



April 2018

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

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"Good News Weekend"

Rev. Stewart Smith, General Presbyterian

I frequently write in this space on the topic of the difficult and challenging situations we face as congregations and as a presbytery and as a denomination. But I also want to talk about some of the good things that are happening as well. This past weekend I was in Northwest Arkansas to experience three "good news" events.

On Saturday, April 7, over 60 Presbyterians from 16 churches braved a surprise April snowfall and some icy conditions to gather at "The PLACE" event in Northwest Arkansas. This was the first time our presbytery has offered "The PLACE" in two locations (Central Arkansas will have an opportunity to attend "The PLACE" on August 4 at Second Presbyterian in Little Rock). After a time of worship led by members of the Mission of the Church Ministry Area and a keynote presentation by the General Presbyterian, participants spread out to attend workshops that were offered in 45-minute time blocks. A total of 12 workshops were offered over a 3-hour period. The three I attended were outstanding!! They were all led by leaders in our churches. The ideas and insights received were very relevant and very helpful.



On Sunday morning I attended worship at the Community Church of Elkins. This is one of our 81 congregations, but it is a combined group of Presbyterians and Methodists and Baptists who worship together. The first and third Sundays of the month, they meet with a Methodist leader. The second and fourth Sundays of the month, they are led by a Presbyterian minister (Rev. Susan Rose and elder/DCE Mary Shaw from Springdale). On the months with a fifth Sunday they are led by a Baptist leader. This is a very small church but a very vibrant congregation. There were over 30 people in attendance, ranging from young couples with children to older adults. They held an impromptu discussion about moving a piano out of the church to make more room for items stored for a food pantry and which would free up more room for children's activities. That is a good problem to have!! Worship began when the matter was decided. They shared with me that they have over 20 women who meet for Bible Study during the week that includes others from the community. In a time when it is evident that more partnerships are needed in our smaller communities between churches to share resources, the faithful folks in Elkins figured out how to

do this years ago. Members don't just come on the Sundays their preferred denominational preacher is leading worship. They embrace the different styles and work together to worship and serve our risen Lord. And I imagine that those labels of Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian tend to fall off over time. The Elkins church can be a model for successful ministry in a small community that other churches can imitate.

On Sunday afternoon, we gathered to install Rev. Dr. Valerie Hobby Bell as pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Rogers. It had been a long time since their previous installed pastor resigned, well before I was called to be General Presbyter in October of 2015. The church had two transitional pastors and the PNC worked patiently and diligently to faithfully and prayerfully discern who God was calling to be the next pastor. This was the fifth ordination or installation service in the last month in our presbytery and we look forward to two more in the coming months. It is a joy to welcome new pastors into our presbytery and it is an encouragement to other PNCs to persevere faithfully with their task. We are finding leaders but it sometimes takes awhile. We hope there will be even more installation services that come before the end of the year.

I continue to be grateful to be partnered with each of you in ministry. I pray that we can all be faithful to the task of "making visible the body of Christ" in this beautiful part of God's creation in which we work and live.

Stewart

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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 2019. To download the current form, [click here](#).

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Church Employment (and Other) Opportunities in our Presbytery

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.

Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock seeks an *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.

Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock is searching for a part-time *Director of Young Families* to work with the Associate Pastor for Youth, Young Adult, and Young Family Ministries. Applications are being accepted for this new 10 hour a week position that is full of opportunities of growth and a lot of fun. We hope to find an energetic and creative person with the strong leadership and interpersonal skills necessary to equip and nurture Christ-centered relationships between families with young children and the greater community. The position description can be found at www.secondpreslr.org. Please share this information with potential candidates!

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.

The First Presbyterian Church of Jonesboro is looking for a Transitional (Interim) Pastor, either full or part time. For more information contact Sandra Puryear, Clerk of Session, at srpuryear93@gmail.com.

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Krista Denné Ordained

On Sunday, March 18th at 4:00, Krista Denné was ordained as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament. She is the Resident Intern at First, Clarksville and First, Fort Smith. A picture of the installation commission is below:



Back row left to right: Rev. Debra Freeman, Chris Lanphear, Rev. Roger Au, John Rommel, Stephen Moody

Front row left to right: Rev. Krista Denné, Rev. Tasha Blackburn, Rev. Rebecca Spooner, Rev. Kade Curry, Rev. Susan Rose

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Vera Lloyd Family Services' Pink Hat Day Gets a New 'Do'

For many years at Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services, "Pink Hat Day" has been synonymous with donor appreciation. But this year, in an attempt to grow our event and appeal to a broader range of our supporters...the Pink Hat is getting an update!

Our new donor appreciation day, the "Campus Carnival", will bring together entertainment for all ages. Like an old fashioned county fair, we'll have games, prizes, food, and fun. Bingo, cornhole, and a cake walk are just a few of the highlights. There will also be a BBQ lunch and program. We hope you'll come join the fun, and let us thank you personally for all you do for our boys and girls.

The Carnival is also scheduled for our Alumni Reunion Weekend so everyone can get in on the fun. Please save the date!

Campus Carnival

Saturday, June 9th, 11:30am-3:00pm

Vera Lloyd's Monticello Campus

745 Old Warren Road

Monticello, AR

For more information, please call Kathy French at (501)666-8195 or email kathyfrench@veralloyd.org.

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Rev. Marie Mainard O'Connell Installed at North Little Rock--Park Hill

On Sunday, March 25th at 2:30, Rev. Marie Mainard O'Connell was installed as pastor of North Little Rock's Park Hill Presbyterian Church. Photos of the installation commission are below:



Left to right: Ruling Elder Matt Lewis, Rev. Leslie Roper (moderator of the Presbytery), Rev. Dr. Robert Williamson, Rev. Marie Mainard O'Connell, Rev. Anne Russ, Rev. Frank LeBlanc, Ruling Elder Liz Branch, Ruling Elder David Murray



Preparing for the service are (left to right): Rev. Marie Mainard O'Connell, Rev. Frank LeBlanc, Rev. Dr. Robert Williamson, Ruling Elders Liz Branch, Dr. Wynona Bryant-Williams, Matt Lewis and David Murray, Rev. Leslie Roper

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People and Church News

NEWS OF OUR PEOPLE

--Congratulations to **Bob and Jeanne Boehmler** of Bentonville on the birth of grandson Paul Hutchins Boehmler on March 22 to Aaron and Amanda Boehmler. Ruling Elder Bob Boehmler is the treasurer of the Presbytery.

--**Rev. Dr. Lewis Donelson**, the Ruth A. Campbell Professor of New Testament Studies at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, was honored with the publication of the Spring 2018 "Insights, faculty journal of Austin Seminary." A minister member of the Presbytery of Arkansas, Lewis will retire at the end of the spring semester after 35 years of teaching at the seminary.

NEWS OF OUR CONGREGATIONS

--**First, Van Buren** sends out mid-week news, worship bulletins and monthly newsletters to communicate better and involve all.

--**Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista** observed Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday on March 4 and served home communion at 2 on Easter Sunday.

--**Pulaski Heights, Little Rock** hosted Hillcrest Community Friday Noon Lenten Service on Feb. 16 and shared a catered Easter lunch on April 1.

--**First, Benton** offers fellowship opportunities through Ladies Night Out at a local restaurant on March 6, first Friday (evening) Fellowship hosted by members and second Thursday Fellowship lunch.

--**First, Morrilton** enjoyed Maundy Thursday soup supper and service, Good Friday evening service and Easter egg hunt on March 31.

--**First, Alma** shared a communion service on Maundy Thursday.

--**United Campus Ministry, Fayetteville** will celebrate seniors graduating in spring or fall on April 26.

--**First, Yellville** hosts the community Easter morning breakfast after the sunrise service.

--**Wynne Presbyterian** decorated a three-dimensional cross with flowers before their egg hunt on Easter morning.

--**First, Prairie Grove** included in mid-March worship drawing and coloring their way through Biblical covenants to produce art for the sanctuary on Easter Sunday.

--**First, Little Rock** will host on April 28 the "Elijah" oratorio by Felix Mendelssohn performed by the choir of **Second Presbyterian, Little Rock** and UA Little Rock Community Chorus.

--**Allison Memorial, Little Rock** holds a spring revival nightly on April 11-13 with Rev. Marcus Montgomery, associate minister at St. Mark Baptist who is an educator, author, poet with special ministry for young people, as evangelist.

--**Barr Memorial, Norman** celebrated "Holy Humor/Bright Sunday" for the third year on April 8 with a free breakfast for the community, members wearing bright colors and sharing jokes, unique prayers and special liturgy in worship.

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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.

SUGGESTED SERIES OF STUDIES FROM YOUR RESOURCE CENTER

There are still six Sundays left before Pentecost Sunday, May 20, and that's enough time to tackle a short course from any of the following excellent studies by Kerygma, each with a leader's guide and a resource book for students, available for loan and to preview.

GENERAL BIBLE STUDIES:

"Your Bible! The Study Begins" in seven lessons by Barbara Anne Keely (leader's guide) and James A. Walther, Sr. (resource book)

"Listening to Scripture: Strategies for Interpreting the Bible" in eight lessons by John Mehl (leader's guide) and Richard L. Rohrbaugh (resource book)

"Interpretation: A Guide to Understanding the Bible Today" in six skills by Richard L. Rohrbaugh

"Great Themes of the Bible: God Saves a People" in seven lessons by Myra B. Nagel and Trish Towle Greeves (leader's guide) and James A. Walther, Sr. (resource book)

"Great Themes of the Bible: God Calls Leaders" in seven lessons by above authors

"Great Themes of the Bible: God Is Faithful" in seven lessons by above authors

"Great Themes of the Bible: Knowing God" in seven lessons by above authors

"The Bible and Theology-Book One, Themes 1 and 2" by Donald K. McKim and LindaJo McKim on theme one, Who is God? and theme two, Who is Jesus Christ?

"The Bible and Theology-Book Two, Themes 3 and 4" by Donald K. McKim and M. Agnes Peebles on theme three, What is the Church? and theme four, Who is Humanity?

"The Bible and Theology-Book Three, Themes 5 and 6" by the authors above on theme five, How are we Saved? and theme six, Where is Authority?

"The Bible and Theology-Book Four, Themes 7 and 8" by the authors above on theme seven, What are the Sacraments? and theme eight, What is the Kingdom?

OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES:

"The Commandments for a Blessed Life" in seven lessons by Patricia Dutcher-Walls

"Discovering the Psalms: Passion, Promise & Praise" Updated in seven lessons by Donald L. Griggs

NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES:

"Lord, Teach Us to Pray" in six studies on spirituality and The Lord's Prayer by John Purdy (3 copies of the resource book)

"Parables: Stories for Life in God's World" in seven lessons by Richard J. Henderson

"Blessed Are You: The Beatitudes of Jesus in Scripture and in Life" in six lessons by Dorothy Hill (leader's guide) and John Purdy (resource book)

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

Rev. Jen Evans Installed at Second (Little Rock)

On Sunday, March 25th at 5:00, Rev. Jennifer Kirby Evans was installed as associate pastor of Little Rock's Second Presbyterian Church. A photo of the installation commission is below:



Front row, left to right: Rev. Don Campbell, Rev. Dr. Karen Akin, Rev. Jen Evans, Elder Karen Herbert, Rev. Anne Russ; Back row, left to right: Rev. Leslie Roper (moderator of Presbytery), Stephen Moody, Rev. Steve Hancock, Ruling Elder Ben Barham, Ruling Elder

H. K. Stewart, and Mary Ibis.

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Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News

Upcoming Youth Events and Trips sponsored by the Youth Advisory Team

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

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SAVE THE DATE FOR THE P.L.A.C.E. CENTRAL 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. Central
**Brought to you by the Presbytery Leadership Academy
for Congregational Enrichment**

Workshops and Leaders to Date:

1. Growing Young: Best Practices for Helping Young People Find a Home in your Congregation led by Certified Christian Educator Theresa Spragins, First, Conway
2. What is NEW! from Board of Pensions led by Regional B of P Representative Kevin Keaton
3. Single Shooter Situation led by Little Rock S.W.A.T. Officer Henry Moore (presented twice)
4. Great Ends of the Church led by Rev. David Dyer, HR, Westminster, Little Rock
5. The "Purple" Church led by Rev. Steve Hancock, Second, Little Rock
6. Church Giving in the 21st Century led by Malinda Kirchner, Director of Planned Giving at Second, Little Rock
7. Clerk of Session Training led by Clerk/Elder Sam Highsmith assisted by Tracy May, Second, Little Rock (covers two workshop time slots)
8. "Transformative Conversations"- Gospel's Call to Bridge the Racial Chasms in Our Society led by Rev. Frank LeBlanc, Westover Hills, Little Rock and Woodson Walker, Mosaic Church of Little Rock
9. Rev. Michael Vinson on presbytery staff will be leading two stand-alone workshops on navigating change in the church on maintaining spiritual health during times of change.

August 4, 2018

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Second Presbyterian Church,
600 Pleasant Valley Dr., Little Rock, AR

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MISSION GRANTS AVAILABLE TO CONGREGATIONS

Mission of the Church Ministry Area again encourages congregations to submit grant requests for this last year of three of the Unified Mission Emphasis: helping the "most vulnerable of the very young and old." These might range from a diaper drive to treats for nursing home residents. If you have some project to launch or one to keep afloat, consider applying for a grant of up to \$500 with Mission of the Church. This may be done by emailing: ktpearson@suddenlink.net. Include in the request: the purpose of the program/project, proof of Session approval, the overall cost of the ministry, the amount desired for the grant, and how the grant money, if received, would be utilized, as specifically as possible. Two grants have already been awarded.

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FIRST, CONWAY TO HOST JUNE PRESBYTERY MEETING

First Presbyterian, Conway will host the 138th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas on Saturday, June 2, 2018 with Rev. Leslie Bethell Roper moderating. The only one-day meeting of the presbytery's year will include in worship commissioning of four commissioners to the meeting of General Assembly on June 16-23 in St. Louis and the commissioning of youth from across the state going on the three presbytery-sponsored summer trips. Other highlights will be welcoming new ministers, report of recent years financial reviews, status of new presbytery website, report from United Campus Ministry (UofA, Fayetteville), theological discussion on looking ahead, recognition of retirement of two church professionals, and more.

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ATTENTION: Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Arkansas

MARK THESE DATES for these upcoming important events!

Questions? Contact Ila Blackketter-Wolfe at ila.nb.wolfe@gmail.com or Cathy Rogers at ccrogers86@gmail.com.

Saturday, April 21, 2018 Registration 9:15

Presbyterian Women's Spring Gathering

First Presbyterian Church in Fort Smith Arkansas

\$10 (includes lunch) To register and questions:

info@1pres.org

2018 Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women

Thursday, August 2 - Sunday, August 5, 2018

Louisville, Kentucky

Register at www.presbyterianwomen.org/gathering

Synod of the Sun Presbyterian Women Gathering

July 25 - July 27, 2019

First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa, Oklahoma

More information to come!

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THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT WITH SOLAR!

By Ann Owen, Solar Under the Sun Board Member

Connections were made on so many levels recently when Solar Under the Sun (SUS) supporters from the Arkansas Presbytery partnered with others on February 20-28 to continue lighting up several small communities in southwestern Honduras. As a result, many more families in the beautiful, coffee-covered mountains near Comayagua now have clean, sustainable power in their homes for the first time - transforming their lives in significant ways.

To help install the solar systems this trip, leader Megan Rubio, previously a member of Second-Little Rock and now with Spring Hill Presbyterian-Mobile (Presbytery of South Alabama), was joined by graduates of SUS Solar Schools from two churches in this presbytery: Second-Little Rock and First-Jacksonville, and Broadmoor-Shreveport in the Presbytery of the Pines.

SUS has a covenant with three Honduran communities El Horno, El Sute, and Agua

Zarca to install smaller one-panel 12V systems (the "FS-12" system) in 76 homes in the area. This was the third trip for this pilot SUS Initiating Partner project. The first survey trip was in June 2016, and since the first installation trip in January 2017, 38 homes have been completed. Nine other homes in Las Glorias, Honduras were installed several years ago.

Solar Under the Sun, an ecumenical ministry of the Synod of the Sun, is lighting the way and you can be a part of it! Please visit www.solarunderthesun.org to learn more about how you can support this wonderful mission or to register for the next Solar School on May 3-6 at Ferncliff!

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PRESBYTERIAN VILLAGE OFFERS SUPPORT FOR DEMENTIA CAREGIVERS

Caregiver Support Offered First, Third Mondays

Presbyterian Village in Little Rock will continue to offer a caregiver support group, hosted by Donna LeBlanc, Advanced Practice Nurse. The group is offered for those caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's Disease or related dementia. Due to the wonderful response, we have a session scheduled for April 23 at 12 p.m. Going forward, they will continue each first and third Monday.

You are welcome to bring a sack lunch or you may pre-order lunch from the Village for \$4.00 by calling the Lodge Information Desk at 225-1615.

Please email [Leah Johnson](#) to RSVP for the group or to ask questions.

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WELLSPRING RENEWAL CENTER FREE SESSIONS FOR 2018

Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Ruling Elders and Certified Christian Educators should have received a letter from Rev. Rebecca Spooner of **Wellspring Renewal Center** reminding you that you have 6 free sessions for you and your family through the Presbytery of Arkansas every year. And then, if you want

to continue that support, you also have 6 sessions from Cigna AEP (Employee Assistance Program). The letter explains how to activate those sessions. There is also a Clergy Support Group that meets monthly on Friday for 2 hours, and the free Presbytery counseling may be used for those group meetings.

Don't live near Little Rock but need a little counseling or support? There are Counsel Network Therapists in Cherokee Village, Hot Springs, Wynne, Jonesboro, Lowell/Rogers/Springdale, Fort Smith, and Collierville, Tennessee, a suburb of Memphis. Information on adding other therapists to the network is available. Please contact the Wellspring Renewal Center at 501.265-0046 to schedule an appointment or for more information.

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Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) Deadline June 1st

FINAL DATE TO APPLY!

year of service, lifetime of change.



youngadultvolunteers.org/apply

DATE

**JUNE
1**

DESTINATION

**National
sites
only**

 **YOUNGADULT
VOLUNTEERS**

Apply to the Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program today!! Final round for the 18-19 season open until June 1. National sites only are available.

Program benefits include a regular stipend, housing, transportation and student-loan repayment options throughout the duration of the service year. For more info, visit the FAQ tab at the top of the YAV homepage. Also, follow @yavprogram as current volunteers take over the account. Help plant seeds of service and spread the word!

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Presbytery Office Closed Thursday Afternoon, April 12th

Due to out-of-town staff commitments, the presbytery office will be closed Thursday afternoon, April 12th. We apologize for any inconvenience.

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It's Not Too Late to Pledge for 2018 Benevolence

It's not too late for congregations to send in pledges for 2018 Benevolence. You may mail it to the Presbytery office at 9221 N. Rodney Parham Rd.; Little Rock, AR 72227. You may also email your pledge to Kenneth Rich at kenneth@presbyteryofarkansas.org or Stewart Smith at stewart@presbyteryofarkansas.org

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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 BOEHMLER](#)

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 10,000 Presbyterians gathered in 83 active churches, 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