



**April 2017**

# **The Banner**

**Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas**

**In this issue:**

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

[Stewart Smith: All Is Well](#)

[Nominations Sought for Committee, Ministry Area Service](#)

[Mark Your Calendars: Presbytery Meets in Little Rock Saturday, June 3rd](#)

[Church Employment \(and Other\) Opportunities in our Presbytery](#)

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

[NiAnn Thompson: Resource Center News](#)

[News for Presbytery Youth](#)

[Big Tent Conference in St. Louis July 6-8 \(Grants Available\)](#)

[Conference Opportunities at Mo-Ranch \(Hunt, TX\)](#)

[Last Call for Year-End Congregational Reporting!](#)

[New List of Churches by Region](#)

[Upcoming Honduras Mission Trip](#)

[Join Vera Lloyd for Pink Hat Day!](#)

[Presbyterian Prayer List](#)

[Presbytery Calendar](#)

[Staff Contacts](#)

[About the Presbytery of Arkansas](#)

## All Is Well

By Stewart Smith, General Presbyter

These are anxious and uncertain times in which we live and do ministry as Presbyterians in the PC(USA). We face numerous challenges in our communities and in our congregations. As we look forward to the annual, grand celebration of Easter, I read these words from Frederick Buechner that I find helpful. He reminds us that the proclamation of Easter can reassure us that "all is well" in spite of the many challenges we face. I quote his meditation below from his book [Listening to Your Life](#).

"Anxiety and fear are what we know best in this fantastic century of ours. Wars and rumors of wars. From civilization itself to what seemed the most unalterable values of the past, everything is threatened or already in ruins. We have heard so much tragic news that when the news is good we cannot hear it.

But the proclamation of Easter Day is that all is well. And as a Christian, I say this not with the easy optimism of one who has never known a time when all was not well but as one who has faced the Cross in all its obscenity as well as in all its glory, who has known one way or another what it is like to live separated from God. In the end, his will, not ours, is done. Love is the victor. Death is not the end. The end is life. His life and our lives through him, in him. Existence has greater depths of beauty, mystery, and benediction than the wildest visionary has ever dared to dream. Christ our Lord has risen."

This Easter, may we all hear and proclaim and celebrate once again the wonderful news - Jesus Christ has risen! May we be astounded and amazed once again by this proclamation and be encouraged to see our challenges as opportunities to share this news with others!!

*Stewart*

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



## Nominations Sought for Committee, Ministry Area Service

Presbytery's Committee on Nominations is seeking names of qualified and willing persons to serve on presbytery ministry areas or committees or subcommittee beginning in 2018. To download the current form, [click here](#).

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

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**135th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas  
Saturday, June 3, 2017  
Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock**

The 135th meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas will begin at 9:45 am on June 3 in the sanctuary of Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock. Registration will begin in the Narthex at 9:00 am with the opening gavel at 9:45. Worship will begin at 10:00. You will begin to see information with more details in the coming weeks but I wanted you to be aware of a pre-presbytery workshop that will be led by Michael Vinson. Michael will be presenting a series of workshops in the coming months for the Presbytery with a theme of "**Skills for Thriving in Change**". The landscape in which we are doing ministry is changing rapidly before our eyes. The first workshop will be held on **Friday afternoon, June 2**.

Ferncliff will be offering accommodations (registration and rates will be published soon) for those attending the workshop and others who want to come to Little Rock the night before the presbytery meeting. There will be opportunities for fellowship and social gatherings at Ferncliff on Friday evening. Please put these dates on your calendar and consider sending several from your church for the 1st "Skills for Thriving in Change" workshop.

May each of you have a joyful and blessed celebration of Easter!!!

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

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## **Church Employment (and Other) 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](http://www.pcusa.org). Inquiries can be directed via email to Jason Holt at [jholtmd@gmail.com](mailto:jholtmd@gmail.com). The website for the church is: <http://fphar.church>.

**Pastor -- First Presbyterian Church--Newport** -- The First Presbyterian Church of Newport, AR, is searching for an energetic part-time minister to serve a small, loving and active congregation. Newport is a county-seat town in East Arkansas, and the members of the church are active in the life of the community. For more information,

contact Marvin Hare, Jr. at [mbhare@hughes.net](mailto:mbhare@hughes.net) or 870-217-3661.

**First Presbyterian Church, Searcy, AR**, is seeking a **part-time Pianist/Accompanist**. Responsibilities would include accompanying one weekday rehearsal with the adult and children's choirs and accompanying choral and congregational music for Sunday morning worship. This individual would serve under the supervision of the church pastor and session. Please send resumes and any additional documentation to [fpcsearcy@gmail.com](mailto:fpcsearcy@gmail.com) or mail to First Presbyterian Church, Attn: Pianist/Accompanist Search Committee Chair, 400 West Arch Street, Searcy, AR, 72143. For more information about FPC Searcy, visit us online at <http://fpcsearcy.com> or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/fpcsearcy](http://www.facebook.com/fpcsearcy).

**Lyon College** is looking for a full-time, 12 month per year College Chaplain. This person serves as pastor to students, staff and faculty; strengthens the spiritual life on campus; functions as liaison between the college and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and may teach one religion course each semester. Send PIF or resume with three references to: Ms. Clarinda Foot, P.O. Box 2317, Batesville, AR 72503-2317.

**First Presbyterian Church of Walnut Ridge** is searching for a full-time minister. Full salary and benefits are available. The church is prepared to help that person repay educational debt over a several year period. For more information, please contact Tom Moore, (870) 219-9379, [thomasmoore929@gmail.com](mailto:thomasmoore929@gmail.com).

**Central Presbyterian Church (Fort Smith, AR)** is searching for a full-time pastor. The church is between 251-400 members, with average worship attendance of 86 members. Desired experience is Solo Pastor/Head of Staff with 5-10 years of experience. Central Presbyterian Church is a welcoming community of faith that seeks to serve Jesus Christ through sharing our collective talents, proclaiming the Gospel, feeding the hungry, healing the brokenhearted, supporting local and worldwide missions, and enjoying the journey with the Triune God. For more information, visit the church's website at [www.centrafortsmith.org](http://www.centrafortsmith.org), email at [info@centrafortsmith.org](mailto:info@centrafortsmith.org) or call 479-783-8966.

**Youth Ministry Summer Intern -- Second Presbyterian (Little Rock)** Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock is currently accepting applications for the position of Summer Intern for Youth Ministry, a full-time 10-week position. The Summer Intern will work closely with the Director of Youth Ministry to plan and lead in-town programming for youth. Ideal applicants will be at least two years out of high school, have a strong faith and excellent people skills, and have a basic understanding of Presbyterianism. A Job Description can be found at <http://www.secondpreslr.org/youth/summer-intern-for-youth-ministry/>. Cover letters and resumes should be sent to [brittonvarn@secondpreslr.org](mailto:brittonvarn@secondpreslr.org) and will be accepted through Monday, April 17.

**100 copies of "The Presbyterian Hymnal: Hymns, Psalms, and Spiritual Songs"** (published in 1990, embossed on the blue cover with Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista) are available for the taking, first come, first served. Contact [niann@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto:niann@presbyteryofarkansas.org) to arrange pick up.

**First Presbyterian of Jacksonville** would like to donate 50 blue Presbyterian Hymnals and 25 gold, machine-washable robes with burgundy stoles to any congregation that needs them. Please call Paula at 501-773-1738 for more information.

First Presbyterian Church  
1208 West Main Street  
Jacksonville, AR 72076

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

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## People and Church News

### News of Our People

Christian sympathy goes to Joan Creason Jones and family on the death of her husband **Rev. Dr. Hugh Geraint "Gary" M. Jones**, 91, on March 27, 2017 in Hot Springs. He was an honorably retired member of the presbytery.

Born in Bargoed, Wales, he served in the British Royal Navy in World War II before immigrating to the US. Jones earned a degree from Arkansas College, now Lyon College, master of divinity from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, and doctor of divinity from Vanderbilt before being ordained in 1954. He pastored churches in VA, TX, TN and El Dorado, AR, moderated two presbyteries, before retiring in 1990. In 1994 he became a member of this presbytery and served on the Board of Trustees at Lyon.

Jones is survived by his wife of almost 65 years, a son and daughter, and four grandchildren. The celebration of his life was held Saturday, April 1, at First Presbyterian, Hot Springs, which is one designee for memorials.

--**Yesenia Zapata** is the new administrative assistant at Central, Pine Bluff.

--**Rev. Terry McLellan**, honorably retired is the new parish associate at First, Fort Smith.

### News of Our Congregations and Ministries

--**First, Eureka Springs** will host Maundy Thursday service at 11 am followed by a soup

luncheon.

--**First, Dardanelle** will host the Easter community sunrise service at 6:30 am on their gazebo site.

--**Holiday Island Presbyterian** designated March as PDA month with a speaker from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, collecting items for flood buckets and a potluck meal at which 25 health kits were assembled.

--**First, Rogers** will celebrate Gifts of Women Sunday on April 23 with a mother-daughter choir.

--**Wynne Presbyterian's** blessing box of canned goods is filled by members bringing a can for each member in the household.

--**First, Pine Bluff** hosted a joint service for Central, Pine Bluff on Palm Sunday.

--**First, Hot Springs** shares their youth group photos and reports on activities on Instagram.

--**First, Batesville** hosted a prayer service at 4 pm on Palm Sunday and opens their sanctuary for 8 prayer stations of scripture reading, reflection, action and prayer.

--**First, Harrison** collected coats on Palm Sunday in memory of the cloaks laid in Jesus' path in Jerusalem and will celebrate on April 23 a decade of ministry in Capps Road location.

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

### **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](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.

### **SPRING STUDY OPPORTUNITIES**

In the nine weeks between Easter Sunday and the beginning of summer, opportunities abound for your adult groups to engage in meaningful, edifying study together. Read on for some suggestions available for loan through YOUR Resource Center.

### **ONE CHURCH ONE BOOK**

The Synod of the Sun, which area includes the Presbytery of Arkansas, is joining the rest of the PC(USA) in reading Debby Irving's "Waking Up White." Co-Moderators of the 222nd General Assembly (2016), the Rev. Denise Anderson and Elder Jan Edmiston invited the church to join them in reading this book on race. The idea is for people to read, reflect, and start a conversation with each other. To help with conversation among the people in the Synod, a Facebook group has been created to foster conversations on the book and its timely topic. You may contact [www.synodsun.org](http://www.synodsun.org) to request membership in this discussion group.

### **NEW OPTIONS** in Presbyterian series "Being Reformed: Faith Seeking Understanding"

These six-session print studies are ideal for Sunday School, small group gatherings, new or continuing membership classes, leader preparation and more. This curriculum for Reformed and Presbyterian Christian adults has as its purpose "to enhance, enrich, and expand our insights...through encounters with theology, church, worship, spirituality/discipleship, and social righteousness...and to grow in understandings of elements that are foundational and significant for their faith." Each set to preview includes a leader's guide and participant's book.

Titles include:

--"**Christian Hope**" with class topics on the difficulty of hope, thy kingdom come, resurrection of the body and life eternal, Christ's return and the last judgment, new creation and living hope in church and world.

--"**Covenant**" with class topics on God's covenant with Noah and creation, with Abraham, with Israel, with David, new covenant in Christ and Israel/Church/and Covenant.

--"**Grace & Gratitude**" with class topics on grace and gratitude, grace: announcement of the gospel, confession of sin as an act of freedom, passing the peace, God's law as guide for grateful living, and living gratitude.

--"**Call to Mission**" with class topics on God's mission, God's call, poverty alleviation, evangelism, reconciliation, and companions on the journey.

--"**New Members Workbook: Call to Discipleship**" with class topics on call to church membership and Christian discipleship, scripture and the faith of the church, taking part in the congregation's common life and worship, joining the mission of the church, Presbyterian church membership and answering God's call.

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.)

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## **Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News**

### **PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS YOUTH SUMMER TRIPS!**

Although the deadline to register for Presbytery of Arkansas Youth Summer Trips has passed, if you have a youth who is interested in attending, please contact Britton at [britton@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto:britton@presbyteryofarkansas.org)! If she can get another spot from the conference and we have a vehicle seat available, she will do her best to add youth to these trips.

***Jr. High Jubilee at Mo Ranch***

July 1-6, 2017

6th-8th graders

**\$395** (price reduced from \$560!!)

***Sr. High Mission Trip with Memphis Youth Mission (Memphis, TN)***

July 9-14, 2017

8th-12th graders

\$320

***Montreat Youth Conference***

July 22-29, 2017

8th-12th graders

\$799

Info and registration forms here:

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

Partial scholarships are available for those with financial need.

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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 new Ministries with Youth, Campus, and Young Adults.)

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

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## Big Tent Conference in St. Louis July 6-8

### Grants Available from Presbytery's Mission of the Church Ministry Area

#### *Big Tent 2017 to focus on 'Race, Reconciliation and Reformation'*

Presbyterians from around the country are invited to live out their faith at **Big Tent 2017 in St. Louis, Missouri**. This biennial gathering will take place **July 6-8**, on the campus of **Washington University**. The theme-Race, Reconciliation and Reformation-will emphasize the hope of the gospel and its power to transform society in the current cultural context marked by anxiety, racial division, political animosity and economic inequality.

Big Tent offers Presbyterians an exciting opportunity to discern some of the toughest concerns of the day, while actively engaging with their faith community.

"Big Tent is one of the finest denominational events put on by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)," said **Tony De La Rosa**, Interim Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. "Three days of quality programming held in a central, convenient location at a reasonable cost for participants-this year's Big Tent gathering promises to be among the best ever."

The opening worship preacher will be PC(USA) Stated Clerk, the **Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson II**. The Rev. Dr. Christine Hong, Assistant Professor of Worship and Evangelism and Chapel Worship Coordinator at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, will be the closing worship preacher.

"As we grapple with the emerging church of the 21st century it is imperative that we come together to listen, learn and envision the future," said Nelson. "God through Jesus Christ is providing us an opportunity at Big Tent to go deep in our theology and faith while renewing our spirits."

**Registration is now open and is \$395. The price includes registration, accommodations for three nights and meals. A \$145 rate for commuters is also being offered.**

For updates visit [pcusa.org/bigtent](http://pcusa.org/bigtent).

The Mission of the Church ministry-area of the presbytery wishes to encourage any person who plans to attend the Big Tent event discussed above to **apply for one of the \$50 grants** to assist in meeting expenses in making the trip to and from St. Louis and associated costs. You may apply via email to Kelly Pearson, moderator-- [ktpearson@suddenlink.net](mailto:ktpearson@suddenlink.net). Also, those willing to caravan or carpool with persons from other congregations, please coordinate with NiAnn Thompson in the Presbytery Office. Mission of the Church was pleased to award grants to people from Jonesboro and Prairie Grove to attend the NEXT Church Conference last week in Kansas City.

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

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## **Conference Opportunities at Mo-Ranch Conference Center**

**Women's Conference**  
**Session I - May 30 to June 1, 2017**  
**Session II - June 2-4, 2017**

**2017 theme: "A Durable Fabric; Frayed but not Afraid" as Presented by  
Keynote Speaker, MaryAnn McKibben Dana**

Take a break from the busyness of life during the Mo-Ranch Women's Conference to recharge physically, mentally and spiritually. Gather together with hundreds of other women from across the region for either of the identical sessions of Women's Conference. Conference activities include keynote presentations, worship, fellowship, recreation, free time and workshops.

Mothers, daughters and granddaughters come together for a time of reunion and growth. Friendships that last a lifetime are made by women who would not have otherwise met.

Registration is open. Register now online at [www.moranch.org/attend](http://www.moranch.org/attend).

**Summer Camp 2017**  
**One to two week sessions**  
**June 4-July 22, 2017**  
**Ages 8-15**  
**Early bird and sibling discounts available**

Mo-Ranch Summer Camp is a co-ed residential Christian summer camp that's located along the north fork of the Guadalupe River in the wide-open spaces of the beautiful Texas Hill Country! Our summer camp is a place where your child will grow in character, faith and confidence through meaningful relationships in a Christ-centered natural setting.

Registration is open. Register now online at [www.summercamp.moranch.org](http://www.summercamp.moranch.org).

Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly, 2229 FM 1340, Hunt, TX 78024

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

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**Last Call!! -- Clergy Salary Worksheets, Church Information Sheets,**

## Background Checks

Once again, we need your help with Clergy Salary Worksheets and Church Information Sheets. Please fill out these forms and return to our office by May 1st, 2017. You may also simply email the information to Kenneth Rich at [kenneth@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto:kenneth@presbyteryofarkansas.org).

Link for the Clergy Salary Worksheet: [Click here](#)

Link for the Church Information Sheet: [Click here](#)

We are also due for 5-year renewal of the background checks for our ministers, commissioned ruling elders and Certified Christian Educators. Please submit the Sexual Misconduct Policy's "Acknowledgment of Receipt" ([click here](#)) and the "Background Check Form" ([click here](#)).

For the full "Sexual Misconduct Policy" document, ([click here](#)).

Contact Temporary Stated Clerk Leslie Belden ([click here for email](#)) to finish the review of Session minutes and registers for 2016 and previous years.

THANK YOU for your help!!!

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

---

## 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."

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

---

## Join Vera Lloyd for Pink Hat Day

Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services invites you to their **Donor Appreciation & Pink Hat Day** on **Saturday, May 6th** from 11 AM to 1 PM at 745 Old Warren Road in Monticello, Arkansas.

The celebration includes lunch, tours of the children's home, visits with youth, a parade of women (and men) showing off their embellished pink hats and recognition of outstanding service by individuals,

churches and organizations.

Call 501-666-8195 or visit [www.VeraLloyd.org](http://www.VeraLloyd.org) to RSVP.

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

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## Upcoming Honduras Trip

July 14-22, 2017

We will be working on community development teaming up with with First Presbyterian Church of Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. We will mostly be working to build cement homes and also strengthen our relationship with the people and Presbytery of Honduras. We'll be splitting our time between two communities in the Trinidad and Copán regions, where our teams have worked in the past.

Only 10 slots available. Orientation meetings will be set up to prepare everyone for the trip physically, mentally, and spiritually. The estimated cost of the trip is \$1,300/person. For those in need, there are scholarship funds available. Youth and children are welcome, though if under 10th grade will need a parent to also go on the trip.

Email Trip Director Leigh Woodruff Harvey ([leigh.woodruff@yahoo.com](mailto:leigh.woodruff@yahoo.com)) if you're interested in an application.

VIDEO:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5c8sSPttRQs&sns=em>



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

---

### **Centsability Recipients for 2017 Named**

Presbyterian Women's Coordinating Team has named the following international, national and local agencies as the recipients (1/3 to each) of donations to Centsability (formerly known as 2 cents a meal):

**International**--Feed the Children Mission, established in 1979 and headquartered in Oklahoma City, is a non-profit relief organization serving 11 countries around the world with food and essentials. It is accredited by guide star exchange, BBB Wise Giving Alliance and rated by Charity Navigator.

**National**--Feeding America Network, based in Chicago, is a non-profit nationwide network of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries and meal programs including recipient food banks in Fort Smith, Jonesboro and Little Rock.

**Local**--Helping Hands in Bentonville, AR is a non-profit organization formed by local churches and volunteers, receiving no government funding, and which last year helped 11,707 families.

Centsability donations (ideally 2 cents for every individual's meal or 42 cents a week) may be sent to the Presbytery office, 9221 North Rodney Parham Road, Little Rock, AR. 72227.

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

## Reporting Who We Are

Rev. Leslie Belden, Temporary Stated Clerk

We all owe a debt of gratitude to those sessions who reported their congregation's 2016 statistics to the Office of the General Assembly. Thanks go to:

Arkadelphia, First	Hot Springs, Westminster
Arkadelphia, West End	Hot Springs Village, Kirk in the Pines
Bella Vista, Presbyterian Church of	Huntsville, First
Bull Shoals, The Presbyterian Church	Little Rock, Grace
Clarksville, Harmony	Little Rock, Pulaski Heights
Conway, First	Little Rock, Second
Dardanelle, First	Little Rock, Westover Hills
Fairfield Bay, Kirk of the Hills	Malvern, First
Fayetteville, First United	Marianna, First
Fort Smith, Central	Newport, First
Gurdon, First	Norman, Barr Memorial
Hardy, Spring River	North Little Rock, Park Hill
Heber Springs, First	Pea Ridge, Mount Vernon
Holiday Island Presbyterian	Prairie Grove, First
Holly Grove Presbyterian	Springdale, First
Horseshoe Bend, Faith	Van Buren, First
Hot Springs, First	Walnut Ridge, First

Rogers, First and Jonesboro, First are also appreciated because they tried to report, and turned in their statistics to the Temporary Stated Clerk. There may be other congregations who tried to report but also missed the denomination's deadline.

The percentage of congregations not sending in their statistical data is discouraging because it is a sign of a problem in our connectionalism. Our per-capita contribution to the work of the denomination is based on the number of members whom we report, and the number of members for non-reporting congregations remains at the number last reported - which in many cases is much larger than current membership.

The on-line form of OGA is intimidating to some, and many were unaware of due dates. Getting better information to and from our congregations is a commitment of your Temporary Stated Clerk for 2017 as we live out our connectional commitment to one another. Churches will soon be receiving a very simple form for the presbytery's purposes to help us in evaluating the health of the presbytery and its congregations, so please fill this out

and return it promptly. If your church is not on the above list please visit with your Moderator and Clerk of Session about how to make sure that in 2018 our congregations better live into our connectionalism.

If you have any questions, or would like to visit about statistical reporting to the denomination, please contact Rev. Leslie Belden, Temporary Stated Clerk, at [lesliebeld@aol.com](mailto:lesliebeld@aol.com) or 479.466.1061.

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

---

**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).

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

---

[Presbytery Calendar](#)

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PRESBYTERY STAFF:  
General Presbyter [STEWART SMITH](#)  
Temporary Stated Clerk [LESLIE BELDEN](#)  
Resourcing Director [NIANN THOMPSON](#)  
Director of Mission Support [KENNETH RICH](#)  
Staff Resource for Youth [BRITTON VARN](#)  
Staff Resource for Vital Congregations [MICHAEL VINSON](#)  
Treasurer [BOB BOEHMLER](#)  
Moderator of Presbytery [RUTH HAMILTON](#)  
Moderator of the Coordinating Team [LACY SELLARS](#)  
Vice Moderator of Presbytery [LESLIE ROPER](#)

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



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 83 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>