



January 2014

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

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"The Company We Keep"

Last Monday, sitting around that long table at the cluster meeting, he spoke of an old friend. In her ninety-fourth year, she was asked, "What have you learned in recent years?" She remarked with a twinkle, "Peer pressure is less than it used to be."

Often, peer pressure is viewed like the flu, something to avoid. Remember Mom, or was it Dad, questioning you after some numbskull decision, "Well, if those friends of yours told you to jump off a bridge, would you?" It was as if we should side-step others' influence because something bad was likely to happen. After all, it just had. Behind the admonition, of course, resided hope that we learn to think before we act, reflect on consequences and remember who we are. In early life, when the sense of immortality is on steroids, that's a tall order.

But later in life, we can also slip. Someone questions the integrity of a colleague and, without thinking, we follow suit with our own belittling critique. Others aren't pulling their weight on the committee assignment so we cut back our effort. We don't like the decision the church officers made. We withhold our gifts; even invite others to join us. Sometimes, we don't think. Peer pressure becomes our pass to being less than our best selves.

There is that other side, however. There is the older woman living alone on her meager retirement. She doesn't get her hair done and contributes the price of a permanent to the youth going to fix houses in Joplin. There is the church which, though dwindling in numbers, has the gigantic vision of giving their building to a new charter school. They believe God wants them to see that kids in the community have a better opportunity to succeed early on and later as well. The peer may be one, a woman living alone. She prompts your imagining what you might do. The peers may be a congregation willing to act on what they sense God wants for children. Because of them, you think about what God wants your church to do.

Who challenges you to be better than you would be without them? Keeping them in the company you keep is succumbing to peer pressure in the best way possible.

Grace always,

Bill



General Presbyter's Out of Office Commitments:

- Jan 18 Mission Committee & Care and Nurture of Church Professionals Committee, FPC--Conway
- 19 Preach and Lead Officer Training, FPC--Morrilton
- 19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Recognition Service, Temple B'nai Israel, Little Rock
- 20-24 Mediation Skills Training Institute, Ferncliff
- 25 Meeting with Interfaith Group re: Trip to Turkey, Little Rock
- Feb 2-6 Stewardship Training Event, Presbyterian Foundation, North Little Rock
- 7 Friends of Ferncliff Dinner
- 8 Ferncliff, Board of Directors meeting
- 13 Arkansas Interfaith Board, Little Rock
- 21-22 Presbytery Meeting, Lyon College (Batesville)
- 24-25 Executive Presbyter Forum, Irving, Texas
- 25-26 Synod of the Sun, Irving, Texas
- 27 Vera Lloyd Board, Little Rock
- 27-Mar 1 Solar Under the Sun, Board of Directors meeting, Ferncliff

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Outgoing Committee Moderators Thanked



Outgoing presbytery moderator Sherée Niece thanks those who have completed

service as moderators of presbytery committees:

- Rev. David Dyer, General Committee
- Rev. Guy Delaney, Committee on Administration
- RE Al Glover, Committee on Clusters

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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.

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People and Church News

News of Our People

--Congratulations to **Rev. Susan and Michael Gray** on the birth of a granddaughter Shelby Ruth Webb May on Dec. 29. Parents are Sarah Webb and Lori May. Susan, the former pastor at Mountainburg Presbyterian, began serving as stated supply pastor of Vaughn Presbyterian Church, Bentonville on Jan. 1 and is a reader of candidates' theological exams for the presbytery.

--**Kristen La Madrid** is the new organist at First, Hot Springs.

--**Rev. Lacy Sellars** has completed his Doctor of Ministry degree at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and will graduate in May. He is pastor of First, Hot Springs and a member of presbytery's Committee on Ministry.

--**Dr. Johnny Alderson** retired on Dec. 11 after 40 years at East Arkansas Community College in Forrest City. He is a member of the Graham Memorial Presbyterian Church there and a member of the presbytery's Committee on Representation.

--**Rev. Elizabeth (Liz) Lindsey** of Forrest City has begun service as temporary supply at First, Newport. She is an at-large member of the presbytery and a member of General Committee.

--Christian sympathy goes to **Rev. Robert Lowry** and family on the death on Jan. 4 of his father Bob

in FL. The memorial service was held at Second Presbyterian, Little Rock on Jan. 11. Robert is transitional pastor of First, Clarksville and Harmony, Clarksville.

--Christian sympathy goes to **Revs. Debbie and Jim Freeman** and family on the death of Jim's father, Rev. David Freeman, who died peacefully January 14 in his sleep. Visitation will be Thursday, January 16 from 5 to 7 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, Oxford, MS. A Service of Witness to the Resurrection will be held Friday, January 17 at 11 am at First Presbyterian. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be given to First Presbyterian Church, 924 Van Buren Ave, Oxford, MS 38655. The family's hope is that some particular project might be undertaken there that was dear to David's heart. Debbie is transitional pastor at First, Jacksonville and a member of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. Jim is a minister member of the Presbytery of the Pines who served in the Presbytery of Arkansas for many years. Both are former moderators of the presbytery.

News of Our Congregations and Ministries

--The Community Soup Kitchen Ministry of **Graham Memorial Presbyterian, Forrest City**, served meals each Monday of 2013 (including holidays and on inclement weather days), totaling 12,237. An additional 4,000 meals were served to mission groups hosted by the church, pastors' meetings, at the Community Thanksgiving meal, and to their 8 youth basketball leagues.

--**First, Arkadelphia** celebrated the Advent season with a play by their children on Dec. 15.

--**First, North Little Rock** launched Sunday School (following worship) "for the first time since anyone can remember" on January 12th. There were 34 participants, from age 3 to adults of all ages.

--**Mountainburg Presbyterian** held a Healing and Wholeness service on Dec. 10 and went caroling around town on Dec. 23.

--**First, Jacksonville** is collecting canned soup throughout January for the Souper Bowl of Caring on Feb. 2.

--**First, Van Buren** has named their food pantry after the late Rev. Stan Farmer.

--**First, Prairie Grove** helped a local family who lost their home and its contents in a fire.

--**First, Benton** offered a daily Advent devotional/thought/scripture/image on Facebook and Twitter.

--**Westminster Presbyterian, Hot Springs** prepared and donated to the Disaster Assistance Center at Ferncliff 50 clean-up buckets for use after floods and other emergencies.

--**Pulaski Heights Presbyterian, Little Rock** will resume their ecumenical Friday Bible study on the Gospel of Luke on Jan. 31 with refreshments at 9:30 and the lesson by Assistant Stated Clerk Rev. David Dyer from 10 to 11.

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LYON COLLEGE, BATESVILLE TO HOST FEBRUARY 2014 PRESBYTERY MEETING

On Friday and Saturday, February 21 and 22, 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 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.

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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.



LENTEN RESOURCES FOR ALL AGES: Ash Wednesday is March 5th

For ADULTS: Print curricula "**Illuminating Lent**" by Donald K. McKim and "**The Spirituality of Dietrich Bonhoeffer**" by John P. Burgess, both titles in the "Being Reformed" series from the PC(USA) includes participant's book and leader's guide.

For book discussion, "**Lent and Easter Wisdom**" (Acc. #BK9635), "**Jesus' Parables of Grace**" by James Moore (Acc. #BK9666), "**Flunking Sainthood**" (Acc. #BK9763) or "**Faith Formation 2020**" by John Roberto (Acc. #BK9701).

DVD series "**Praying in the Midst of Life**" (Acc. #DVD9788), "**Everything is Spiritual**" by Rob Bell (Acc. #DVD9785) and "**Road to Emmaus**" (Acc. #DVD9796)

For YOUTH: DVDs "**Becoming a Good Samaritan**" teen edition (Acc. #DVD9786), "**Legend of the Three Trees**" (Acc. #DVD9779) and "**C. S. Lewis Beyond Narnia**" (Acc. #DVD9753) or book "**Worship Feast: Lent and Easter**" (Acc. #BK9700) or curriculum "**Faith Questions: Temptation**"

For CHILDREN: "DVD: Read and Share Bible--Easter" (Acc. #DVD9790) and "Cherub Wings: And It Was So! Easter" (Acc. #DVD9798) or book "It Looks a Lot Like Easter" (Acc. #BK9629)

SERMON Helps: "Lent for Everyone: Luke, Year C" by N. T. Wright (Acc. #BK9720), "Living Into Lent" by Donald McKim (Acc. #BK9748) and "Interpretation: The Sacraments" (Acc. #BK9657)

FOR THOSE IN TRANSITION

A new resource produced by Presbyterian Women "**Practicing God's Radical Hospitality: Exploring Difference, Change and Leadership Through the Spiritual Discipline of Hospitality**" is a six-session study guide for small groups such as a local PW circle or leadership team in a setting which is going through a transition.

The **Online Resource Center** of reliable and Reformed internet resources for every day, Lent/Holy Week/Easter, Missions and Vacation Bible School has been updated. Check it out at:

<http://www.parc-pcusa.com/online-resource-center.html>

RESOURCE CENTER HOURS CHANGE

Beginning this month I am ordinarily 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 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 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

Youth at Presbytery -- "Why are YOU here?" (1 Corinthians 12:27)

Do you have young people in your congregation who are leaders or want to become leaders? Do you have young people in your congregation who are ready to learn more and share what they know about their church and their faith? This weekend is for them! All 10th-12th graders are invited to attend. Cost is \$25.

February 21-22, 2014

Lyon College, Batesville, AR

Registration deadline is February 7!

Registration materials will be mailed this week to all churches and posted online
at:

<http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/frmYouthCouncil.aspx>

Sr. High Youthquake -- "God Has a Plan" (John 3:8)

What? A weekend of faith, fun, and friends for all 9th-12th graders!

When? March 14-16, 2014

Where? Camp Yorktown Bay (on the shores of Lake Ouachita)

Start gathering your group now! Registration deadline is February 28!
Registration materials will be mailed later this month to all churches and posted
on the Presbytery website.

Jr. High Jubilee at Mo Ranch (in the Texas Hill Country)

July 5-10, 2014

All current 6th-8th graders invited!

\$560

Registration and \$200 deposit are due February 28!

For more info, see our complete registration packet here:

[http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/documents/YouthCouncil/Summer
%20Trips%202014%20-%20Info%20and%20Registration%20form.pdf](http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/documents/YouthCouncil/Summer%20Trips%202014%20-%20Info%20and%20Registration%20form.pdf)

Montreat Youth Conference (Montreat, North Carolina)

July 12-19, 2014

All current 8th-12th graders invited!

\$815

Registration and \$200 deposit are due February 28!

For more info, see our complete registration packet here:

<http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/documents/YouthCouncil/Summer%20Trips%202014%20-%20Info%20and%20Registration%20form.pdf>

**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.)

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PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

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

Q: It's 10 o'clock on the morning after a storm or an earthquake. Can you locate your church members, especially the vulnerable ones? If members of your church are displaced from their homes, how will you know if they are dead or alive, injured or unhurt? How will you be able to contact them?

A: Every congregation needs multiple ways to contact members. That means, for cases of displacement, you need contact information for each member's likely destination (relatives? friends?). Hurricane Katrina taught Gulf-area churches and presbyteries this need, but we too need to be ready. Collect that contact information NOW and put it where you can find it at church and also offsite in the hands of key members and staff!

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>

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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](#).

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Winter Weather Reminder

When Little Rock schools close for winter weather, the presbytery office closes also. We ask for your patience if you call and/or email the office during winter weather closings.

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Save the Date for "The P.L.A.C.E."

The Christian Education Committee invites everyone to "The P.L.A.C.E" seminar to be held Saturday, August 9th at Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock. "P.L.A.C.E." is an acronym for **P**resbytery **L**eadership **A**cademy for **C**ongregational **E**nrichment.

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Ken McFayden, Dean of the Leadership Institute, Professor of Ministry and Leadership Development at Union Presbyterian Seminary, Virginia. He is also the author of: Strategic Leadership for Change: Facing our Losses, Finding our Future.

This is a wonderful opportunity for many different types of church leaders (clergy and laity) and many different ages (Kids Kamp led by Ferncliff counselors, Youth workshops and/or mission projects, workshops for ministers and CREs). There are special savings for congregations that register groups for this event!

For more information, [click here to download a brochure.](#)

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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**.

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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](#).

For a brochure, [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.

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Register for Arkansas Pilgrimage #20

An invitation to attend Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage #20 at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center in Little Rock.

When? April 3-6, 2014

The weekend activities begin about 5:30 pm on Thursday, April 3 and conclude around 5 pm Sunday, April 6. Enjoy a weekend of study, worship, fun and fellowship that will bring you closer to God!

Moderator: Patty Minga

To register, visit www.pilgrimage-arkansas.org or contact Ron David, the Registrar at 309 North 3rd, Rogers, AR 72756.

Through the Presbytery's financial support of Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage, the ARPP would like to scholarship up to five Presbyterian participants for the upcoming pilgrimage weekend. You may request up to \$200 in scholarship assistance if needed. You may indicate your need for scholarship assistance when you register.

Deadline to register for Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage #20 is March 2, 2014.

The fall pilgrimage, Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage #21 will be October 2-5, 2014, also at Ferncliff. The moderator for ARPP 21 will be Vickie Davis. Details and registration for this will be available later this year.

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Cluster 5 Gathers for Christmas Party and Caroling

Members of Cluster 5 gathered on December 13th, 2013 for a potluck dinner, caroling, prayer and conversation. It was a nice bit of relaxation during a busy Advent season!







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Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services Announces New Hires

Melissa Hendricks, CFRE, has joined Vera Lloyd as its director of development. In this position, she is responsible for all fundraising activities for the nonprofit organization.

Jenny Caldwell, LCSW, has joined Vera Lloyd as the director of the Laurence E. Schmidt Counseling Center. Through the Laurence E. Schmidt Center, located in Little Rock, Vera Lloyd offers professional counseling, including individual, family and marriage counseling.

Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Children's Home and Family Services' corporate offices and counseling center are located in Little Rock and its children's home is located in Monticello. The children's home was established in 1923 through the dedication and monetary support of Lulu Williamson, Vera Lloyd and Annie B. Wells.

Vera Lloyd Children's Home provides residential housing for up to forty youth under the care of family teachers. Youth are nurtured, cared for and taught a positive family model of living. They learn independent living skills and social skills in order to secure jobs and become successful, contributing adults.

Today, Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services operates on an annual \$2.3 million budget, is accredited by the Council on Accreditation and employs 38 people.

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NWA Cluster Confirmation Retreat -- "A New Journey Begins" February 8, 2014, from 3:00 pm - 8:00 pm

This retreat designed for youth in the confirmation process will be held at United Campus Ministry Center, U of A Campus, 902 W. Maple Street in Fayetteville. The cost of the retreat is \$15 per youth participant, with no charge for adult chaperones and leaders. The cost covers: snacks, dinner on Saturday, and use of the building.

Please contact Kristi Button, First United Presbyterian, Fayetteville @ kbutton@fupcfay.org (479-442-4411) or Mary Shaw, First Presbyterian, Springdale @ mshaw59@cox.net (479-751-2040)

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Spring River Presbyterian Church Celebrates Food Bank

Spring River Presbyterian Church has housed the North Sharp Ministerial Alliance Food Room for nearly twenty-five years. It is basically staffed by members of the congregation with help from people from other congregations.

In 2013 they served more than 3,600 families (7,200 adults and 3,500 children) with fresh produce and non-perishable food items. Meat is also made available when possible.



This ministry was made possible by caring individuals donating 1,632 hours of their time. Christ is visible in the Hardy, AR area, thanks to the Spring River Presbyterian Church, its members and the other churches in the area. Thanks be to God!

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Presbytery Group Attends Montreat's College Conference

On January 1st, 20 college students from the Presbytery of Arkansas traveled to Montreat, NC for the "College Conference at Montreat." From Jan 2nd-5th, students spent time in worship, keynote and small groups, as well as in fellowship with old friends and new. On Sunday morning, Geoff Ryken, First, Conway, was commissioned as part of the College Conference planning team for 2015.



Bekah Hall, a sophomore at Mizzou and member of Second, Little Rock, had this to say about the conference, "As always, spending time at Montreat these past few days has left me sore from laughter, my faith invigorated and challenged, and my love for the Arkansas presbytery group continues to abound. Montreat truly is a "thin" place, its beauty only challenged by its capacity for teaching love. It is well with my soul."

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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).

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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](#)
Presbytery Evangelist [JESSE GONZALEZ](#)
Staff Resource for Youth [BRITTON VARN](#)
Staff Resource for Congregational Care & Development [MICHAEL VINSON](#)
Treasurer [WES SHAVER](#)
Moderator of Presbytery and Moderator of the General Committee [SHERÉE NIECE](#)
Vice Moderator of Presbytery [CLARE KELLEY](#)

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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>