth and Families has kicked off the New Year with lots of ideas, events and activities! Come to church with an appetite on January 31. On that Sunday, youth group will hold a fundraiser pancake breakfast to serve to the congregation. We will have two convenient times—11:15 (after the congregational meeting) and 12:00 (after the late service).



We are excited to sponsor Souper Bowl of Caring on February 7th during church hours. This is an opportunity for you to vote on who you think will win the Super Bowl by donating change to that team's pot. So, save up your change and support those in need!

Since the "Fall Yard Sale, Bake Sale and Car Wash" was such a success...we are going to have a reprisal in the Spring! Stay tuned for dates and times.



Be on the lookout for a fun "movie night" that is for families and will be open to the community. We are hoping to draw in new families by sponsoring this event. Further details will come close to the time.

CYF team is busy planning youth missions, camps and activities. If you would like to help out or have any great ideas, please feel free to share with a team member.



Tying knots with the youth group from Beth-El in November.



Making Advent candles.

PEACE PHOTO ALBUM



Trick or Treat for the Manatee Food Bank brought in lots of items.



Blessing and Marilyn were baptized on December 27.



Building TP snowmen in December.



Baptism of Peyton, surrounded by family

Kim Adams ordination on November 22.



The Peaceful News is published quarterly by:
Peace Presbyterian Church
12705 State Road 64 East
Lakewood Ranch, Florida 34212
941-753-7778
www.PEACEpcusa.com

Pastor: Elizabeth Deibert

Editor: Diane Brinkmeyer

Graphic Design: Peter Miller

Photos: Emily Miller, Krista Langowski, Terry Bosley, Sally Schoeffel, Eirinn Camphire.