



September 2016

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

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Urgent Message that Needs Quick Attention

By Rev. Stewart Smith, General Presbyter

I hope that most of you know there are some significant changes made to the Board of Pensions medical plan, especially for employees in the plan who are not Teaching Elders. And while the medical plan did not change for Teaching Elders, under the new system each congregation must report employer decisions by September 30 for any employee that is in the plan. I have copied below the recent letter sent by Kevin Keaton, our Board of Pensions representative. Note the links for assistance and know that the Board has hired extra staff to answer the 800 number if you need to call for assistance.



Stewart

General Presbyter Out of Office Commitments

September 18	Preach, First Presbyterian - Arkadelphia
19	Congregation Life Cycle Seminar - Dallas
25	Preach, First Presbyterian - Bentonville
28,29	Vera Lloyd Meeting - Monticello
October 1	Coordinating Team - Little Rock
3,4	Executive Presbyter Forum - Dallas

Dear Friends,

I trust that you have had a good summer following General Assembly.

I wanted to remind you that ALL churches/employing organizations will need to report their employer decisions by September 30.

Even if the church only has one person/ pastor enrolled in the Benefits Plan, the church still must report the decision.

Thus it would be most helpful if you might share the following information in your presbytery communications to churches.

As you know the Board of Pensions has made a number of significant changes to the Benefits Plan and the way employee benefits are priced and structured. There have been many communications about the changes from the Board, but there are many churches that have not either heard or understood the actions all churches are required to do by September 30. Here is some helpful information. Please put the following into your presbytery's communications/e-newsletters, etc. in order to get the word out!

1. Before Sept 30 all churches will need to have the "Authorized Person" from their church (i.e. normally the treasurer, business manager, or chair of personnel who inputs salary information into Benefits Connect for billing purposes from the Board of Pensions), access Benefits Connect and input salary information for each employee and choose the benefits/classifications for all employees. Even if there is only one employee, e.g. the pastor, the authorized person from each church will need to fill in the information on Benefits Connect by Sept 30. Once benefits are chosen, an employer agreement would be created that would determine accurate billing. This Employer Agreement needs to be submitted by September 30.

2. Once benefits for employees are chosen by the employing church, the employees and/or pastor will need to access Benefits Connect. Each employee will see only their information and the benefits offered them by their employer/church. Then, each employee and/or pastor will need to access Benefits Connect between Oct 17 and Nov 11 to choose which benefits they will select or waive from the benefits offered by their employer/church.

Here are several links that will help guide the process-
2017 Benefits Plan Summary-

<http://www.pensions.org/AvailableResources/BookletsandPublications/Documents/pln-603.pdf>.

2017 Benefits Plan Employer Decision Support Guide

<http://www.pensions.org/AvailableResources/BookletsandPublications/Documents/pln-604.pdf>.

To access Benefits Connect go to www.pensions.org. and in the upper right side will be a Benefits Connect "log in".

For support call Member Services or Employer Services at 800-773-7752.

Thank you for your assistance in sharing this with your presbytery!

Grace and peace,

Kevin

Rev. Kevin S. Keaton,
Church Consultant

1-800-773-7752 ext. 7044

215-435-1301

kkeaton@pensions.org

**Synod of the Sun Mission Connection Event
October 21-22, 2016
Woodhaven Presbyterian Church, Irving, TX**

Yes, this is the same weekend as the Presbytery meeting (The Synod event was

scheduled first - they try to avoid conflicts with Presbytery meetings; but if some would like to attend, this will be a gathering around common mission of all kinds to share, connect with and learn from one another.

Discover mission that is happening in our congregations and presbyteries; share visions of congregation and presbytery mission; generate excitement for mission and enthusiasm for mission connections; experience the breadth of mission within the synod

Rev. Jan Edmiston, Co-Moderator of the 222nd General Assembly will preach and present!

For more information and to register go to synodsun.org.

Leadership in the Life Cycle of the Congregation

September 19, 2016

Presented by Grace Presbytery

Presbyterian Mission Center - Irving, TX

The seminar will be led by Dr. George Bullard, a Strategic Leadership Coach and writer of articles and books with The Columbia Partnership. He also serves as President and Strategic Coordinator. His vision is to use his spiritual and strategic giftedness to empower congregations and congregational champions to fulfill their vision for Kingdom growth. Register at gracepresbytery.org under the "Meetings and Events" tab.

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Church Employment Opportunities in our Presbytery

Pastor -- Huntsville First Presbyterian Church --First Presbyterian Church (Huntsville) seeks a half-time pastor to help lead their congregation. Full details are available through the CLC portal through www.pcusa.org. Inquiries can be directed via email to Jason Holt at jholtmd@gmail.com. The website for the church is: <http://fphar.church>.

All Souls' Church -- Scott, AR -- Two positions are open at All Souls' Church in Scott, Arkansas. A job description for the **Minister to Youth** can be found [here](#). The job description for **Minister to Preschool and Children** can be found [here](#). The contact person for these jobs is Rev. Ward Rudolph (PCUSA) solo pastor (email: wardly62@gmail.com, phone: 479-466-9975).

Administrative Associate -- Second Presbyterian Church (Little Rock) -- Little Rock's Second Presbyterian Church is seeking an Administrative Associate - Communications. This position designs and produces various communications including newsletters, bulletins and mailings as well as maintaining the church's website. Knowledge of Microsoft products, HTML, CSS, WordPress and graphic design software is requested. For more information, contact Tracy May at 227-0000 or tracymay@secondpreslr.org. For a more detailed job description, [click here](#).

Office Manager -- First United Presbyterian Church (Fayetteville)
-- First United Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville is seeking an Office Manager. Duties are as follows: Welcome and graciously assist all who contact or visit the office; coordinate and ensure the accurate production, editing, and updating of the church's website, printed materials, and publications; provide needed office support and reception for the pastors and staff; effectively communicate church schedules, events, meetings, and calendar to members, leaders, and volunteers; ensure appropriate use and timely maintenance of church computers, software, network, and office machines, and handle details related to worship. Applicants may send resumes with a cover letter to officemanager@fupcfay.org or by mail to 695 E. Calvin St., Fayetteville, AR 72703. For a document with more information, [click here](#).

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People and Church News

News of Our People

--**David Muffett** of Bowling Green, KY has begun duties as Director of Student Ministries at Trinity Presbyterian, Little Rock.

--**K.C. and Manivan Chanthorn** moved into their new home, supported by household items given by First, Fort Smith, after their house fire last fall. He is commissioned ruling elder for the Laotian Ministry nested at the church.

News of Our Congregations

--**First, Benton** now offers yoga at 5:30 p.m. Sunday free, with participants encouraged to bring their mats.

--**Hopewell Presbyterian, Morrilton** celebrated 59 years of ministry on August 14.

--**First, Morrilton** led a mission trip to Buckhorn Children's Home, KY and participated in a school supply drive for Vera Lloyd Children's Home, Monticello.

--**Park Hill Presbyterian, North Little Rock** recently dedicated their newly renovated areas of handicapped restrooms, welcome area, remodeled office and covered entrance.

--**Mountainburg Presbyterian** held Vacation Bible School on June 7, July 5 and August 2 this year.

--**Second Presbyterian, Little Rock** participated in the inaugural interfaith children's camp for Christian, Islamic, Jewish and Baha'I faiths and blessed backpacks on Aug. 14 for students, teachers, administrators, coaches, staff and others involved in education.

--**Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village** honored pastor Bill Bailey on Aug. 14 with a reception on his 10th anniversary as their pastor.

--**Wynne Presbyterian** held a one-day Vacation Bible School at Village Creek State Park on August 1 after a potluck kick-off on July 31.

--**First United, Fayetteville** plans an all-church retreat Oct. 14-16 at Dwight Mission camp and had their annual Coffee House Music evening on Aug. 20.

--**Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista** had several Sundays of hymn sings this summer and collected school supplies for Gravette schools in August.

--**First, Springdale** offers their Sunday worship service live on You Tube.

--**First, Rogers** kids will have a cookout on Sept. 18.

--**First, Dardanelle** kicked off their food pantry on July 20 to be open each third Wednesday of the month.

--**First, Arkadelphia** participated in college community fairs at Henderson State University and Ouachita Baptist University on Aug. 23.

--**First, Searcy** opens the FPC labyrinth at Presbyterian Park to the community for walks 24/7.

--**First, Conway** hosted the Red Cross blood drive on August 28.

--**First, Yellville** fellowship committee and volunteers prepares meals for members who are ailing or homebound.

--Children at **First, Van Buren** decided on August 14 what they will buy from Heifer International with the quarters they collected all year.

--**First, Prairie Grove** plans an 8-week Sunday School class "A Walk through the Bible."

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Resource Center News

by [NiAnn Thompson](#), Resourcing Director

Phone 501.663.2424, ext. 104

Monday & Wednesday, 7:45 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. Rev. Anne Russ at First, North Little Rock (Argenta) at 501.374.7677 or email revruss@gmail.com will be glad to answer your questions.

Three copies of the **2016-2017 PRESBYTERIAN PLANNING CALENDARS** are still available at the discounted price of \$14 per copy. Start fall with a fresh calendar!

It's not too early to look ahead to books and DVDs for Advent, which begins on November 27 (with Christmas Day this year falling on a Sunday).

ADVENT BOOKS for small group or personal study

RAVE REVIEW: Former Stated Clerk Cathy Ulrich writes about "**Advent in Narnia: Reflections for the Season**" by Heidi Haverkamp that "It is an inspiring and well-written devotional book, with excellent scripture and questions which lead to deeper thinking and exploration of Advent and our place in it. This is a treasure. It is my hope that another disciple will be blessed by it."

"**The Women of Christmas: Experience the Season Afresh with Elizabeth, Mary, and Anna**" by Liz Curtis Higgs. Popular humorist and author Higgs looks at barren Elizabeth, willing Mary and patient Anna, all who trusted in God and prepared to do their part.

"**Christmas Gifts That Always Fit**" by James W. Moore uses the story of the first Christmas and Christmas in our time to look at the gifts of the heart-friendship, encouragement, kindness, faith, hope, love, forgiveness, time and appreciation.

"**Chrismons-They Point to Jesus**" includes order of worship, program for adults and children, patterns and instructions for making 20 different Chrismons, which are monograms of Christ.

"**Every Valley: Advent with the Scriptures of Handel's Messiah**" provides 40 insightful meditations on four sets of scriptures from the oratorio, tracing God's promised one foretold, to Christ's birth, death and ultimate victory.

"**Walking Backwards to Christmas**" by Stephen Cottrell is a unique collection of 11 Advent devotionals starting at the end of the story with Anna and Simeon at the Temple, and moving backwards through Herod's slaughter of the innocents, the wise men's visit, Jesus' birth, Mary's pregnancy to the Old Testament dreams of Isaiah and Moses.

"**Christmas Is Not Your Birthday: Experience the Joy of Living and Giving Like Jesus**" by Mike Slaughter contains five short chapters which invite readers to "cut through the hype that leaves you exhausted and broke at the end of the year...to (find) the peace of knowing that God is truly with us, the joy of giving sacrificially, and the love of a Savior" in approaching Christmas differently this year.

ADVENT DVDs for personal or group use

"**The Best Christmas Pageant Ever**" starring Loretta Swit is a delightful Christmas classic. This 60-minute recreation of the best-selling family book introduces the Herdman children to the church that may not quite be ready for them or the miracle in their wake.

"**Discovering Christmas 1**" includes a 7 minute salute to nativity sets and nativity plays, a 17-minute recreation of the Christmas story, plus six animated Bible stories (4 of Jesus' life and ministry, and Old Testament heroes Joseph in his colorful coat and Jonah and the Whale)

More titles next month!

Reminder: I am in the Resource Center on Monday and Wednesday and available by phone (cell 501.337.2360) or email other days.

(Your Resource Center receives funding from the presbytery's Mission of the Church ministry area.)

Presbytery to Meet in Harrison

The 133rd stated meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas will be hosted by **First Presbyterian, Harrison on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 21-22**. At least two pre-presbytery workshops will be offered from 3:45 to 5:15: Clerks of Session training led by Stated Clerk Robert Lowry and Communion Training for Ruling Elders led by Rev. Phil Butin. Registration begins at 4:30 and the gavel falls at 6:45 p.m. Friday. Worship with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and theological discussion are set for Friday night with business, including welcoming at least three ministers new to the presbytery, fellowship and committee reports on Saturday. Churches nearby Harrison may want to bring groups to observe the workings of the regional church.

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Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News



Jr. High Youthquake to meet Sept. 23-25 at Ferncliff!

Please say a prayer for all of the youth, adult advisors, Leader Corps, and adult leaders who will be attending Jr. High Youthquake next weekend as we worship, play, sing, enjoy the outdoors, and get to know more about how God connects each of us!

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 receives funding from Presbytery's new Ministries with Youth, Campus, and Young Adults.)

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**United Campus Ministry (Fayetteville) Is Excited to Introduce Their
Three Lilly Interns**



United Campus Ministry in Fayetteville has three interns (supported by a Lilly grant from PC-USA)

From left to right, they are:

Mishann:

Hometown: Bentonville

Home church: First Presbyterian, Bentonville

Internship: Working with First United Presbyterian, Fayetteville, in the area of Stephen Ministry

Julianna:

Hometown: Little Rock

Home church: First Presbyterian, Springdale

Internship: Working with First Presbyterian, Prairie Grove, in the area of developing Bible Studies

Hartley:

Hometown: Springdale

Home church: First Presbyterian, Springdale

Internship: Working with Elkins Federated Church, and Special Events at UCM and the Presbytery

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Announcement from Church and Its Ministry Area Regarding Peacemaking Offering and Cents-Ability Donations

Peacemaking Offering:

The Church and Its Mission ministry-area wishes to inform our congregations that they may publicize the 25% retained by the presbytery from the PC(USA) Peacemaking Offering received in October (beginning on World Communion Sunday), has been designated for the Arkansas Food Bank (& Rice Depot). If you are unaware, these two agencies have become one entity.

Cents-Ability Donations:

In 2016 Arkansas Presbytery will give the Cents-Ability Offering as follows:

1/3 to Barr Memorial Presbyterian church in Norman to help with their Saturday morning breakfast and food program. This is one of the most depressed areas of our state. Each Saturday they feed up to 100 people a full hot breakfast plus gives out bags of groceries to as many as 250 families.

1/3 to STOP HUNGER NOW for the national food program

1/3 to STOP HUNGER NOW for the international food program

For more information on the Cents-Ability donations (including information on how to make suggestions for next year's donations), [click here](#).

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Two Workshops Offered at Second Presbyterian Church (Little Rock)

Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock is offering two workshops for all who are interested:

--Enneagram Conference (Oct. 28-29): Ian Cron and Suzanne Stabile present a workshop based on their book:

The Road Back to You: An Enneagram Journey to Self-Discovery, which will be released in early October. The conference will be held October 28th (6:30pm-9:30pm) and October 29th (8:30am-4:30pm). Cost: \$99 per person, \$159 per married couple. For a brochure with more details, [click here](#).

--Caregiver's Expo (Nov. 10): Speakers and vendors will present education and resources for caregivers who are caring for loved ones. Highlights of this conference will be Keynote Speaker Donna Terrell (Fox 16 News Anchor), a panel of professionals to respond to audience questions, and 30+ vendors with products and services available for caregivers. The event will be Thursday, Nov. 10th from 9:30am-1:00pm. There is no cost for participants to attend this event. For a brochure with more details, [click here](#).

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Another Chance to Help McGehee, Arkansas Flood Victims, and a Report on Previous Mission Trip

We intend to continue our support for McGehee recovery. Since recent flooding in South Louisiana may draw potential volunteers away from McGehee, **Susie Wright (501-620-3335) is organizing a follow-up trip to McGehee, October 3-7.** *Volunteers are crucial* to stretch donated dollars for recovery for those who can least afford their own repairs. For information about organizing a work week/weekend for your church, call Wesley Jacobs at 870-814-9238.

"It's about raising hope not walls" was the mission trip theme, so offering emotional and spiritual care to residents was more important than the work. As Mrs. Frankie Thomas began watching our group insulate and sheet rock a room in her recently flooded house, she said, "I see possibilities!" By the 2nd day of work, she could say, "I see more possibilities!"

For more on the wonderful work our volunteers did, plus an inspiring story of an answered prayer, [click here](#).

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Arkansas Pilgrimage to be held October 12-16, 2016

Are you looking for a boost in your faith journey? Consider attending the Arkansas Presbyterian

Pilgrimage to be held at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center from October 12 through 16, 2016. The pilgrimage weekend will begin at 5:30 pm on Thursday, and will end about 5 pm on Sunday. There will be plenty of worship, prayer, food, study, fellowship, and much more. The cost to attend the weekend is \$200.

Scholarships are available if you need financial aid from our Scholarship and Endowment Fund. Also, if anyone is interested in contributing to the Scholarship and Endowment Fund, information is available at the website below.

Applications are available on the Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage website www.pilgrimage-arkansas.org.

You may also pick up participant applications from the Presbytery Office in Little Rock. If you have any questions, you may contact the Registrar at ARPC.registrar@gmail.com

The deadline for applications is October 3, 2016.

(Pilgrimage receives funding from Presbytery's new Church and Its Mission Area.)

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Wellspring Renewal Center Sponsors Fall Clergy Support Groups

Wellspring has scheduled its fall Clergy Support Groups. The groups meet monthly on Friday from 2-4 p.m., are confidential, and can be filed on your insurance. You are also welcome to use your free sessions that are provided through the Presbytery for group. Groups are facilitated by Rev. Rebecca Spooner, a teaching elder in this Presbytery and a licensed psychotherapist. This group is a safe place to vent, increase coping and help manage stress.

To sign up, simply call Wellspring Renewal Center at 501-265-0046 or e-mail Rev. Rebecca Spooner. The tentative group dates for the fall are 8/19, 9/23, 10/21, 11/18 and 12/9. We will formalize the dates for future groups at our first session in August. For more information about Wellspring Renewal Center check out our website: www.WellspringRenewalCenter.com

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Mark Your Calendar Now For Presbyterian Women Fall Gathering Dates

Cluster 2 Fall Gathering -- Date TBA, First Presbyterian Church, Clarksville
Cluster 3 Fall Gathering -- Friday, September 16, Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village
Cluster 4 Fall Gathering -- Saturday, September 24, First Presbyterian Church, Jonesboro
Cluster 5 Fall Gathering -- Saturday, September 10, Allison Memorial Presbyterian Church, Little Rock

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First Presbyterian (Fort Smith) Invites You to their Final Capstone Lecture Event

Fort Smith's First Presbyterian Church invites you to the last of their Capstone opportunities for 2016: visiting worship professor from Perkins for three remaining Thursday evenings: 5:30-7:30pm each meeting (Sep. 15, 22, 29)

There are two books each student will receive and that is included in the \$50 registration fee. Dr. Miller will be talking about how worship is in our DNA and how our bodies and minds are connected in worship.

To register for the event, visit www.1pres.org/capstone.
For a brochure with more details,

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

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Presbyterian Village Invites You to a Cook-off to Benefit Their Foundation

You're invited to "Cook-off in the Courtyard" to benefit the Presbyterian Village Foundation. Please join us Thursday, October 20 from 5-7 p.m. for spirited chili tasting and voting, dinner, and musical entertainment by Bob Boyd. Do you have a winning chili recipe? Enter the Cook-off for only \$25, with a chance to win 3 monetary prizes. Adult tickets are \$20 and kids' tickets are \$10 (ages 4-12). Please visit our online event website ([click here](#)) for more information or to purchase tickets. You may also call Melissa Jenkins at 225-1615. We look forward to seeing you October 20!

*also, here is the event link separate if you need it.

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Run or Walk in the Vera Lloyd "Turkey Trot" -- Saturday, November 9th at 9:00 AM

Run or walk in the Turkey Trot 5K. You can register through <https://runsignup.com/Race/AR/Monticello/veralloyd/turkeytrot> or <http://www.veralloyd.org/events/turkey-trot-5k>. Registration for the 3.1 mile run or walk is \$25 and includes the event T-shirt. The one mile fun run for kids is \$10 and includes a T-shirt. Kids who run, but are not registered will receive a medal.

Register as a virtual participant or create a virtual team. You can register for \$25 and receive an event T-shirt and NOT travel to Monticello for the Turkey Trot 5K. You will have the satisfaction of helping children in need!

Be part of the Little Rock Turkey Trot celebration. Westover Hills Presbyterian Church in Little Rock will host the 2nd annual Turkey Trot celebration in Little Rock on Wednesday, November 2, from 5:15 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The celebration includes dinner, a presentation from Vera Lloyd and a fun walk around the gym. Everyone will receive an event T-shirt and have the opportunity to give an additional gift to help children.

Your gift will help care for 200 boys and girls each year who live at Vera Lloyd's children's home in Monticello.

For a colorful brochure with more information (and a wonderful story of a young woman whose life has been transformed by Vera Lloyd Family Services), [click here](#).

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Prayer List for Congregations -- 2016 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 Calendar](#)

PRESBYTERY STAFF:

General Presbyter [STEWART SMITH](#)

Stated Clerk [ROBERT LOWRY](#)

Resourcing Director [NIANN THOMPSON](#)

Director of Mission Support [KENNETH RICH](#)

Staff Resource for Youth [BRITTON VARN](#)

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

Treasurer [BOB BOEHMLER](#)

Moderator of Presbytery [LACY SELLARS](#)

Moderator of the Coordinating Team [ED WILKINSON](#)

Vice Moderator of Presbytery [RUTH HAMILTON](#)

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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>

Presbytery of Arkansas, 9221 N. Rodney Parham Rd., Little Rock, AR 72227