



November 2016

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

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Faithfulness in Anxious Times

by Rev. Stewart Smith, General Presbyter

I would imagine that many of our congregations addressed the aftermath of the recent contentious presidential election in worship this past Sunday. This election was unlike any we have seen in our lifetime and the outcome was a surprise to much of the country and especially to the various polling organizations. The popular vote total for the two major party candidates of 47.8% to 47.3% illustrates the reality of just how divided our nation is. One side was going to be very upset at the outcome of the election.



I preached at West End Presbyterian Church in Arkadelphia the Sunday after the election. I used the passage from Isaiah 65:17-25 and talked about the vision that the text lifts up; especially the part about enemies - the wolf and the lamb - feeding together. I suggested that we needed to see donkeys and elephants (Democrats and Republicans) working together instead of against each other. And I also suggested that it seems to me that one of the things the church can do better - is to model for the world a way of interacting with each other during times of disagreement. Unfortunately, throughout its history the church has fragmented itself along various lines and when people don't like something about a church - they leave. Sometimes they work to start another church. We need to provide a better example for the world.

I am reminded of the small pamphlet that many of you may remember. It is titled "*Seeking to be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement*". It was adopted by the 204th General Assembly back in 1992. A link to the document is provided [here](#). You can also find the document at this web address: <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/seeking-be-faithful-together/>.

I encourage you to read this again and while it is provided for congregational conflict I think you will find that the guidelines will work well for the current political division. There are 10 guidelines with scriptural references. The document states that every congregation has conflicts. They will either be occasions for divisiveness and harm or they will provide opportunities for growing and learning.

These are indeed challenging times in which we live. As one of my fellow presbytery executives said, "This is precisely the time for us to be the church. We're going to have plenty to do in the coming weeks and months." As we approach Christ the King Sunday let us remember that God is still faithful and Christ is still on the throne. May we continue our common ministry together to make visible the body of Christ and to make the love and grace of Jesus Christ a reality available for all of God's children.

A prayer for us during these anxious times is found in the pamphlet quoted above:

Gracious and Loving God, You have called us together to do the work of Your church. Be present with us during this meeting (time ahead), guide us that we may make decisions that will reflect Your loving presence in this world. Create within us open minds and hearts, that we will not fear conflict or run from it, but embrace it, knowing that it is an opportunity for growing in faith and a fuller understanding of Your will for us. Help us to listen to each other, share our thoughts in loving, honest ways and do all we can to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

As we face these challenging times, I am grateful to be partnered with each of you. We Presbyterians have a voice that needs to be heard and a message that needs to be shared. Blessings upon us all as we faithfully work together in these anxious times.

Stewart

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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).

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

--Christian sympathy goes to **Carol and Rev. Dennis Ritchie** on the death of her mother on Nov. 5. Dennis is pastor of Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista and a member of Committee on the Church and Its Ministries.

--On November 6th, **Rev. Paul Fulks** was installed as pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Heber Springs. A photo of the Installation Commission is below:



Left to right: RE Anton Bucher Heber Springs--First; TE Milton Davis, Honorably Retired; RE Carolyn Buchanan--Batesville, First; TE Lacy Sellars, Hot Springs--First; TE Carol Clark, North Little Rock--Park Hill; TE Paul Fulks, Heber Springs--First; RE David Clark, Heber Springs--First; RE Ruth Hamilton, Hot Springs Village--Kirk in the Pines; TE Stewart Smith, General Presbyter; TE Kade Curry, Searcy--First.

News of Our Congregations and Ministries

--**First, Benton** plans an Advent Gardens service, lighting of candles and reception on Dec. 11.

--**Wynne Presbyterian** enjoyed a Kirkin o' the Tartans on Oct. 30 with bagpipes, procession and blessing of the tartans with potluck after as well as time to honor the memory of those preceding current members in the faith.

--**Second, Little Rock** hosts respite care for five families living with disabilities and trains volunteers.

--**First, Yellville** will host a Thanksgiving service on the evening of Nov. 20 which is open to the public.

--**Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista** will assist 10 families in the Gravette schools with Christmas celebrations.

--**First, Dardanelle** observed All Saints' Day on Reformation Sunday, Oct. 30, by listing names of saints who have passed in the last three years.

--**Westminster, Hot Springs** has adopted the "Glory to God" hymnal, published in 2014, and used memorial monies to purchase copies for the choir with the congregation placing hymnals in the sanctuary in honor or memory of loved ones.

--**Presbyterian Church of Bull Shoals** celebrated Veterans Day in worship and at a potluck on Nov. 13.

--**First, Rogers** has started serving breakfast before worship on the first Sunday of the month.

--**First, Van Buren** is hosting Brewed Theology discussion offsite at a coffee shop.

--**Central, Pine Bluff** members led the vespers service at nearby Trinity Village retirement center on Oct. 30.

--**Mountainburg Presbyterian** deacons are working on ways to help people come to worship or have worship come to them.

--**Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village** is offering a three-week series of classes in Nov. for Villagers with low vision on how to handle everyday activities.

--**Pulaski Heights, Little Rock** has a "food manger" where congregational donations of non-perishable foods and personal toiletries and paper products are placed for needy people.

--**Spring River, Hardy** placed in their newsletter Halloween safety tips, home fire safety pointers and information on reporting domestic violence.

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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.

RAVE REVIEWS FROM EDUCATORS GATHERING:

Christian Educators and youth/children's directors are always treasure troves of suggestions on the most useful resources for our congregations. These came from the meeting of NW AR professionals on Nov. 9. Watch next month for suggestions from the central AR group.

"**Beyond the Broken Heart**" resources for grief recovery (and in YOUR Resource Center)

"**Fresh Start-Divorce Recovery Workbook**" book

"**Five Love Languages for Singles**" book

"**A Walk Through the Bible**" by Leslie Newbiggin studied inter-generationally (and in YOUR Resource Center)

Children's Books: "**To Whom Angels Spoke**" by Terry Kay, "**Voices of Christmas**" by Nikki Grimes,

"What can I give Him?" by Debi Gliori, **"Gift of the Christmas Cookie"** by Dandi Daley Mackall, **"Children of God: Storbyook Bible"** by Desmond Tutu (in Resource Center), **"Secret of Saying Thanks"** by Douglas Wood and **"Praying in Color"** (for adults and for children, in Resource Center) All of the **"Sticky Faith Resources"** for youth, **"Making of an Ordinary Saint"** for collegiates by Nathan Foster and **"Ordinary Radicals"** (book and app.) by Shane Claiborne.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S ON SUNDAYS!

For many congregations this presents an opportunity to try something new. What about offering a DVD to an unpredictable study group? **"Discovering Christmas 2"** (Acc. #DVD9885), **"Bethlehem Year Zero"** (Acc. #DVD9355 or 9886) for youth or young adults, **"VeggieTales Put Others First Sunday School Lessons"** (Acc. #DVD9869) for children, or **"Who is this Man?"** by John Ortberg (Acc. #DVD9847) for adults.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2017

From "The Great Courses" series are offered these topics of 30 minute lectures with course guidebook and full transcripts:

"How Jesus Became God" from Greco-Roman "gods" who became human to the Council of Nicea in 24 classes by Dr. Bart D. Ehrman

"The Historical God" from the many faces of Jesus to prophet of the new millennium in 24 classes, also by Dr. Ehrman.

"Jesus and His Jewish Influences" by Professor Jodi Magness which follows an acclaimed archaeologist in unearthing the roots of Jesus' actions and teachings within traditions and beliefs of ancient Judaism in 24 classes.

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.)

BULLETIN FROM THE CHURCH & ITS MISSION LAST CALL FOR EVANGELISM GRANTS

There are available five grants up to \$500 each for congregations desiring to improve upon or create avenues to evangelize. These can be for signage, advertising, or a website, etc. You have good news to share in your communities and with the help of a grant from the presbytery you can.

To apply, contact the moderator of The Church & Its Mission by email: ktpearson@suddenlink.net. Include a brief description of the project, how much (up to \$500) is being requested, and how it specifically will be utilized. Incidentally, requests should be Session-authorized. If you have questions, you may call 479.229.3394. The deadline to receive requests is December 5th.

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Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News

Youth Mission Trip being organized through Memphis Youth Mission!

When? July 9-14, 2017
Who? Current 8th-12th graders
Where? Memphis, TN
Cost? \$320

Registration and deposit deadline? Dec. 16

Registration information?

<http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/documents/YouthCouncil/Mission%20Trip%202017%20-%20Info%20and%20Registration%20form.pdf>

Memphis Youth Mission (MYM) is a mission site of Youth Mission Co., an organization started by two Presbyterian pastors (Bill and Aimee Buchanan) in North Carolina. MYM's Mission Immersion programs are opportunities for young people to dive into the challenges and needs of our neighbors who live on the margins. The week will include service at a variety of local agencies and debriefing that uses Bible Study, group discussion, and art projects led by MYM staff. Through their work and their presence, youth will come to know more about issues of homelessness, poverty, food insecurity, and the unsupported.

This is the first youth mission trip the Youth Advisory Team has offered in a number of years. We hope to send a great group!

Mark your calendar for these 2017 youth events and trips, and watch for more information to come!

Youth Advisory Team Winter Meeting (location tbd) - Jan. 20-21, 2017

Youth at Presbytery (University of the Ozarks, 10th-12th graders) - Feb. 17-18, 2017

Sr. High Youthquake (Ferncliff, 9th-12th graders) - March 31-April 2, 2017

Jr. High Jubilee (Mo Ranch, 6th-8th graders)
July 2-6, 2017

Sr. High Mission Trip with Memphis Youth Mission (Memphis, TN, 8th-12th graders)
July 9-14, 2017

Montreat Youth Conference (Montreat, NC, 8th-12th graders)
July 23-29, 2017

Want to stay updated about Youth Ministry happenings in the Presbytery?

"Like" us on Facebook!

Search

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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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Announcement from Church and Its Mission Ministry Area Regarding 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 give 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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New List of Churches by Region

The 2016 new 4-Region list of churches can be found [here](#).

You can also find this file at the presbytery's website under "Resources | Presbytery Documents."

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Disaster Prep Says: "Stop, Cover, and Hold On!"

It was 10/20/16 and at 10:20am, I participated in the Great American ShakeOut. I dropped, covered, and held on. If you have not practiced this drill yet, please try it now.

DROP to the floor in front of your seat or lean over as much as possible onto your hands and knees. If you can do so within 5-7 seconds, get under something sturdy.

COVER your head with your arms (as well as possible).

HOLD ON to your neck with both hands until shaking stops.

Here are two suggestions for your congregation to protect itself if threatened by an earthquake during worship.

If seated and unable to drop to the floor:

Bend Forward,

Cover your head with your arms,

Hold On to your neck with both hands.

Then walk out slowly, watching for anything that could fall during aftershocks.

--This message is brought to you by the Presbytery of Arkansas Disaster Preparation and Response Committee. Additional information is available at <http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/frmDisasterResponse.aspx>

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Presbyterian Pilgrimage Invites You to April's Event

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 April 28 through 30, 2017. 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 April 16, 2016.

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Youth at Vera Lloyd Succeed Because of Your Help

For Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services, the "back to school" season is year-round. While the majority of our boys and girls need school supplies for the start of a new school year in August, we always have youth who come to us during the school year in need of school supplies. Many of these youth have nothing when they come to us, especially not a backpack, paper or pencils.

We are so thankful to those that helped us prepare our kids for the start of their year this August. Thank you to: Catherine Allsbury and James Miller, Robert and Lynda Bowman, Jeanne Lloyd, James and Bettye Balmaz, Harper and Adele Jackson, Craig and Ann Shackelford, Dan and Linda Martin, Charles and Patricia Barnett, Graceminster Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Monroe, La.; First Presbyterian, Morrilton; Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Westover Hills Presbyterian Church, all in Little Rock; First Presbyterian Church, Springdale; and First Presbyterian Church, Bentonville. You made sure our kids had a great first day back to school.

We are also grateful to those who make sure youth coming to Vera Lloyd are ready for school at any time. Recently, Westminster Presbyterian Church in Hot Springs and Graceminster Evangelical Presbyterian Church donated backpacks to our boys and girls.

Even as the Christmas season approaches, we hope you remember that, for Vera Lloyd, we're always

going back to school! Thank you for making sure our boys and girls have what they need for school any time of the year.

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Presbytery Office Can Use Two Gently Used Appliances

Are you retiring a microwave oven or a coffee maker? Your Presbytery Office in Little Rock would be delighted to receive either or both of these gently used appliances for our kitchenette. Contact stewart@presbyteryofarkansas.org or phone 501.663.2424x101 and Thank You!

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Presbytery Office Closed For Christmas Holiday

The presbytery office in Little Rock will be closed from December 23rd, 2016 through January 1st, 2017. Our last business day will be December 22nd. Please ensure that year-end mailings are sent with ample time to arrive at the office.

In case of inclement weather, the presbytery office is closed when Little Rock School Districts are closed. We appreciate your patience and apologize for any inconvenience.

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Prayer List for Congregations -- 2017 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 12,000 Presbyterians gathered in 86 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

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