



August 2017

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

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"The Boat as a Metaphor for the Church"

By Stewart Smith, General Presbyter

This edition of the Banner coincides with my preparation for a sermon on the gospel lectionary reading for August 13. In this well-known story, after the miraculous feeding of more than 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish, Jesus sends the disciples across

the lake so he can get away for some much needed solitude (He had just recently learned of the death of John the Baptist). A storm arose on the Sea of Galilee and the boat the disciples were in was being battered by the wind and waves. Jesus came walking towards them on the sea and they were terrified. Jesus spoke to reassure them saying, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter said, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." Jesus said, "Come." Peter starts walking on the water toward Jesus and then he gets distracted by the strong wind, gets frightened and starts to sink. Jesus reaches out to catch him and says, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"



Many pastors and theologians have assumed over the years that this meant that Peter doubted he could walk on the water and if he had just kept his focus and attention on Jesus he would have reached him. But others have raised the question, "What if Jesus is referring to Peter doubting it was Jesus in the first place?" Why did Peter need assurance by asking Jesus, "if it is you, command me to come to you on the water?" The other eleven disciples don't seem to need that assurance. They stayed in the boat. Could it be that Jesus' comment and question refer to his getting out of the safety and community of the boat?

Tim Woodroof has written an article suggesting as others have before him, that Mark, who also tells this story, uses the boat as a metaphor for the church. In the boat there is safety from the storm, camaraderie with Christ, shared work and experiences, and a common direction and purpose. Woodroof looks at several "boat stories" in the gospel and says the boat is a place where three things occur: 1) the boat functions as a place of testing (where the faith and courage of the disciples are tried), 2) it serves as an environment for building faith, and 3) it serves as a place to experience the saving power of Jesus Christ.

Whether or not Jesus and the gospel writers intended for this interpretation, I like the metaphor of the church as a boat. Being in the church does not magically protect us from the storms of life. Yes, we are tested - often. But I have found in my life that the calming experience of Christ is much easier to experience when surrounded by people with a common love for and a common faith in Jesus Christ. We weather the storms better when surrounded by others who care for us and love us and who have a common direction and

purpose. In the church, we have opportunities to build our faith and experience the saving power of Jesus Christ. I suggest to you that you and I need the church. We can try to go our own way, assuming the values and priorities of the world. But one day we will look up and realize we are sinking and wonder what went wrong. We will long for a peace and calm down in our souls and wonder where we can find it.

Friends, we are in the boat together as we seek to serve God and those in our communities by the part of God's fleet known as the Presbytery of Arkansas. The seas are challenging right now and there are those who don't know of the safety of the boat and there are those who are choosing to leave the boat because they are unsure or afraid. Let us all remember that we have one in the boat with us who not only has calmed the wind and the water but has also defeated the power of sin and death forever. His voice calls out to each of us, no matter how calm or stormy the wind and waves may be saying, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

I continue to be thankful to be in the boat with you as together we navigate these challenging times in which we live. May we together continue to strive to make visible the body of Christ wherever the boat may take us!

Stewart

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Rev. Kade Curry Installed at First--Springdale

Rev. Kade Curry was installed as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Springdale, Arkansas on August 6th, 2017. Pictured below are members of the Installation Commission:



Left to right: Elder Jeremy Hightower, Elder Ruth Hamilton (moderator of presbytery), Rev. Kris Crawford, Rev. Stewart Smith (General Presbyter), Rev. Kade Curry, Rev. Bill Henning,

Elder Susan Anderson, Elder Ronnie Prevost, Rev. Janice Six, Piper Kenton Adler

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Presbytery to Meet in Forrest City

The 136th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas will head east, meeting at **Graham Memorial Presbyterian, Forrest City on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 6-7**. Rev. Michael Vinson, presbytery staff member, will lead the second workshop in a series from 1 to 5 p.m. Friday, this one entitled "Mapping Congregational Transformation, Aligning with Your Purpose as a Congregation". Registration for the meeting begins at 5, dinner is on your own with displays setting up until the gavel sounds in the sanctuary at 6:30 p.m.

Highlights of this meeting include: Theological Discussion led by Dr. David Johnson of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary on "Reformed Spirituality and Current Trends, Patterns and Practices," worship with communion and a candidate for ordination preaching and fellowship. On Saturday regular business (at 8:30 am) will be punctuated by the presentation "Encouraging Opportunities for Spiritual Development across the Generations" by Dr. Johnson, a video on the presbytery's ministry in Honduras, polity committee's report on a possible constitutional amendment and Rev. Rebecca Spooner's spiritual development for caregivers in families, congregations and communities.

Congregations are encouraged to plan now to send an elder commissioner to this stated meeting.

Dates and locations for 2018 presbytery meetings were set by the Coordinating Team on August 5th: Feb. 9-10, Lyon College, Batesville; June 2, First, Conway and Oct. 19-20, Ferncliff Camp.

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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](#).

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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. Inquiries can be directed via email to Jason Holt at 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 or 870-217-3661.

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.

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, email at info@centrafortsmith.org or call 479-783-8966.

Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock seeks *Associate Pastor for Congregational Nurture*. The person in this full-time ordained position will provide leadership and support for the church's ministries of pastoral care and counseling, hospital visitation, and congregational fellowship. Job Description can be found at <http://www.secondpreslr.org/search-for-associate-pastor/>. Personal Information Forms can be sent to Philip Shell at pshell88@gmail.com.

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Board of Pensions Reminders

Now through October 13, employers (churches) can model and build employer agreements (offer of benefits) for 2018. Go to pensions.org for more details.

October 13 is the deadline for employer to offer employer agreements.

October 30 - November 17 - employees make decisions and accept benefits offered. This is an open enrollment period for employees to get into dental plan or other options offered by the Board.

Important Note: All benefits will not automatically be rolled over. Only the pension, medical, and death and disability will be rolled over. If a pastor is enrolled in the optional dental plan, it will not be rolled over without completing an employer agreement. The hope is that all churches will fill out an offer of benefits and all pastors and employees will make decisions on the employer agreement.

Call to Health has been extended until November 17. There is still time to earn points for a lower deductible and for \$100.00 Amazon gift cards.

For more information go to pensions.org or call Board Resources at 1-800-773-7752.

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People and Church News

News of Our People

--**United Campus Ministry** at UofA, Fayetteville received a grant for students to go to

Honduras with the Presbytery trips. Two students, Cate Morales and Teila Creekmore, both active at UCM, went to Honduras in July, where the Arkansas group met a group from South Carolina to build homes in communities, learn more about the communities and also share with local government leaders, both mayors and governor candidates about the needs in the community and ways to work together to better the lives of those in the rural communities. sioned Ruling Elders.

--**Rev. Heinrich and Jean Eiler** will be honored with a "going-away" reception on Sunday, Aug. 27 from 11 until noon in the Fellowship Hall at Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village. Eiler, an honorably retired minister member of the presbytery, will be moving on Aug. 28 to Wisconsin to be near family. He was the dean of the last few lay academies held in the presbytery and is mentor to several Commissioned Ruling Elders.

--**Chris McRae** will have a reception in his honor celebrating his years of service to Solar Under the Sun. Chris is an elder at Central Presbyterian Church in Fort Smith. You are invited on Friday, August 11 at 6:00 pm at the Heifer Village building in Little Rock.

News of Our Congregations

--**First, Mountain Home** is seeking two members (church angels) to keep pews and pew racks straightened and stocked after worship.

--**Presbyterian Church of Bull Shoals** will resume their Thursday Bible study, coffee and fellowship in September.

--**Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village** plans Dinners for Six during September through December so that new members may meet and get to know seasoned Kirk veterans.

--**First, Conway** distributed "Still Seeking" surveys to ask what members are seeking in life, in the church or from God to inform the pastor's summer sermons.

--**First, Huntsville** resumes Sunday School at 9:45 a.m. on Sept. 10 and took time at their July 23 potluck to wish Godspeed to two members moving out of state.

--**First, Prairie Grove** shared a potluck of 4th of July foods on July 2 and will resume Wednesday Supper & Scripture on Sept. 6.

--**Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista** hosted "Creative Kids Make It and Share It" half-day summer camp for grades K-12 in which children and youth made and delivered a different project each day to a different non-profit in Bella Vista.

--**Central Presbyterian, Russellville** has scheduled the Blessing of the Backpacks for August 13, the Sunday before school resumes.

--**First, Morrilton** will celebrate Rally Day on August 20 when fourth graders receive Bibles, teachers are recognized and new leaders commissioned during worship, with fellowship luncheon and teacher training following.

--**Wynne Presbyterian's** newsletter front page featured an explanation and Biblical thoughts from their pastor on the solar eclipse coming on August 21.

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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.

ARE YOU READY TO KICK OFF YOUR FALL PROGRAMS?

Whether your new schedule begins with the first day of public school or you wait until after Labor Day, people will return to their regular routines and anticipate learning at church. Here are some items to check out:

For the serious student: **"Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Memories and Perspectives"** (Acc. #DVD9921) is a life story of one of the first German pastors to recognize the threat by Nazism to the basic human values of Western civilization. (90 minutes/black and white)

"Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Nazi Resistor, Martyr" (Acc. #9920) presents one of the great theologians of the last century by master storyteller Martin Doblmeier, tracing the acclaimed author of "Cost of Discipleship" who ultimately joined the assassination plots to kill Hitler.

"Knox: The Life and Legacy of Scotland's Controversial Reformer" (Acc. #DVD9922) presents renegade, revolutionary John Knox and his epic journey from Catholic priest to passionate Protestant preacher.

For the eager class: **"Moses: In the Footsteps of the Reluctant Prophet"** (Acc. #DVD9924) is a set of a six-part DVD study from the Nile River to the Reed Sea, from Mt. Sinai to the desert wilderness, complete with leader guide and book. Popular author Adam Hamilton uses historical information, archaeological data and biblical text to examine Moses' birth, two moments that defined the man, the Exodus, 10 Commandments, lessons from the wilderness and the take-away (don't forget . . . pass it on).

For the younger crowd (including Sunday School, children's church, after-school programs and special events): **Books** beautifully illustrated are **"The Real Story of the Exodus"** and **"The Real Story of the Flood,"** both by Paul L. Maier, and **"In God's**

Hands" by Lawrence Kushner and Gary Schmidt, a delightful, timeless legend based on Jewish tradition and the ordinary miracles that occur when we open our eyes to the world around us.

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 of Arkansas Youth News

SAVE THE DATE!

JR. HIGH YOUTHQUAKE!

September 22-24, 2017

Ferncliff Camp

All 6th-9th graders (and their adult advisors!) invited!

PLEASE SHARE! SEEKING YOUTH, COLLEGE, AND ADULT DELEGATES TO SERVE ON THE YOUTH ADVISORY TEAM!

It's time to recruit a wonderful group of youth (10th-12 graders), college students, and adults to serve as our Presbytery's Youth Advisory Team (YAT) for next year! Please help us get the word out that YAT applications are available and are still being accepted. Thank you for sending this info to youth, college students, or adults who would be great on the Team. We would love to have YOU serve as well!

If you have any questions regarding the Youth A-Team or the application process, please contact outgoing Adult Co-Moderator Geoff Ryken (geoff@ryken.com) or incoming Adult Co-Moderator Rachel Cowan (rscowan@yahoo.com).

Applications can be found

here: <http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/documents/YouthCouncil/Youth%20Advisory%20Team%20Letter%20and%20Application%20for%202017-2018.pdf>

YAT Fall Retreat -- August 18 (8:30 pm) - Aug 19 (2:00 pm)
First Presbyterian Church, Conway

Youth Advisory Team of the Presbytery of Arkansas

We are a team of youth, college students, and adults that gather to grow in our faith and our leadership abilities & to help the Presbytery make disciples of Jesus Christ through events, conferences, and mission opportunities!

The Youth Advisory Team (A-Team) plans events and trips open to all youth in the presbytery.

The A-Team is a sub-committee of the Presbytery's Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry Area.

There are three types of delegates for Youth Advisory Team:

Youth delegate - 10th-12th grade for 2017-2018 school year

College delegate - high school graduate through age 22

Adult delegate - 23 or older

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, Young Adults, and Campus Ministry.)

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Honduras Mission

The Honduras Mission Project, started by churches in Northwest Arkansas, endorsed by the presbytery and a joint project with other congregations and presbyteries, has announced a new mission co-worker. Dori Kay Hjalmarson will begin training this fall and will assume this new role in mid-November. Dori is a graduate of San Francisco seminary and currently serves as a chaplain in Albuquerque. You can read about this and the project at the Facebook page "Our Honduras Mission". Rev. Phil Butin is spending the summer in Honduras with his sabbatical. Phil serves as co-pastor at First United Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville.

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Grants Available For Ministry To 'Most Vulnerable'

Just a reminder that again this year the approved Unified Mission Emphasis of the Presbytery of Arkansas is aimed at assisting the "most vulnerable populations"--especially the youngest and the oldest. So if your congregation already has a ministry to neighborhood children or collects diapers or formula for unprepared mothers to use or if you assist with meals for homebound seniors or transport retirees to their medical appointments or knit shawls for hospice patients, you are participating in the Unified Mission Emphasis for 2017.

You are invited to apply for a grant from the presbytery's Mission of the Church ministry area by emailing the area moderator Commissioned Ruling Elder Kelly Pearson at ktpearson@suddenlink.net, describing your ministry in a short paragraph that explains how the funds would be used, and suggesting an amount that would assist this ministry. Grants are made on a first come, first considered basis so you would be wise to make this request this summer or in early fall. The next meeting is Sept. 7.

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Celebration and Recognition of Anniversaries of Ordination, Certification and Commissioning of Church Professionals in the Presbytery of Arkansas

Continuing a practice begun in 2004, the Committee on Ministry will recognize at the **136th Stated Meeting on October 6-7, 2017** all Ministers of Word and Sacrament members of the presbytery who this year celebrate anniversaries in five-year increments. The Presbytery will also recognize currently serving Commissioned Lay Pastors and active and retired Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators celebrating anniversaries in five-year increments. The list below is based on information compiled in the presbytery office. Please check to make sure the information is correct and notify the Presbytery of any changes (501.663.2424 or email: niann@presbyteryofarkansas.org)

The following Church Professionals are Receiving Engraved Keyrings as First-time Honorees:

Ministers 5 Years

Rev. DC Adams
Rev. Marie Mainard-O'Connell

Ministers 10 Years

Rev. Jeremy Wilhelmi

Ministers 20 Years

Rev. Bryan Bond
Rev. Steven Frazier

Church Professionals who were earlier honored in 2012 in the eighth year of the celebration of five-year increments will this year receive a salute in the COM report:

10 Years

Rev. Leslie Roper

35 Years

Rev. Jim Chaffin, HR
Rev. Ed Holt, HR

15 Years

Rev. Brian Brock

45 Years

Rev. Gordon Garlington, HR
Rev. Richard Miller, HR

20 Years

Rev. Tim Reeves
Rev. Shauna Silmon

55 Years

Rev. Walter Swetnam, HR

25 Years

Rev. Lance Jones, HR

60 Years

Rev. Ben Bateman, HR

Rev. Rita Wilson, HR

Rev. Bob Hyatt, HR
Rev. Jerry Rice, HR
Rev. Don Wardlaw, HR

30 Years

Rev. Jan Butin
Rev. Phil Butin

65 Years

Rev. John Foss, HR

Commissioned Lay Pastor

K. C. Chanthorn, 20 years

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Presbyterian Village Chili Cookoff

Calling all chili cooks! The Presbyterian Village Foundation is hosting a Chili Cook-off in the Courtyard on Thursday, October 19, and we are looking for chili teams to join our night of festivities. Individuals, families, or church groups are encouraged to participate. Teams will compete for cash prizes and bragging rights! Please contact melissajenkins@presbyvillage.org for team entry and event information. Deadline to enter is October 2.

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Presbyterian Women's Fall Gatherings Announced

Co-Moderators of Presbytery of Arkansas PW Coordinating Team, Ila Blackketter-Wolfe and Cathy Rogers have released the schedule and contacts for cluster fall gatherings as follows:

Thursday, August 17th: Cluster 3 - Barr Memorial Presbyterian Church, Norman
Contact: Mary Beth Lysobey 870-223-2724 lysobeym@windstream.net

Friday, August 18th: Cluster 1 - First United Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville
Contact: Katie Jackson 479-879-1749 wwscribner@yahoo.com

Saturday, September 9th: Cluster 5 - 2nd Presbyterian Church, Little Rock
Contact: Emily Hall 501-228-2023

Saturday, September 16th: Cluster 2 - First Presbyterian Church, Morrilton
Contact: Judy Calhoun 501-354-4735

Saturday, October 14th: Cluster 4 - Faith Presbyterian Church, Horseshoe Bend
Contact: Patty Minga 870-530-4576 22003parrot@gmail.com

Note: geographical bounds for PW clusters are different from presbytery's geographic bounds for regions

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Vera Lloyd Young Professionals

Do you know young professionals in central Arkansas who want to make a difference to youth in Arkansas?

Invite them to be part of the Vera Lloyd Young Professionals!

Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services provides residential housing for close to 200 boys and girls each year who are in foster care or are finishing their time in juvenile justice. Members of our new Young Professionals group will carry out fun activities to help youth and support the mission of sharing Christ's healing love with children in crisis.

The Young Professionals group will host a membership party on August 22 at U.S. Pizza in Hillcrest (Little Rock) from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. It will be a casual atmosphere for people to come and go, ask questions about Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services and learn how to be involved in the Young Professionals' activities. Pizza will be provided and a cash bar will be available.

For this special night only, participants can join the Young Professionals group at a special membership price of \$25--\$10 off the \$35 registration fee.

Call Natalie Clark, Development Associate at 501-666-8195 or email at natalieclark@veralloyd.org to nominate a Young Professional in your congregation who wants to help youth in foster care who live at Vera Lloyd! We will send them a special invitation to the kick-off party.

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Mark Your Calendar:

Pilgrimage Coming: October

This fall, the foliage will make your Pilgrimage experience even more memorable. The fall Pilgrimage is October 19-22. Mark your calendars now, and make your reservation (below).

When you attend your Pilgrimage, you experience the love of Jesus Christ as lived out in practical ways. You learn practical tools for walking the Christian path day-by-day. You sing with joy, taste good food, and you laugh out loud. AND, you have a chance to experience all of this away from the day-to-day cares of the world.

"It felt like a preview of Heaven," a participant said about their Weekend.

Each Pilgrim comes for his or her own reason. Some come for a "retreat" from the world's cares; others participate to reconnect with Jesus. Some come just because they've heard it was fun. Whatever the reason, almost everyone who has attended their Pilgrimage has reported they were so glad they came.

All costs except room and board are donated by volunteers. Room and meals cost \$200 for the three-day Pilgrimage, but scholarships are available upon request. (Arkansas Presbytery helps support these scholarships.)

To register online, or to learn more, just go to the Pilgrimage website, at www.pilgrimage-arkansas.org.

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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.

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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 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](#)

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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 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>

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

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