



January 2018

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

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The Color Purple

Stewart Smith, General Presbyter

For much of my career in ministry I have greatly enjoyed working with youth. I've spent many nights with youth at lock-ins, mission trips, and camps or retreats. One of the phrases that is often heard when discussing a trip covenant with youth is "no purpling". When separate spaces for boys (represented usually by the color blue) and girls (usually represented by the color pink) are used for sleeping, we would say there is to be no purple (a mixture of the two) in those spaces. There are good reasons for that rule when one is responsible for junior and senior high youth while they are away from their homes. Now I am hearing this image of the color purple referring to churches that have a mixture of Republicans (usually represented by the color red) and Democrats (usually represented by the color blue).



Most pastors are used to this idea of people on both sides of the political aisle being in the congregation. But it seems that in our lifetimes, we have recently become even more polarized as more voices are in the public realm. Back in the 60's and 70's opinions were not usually shared on the evening news. The editorial page of the newspaper would typically have a more conservative or liberal stance, but one was not bombarded with that on an hourly basis. With the advent of talk radio, cable news channels and social media, we tend to align ourselves and listen to the radio station, watch the cable news channel and "friend on Facebook" those who speak a voice similar to what we want to hear. We often "unfriend" those with opposing views, and don't watch or listen to the stations that don't match with our beliefs. And I believe we become more polarized in the process.

Christopher Edmonston, pastor of White Memorial Presbyterian Church in Raleigh, NC, wrote an article in a recent (Jan. 2, 2018) edition of *The Presbyterian Outlook* titled "Pastoring a Purple Church". In the article, he talks about the challenges involved and the consequences that potentially exist when a church addresses the controversial issues of our day that are also involved in the political discourse of our time. How do we speak prophetic truth in our day? Edmonston offers the example of Jesus addressing the "rich ruler" in Mark: *"Jesus gives the man a heaping helping of prophetic truth: You love money too much; you will miss the kingdom of God; it is easier for a camel to get through the eye of the needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom. But at the same time, Jesus offers him a helping*

of pastoral grace. It happens at verse 21: 'Jesus, looking at him, loved him.' Only Mark among the synoptic Gospels has this detail. But it is an important detail. It may just reveal something critical about being a purple church."

There is no doubt that "the center" has shifted in our lifetime as more conservative members have left the PC(USA) for other denominations. The purple has been fading into more of a blueish tint. We have struggled and wrestled over decisions to become a more inclusive church and we now welcome voices that have long been silenced or excluded from the church. I think that is a good thing as we seek to welcome all of God's children into our communities of faith. My worry is that in the struggle, we have not always been loving toward those with whom we disagree. Too often, people that identify more with the color red or the color blue on various issues have not been loving toward those of the other color. I've shared with you before that I find it hard to identify with the polarized labels that we seem to be pushed into. Life is not black and white - it is a shade of murky gray. I myself would identify more with a purple color than red or blue. On various topics that come up in the life of the church, I find myself sometimes with a progressive and forward thinking stance and other times with a more conservative or traditional stance. I, for one, think that is ok and healthy for a church. We need different perspectives. We need the voice of the many rather than the voice of the few or one. We learn and grow and become more of whom God calls us to be when all voices are included.

At our upcoming presbytery meeting at Lyon College, Dr. Peg Falls Corbitt, the Virginia A. McCormick Pittman professor of philosophy at Hendrix College and an elder at First Presbyterian Church in Conway, will lead our theological discussion on "The Church in Civil Discourse." We will focus on the church "doing" civil discourse and the church's role in civil discourse. The goal will be to provide an exercise to help us get better at being a diverse church that truly welcomes all people. I look forward to being with you at Lyon College and I consider it an honor and privilege to be partnered with you in ministry as we seek to be a church that shares the good news of Jesus Christ with all of God's people.

Stewart

Temporary Staff Resource for Youth

We are pleased to welcome **Hannah Lahodny** as the new Temporary Staff Resource for Youth for the Presbytery of Arkansas. Hannah currently serves as the Assistant Program Director at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center in Little Rock. She is a graduate of the University of Arkansas where she earned degrees in Biochemistry and Biology. A lifelong Presbyterian, the Presbytery of Arkansas

played an integral role in her upbringing, especially through retreats, trips, and serving on youth council. Throughout her college years, she was an active member and student board member at United Campus Ministry (UCM). Hannah is also involved with the Presbytery's developing relationship with the Presbyterian Church of Honduras and has completed three trips there in conjunction with Solar Under the Sun. In her spare time, you'll probably find her outside hiking, reading, or drinking coffee. Fun facts about Hannah: her last name means 'delicious' in Czech and she has traveled to over 40 countries.

Because of Hannah's employment at Ferncliff, she will have different hours than this position has typically had in the past. We will post hours that Hannah will be available for phone conversations, conference calls, and video conferences that will fall outside of the normal 8:00-5:00 workday. Hannah is never far from her computer, so she will be available by email on a more consistent basis. Many of you know Hannah and she will be introduced to you at the February presbytery meeting at Lyon College.

Memorial Service for Guy Delaney

The Memorial Service for Rev. Guy Delaney will be held on **Saturday, January 20th at 10:00 am** at the First Presbyterian Church of Morrilton.

For those that missed the notification in the December edition of **The Banner**, Guy died in Little Rock on November 17. Guy was an honorably retired member of the Presbytery of Arkansas and in addition to serving churches in Texas and Virginia and serving the church at Union Theological Seminary and Mo-Ranch, Guy served as Associate Pastor at Second Presbyterian in Little Rock and as pastor of Kirk in the Pines Presbyterian Church in Hot Springs Village. He also served as Interim pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Jonesboro, First Presbyterian Church in Little Rock and at First Presbyterian Church in Morrilton.

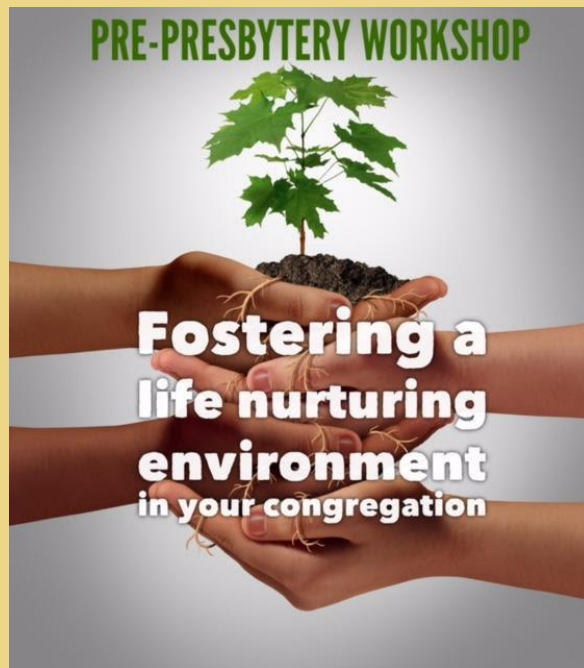
Guy was preceded in death by his wife Charlotte, daughter Rebecca, and sister Billie. Guy is survived by daughters Amy Young, Annette Delaney, and Elaine Delaney; two sons-in-law Harvey L. Young, Jr. and Wally Bruce; his sister and brother-in-law Ginger and Carroll Johnson; and seven grandchildren.

Rev. Steven Frazier, pastor at First Presbyterian Morrilton will officiate the service.

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Lyon College to Host Presbytery Meeting

The 137th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas is set for Friday and Saturday, Feb. 9-10, at Lyon College, Batesville. Highlights include installation of Rev. Leslie Roper as moderator, welcome of youth and young adult advisory delegates and new ministers, exam of two candidates for ordination and approval of the budget. Gavel is at 6:30 pm and relevant documents are on the presbytery's website.



The Third and final workshop in the series on "Thriving in Change" will be February 9, 2018 at the Presbytery meeting at Lyon College. To register, go to <https://shifting-behaviors-workshop.eventbrite.com>

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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>.

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.

Graham Memorial Presbyterian Church, Forrest City is searching for a full-time pastor. The church is right at 100 members, with average attendance of 41 members. Desired experience is Solo Pastor/Head of Staff with 5-10 years of experience. Graham Memorial is a welcoming community of faith that seeks to serve Jesus Christ through sharing our collective talents, proclaiming the Gospel, feeding

the hungry, and ministering to our community. For more information, visit the church's Facebook page or contact the PNC through Nancy Dunaway via email jdunaway@arkansas.net or phone 870-261-3330. The MIF can be viewed on the CLC website.

First, Clarksville has 23 blue choir robes, approximately 100 place settings of china embossed with "Presbyterian Church" in gold, and approximately 100 Blue Hymnals. These items are free to anyone who will come get them. For a file with photos, [click here](#). Contact Pat Farmer at nyphinny@gmail.com.

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Synod Educators "Adopt a Class" Hurricane Relief Project

Would Sunday School Classes or members of your congregation like to assist congregations in New Covenant and Mission Presbyteries who were impacted by Hurricane Harvey? Do you have a Christmas market or other mission opportunities coming up this month? What about adopting a Sunday School Class or two?

The Southcentral Region of the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (SCRAPCE) is sponsoring an "Adopt a Class" program. Impacted congregations will be able to apply for grants of up to \$1000 per classroom to help them replace supplies, curriculum, and equipment. We are working with Presbytery staff who have identified the need. In order to provide the funds, SCRAPCE Educator members are asking congregations across the Synod of the Sun to consider collecting funds to help with the project. Then a Sunday School Class (or group) from a particular congregation will be matched with an impacted Sunday School class so that they can exchange cards, pictures, prayers, and build a relationship.

Contributions are being received through the spring and grants (and class matching) will be made when requests arrive and funds are available. SCRAPCE asks that contributions come as one check per church sent to the treasurer in Houston with a donation form. Go to www.apcenet.org/south-central to download a flyer with information including the address to send the checks and the needed donation form.

Contact Miatta Wilson at Miattaw@fpcdallas.org with questions.

For a flyer about the program, [click here](#). For a donor form, [click here](#).

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From the Temporary Stated Clerk: Calling All Clerks!!!

Clerks of Session are the glue of Presbyterianism - you record who we are, what we're doing, and what direction God is calling us. Every month it is the Clerk who tracks the actions of the Session, and generally reports to the congregation.

A few times of the year you have additional tasks - tasks that your Temporary Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Arkansas thanks you for - and those times are quickly approaching. They are:

1. Completing PC(USA) Statistical Reports - Due February 1, 2018
2. Having the records of the church reviewed annually - Between February 1 and May 31, 2018

Since Friday, December 1 you may enter your "Statistics of the Church" report for year-end 2017. You have all of December and January to complete this report - they are due the first of February!!! To fill out the report go to <http://oga.pcusa.org/stats>. If you don't know your PIN I can help you.

If you're new to your position take heart - all of this is new to me, too, so we'll learn together! If you have any questions please contact me at lesliebeld@aol.com or 479.466.1061. If I can't immediately answer your questions I'll contact our friends in Louisville and find out.

Also, **I want to remind all Clerks of Session that all congregational records need to be reviewed annually.** This includes your church rolls and records, and your minutes of session meetings and congregational meetings. This year we will be offering multiple ways of accomplishing this task, beginning with gathering all Clerks of Session, or their representative, of a region together to review one another's records. **This regional gathering for records review needs to be scheduled between February and May.** If your region is geographically large, two such gatherings may be scheduled in different places.

I encourage Moderators/Pastors to communicate among yourselves in your region and assist in setting up a time for the records review sometime in February-May, and to also attend and take part in the review.

Thanks so much for all that you do to keep us doing things "decently and in order!" I am...

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Leslie Belden
Temporary Stated Clerk

P. S. -- the Annual Church Information Form will also be coming your way early in 2018.

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People and Church News

NEWS OF OUR PEOPLE



28 college students, 2 university chaplains, and 1 associate pastor representing 5 ministries within the Presbytery attended the Montreat College Conference in January. Students were from 2nd Presbyterian - Little Rock, UKirk Conway, UCM Fayetteville, Lyon College, and University of the Ozarks.

NEWS OF OUR CONGREGATIONS

--**Laotian Fellowship** hosted a holiday luncheon for congregation of First, Fort Smith on December 10.

--**First, Bentonville** hosted a service of solace on December 3 for reflection and comfort and the deacons corner in their newsletter offered tips on self care and

managing holiday stress.

--**Grace Presbyterian, Little Rock** set the congregational meeting on January 21 to review annual reports, receive 2018 budget and vote on pastor's terms.

--**Wynne Presbyterian** hosted an 11 pm watch service on New Year's eve.

--**Trinity, Little Rock** newsletter included year-end review of different church ministries.

--**First, Van Buren** is one of many congregations that received the Joy Gift Offering.

--**First, Yellville** newsletter explained symbols of Christmas placed in the sanctuary during the "Hanging of the Greens" service.

--**First, Malvern** continues their fourth Sunday contemporary worship service.

--**First, Conway** mission team helped men in prison give Christmas gifts to their children.

--**First, Rogers** deacons present weekly devotions to those they visit.

--**First, Huntsville** deacons invited members to donate to holiday meals for needy persons delivered on December 17.

--**Westover Hills Presbyterian, Little Rock** welcomed display of artwork from members for Advent art show.

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.

As the new year begins, it is a good time to explain to new and potential patrons the services offered by YOUR Resource Center. Supported by the benevolent giving of the congregations of the presbytery, the Resource Center is overseen by a board of professional and gifted volunteer church educators and reports to the Mission of the Church Ministry Area. This free lending library housed in the presbytery office in Little Rock is accessible in person and online at the presbytery's website to church members, teachers, leaders, CE committee members, Sunday School superintendents, church educators and friends. This library houses books, DVD,

curricula for all ages, intergenerational studies and activities, seasonal items, equipment and games for loan to preview or use for short or long term experiences.

Financial donations are always appreciated but not required. For a nominal fee these loans are available to other denominations and to PCUSA congregations beyond this region. As a Certified Christian Educator with 30 years experience, I am glad to counsel and advise callers, visitors and emailers on program needs, opportunities and challenges as well as educational opportunities offered by churches, agencies, presbytery entities and colleges. We welcome your suggestions on possible new acquisitions for the center and sometime buy back your purchases that have proved successful in your local setting. When I return from medical leave later in January, I will be in the Resource Center Monday and Wednesday and available by cell phone other weekdays.

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

Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News

Upcoming Youth Events and Trips sponsored by the Youth Advisory Team

**Youth Advisory Team Winter Meeting (University of the Ozarks, Clarksville) -
January 19-20, 2018**

Youth at Presbytery (Lyon College) - February 9-10, 2018

Sr. High Youthquake (Ferncliff) - April 13-15, 2018

Trip to PC(U.S.A.) General Assembly (St. Louis) - June 15-21, 2018

Jr. High Jubilee (Mo Ranch, TX) - June 30-July 5, 2018

Montreat Youth Conference (Montreat, NC) - July 21-28, 2018

**(These dates are also posted at www.presbyteryofarkansas.org under
"Ministries," then "Youth Council.")**

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.

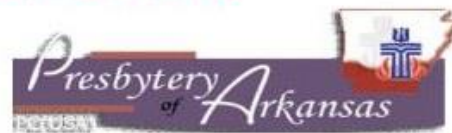
(Presbytery's Youth Ministry receives funding from Presbytery's new Ministries with Youth, Young Adults, and Campus Ministry.)

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SAVE THE DATE FOR THE P.L.A.C.E. 2018

THE CHANGING FACE OF THE CHURCH

Offered by
The Mission of the Church Ministry Area
of the Presbytery of Arkansas



The P.L.A.C.E.* 2018

***The Presbytery Leadership Academy for Congregational Enrichment (The P.L.A.C.E.) is providing two unique opportunities for persons seeking to learn and grow to join with others facing the challenges and opportunities of the changing face of the church.**

SAVE THE DATE!

The P.L.A.C.E. NW on April 7, 2018,
9am—1pm, First United Presbyterian
Church, Fayetteville, AR

The P.L.A.C.E. Central on August 4,
2018—Second Presbyterian Church,
Little Rock, AR

**PILGRIMAGE:
Consider This Three-Day Renewal of a Lifetime!**

A Presbyterian Pilgrimage Weekend is not just "another retreat". No, it is a part of a personal spiritual journey. At a Pilgrimage, you can experience a deepened relationship with Christ, which can continue growing - and last a lifetime.

At Pilgrimage people often:

- meet Christ "face-to-face";
- better understand Christ's love, grace, forgiveness; and
- become even more alive in their faith;
- gain a renewed sense of hope and purpose.

But there's more: Weekends are a lot of fun, too!

Will you prayerfully consider attending the Presbyterian Pilgrimage this spring, April 19-22 ?

You can find out more, and register in 5 minutes, at www.pilgrimage-arkansas.org. The cost is \$200 for lodging and meals, but scholarships are available, so don't let cost be a barrier!

For a flyer/application, [click here](#).

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Mission Giving from Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women Mission Giving

The following are the funds received for mission and paid through the Presbytery treasurer of Presbyterian Women:

Vera Lloyd Children's Home	\$1,169.00
Goodland Presbyterian Home	\$215.00
Evergreen Presbyterian Home	\$15.00
Cents-Ability (Presbytery Hunger Program)	\$345.49

Honduras Mission	\$200.00
Least Coin (International Mission)	\$1,668.62
PW Missions, Churchwide	\$4,787.00
PW Missions, Synod	\$1,500.00
Thank Offering to include 40% to Medical Missions (smaller grants to aid families national and international)	\$7,603.17
Birthday Offering (larger grants ie: PDA, Solar, and Presbyterian Village; national and International)	\$9,289.32
PW Honorary Life and Recognition (funding to help with scholarships in leadership)	\$1,180.00
Total Giving:	\$27,972.60

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Winter Weather Reminders

As a reminder, the presbytery office is closed for winter weather if the Little Rock School Districts close for weather. We appreciate your patience.

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Do You Have News for the Banner?

If you have something you would like us to consider for inclusion in the Banner newsletter, please send it to: kenneth@presbyteryofarkansas.org, niann@presbyteryofarkansas.org, and stewart@presbyteryofarkansas.org. We cannot guarantee your submission will be published, but we will do our best to include what we can.

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Prayer List for Congregations -- 2018 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](#)

Temporary Stated Clerk [LESLIE BELDEN](#)

Resourcing Director [NIANN THOMPSON](#)

Director of Mission Support [KENNETH RICH](#)

Interim Staff Resource for Youth [HANNAH LAHODNY](#)

Staff Resource for Vital Congregations [MICHAEL VINSON](#)

Treasurer [BOB BOEHLER](#)

Moderator of Presbytery [LESLIE ROPER](#)

Moderator of the Coordinating Team [RUTH HAMILTON](#)

Vice Moderator of Presbytery [DAVID STRICKLIN](#)

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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