



December 2013

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

In this issue:

(Click on the link below to jump directly to an article, or scroll/page down to read the entire Banner from beginning to end)

[Bill Galbraith: "Dance, then, wherever you may be . . . "](#)

[Church Employment Opportunities in the Presbytery](#)

[News of Our People and Our Congregations](#)

[Lyon College \(Batesville\) to Host February Presbytery Meeting](#)

[Disaster Assistance Helpful Hint](#)

[NiAnn Thompson: Resource Center News](#)

[News for Presbytery Youth](#)

[Presbytery Committees Welcome Nominations](#)

[Winter Weather and Year-End Reminder](#)

[Mediation Skills Training offered January, 2014](#)

[Save The Date and Register for 2014 Annual Spring Retreat](#)

[News from the APA Regional Conference](#)

[Presbyterian Prayer List](#)

[Link to Presbyterian Women Newsletter](#)

[Presbytery Calendar](#)

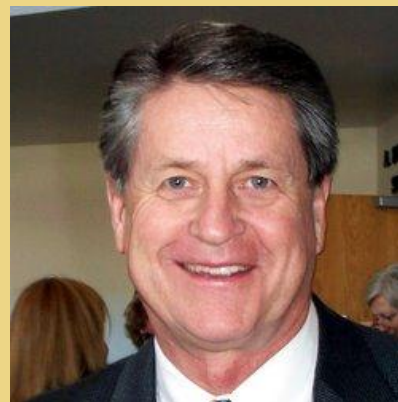
[Staff Contacts](#)

[About the Presbytery of Arkansas](#)

"Dance, then, wherever you may be . . . "

When word came that former South African President, Nelson Mandela, had died, crowds began to gather outside his home. They brought flowers. They sang. They danced!

One South African leader said, "That's what we do. At births, at marriages, at death...we dance." Expressing their grief through singing and dancing, these crowds exuded joy. They celebrated Mandela who led world reverberating social transformation in South Africa. This one, like Lincoln, Gandhi and King before him, redirected his homeland away from nationalized



injustice toward equality. Imprisoned as a threat to the government's unjust pass laws and other policies, Mandela could have dwelt upon violent response. At first, it appeared he would. Following the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, Mandela questioned the effectiveness of non-violence. But, discerning that justice will ultimately prevail, even when it appears unlikely, Mandela worked to unify his country. During his 27-year imprisonment, he gave himself to justice's non-violent pursuit. How?

During a memorable visit, Nelson Mandela was asked by then President Bill Clinton, "I know how you came out of prison but," Clinton wanted to know, "How did you go into prison?" "Weren't you bitter?" Mandela responded, "I lived on hatred for eleven years. They took away the opportunity to be with my children. Ultimately, they cost me my marriage... I realized they could take away every single thing from me except my mind and my heart. Those things I would have to give them. And I decided not to give them away." Then turning to Clinton, he said, "Neither should you."

I wonder if singing and dancing occur so often among those who have known oppression because they give their hearts and minds to more than trying to get even. Whether the vision of the Lord of the Dance and, "the life which will never, never die," has taken hold of them. Whether, like Mandela, they seem to know that the heart and the mind can only be given away; that justice will finally be achieved through committing their all to its cause. Whether their boldness arises from a conviction that God intends all things in heaven and on earth to be reconciled and they dare to help it along.

I wonder if during this Advent's sober preparation, we will thank God for the Coming One and those who continue to prepare the way, singing, even dancing, as they go. On the way with you,

Bill

[Back to the top of this email](#)

Church Employment Opportunity in our Presbytery

Youth Intern -- First Presbyterian, Harrison is seeking a young adult who has the ability to lead our junior and senior high youth into deeper Christian discipleship as they grow physically, mentally and spiritually. This person would need to be available on Sundays, mornings and evenings. For a more complete job description and application form please contact the Pastor/Head of Staff, the Rev. Jane Huffstetler at jane@fpcharrison.org, check out our website at www.harrisonfpc.org, or contact the church office at 870/741-2464.

[Back to the top of this email](#)

People and Church News

News of Our People

--**First, Pine Bluff** hosted Heritage Sunday on Nov. 3 for the congregations of **Faith** and **Central**

Presbyterian, Pine Bluff.

--**First, Springdale** has organized and sponsors a Life After High School fellowship lunch for young adults following worship.

--**Mount Comfort Presbyterian, Fayetteville** celebrated their fourth annual Harvest Fest on Nov. 5 with pumpkin carving, games, cakewalks and gospel singers to celebrate the harvest of their community garden.

--**First, Malvern** observed a Feast or Famine fellowship time at the Nov. 13 potluck where a bountiful meal was followed by presentations and opportunities to support the local food pantry, AR Rice Depot and Heifer International hunger-relief programs.

--**First, Batesville** recently benefitted from the work of students at Lyon College's service day. The church's new wedding policy allows non-members to use the church plant for a fee.

--**Central Presbyterian, Russellville** Mission Committee is preparing Christmas dinner baskets by distributing empty shopping bags to be filled for people whose names were submitted by church members.

--**Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista** observed Bring a Friend to Church Sunday on Nov. 10.

--**Holiday Island Presbyterian** supports Larry and Inge Sthreshley, missionaries in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

--**First, Harrison** will host the Harrison Community Choir's performance of "The Messiah" on Dec. 16.

--**Trinity Presbyterian, Little Rock** substituted the opportunity to give to church missions in honor or memory of a loved one instead of sponsoring poinsettias this Advent season. On Dec. 22 afternoon the congregation will carol around the bonfire on the church grounds and share hot chocolate and s'mores.

News of Our Congregations and Ministries

--**Kimberly Rodriguez** is the new Administrative Assistant at Westminster Presbyterian, Hot Springs.

--**Jennifer L. Lord**, a minister member of the Presbytery of AR, was inaugurated on November 21, 2013, as full professor in The Dorothy B. Vickery Chair of Homiletics and Liturgical Studies at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

--Christian sympathy goes to **Gail and Wendell Phillips** on the death of her father Louis Spitzfaden on Dec. 4 in Delaware. Gail is administrative assistant at First, Jacksonville and clerk of the presbytery's Committee on Christian Education. Wendell is a member of presbytery's Committee on Ministry.

[Back to the top of this email](#)

LYON COLLEGE, BATESVILLE TO HOST FEBRUARY 2014 PRESBYTERY MEETING

On Friday and Saturday, February 21 and 22, 2014 the Presbytery of Arkansas will gather for the 125th stated meeting at Lyon College, Batesville.

Registration will begin at 2:15 p.m. on Friday with Healthy Boundaries workshop running from 2:45 until 5:45 p.m., and Annual clerks of session training, DIY Church Websites and Using Social Media in the Church workshops set for 3:45-5:45.

Evening meal is on your own with dining hall open. Business in Brown Chapel begins at 6:30 with worship at 7:15 p.m. highlighted by the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, sermon by outgoing moderator Ruling Elder Sheree Niece and installation of new moderator Teaching Elder Clare Kelley, and reception following in Bevan Music Room. Worship offering recipient is the Presbytery of Arkansas scholarship at Lyon

College.

Saturday's schedule in the new Student Union will be 7:45 continental breakfast, 8:30 gavel, morning prayers including installation of vice moderator Ruling Elder Ed Wilkinson and business and lunch to follow while meeting around tables.

Highlights of the meeting will be presence of Youth at Presbytery delegates, the annual State of the Presbytery report by the General Presbyter, Ferncliff Board report and voting on the 2014 budget. Watch for the packets for this meeting to be posted by Jan. 31.

[Back to the top of this email](#)



PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

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

Q: What if, during worship, the burning Advent candles fall on the carpet and catch the church on fire?

A: Oooh, that would be very sad. But if the worst does happen, you'll have less pain and panic if you exercise thoughtful options now.

- 1) Set the date today for a fire drill during a worship service. Stage the drill at the start of worship, so you are less likely to distract from the meaning of the worship service.
- 2) Plan how you're going to evacuate children and people who are less mobile.
- 3) Select the meeting place where everyone will gather after evacuating; make it far enough from the buildings so that embers won't touch you.
- 4) Stage the drill within the next month. Give people notice the first time; then practice again - without notice -- six months later. Then drill at least once a year.

By thinking these things through now, you may be able to keep an emergency from becoming a disaster.

--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>

[Back to the top of this email](#)

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.

Wishing the patrons and other friends of YOUR RESOURCE CENTER a joyous Advent, serene Christmas and healthy New Year!

RAVE REVIEW

Resource Center board member Betsy Gillaspay-Williams at First, Conway

commented on "**Confronting the Controversies**" by Adam Hamilton (Acc. #DVD8827) DVD kit that



the small-group study that explores separation of church and state, creation vs. evolution, the death penalty, euthanasia, prayer in public schools, abortion and homosexuality prompted "wonderful discussion, and while we agreed to disagree (in some cases) one study led to another and brought out many personal stories."

WHAT ABOUT DECEMBER 22 AND 29?

Those Sundays may bring surprise guests, including visiting children and youth. Be prepared with one of these DVDs! For young children ages 3-7, "**Cherub Wings: The Angel Song**" (Acc. #DVD9775) in English and Spanish (25 minutes) or "**The Bedbug Gang: Christmas Show!**" (Acc. #DVD9776) with 3-D computer animation (27 minutes). For older children, "**Why do we call it Christmas?**" explaining the sacred history of the Christmas traditions of cutting down trees, hanging stockings and Santa Claus or "**What's in the Bible: Vol. 10, Jesus is the Good News!**" on the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John containing two 25-minute episodes (on the 400 years between the testaments bringing Jesus' perfectly timed arrival and the life and ministry of Jesus, the Savior) or "**Holy Moly: 4 Stories for Advent and Christmas**" including The Annunciation, Mary and Elizabeth, Jesus is born, and The Magi.

If your adults are looking for a one-week lesson before the year ends, consider "**Star Over Bethlehem**" (Acc. #DVD9774), the Christmas story filmed in the Holy Land, or "**Nativity: The Art and Spirit of the Creche**" (Acc. #DVD8696), an international array of scenes gathered by collectors and interpreted by theologians, both 30 minutes in length.

...AND MORE INTERESTING DVD TITLES FOR 2014

"**Billy: The Early Years of Billy Graham**" (Acc. #DVD9751), 98 minute full-length movie. "**Watch & Talk: Five short sharable parables for growing your family's faith**" (Acc. #DVD9752), watch each parable for 10 minutes or less, read the short suggested scripture, and discuss the simple questions.

"**When God is Hiding**" (Acc. #DVD9755) by Philip Yancey (26 minutes). "**Grieving the Sudden Death of a Loved One: Guidance for when the unthinkable occurs**" (Acc. #DVD9757), 17 segments in 60 minutes with discussion guide

RESOURCE CENTER HOURS CHANGE

Beginning in January, 2014 I will ordinarily be in the Resource Center only on Tuesday and Wednesday from 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Self-service hours in the Resource Center will continue from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday and Friday and in January, Thursday will be added as self-service. If these latter days are the best for your visits, I'll gladly gather resources for you to pick up and as usual, I'll mail resources to patrons on the days I'm here.

REMEMBER OUR ONLINE CATALOG! Just go to the 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)

[Back to the top of this email](#)

Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News

Save the Date!

Jr. High Youth - join the Presbytery of Arkansas at the
Jr. High Jubilee at Mo-Ranch!

July 6-10, 2014

Current 6th-8th graders invited

For information on this trip and other summer trips in 2014, [click here to download a brochure!](#)

**Want to stay updated about Youth Ministry happenings in the Presbytery?
"Like"
us on Facebook!
Search**

PresbyteryofArkansasYouthMinistry

on Facebook,

or go to

www.facebook.com/PresbyteryofArkansasYouthMinistry

This page is for anyone wishing to stay updated about Youth Ministry happenings in the

Presbytery -- Youth Workers, parents, youth, Educators, Pastors.
(Presbytery's Youth Ministry received funding from
Presbytery's Committee on Christian Education.)

[Back to the top of this email](#)

Presbytery Welcomes Nominations Suggestions

The Committee on Nominations asks for your suggestions for names of people who would be good candidates to serve on presbytery committees. You may submit these names by completing the Nominations Form at the following link: [2014 Nominations Form](#).

[Back to the top of this email](#)

Winter Weather and Year-End Reminders

When Little Rock schools close for winter weather, the presbytery office closes also. The office will be closed from Dec. 24 through Jan. 1 in observance of Christmas and New Year's Day.

Our fiscal year ends on Dec. 31, 2013. If you need reimbursements from or donations to the presbytery to be included in 2013's business, please make sure they arrive in the office by Dec. 23rd (our last working day of 2013).

[Back to the top of this email](#)

Mediation Skills Training Institute -- January 20-24, 2014

The Presbytery of Arkansas in partnership with the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center is offering their *Mediation Skills Training Institute* at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center from January 20-24, 2014.

The institute includes lectures, discussion and guided practice in role-plays. Active and practical in focus, the sessions emphasize hands-on skills training and real-life role-plays based on the kinds of conflicts faced by participants. The Trainer is **Richard Blackburn**, Executive director of the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center. The goal of the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center is to equip others to be ministers of reconciliation in daily life. Please [click here](#) for a descriptive brochure. For information about the institute, please visit www.LMPeaceCenter.org. For further information contact **Bill Galbraith** at (501) 663-2424.
[Back to the top of this email](#)

Congregational Care & Development Committee's Annual Spring Retreat -- March 6-8, 2014

Congregational Care and Development Committee is again sponsoring the Annual Spring Retreat, March 6-8, 2014 at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center. The title of this year's retreat is ***Launching New Ministries In An Ever Changing World***. For an informational letter, [click here](#).

Please take time to share this with your congregation and encourage participation from your church. It is not too early to register to ensure your desired accommodations, like a downstairs room. You can register online through Ferncliff at www.ferncliff.org under events, call them at 501-821-3063 or mail it directly to Ferncliff, 1720 Ferncliff Road, Little Rock, AR 72223. Remember that your payment is due at the time of registration.

[Back to the top of this email](#)

Partners in Ministry

The Arkansas Chapter of the Southwest Region Administrative Personnel Association hosted a conference in Little Rock October 17-19. Thirty people from seven states attended to take classes in Church History, Theology, Book of Confessions, Pastoral Care, the Church and Persons with Disability, Spiritual Growth, Risk Management and more. Six teaching elders from Arkansas, one from the Board of Pensions and four lay persons provided excellent presentations which were very well received.

The host committee was comprised of Linda Castleman, First-Clarksville, Verna Mae Newman, Spring River-Hardy, plus Sage Arnold, Nancy Coleman, Robin De Rossitte, Tracy May, and Pam Luther, all from Second-Little Rock. They welcomed Amy Jones, recently employed by Park Hill-Little Rock.

Arkansas members receiving certification awards were Sage Arnold - Level I, Linda Castleman - Level III, and Pam Luther - 50 hours additional study following Level III. Retired Administrative Associate, Pet Hollender, was awarded a Life Membership - she completed 34 years of service at Second Presbyterian Church.

[Back to the top of this email](#)

Prayer List for Congregations -- 2014 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).

[Back to the top of this email](#)

[Click here for the latest PW newsletter](#)

[Back to the top of this email](#)

[Presbytery Calendar](#)

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 [SHERÉE NIECE](#)

Vice Moderator of Presbytery [CLARE KELLEY](#)

Moderator of the General Committee [DAVID DYER](#)

[Back to the top of this email](#)



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>