



**December 2014**

# **The Banner**

**Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas**

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## "Thank you for your service . . . "

It's a phrase exchanged on airplanes and at McDonalds, "Thank you for your service." A woman or man in military uniform approaches or is seated next to us. There's eye contact. A greeting follows, often including words of appreciation for what the veteran has done or is doing in serving our country.



Veterans come to mind because in recent years their service has been precarious with deployments to some of the most dangerous regions of the world. Rarely, do we think of other service in light of one risking his or her life. There is, however, clear indication that service to Jesus Christ can come at such cost. Christians living in some of the same areas as our military is deployed, face death sentences or must pay onerous taxes should they refuse to renounce their faith in Christ. In Columbia, accompaniers help ensure the safety of Christians who are regularly threatened because of their efforts on behalf of justice and fair dealings with those on the edge of society. Some have been imprisoned for sharing the gospel or leaving Bibles behind in countries controlled by repressive regimes. The New Testament calls to mind early saints who, "experienced mockings and scourgings...chains and imprisonment, who were stoned, sawn in two, tempted and put to death with the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated." (Hebrews 11:36-38) At Cappadocia, in current Turkey, they lived in holes in the ground.

Being a Christ-follower is risky business but you and I are privileged to serve Jesus because of those who have gone before and whose witness has had transformative power. As you read this, think of those servants of Christ who have helped mold your faith and imagine how God wishes to use you in shaping the faith of others.

At the end of 2014, on behalf of the Presbytery of Arkansas, I give thanks for the service of the 227 pastors, educators and members of our congregations who have served with the various committees of the Presbytery. Many of them moderated our committees. They are: Clare Kelley (Moderator of the Presbytery), Sherée Niece (General Committee), Catherine Allsbury (Administration), Marty Shepherd (Care and Nurture of Church Professionals), Linda LeBron (Christian Education and Nurture), Rita Wilson (Congregational Care and Development), James Anderson (Disaster Preparedness and Response), John Dickins (Ferncliff Board), Frank LeBlanc (Committee on Ministry), Kim Danehower (Mission), Julie Agee Gillaspay (Nominations), Susie Wright (Preparation for Ministry), Betty Glenn (Presbyterian Women), Led Davis (Representation).

Though none has been devoured by lions, the work of Christ's Church is stressful and the demands many. Thank you for running the race set before us and for encouraging others through your service.

Gratefully yours,

*Bill*

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## **Church Employment Opportunities in or near our Presbytery**

**Christian Education Director** -- First Presbyterian Church of Texarkana, Arkansas is seeking a full-time Christian Education Director to oversee and develop the overall educational program of the church. The current emphasis for this position will be on development of children's ministry with some support of youth and other educational ministry. For a job description, click this link: <http://www.firstprestexarkana.org/wp-content/uploads/DCE.pdf>. Resumes may be emailed to [1stpresbytxk@cableone.net](mailto:1stpresbytxk@cableone.net). For questions about the position please call either of the search committee's co-moderators: Jeff Daniels, 1-903-280-1424 or Corey Sharp, 1-903-556-7853.

**Director of Youth Ministry** -- Park Hill Presbyterian Church, 3520 JFK Boulevard in North Little Rock, is seeking a creative, energetic person of faith to lead its youth ministry. The position is 10 hours per week, salary negotiable, with primary focus on the church's youth group which currently meets Sundays at 5:30 p.m. We are searching for someone with a heart for youth, who with our youth and their adult sponsors will build a program that nurtures Christian faith and fellowship and includes Bible study, recreation, and service. Mission trips and participation in Presbyterian youth events and conferences are also high on our agenda. Please send resumes to the Search Committee via the church's pastor, Gordon Garlington, at [ggarlington3@hotmail.com](mailto:ggarlington3@hotmail.com). Questions or inquiries may be addressed to him at 501-940-8008.

**Director of Christian Education** -- Park Hill Presbyterian Church, 3520 JFK Boulevard in North Little Rock, is searching for a creative, energetic person of faith interested in leading its ministries of Christian education for children, youth, and

adults. The position is 10 hours per week, with salary and schedule negotiable. With the right individual, this position might be combined with the church's current search for a Director of Youth Ministry. Please send resumes to the Search Committee via the church's pastor, Gordon Garlington, at [ggarlington3@hotmail.com](mailto:ggarlington3@hotmail.com). Questions or inquiries may be addressed to him at 501-940-8008.

**Part Time Music Director** -- First Presbyterian Church in Harrison, Arkansas seeks a qualified person to direct the chancel choir, hand bell choir, and praise band, with occasional youth/children's choir, meet with the pastor to plan music for worship, and direct all choir practices. Salary, vacation, study leave, and study fund are part of the salary package.

**Part Time Organist/Pianist** -- First Presbyterian Church in Harrison, Arkansas seeks a qualified person to play the organ and piano for Sunday worship and other services as needed, work with the music director, and meet with the pastor to plan music for worship. Salary, vacation, study leave, and study fund are part of the salary package.

**Administrative Assistant** -- FPC Bentonville is looking for a full time Administrative Assistant; please call 479-273-5450, or email [bwilliams@fpcbentonville.org](mailto:bwilliams@fpcbentonville.org).

**College Chaplain (Lyon College; Batesville, AR)** -- Lyon College seeks an ordained PC(USA) minister to serve as College Chaplain beginning in the summer, 2015. Lyon is a U.S. News and World Report 'top tier' national liberal arts college affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA), and is an equal opportunity employer. Send letter of application, resume (including graduate transcripts), and the names and telephone numbers of three references to: Ms. Clarinda Foote, Director of Human Resources, P.O. Box 2317, Batesville, AR 72503-2317 or electronically to [jobs@lyon.edu](mailto:jobs@lyon.edu). The starting date is no later than August 1, 2015. Review of application materials will continue until the position is filled.

## Other Opportunities

**Hymnals Available** -- The Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista has recently switched to the new Glory to God hymnals. They have 140 copies of The Presbyterian Hymnals (blue) that are available free of charge. If you are interested in these hymnals, please call the church office at 479-855-2390.

**Always wanted to travel to Israel?** First Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith is planning a trip February 24-March 12, 2015, hosted by Co-Pastors, Phil and Tasha Blackburn and offered by International Heritage Tours. Contact Phil or Tasha at (479) 783-8919 for additional information.

**The Bold Word Preaching Conference** Want to improve your preaching? Consider the Bold Word Preaching Conference offered by Mo-Ranch Camp and Conference Center, April 20-23, 2015. The event is scheduled as a post-Easter opportunity for reflection, renewal and fellowship with colleagues and other leaders widely recognized as outstanding preachers. Please be in touch with Bill Galbraith, (501) 663-2424x101, should you be interested in going. More information will be available after the first of the year.

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## Thank You for Support of the Presbytery's Mission in 2014

Your generous support of the mission of the Presbytery of Arkansas is appreciated. Please review the Presbytery's record of benevolent contributions received to date. You may access this information by [clicking here to open the report.](#)

Contributions may be made to: The Presbytery of Arkansas  
Attention: Kenneth Rich  
9221 N. Rodney Parham Road  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72227

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## People and Church News

### News of Our People

--Christian sympathy goes to **Rev. Jimmie Thames** of Fort Worth on the death on Nov. 12 of his wife **Ailene**. They had recently moved from Rogers, AR. Jimmie is an honorably retired minister member of the presbytery and pastor emeritus of First, Jacksonville. A memorial service is scheduled for Mrs. Thames at 11 a.m. on April 18, 2015 with Stockdale-Moody Funeral Services of Rogers.

--**Linda Ware** was honored on Nov. 16 as she retired after 32 years of service as office manager at First, Fort Smith.

--**Lyle Rupert** and **Sarah Hays** have resigned from the staff at First, Conway. He was organist and choir director, and she was an administrative assistant.

--**Britton Travis Varn** has returned to part-time work at the presbytery office as Staff Resource for Youth after maternity leave following the birth of their son Declan. Thank you to Mary Shaw, DCE at First, Springdale who filled in for Britton the last three months.

--Christian sympathy goes to **Rev. and Mrs. Lewis Donelson** of Austin on the death in early Dec. of their son James M. Donelson. Lewis is a minister member of the Presbytery of Arkansas and on the faculty of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

--Prayers are requested for **Rev. James M. Miller**, honorably retired, of Little Rock who is hospitalized at Baptist Health in Little Rock. Jim has recently been preaching and moderating Session at First, Beebe and is a member of presbytery's Committee on Ministry. His wife **Rev. Catherine Allsbury** is transitional pastor at First, Malvern and moderator of presbytery's Committee on Administration.

## **News of Our Congregations and Ministries**

--**First, Little Rock** was recently certified as an Earth Care Congregation by the PC(USA) Environmental ministries through Sept., 2015. The church affirmed integrating environmental practices and completed projects and activities in worship, education, facilities and outreach.

--The **Laotian Ministry** hosted the congregation in the annual Holiday Luncheon on Nov. 9 to give thanks for the partnership between the two congregations which meet in First, Fort Smith.

--**Westover Hills Presbyterian, Little Rock** hosted an Alternative Christmas Market on Nov. 15.

--**First United, Fayetteville** is planning a ski trip to Winter Park, CO on Dec. 30-Jan. 1. Six to eight spots are available for youth of 14 years and older or adults. Contact Kristi Button at [kbutton@fupcfay.org](mailto:kbutton@fupcfay.org) for details.

--**Mount Comfort Presbyterian, Fayetteville** held their Harvest Festival on Nov. 8 with pumpkin carving, games, cakewalks and square dancing.

--**First, Dardanelle** contributed food to the Community Thanksgiving Meal and plans membership classes soon.

--**First, Huntsville** deacons "greened" the church on Nov. 29 and will "de-green" it on Jan. 3.

--**Holiday Island Presbyterian** filled two emergency buckets for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and gathered items for 16 health kits.

--**First, Eureka Springs** hosted the Cluster Presbyterian Women's meeting.

--**First, Benton** plans the Longest Night worship service on Sunday, Dec. 21, for those suffering on their journey to wholeness and people who support them.

--**First, Rogers** sponsored a Parents Night Out on Dec. 5 and will have a Parents Day Out on Dec. 20 as fundraisers for the Honduras Mission Trip over spring break.

--**Fairfield Bay, Kirk of the Hills** honored the veterans in their congregation on Veteran's Day (picture below).



--**Trinity Presbyterian, Little Rock** held a concert in word and music on Dec. 7 followed by a reception.

--**Mountainburg Presbyterian** hosted the Community Church Sing on Dec. 7 and will have a Live Nativity on Dec. 17.

--**First, Malvern** welcomed a speaker from Vera Lloyd Children's Home to their Thanksgiving potluck dinner on Nov. 19.

--**First, Arkadelphia** celebrated their annual Chrismon service on Dec. 7 during which children add the Chrismon symbols to the sanctuary tree while their meanings were explained by speakers.

--**First, Mountain Home** library features a display of holiday-themed books, and the congregation is upgrading their automatic external defibrillator.

--**First, Searcy** enjoyed a formal, catered dinner before the performance of "Starry Night Noisy Night", their first annual Kids Christmas Pageant on Dec. 7.

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## **Presbytery Group Does Mission Work in Central Arkansas**

From November 9th through the 15th, the Presbytery of Arkansas took a local Mission Trip to central Arkansas this year, helping people who were affected by the tornados in April of 2014. The group helped with general cleanup, light construction, and other tasks as needed. Pictured below are Susan and David Wright, installing insulation under a mobile home.



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### **Resource Center News**

by [NiAnn Thompson](#), Resourcing Director  
Phone 501.663.2424, ext. 104  
Tuesday-Wednesday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.



## **PRESBYTERY FACEBOOK PAGE**

If you have events that you want the people of the Presbytery to know about, post them to our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/PresbyteryOfArkansas](http://www.facebook.com/PresbyteryOfArkansas). Rev. Anne Russ at First, North Little Rock (Argenta) at 501.374.7677 or email [revruss@gmail.com](mailto:revruss@gmail.com) will be glad to answer your questions.

## **RAVE REVIEW**

- Rev. Rita Wilson, pastor, First Presbyterian, Yellville writes: Our youth have accepted the responsibility for leading the devotionals at their youth meetings. "**365 Meditations for Teens**" (Acc. #BK8244 from the Presbytery's Resource Center) offers a scripture reference, reflections and in some cases questions to talking points that can lead the group into a conversation about various subjects in their lives. Those written for Jan. 22, 24; June 4; Aug. 13, and 21 are a few examples. The youth have enjoyed using this resource.

## **RAVE REVIEW**

--Rev. David Reed, HR, Resource Center Board member raves about a new set of resources. He writes: What is *Theocademy*? *Theocademy* is an exciting new online training series available at [theocademy.com](http://theocademy.com). Did I mention? It's FREE! If you don't have access to the Internet, you can also check out DVD versions available at your *Presbytery of Arkansas* Resource Center. Drawing on the vast gifts of our denomination, *Theocademy* would like to provide members of the *Presbyterian Church (USA)* with the finest theological education they can get, short of attending one of our ten seminaries.

***Being Presbyterian: Foundations of Presbyterian Discipleship*** is designed to orient new members, though, I believe these lessons are an excellent refresher course for those of us who've been Presbyterian for years. *1 Grace, 2 Renouncing Sin & Evil, 3 Jesus Christ as LORD and Savior, 4 Worship & Study, and 5 Fellowship & Mission* are the five lessons which you can view directly from the [theocademy.com](http://theocademy.com) website or in YouTube on your iPhone, iPad, or Android device.

***Preparation for Ordered Ministry*** is a wonderfully comprehensive series designed for ruling elders and deacons. Major topics include *What is the Church? What are the Confessions? Presbyterian Polity, Dynamics of Worship, What is an Elder/Deacon?* Fifteen lessons are designed to help leaders understand the ministry to which they've been called. In a very informative introduction to the series delivered at *Next 2014* (which you can view by simply typing [vimeo.com/94233866](http://vimeo.com/94233866) into your browser), host, Landon Whitsitt shared the best endorsement around for this fine series. As he was training the session at his church using the new series, one of his elders slammed her hand down on the table and said, "Where ... has this been for the last 43 years of my life!"

Future plans for *Theocademy* include: a series for training commissioned ruling elders, a bible content exam prep course, in-depth biblical studies, as well as introductions to important theologians & theological movements. *Theocademy* is a project of *The Synod of Mid-America* and its partners, including: *The Synod of Lincoln Trails, The Synod of the Southwest, The Synod of Lakes and Prairies, The Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation, The Heartland Center, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Louisville Seminary, and McCormick Seminary.*

Remember: this series is FREE, and you can use it in so many different ways (individual lessons, group gatherings, Sunday School classes, session retreats, etc). So, check it out today from our Resource Center. You'll be glad you did!

## ARE YOU READY FOR DECEMBER 28?

That in-between Sunday can be a "low" (attendance) Sunday or one where you welcome unexpected guests. Be prepared with the DVDs for adults "**Star Over Bethlehem**" (Acc. #DVD9774, 30 minutes), "**Nativity: The Art and Spirit of the Creche**" (Acc. #DVD8696, 30 minutes), "**A Thrill of Hope: The Christmas Story in Word and Art**" (Acc. #DVD9590, 50 minutes) and "**The Census and the Star: Solving the Mysteries of Jesus' Birth**" (Acc. #DVD9462, 30 minutes). Here are some for children: "**The Bedbug Gang: Christmas Show!**" (Acc. #DVD9776, 27 minutes), "**Cherub Wings: The Angel Song**" (Acc. #DVD9775, 25 minutes in English and Spanish), and the DVD containing two stories "**Go Look in the Manger**" and "**The Candy Maker's Christmas**" (Acc. #DVD9460). All are available from YOUR Presbytery Resource Center.

Warm Advent, Christmas and Epiphany wishes to all the patrons of the Resource Center. It has been the joy of the board and me to partner with you in the educational and programming needs of your congregations, groups or personal studies this year. Next year I will be working on Tuesday (7:30-5:30) and most of Wednesday (7-1:30) each week and can easily be reached other weekdays. Watch for improvements as we make the Resource Center more accessible to all those who visit any weekday.

Self-service hours in the Resource Center are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Thursday and Friday. 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](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)*

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## Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News Important Youth Ministry Dates

Please mark your calendar with these important dates for next year!

**Youth at Presbytery (U. of the Ozarks) -- Feb. 20-21**  
**Sr. High Youthquake (Ferncliff) -- March 13-15**  
**Jr. High Jubilee trip to Mo Ranch -- July 5-9**  
**Montreat Youth Conference trip -- July 26-Aug. 1**

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**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](http://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 receives funding from  
Presbytery's Committee on Christian Education.)

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## **Presbytery's Black Caucus Presents Annual Christmas Music Festival This Weekend**

The Presbyterian Black Caucus is hosting its annual Christmas Music Festival at Allison Memorial Presbyterian Church at 4 p.m. on Sunday, December 14th.

Allison is located at 922 Wright Avenue in Little Rock. Participating congregations and choirs include: Allison Memorial, West End in Arkadelphia, Faith in Pine Bluff, Hopewell in Morrilton and Holmes Chapel in Monticello. The Presbytery is cordially invited to join the congregations for this special event. An offering is received to help support scholarship programs for youth of these congregations.

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## **PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

**Q: I worry about the safety of our older adults, especially in wintertime. What can our congregation do to help our older members stay safe and well?**

**A: First and foremost is communication:** You can make sure that every member, especially if living alone, has a personal communication plan. For each older adult member, line up a deacon or younger member of the congregation to be a "go to person" (GTP), who will check in with the older person regularly. And remind older adult members to call their GTP in an emergency.

You can also double check, before bad weather strikes, that older adults have back-up hearing aid batteries, glasses, and other medical supplies, such as oxygen; that they have enough medicine and supplies to last at least a week; and that in slippery times, they wear non-slip shoes -- or stay inside.

--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>

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### **New Region Map**

The Presbytery Restructure Task Force presented a new map of Regions for the Presbytery of Arkansas. This new map was approved by a vote of the presbytery. For a list of the churches in each region, [click here](#).

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### **Church members make Christmas happen for children**

Vera Lloyd needs help from people like you to make Christmas happen for children and

youth on our campus who won't experience Christmas without you.

Vera Lloyd staff gathers wish lists from youth and provides lists to churches and volunteers who purchase gifts and bring them to the Monticello children's home campus or our Little Rock corporate office. If you are interested in bringing Christmas to children at Vera Lloyd, please contact Melissa Hendricks, Director of Development, at 501-666-8195.

### **Schmidt Center now offers help overcoming grief**

Jenny Caldwell, LCSW and Director of Vera Lloyd's Laurence E. Schmidt Counseling Center, is now certified in the Grief Recovery Method through a week-long training offered by the Grief Recovery Institute.

The Grief Recovery Method is an action-step, proven program that helps people overcome grief. With help through the Schmidt Center, you or someone you love can move past a loss and embrace life again.

Call the Schmidt Center at 501-664-7777 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

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### **90 Day Companions to Begin in 2015**

In 2015, the Committee on Care and Nurture of Church Professionals will initiate a 90 Day Companion program to help welcome newcomers to the Presbytery of Arkansas. New members to the Presbytery will be matched with a companion who will make contact with the newcomer at least three times during the first 90 days of membership in the Presbytery. These contacts may be phone calls or face-to-face visits and may be more frequent than once a month. The frequency and nature of the contacts will be determined by the person coming into our presbytery and the person who has agreed to serve as the 90 Day Companion. Typically, the conversation will include the following:

- Celebrations and Accomplishments
- Current Challenges
- Plans for Addressing the Challenges
- Whatever else the new person would like to discuss

Current members of the Presbytery of Arkansas may be asked to serve as 90 Day Companions. If you would like to be considered please let Dan Wooley, incoming moderator of the Care and Nurture of Church Professionals know. He may be contacted at: [DANSW7156@aol.com](mailto:DANSW7156@aol.com)

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## Presbytery Welcomes Nomination 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: [2015 Nominations Form](#).

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## 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, 2014. If you need reimbursements from or donations to the presbytery to be included in 2014's business, please make sure they arrive in the office by Dec. 23rd (our last working day of 2014).

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**Prayer List for Congregations -- 2015** 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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PRESBYTERY STAFF:

General Presbyter [BILL GALBRAITH](#)

Stated Clerk [CATHY ULRICH](#)

Resourcing Director [NIANN THOMPSON](#)  
Assistant Stated Clerk [DAVID DYER](#)  
Director of Mission Support [KENNETH RICH](#)  
Staff Resource for Youth [BRITTON VARN](#)  
Staff Resource for Congregational Care & Development [MICHAEL VINSON](#)  
Treasurer ["BUZZ" ROBERTS](#)  
Moderator of Presbytery [CLARE KELLEY](#)  
Moderator of the General Committee [SHERÉE NIECE](#)  
Vice Moderator of Presbytery [ED WILKINSON](#)

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The Presbytery of Arkansas is a council 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, a new church development and one ministry 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>

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