

September 2012

# The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas



## Britton Varn Selected as New Youth Ministry Coordinator

Britton Travis Varn has recently accepted the invitation to serve as the Presbytery's Youth Ministry Coordinator. Britton has had a broad background in youth ministry and currently serves as the Director of the Presbyterian Youth Workers' Association (PYWA). Prior to the growth of her family, Britton served as the Director of Youth Ministry with Second Presbyterian Church of Little Rock, and as Director of Junior High Ministry with Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church of Dallas.



Britton is a graduate of Austin College with a double Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish and International Studies. She was also elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Her undergraduate studies prepared her for teaching Spanish to three and four year-olds in Second Presbyterian Church's Preschool which she does two mornings each week.

Her resume of church-related activities ranges from small group leadership in various presbyteries and directing camp and conferences to serving as Moderator of the Latin American Task Force of Grace Presbytery and membership on the National Presbyterian Youth Ministry Council.

Britton is a life-long Presbyterian and the daughter and granddaughter of Presbyterian pastors and their spouses. She and her husband, Chris, have three children: Riley, Gracie and Kira.

The Youth Ministry Coordinator position is a parttime, 10 hour per-week position designed to provide visionary staff leadership to the Youth Advisory Team, to help recruit and support leaders for youth ministry events sponsored by the Presbytery of Arkansas and to coordinate youth event publicity and registration.

Those serving on the initial Youth Ministry Coordinator Search Committee included: Guy Delaney (chair), Gail Phillips, Theresa Spragins, Jeannie Ford and Mary Shaw. We are grateful for their service.

Britton officially joined the Presbytery's staff on September 11th. Her office hours will

be 9:00 am to noon, Tuesdays and Fridays.



Britton with her family: Chris, a Software Architect at NIC, Inc.; Riley, a 1st grader at Roberts Elementary; Gracie, 3; and Kira, 15 months.

Your partner in ministry,

### *Bill*

#### General Presbyter's Out of Office Commitments

##### September

11 Committee on Ministry and Cong. Care & Development, First Pres., Conway

12-14 Solar Under the Sun Solar School, Ferncliff

16 Adult Sunday School Class, Second Presbyterian, Little Rock, Teach

16 First Presbyterian, Ft. Smith, Installations of Phil and Tasha Blackburn

24 Called Meeting of Synod, Irving, Texas

27 Vera Lloyd Board Meeting, Monticello

29-Oct 1 Association of Executive Presbyters and Polity Conference, Louisville, KY

##### October

7 Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village, Preach

12-13 Presbytery Meeting, Central Presbyterian, Pine Bluff

14 Mt. Comfort Presbyterian, Fayetteville, Preach

20 Committee on Care and Nurture of Church Professionals, Conway

21 Westminster Presbyterian, Hot Springs, Preach

21 First Presbyterian, Little Rock, Installation of Marie Mainard O'Connell, if the way

be clear

22-27 Doctor of Ministry Colleague Group, Mo-Ranch

28 First Presbyterian, Search, installation of Kade Curry

29 Synod Executive Presbytery Forum; Lubbock, TX

30 Synod Meeting; Lubbock, TX

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### **Church Employment Opportunity in our Presbytery**

**Choir Director** -- First Presbyterian Church, Harrison, Arkansas, seeks a choir director for Wednesdays and Sundays. A job description and an application form are available by contacting the church at 870-741-2464 or [jane@fpcharrison.org](mailto:jane@fpcharrison.org).

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*Why do people give?*

*Why must the church learn to compete?*

*What are the three pockets of giving?*

*Why must we change the culture of stewardship?*

*How do generations differ in giving?*

**Come to Central Presbyterian in Pine Bluff**

**Friday, October 12, 2012**

**7 to 9 p.m.**

Clif Christopher, President of Horizons Stewardship, will address these questions and what we can do to strengthen the stewardship of our congregations for the work of Christ. All commissioners, members of the Presbytery, ruling elders and those interested in increasing the Church's capacity for mission are encouraged to attend. Bishop Janice Huie of the United Methodist Church writes, "...Clif Christopher helps us understand the changes that are happening and offers a fresh gospel-centered, practical approach to stewardship in the twenty-first century."



*Clif Christopher*

*President, Horizons Stewardship*

Author of: Not Your Parents' Offering Plate: A New Vision for Financial Stewardship

## **CENTRAL, PINE BLUFF TO HOST PRESBYTERY MEETING**

On **Friday, October 12**, the Presbytery of Arkansas will gather for the 121st stated meeting at Central Presbyterian, Pine Bluff. According to the planning team, the meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. with an Agape' meal hosted by the church.

Orientation for new church professionals in the presbytery will precede the meeting from 1 until 5:15 p.m. and three pre-presbytery workshops ("Supporting Children and Families with Special Needs in Sunday School" and "Congregational Disaster Preparedness," both for anyone interested, and "Worship, the sacraments, and funerals" for commissioned ruling elders, graduates of the lay academy, and interested ruling elders) are offered from 3:15 until 5:15 p.m. Registration begins at 2:45 p.m. in the youth building where 15 displays will be housed.

Opening business begins at 6:30 p.m. From 7 to 9 p.m. J. Clif Christopher, founder and President of Horizons Stewardship Company, will present a plenary on financial stewardship for congregations. (See article above for more details.)

The schedule for Saturday, Oct. 13 includes reports from the commissioners to General Assembly, welcoming new ministers, previewing the 2013 budget, examining a candidate for ordination, electing new committee members, and worship with communion. Worship offering will benefit The Stewpot ministry at First, Little Rock and the Ingathering items requested (packets of kool-aid, shampoo, and bar soap) will be given to CASA, a Pine Bluff agency that assists people affected by domestic abuse.

The read-ahead packets for this presbytery meeting will be posted by September 22.

## **FROM YOUR MISSION COMMITTEE: Working Together to Alleviate Hunger!**

"I was hungry, and you gave me food..."

-- Matthew 25:35

In June of 2010, our Presbytery of Arkansas voted to make Hunger our "Unified Mission Emphasis" for 2011- 2013.

Since that time your Mission Committee has been working to fulfill that mandate. We sponsored a pre-presbytery workshop on hunger ministries in October of 2011. In addition we have been pleased to multiply your mission dollars by providing grants to:

-- the congregations of First Presbyterian Church of Jonesboro and Grace Presbyterian Church of Little Rock as they offered summer programs providing meals and recreation to at-risk children and youth in their neighborhoods, the Graham Memorial Presbyterian Church of Forrest City for its feeding program and other

hunger ministries, and the Barr Memorial Presbyterian Church of Norman for its Gretta Lane Food Pantry and other hunger ministries;

-- Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center for its Garden, Nutrition, Education and Outreach program, a community garden serving as an instrument of mission education and providing food for Ferncliff guests and fresh vegetables/fruit for an area food pantry;

-- the Stewpot, feeding meals to the homeless, housed at First Presbyterian Church of Little Rock, and the "Food for Kids" backpack Program of the Arkansas Rice Depot;

-- the Ferncliff-sponsored "Stop Hunger Now" project on June 1-2, 2012, in which over 30,000 meals were packaged and sealed to be distributed to students in schools in nations where hunger is rampant;

In addition, we've been pleased to recommend offerings at our presbytery meetings benefitting Centsability, "Stop Hunger Now," and the "Food for Kids" backpack program of the Arkansas Rice Depot.

Please help us continue our efforts to alleviate hunger! We encourage your church to be active and creative in beginning or growing ministries that feed hungry children and families and address the root causes of hunger. A brochure, Unified Mission Emphasis Hunger Grants, is located in "Presbytery Documents" on the presbytery's website ([www.PresbyteryOfArkansas.org](http://www.PresbyteryOfArkansas.org)). Check it out and send us your proposals for assistance with your congregation's hunger ministries!

### **Cents-Ability and the Peacemaking Offering for 2012**

Your Mission Committee encourages your support for the annual special offerings of our Presbyterian Church (USA) that benefit mission-related causes!

Two we think of at this time of year are the Cents-Ability program and the Peacemaking Offering, often received on the first Sunday of October, World Communion Sunday.

1) **Cents-Ability** (formerly 2 Cents A Meal) offerings combat hunger through international, national, and local -- Presbytery of Arkansas - projects. For some, that means literally putting 2 cents per meal in a Cents-Ability container, a wonderful teaching opportunity for all and especially for those with children. Others write one check for the equivalent, \$21.90, or more, and make that their contribution.

The causes to which our Cents-Ability offerings are designated for 2012 are:

***International*** - The Cameroon Food Sovereignty Program (H000128) -. This program helps villages build and operate village-run grain banks which allow villagers

to sell their grain to a community silo and then buy their grain at a reasonable cost throughout the year. If villagers don't have money, they can buy the grain on credit and pay back that grain at harvest. The villagers make the decisions, are responsible for the banks, and are the beneficiaries. The grain banks have been incredibly successful and mean children in the Sahel who were eating maybe once a day during lean months are able to eat twice a day.

**National** - Our national portion will go to the general Cents-Ability fund (H000107) from which at the end of the year the Cents-Ability Advisory Committee selects and awards grants to hunger-related projects across the United States.

**Presbytery of Arkansas** - Our local portion of the 2012 Cents-Ability offerings will go to help support the hunger Ministries of the Graham Memorial Presbyterian Church in Forrest City, Arkansas. That congregation now serves their community through soup kitchen held each week that serves approximately 400 individuals. In addition, they during the school year procure and pack backpacks of easily-opened and served food for Forrest City school children from at-risk families.

2) **The Peacemaking Offering** supports national and international peacemaking efforts through grants made by the Peacemaking Program of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

The 50% of our Peacemaking Offering received in Presbytery of Arkansas churches during 2012 will help make possible a year of service in Northern Ireland for a young man from our presbytery, David Mills. David will spend the year building bridges of peace through the Presbyterian Church (USA) Young Adult Volunteers program. He will serve with the Abbey Presbyterian Church in Monkstown, a lower income housing area in northern Belfast, working with youth in and beyond the church.

Receipts for both Cents-Ability and the Peacemaking Offering should be sent through our Presbytery of Arkansas' office.

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### **Request from Your Presbytery Disaster Preparedness and Response Committee**

The hurricane season has already started. That can mean flooded houses and belongings. To help Church World Service prepare to help, can you or your congregation fill some disaster buckets?

Thanks to an Illinois Presbyterian who has an ice cream factory, Ferncliff received a windfall of 500 empty buckets and lids. You are invited to drive by the Disaster Assistance Center (DAC) at Ferncliff and pick up a bucket or buckets. Call ahead at 501/821-3063 to be sure someone can meet you at the DAC; preferred times: Monday through Friday between 8 am and 4 pm.

When you have filled the buckets, please return them to the DAC.

Here's the "bucket list":

Five scouring pads

Seven sponges, assorted sizes

One scrub brush

Eighteen cleaning towels (reusable, like Easy Wipes®)

One 50-78 oz. box dry laundry detergent

One 12 oz. bottle of liquid concentrated household cleaner (like Lysol®)

One 25 oz. bottle liquid disinfectant dish soap (like Dawn®)

One package of 48-50 clothespins

Clothesline, two 50 ft. lengths or one 100 ft. length

Five dust masks

Two pairs latex gloves (like Playtex®)

One pair work gloves

28-bag roll of heavy-duty trash bags (30-45 gallon)

One 6-9 oz. bottle of insect repellent (pump, drops or lotion, not aerosol)

Please provide all liquids in new, unopened plastic bottles. Be sure to send only new materials. Place all items in the plastic bucket, making sure they are packed securely to avoid damage during shipment, and seal lid with packing tape.

--The Presbytery of Arkansas Disaster Preparation and Response Committee



## **PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is a mission program of PC(USA)

**Q: Do you know -- the difference between an emergency and a disaster?**

**A: An "emergency" is a traumatic event for which local resources are adequate; a "disaster" is also a traumatic event, and it overwhelms the local resources.** Your presbytery Disaster Preparedness and Response Committee is here to help your congregation prepare for a potential disaster and also to help your congregation, with other churches and communities in the presbytery, to respond to disasters.

**--This message is brought to you by the Presbytery of Arkansas Disaster Preparedness and Response Committee. Additional information is available at**

**<http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/frmDisasterResponse.aspx>**

## **People and Church News**

### **News of Our People**

--**Revs. Jan and Phil Butin**, co-pastors at First United, Fayetteville are the lead couple for the Oct. 22-25 "Couples in Ministry" retreat at Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly, Hunt, TX.

--**Rev. Lewis Donelson**, minister member of the presbytery and New Testament

professor at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, will be guest minister at First, Malvern on Theological Education Sunday, Sept. 16.

--**Jim Keyes** has resigned as Commissioned Ruling Elder at First, Yellville, where **Rev. Rita Wilson** is pastor. He continues as CRE at One-o-One Presbyterian, Gamaliel.

--Congratulations to **Susie and Curtis Wright** on the birth of a grandson Max Payne Wright on Sept. 2. Proud parents are **J. Tom and Meghan Wright** of Hot Springs. Susie is Director of Christian Education at Westminster Presbyterian, Hot Springs and a member of presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

--**Rev. Jim Fleming** of Huntsville, honorably retired, is recuperating from hip surgery and with his wife Jeanne now live in Miami, OK.

--**Rev. Jerry Rice** of Rogers, honorably retired, is recuperating from knee replacement surgery.

### **News of Our Congregations**

--**First, Clarksville and Harmony, Clarksville** kicked off the new program year with worship, potluck lunch, games and fellowship on Sept. 9.

--**Westminster, Hot Springs** will celebrate Evangelism Sunday on Oct. 21 with a chili cook-off and the project of filling disaster buckets for the Disaster Assistance Center at Ferncliff.

--**First, Van Buren** four youth (ages 9-12) carried out a post-confirmation project for feeding hungry people. They had a walk-a-thon to raise money to buy the groceries and parked cars for donations in the church lot for "Old Timers Day," shopped and filled 40 sacks full of food, and asked the men of the church to have a free pancake breakfast on a Saturday where the boys handed out on the street all 40 bags before noon.

--**First, Newport** continues its prayer time Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.

--**First, Springdale** included instruction in emergency procedures and a detailed tour of the church in their Teacher Appreciation event to begin fall activities.

--**First, Batesville** will host Presbyterian Peacemaker Nora Kort, a Palestinian Christian from Jerusalem, in worship on Sept. 30 while she is in Batesville from Sept. 26 through Oct. 1.

--Rev. Anne Hagler, a member of Mid-South Presbytery, has completed her work as stated supply at **Wynne Presbyterian**.

--**Park Hill Presbyterian, North Little Rock** will celebrate Evangelism Sunday on Sept. 30, an annual observance of inviting a family member, friend, co-worker or neighbor to worship.

--**Graham Memorial Presbyterian, Forrest City** celebrated a full Sunday on Sept. 9 with a congregational meeting at the beginning of worship, Communion, September potluck with reports from each Sunday School class and stated September session meeting.

### **News of Our Clusters**

--**Cluster 2** (north central AR) has elected Ruling Elder Carol Klarr, First, Eureka Springs as their representative to Committee on Clusters and Commissioned Ruling Elder Jim Keyes, One-o-One, Gamaliel as their representative to General Committee. Cluster 1 has elected Ruling Elder Ron David, Mount Vernon, Pea Ridge



as their representative to General Committee and will elect a representative to Committee on Clusters on Sept. 19. All terms span 2013-2015.

--Church professionals from **Cluster 9** (Pulaski County and environs) and their spouses or dates enjoyed the annual cluster picnic on August 13. Photos are below:



## Youth Advisory Team Fall Retreat

The Youth Advisory Team kicked off another great year of youth programming with their August retreat hosted by 1st Presbyterian Church in Dardanelle. Fifty youth and adults worked together to plan Sr. and Jr. High YouthQuakes, Youth at Presbytery, and Summer Trips.





The Youth Advisory Team members would like to say "THANK YOU" to the members of 1st Presbyterian Church, Dardanelle for such wonderful hospitality and an AMAZING breakfast Saturday morning.

### **Upcoming Youth Events!**

September 28th - 30th: Jr. High YouthQuake

*Don't Just Go to Church . . . BE the Church!*

Ephesians 1: 22-23

**Registration DUE BY September 14th!!!**

February 15 & 16, 2013:

Youth @ Presbytery

*"Listen for the Voice"*

1 Samuel 3: 10-11

April 5-7, 2013: Sr. High YouthQuake

*"Faith Like a Child"*

Matthew 18: 2-5

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**Presbyterian Village Presents  
Cookout in the Courtyard  
Food -- Fun -- Fellowship  
Thursday, October 18, 2012**

5:00 PM until 8:00 PM  
Presbyterian Village  
510 N. Brookside Dr.  
Little Rock, AR

**Tickets: Adults--\$20, Children (12 and under)--\$10**

Proceeds to Benefit Presbyterian Village Resident Programs

For information and reservations contact David King

501-225-1615 or [davidking@presbyvillage.com](mailto:davidking@presbyvillage.com)

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**Prayer List for Congregations - 2012** can be found [here](#). (Note: some web browsers may require you to press and hold the "Ctrl" key while you click the link to reach the linked website).

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[Click here for the latest PW newsletter \(including a recap with photos of the recent Bible Study led by Rev. Nancy Benson-Nicol at University of the Ozarks, and dates for Fall Gatherings\)](#)

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## **PRESBYTERY SUPPORTS PILGRIMAGE SCHOLARSHIPS**



Through the Presbytery's financial support of the Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage, ARPP announced the non-profit group may now scholarship up to five Presbyterian participants at the upcoming ARPP #17 Pilgrimage Weekend, scheduled for October 18-21, 2012, at Ferncliff.

"Pilgrimage is a wonderful three-day retreat from the world," said Debbie Cordell, ARPP Chair. "Each participant's experience is unique, depending upon their own faith journey, but participants so often tell us they had a close encounter with Jesus Christ-one which helped better prepare them for serving in their home church and community."

"We hope more than five people will take advantage of this Weekend, but we can scholarship up to five Presbyterians who need financial assistance in order to attend," added Cordell.

Deadline to register for the next Weekend is October 7th. To register (and to request up to \$200 in scholarship assistance if needed), visit [www.pilgrimage-arkansas.org](http://www.pilgrimage-arkansas.org), or call Sandra Phillips (Registrar) at 870-688-9189. Scholarships are confidential.

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## Resource Center News

by [NiAnn Thompson](#), Resourcing Director  
Phone 501.663.2424, ext. 104

Tuesday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Proposed Amendments to the PC(USA) Constitution, Parts 1 and 2, have been posted to the internet. Eighteen amendments to the Book of Order will be sent to the presbyteries for vote, along with one amendment to the Book of Confessions. Links to both parts can be found at

<http://oga.pcusa.org/section/departments/communication-development-and-technology/constitution/#amend>.



### **RAVE REVIEW BY PRESBYTERY MODERATOR Rev. David Dyer:**

"A recent acquisition for the Resource Center is a small book with a big message for ministers, Ruling Elders, and other leaders who are tired, worried about the future of our church and our congregations, or just in need of a bit of inspiration and hope. Landon Whitsitt, recent Vice-Moderator of the PC(USA) General Assembly, offers a vision of the church as a collaborative community in his 2011 book **Open Source Church**.

Whitsitt takes the oft spoken truth "all of us together know more than any of us by him or herself" and turns it into an exciting plan for how the Twenty-first century church can make use of both ancient truths and the most modern systems and technologies. With an eye both to the local congregation, large and small, and the councils of denominations, Whitsitt offers the happy idea that leaders and governing groups would do better to be givers of permission and creators of ministries rather than gatekeepers or those who see their main task as saying "No" to people. Not only would the church be more flexible and creative with such leadership, it would be more faithful to the call of Jesus to minister to the world around us. Churches that seem stagnant, dull, even dead, have lively people among their congregations; they simply need to be given a culture of working together in greater freedom to blossom and enliven their group. It is an appealing vision.

I highly recommend this little book to you. It is a lively read and will lift your spirits. Besides, any book with a chapter entitled "Leaders Lead, But Experts Do What, Exactly?" is well worth taking a look at." YOUR Resource Center has two copies available for loan.

### **FALL OFFERINGS FOR ALL AGES**

**"Gifts of God: The Sacraments"** (Acc. #DVD9669) is the denomination's study of baptism and the Lord's Supper for confirmation classes and new members. The DVD and companion study guide are divided into sacraments in the Reformed Tradition, in the PC(USA), exploring baptism (introduction and digging deeper), exploring communion (introduction and digging deeper) and further study.

**"Kerygma's Galatians and James: faith and works"** (Acc. #DVD9670) includes a leader's guide on DVD and a resource book with seven sessions on the New Testament book of Galatians and four on James.

**"Union Sunday presents Revelation"** (Acc. #DVD9675), a 12-part DVD teaching series by Dr. Brian K. Blount, president of Union Presbyterian Seminary. This series comes highly recommended by Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista.

**"Losing Our Sons"** (Acc. #DVD9679) features the father of the military recruiter killed across from our own presbytery office and the father of his alleged killer, the loss they share, and the forgiveness they found as they work together to avert such tragedies in the future due to radical terrorist plots.

**"Veggie Tales Princess and the Popstar: a Story of Trading Places"** (Acc. #DVD9676) gives children an animated "Lesson in Being Yourself" when a farm girl and her look-alike favorite pop singer trade lives and locations only to find the life God gave them is the one for which they were uniquely and lovingly designed.

**REMEMBER OUR ONLINE CATALOG!** Just go to the [www.presbyteryofarkansas.org](http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org) website, click on "Resources," then on "Resource Center" and "click here to search the catalog" to conduct a simple or advanced search for just the right item.

*(The Resource Center receives funding from Presbytery's Committee on Christian Education and Nurture.)*

## Small Church Pastors' Retreat at Mo-Ranch

October 15-18, 2012



The Small Church Pastors' Retreat is an annual collaborative effort between Mo-Ranch, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and the Synod of the Sun. We are delighted to be working together to provide a quality affordable event in a restful place where pastors who serve small congregations might reflect on their ministry and receive inspiration and renewal through study, fellowship, worship, rest and relaxation. Financial support from all three sponsors has made this dream a reality! This event has been designed for all pastors serving churches whose regular worship attendance is fewer than 150 persons. Commissioned ruling elders, stated supply pastors, interim pastors and full or part time teaching elders are all welcome to join us.

Pastors will learn to use a Family Systems' approach for leading their congregations in anxious times from the Rev. Dr. David Jones (a presenter at our February presbytery meeting). Other highlights of the conference will include workshops from Dr. Jones and others (including Texas Presbyterian Foundation's Melinda Hunt), as well as renewing worship and ample free time.

[Click Here for more information, including a brochure](#)

### PRESBYTERY STAFF:

General Presbyter [BILL GALBRAITH](#)

Stated Clerk [CATHY ULRICH](#)

Resourcing Director & Assistant Stated Clerk [NIANN THOMPSON](#)

Director of Mission Support [KENNETH RICH](#)

Presbytery Evangelist [JESSE GONZALEZ](#)

Staff Resource for Youth [BRITTON VARN](#)

Staff Resource for Congregational Care & Development [MICHAEL VINSON](#)

Treasurer [WES SHAVER](#)

Moderator of Presbytery [DAVID DYER](#)

Vice Moderator of Presbytery [SHEREE NIECE](#)

Moderator of the General Committee [SAM HIGHSMITH](#)



The Presbytery of Arkansas is a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), which is part of the Reformed family of churches within the universal Church of Jesus Christ. Our vision is ***to make visible the body of Christ*** (Acts II).

We are composed of over 14,000 Presbyterians gathered in 87 active churches, two new church developments and two fellowships located in various towns and cities in the northern two-thirds of the State of Arkansas.

Phone 501.663.2424 Fax 501.224.2429 <http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org>