



October 2018

# The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

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**The Presbytery at Work Together:  
Summary of the 139th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas**

Temporary Stated Clerk Leslie Belden

Although Friday's rain pushed the hamburger cookout indoors, and washed out the plan to roast marshmallows for s'mores around the fire-pit during the reception following worship, the rain did not dampen God's Holy Spirit from moving through the Presbytery as we gathered at Ferncliff Friday and Saturday, October 19-20, 2018. Hope for the future, caring for one another, and joy in being together were the hallmarks of this meeting - possibly because of the casual camp setting, but certainly because God's Holy Spirit was working among us. A grand total of 154 participants signed in, making this meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas not only one of the most spirit-filled, but also one of the most well attended presbytery meetings in a long time!

Friday evening we experienced highs as well as lows -- joyfully gathering together for a "cook-out" in the Dining Hall, after workshops and tours of Ferncliff, but also addressing the request for dismissal from one of our sister congregations. General Presbyter Stewart Smith offered a new opportunity for commissioners and attendees through an orientation to the meeting immediately prior to the gavel, which more may wish to attend at future meetings because those who attended expressed appreciation for the time of preparation.

Definitely the most difficult business before the body, not just on Friday evening but of the meeting as a whole, was the motion to dismiss the Woodlands Presbyterian Church of Hot Springs Village to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Following the unanimous vote to approve the motion to dismiss, General Presbyter Smith lifted to God the prayers of all in attendance, mourning our loss of our sister congregation and trusting that God will continue to work through the Woodlands congregation, and through the Presbytery of Arkansas, as we go our separate ways.

In his report a bit later Friday evening, General Presbyter Smith encouraged those present to be flexible in our ministry together during these changing times, drawing the Presbytery's attention to the Coordinating Team's work on taking "next steps" in moving the Presbytery toward our professed priorities, to which we recommitted at our June meeting's theological discussion:

- \* Building strong congregations that faithfully and effectively share the gospel through mission and ministry
- \* Connecting congregations, resources and expertise to support life giving practices in congregations and fellowships
- \* Developing and supporting ministries with youth and young adults including collegiate and campus ministry

He outlined what he has seen and experienced in his three years of service as our General Presbyter, noting that since 2005 we have gone from 95 to 79 congregations with 5,000 fewer active members on our church rolls, but that even with the 2014 restructuring we continue to have almost the same number of committees needing the same number of volunteers. He challenged the Presbytery to be open to changes

so that we may be more nimble as we faithfully continue to make the Body of Christ visible within and beyond the boundaries of our presbytery.

Worship on Friday evening was a high point for many in attendance, as the choir from Kirk in the Pines Presbyterian Church of Hot Springs Village led us in song while MWS Bobby Williamson shared the word of God, alongside Bernadette Reynolds of Mercy Church in Little Rock. Gathered around tables, the Lord's Supper was celebrated "family style" with bread and cup located at each table, and a basket for offerings for Solar Under the Sun, which totaled \$1,047.00.

The rain passed and we awoke to a beautiful, if chilly, Saturday morning, gathering at the cross by the lake for morning prayer led by MWS Anne Russ, and music by MWS Bill Seitz. Loving one another emerged as the theme of the meeting, continuing through morning worship at which RE David Clark was commissioned as the Commissioned Ruling Elder for First Presbyterian Church of Heber Springs and RE Ronnie Prevost as a Commissioned Ruling Elder for Bella Vista Presbyterian Church.



Commissioned Ruling Elder David Clark (Heber Springs)



Commissioned Ruling Elder Ronnie Prevost (Bella Vista)

Temporary Stated Clerk MWS Leslie Belden reminded commissioners and visitors that at presbytery meetings, as at Ferncliff in general, we respect others and listen to God through the voices of others. The sense of loving others, mutual respect and trusting in God's Holy Spirit to guide us continued to galvanize the tenor of the meeting. There was meaningful discussion, and respectful differences of opinion, as motions were made, discussed, and voted on.

Saturday's highlights included welcoming pastors to the Presbytery, including former members of our presbytery MWS John Arnold, called as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Walnut Ridge, and MWS Susan Arnold, serving as the Transitional Pastor of Wynne Presbyterian Church. Also welcomed were MWS Alisa Secrest, the new Associate Pastor for Congregational Nurture at Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock, and MWS Matt Bussell, called as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church,

Jonesboro. MWS Ward Rudolph, who formerly served a non-denominational congregation in our region was called as pastor to First Presbyterian Church of Searcy. And changes in pastorates of Presbytery of Arkansas members MWS Cindy Saul and MWS Paul Fulks, who began service in temporary pastoral relationships with the Presbyterian Church of Bull Shoals and First, Van Buren, respectively, were also lifted up for celebration.



MWS John Arnold (Walnut Ridge)



MWS Susan Arnold (Wynne--Transitional Pastor)



MWS Alisa Secret (Little Rock--Second)



MWS Matt Bussell (Jonesboro)

The Presbytery took a moment of silence to commemorate the life and ministry of MWS Park Moore, HR, who joined his Maker in heaven on August 3, 2018, and the Presbytery celebrated the five-year anniversaries of Pastors, Certified Christian Educators, and Commissioned Ruling Elders, giving key rings to those not receiving one previously.

General Assembly Commissioners reported on their experiences at this summer's General Assembly, with Young Adult Advisory Delegate Emma Gillaspay sharing a PowerPoint composite of what it was like for her in St. Louis this past summer. During the theological discussion led by RE Peg Falls Corbitt, those attending Presbytery expressed their views on a proposed amendment to the Book of Order that attempts to provide the safeguards through our PC(USA) constitution that currently exist in our federal government's "Johnson Amendment," discouraging religious leaders from publicly endorsing or opposing political candidates. Commissioners will vote on proposed amendments to the Book of Order at our March 1-2, 2019 presbytery meeting at the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville.



Routine business filled the latter part of the morning, and following lunch the Presbytery heard the much anticipated report of the Presbytery's Task Force on Staff Structure. As had been the case throughout the meeting, the spirit of love and mutual respect guided commissioners to ask thoughtful questions and listen to one another respectfully, and to Task Force Moderator MWS Leslie Roper, as the proposed positions were explained. The structure, which was strongly influenced by the three core priorities of the Presbytery, was approved and referred to the Coordinating Team, who was charged with appointing a search committee who will search for God's servants to fill all positions other than the position of General Presbyter. Temporary Stated Clerk Belden reminded those gathered that the Presbytery will need to approve the nominee for Stated Clerk in accordance with the Book of Order (G-3.0104) and the "Presbytery of Arkansas Ministry Manual," which is not the case with the other staff positions in the model.

The last order of business left commissioners on a high note as Inquirer LaWanda Harris of Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church of Little Rock was examined and approved as a Candidate for Ministry of the Presbytery of Arkansas. With the sun still shining, and lots of hugs of "goodbye," commissioners and visitors left for their various places of ministry around the Presbytery, tired but uplifted by the work accomplished, and our worship of our God through that work.

Elder Commissioners may use this summary of our work to report to their sessions, and the complete minutes of the meeting will be posted on the Presbytery's website by November 9, 2018.

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## **Corrections from the Presbytery Packet**

The Installation service for MWS Ward Rudolph, pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Searcy will be held at 4:30 pm on Sunday afternoon, November 4 at the church which is located at 400 West arch St. in downtown Searcy. The presbytery packet listed the start time at 4:00 pm. The correct time is 4:30 pm.

The totals for the Wellspring Contract were incorrect in the presbytery packet. The figure was correctly used for the 2019 proposed budget but had not been updated in the contract that was listed in the packet.

The correct totals are:

11 -- Commissioned Ruling Elders  
7 -- Certified Directors of Christian Education and Associate Directors of Christian Education  
5 -- Staff Members  
68 -- Ministers of Word and Sacrament  
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91 -- Total

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### **Statement from Interfaith Arkansas**

Interfaith Arkansas, an ecumenical organization which is supported by our Mission of the Church Ministry Area, issued the following statement in the aftermath of the tragic violence at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA.

"Interfaith Arkansas, which throughout its nearly sixty years of work, has worked closely with the Jewish community in Arkansas as partners seeking openness, inclusion, justice and peace for all. We stand today in solidarity with our Jewish communities in light of the senseless killings in the synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA and condemn violence against Jewish people and their holy places. We are deeply concerned and troubled by the creation of a culture where this kind of evil and anti-Semitic violence expresses itself.

We encourage leaders, individuals and communities to live out attitudes and actions of faith, love, compassion, kindness, justice and peace in the face of people who perpetrate hate and violence."

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### **Opportunities for Our Presbytery**

Applications are being accepted at **Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock** for

a **Director of Families with Young Children**, a 10-hour per week position. This new team member will work with the Associate Pastor for Youth, Young Adults, and Families with Young Children and other part-time teammates that work with youth and young adults. We hope to find a faithful person with the 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](http://www.secondpreslr.org). Please share this information with potential candidates!

**Youth Director at Park Hill Presbyterian Church, North Little Rock for 2019**

Our church is looking for the right (part or more time) person to help us accomplish God's will in this place! Dynamic and energetic individual needed to organize and lead weekly Sunday afternoon gathering for middle and high school youth. Goals include building relationships, community and teamwork while developing Bible Study, Fellowship and Service/Mission opportunities. Occasional worship leadership. Will also attend local church youth events/conferences.

Other possible duties for the appropriate candidate include: teaching youth Sunday School, assisting with VBS and confirmation, coordinating youth worship and local mission projects; leadership in recruitment, fundraising and outreach. The ideal candidate is capable of planning and implementing curriculum across a wide range of child and adult education needs and becoming a key player on staff. May include continuing education and professional development opportunities; Christian Educators are encouraged to apply. Approx. \$15-20/hr or salary as negotiated; room to grow, all applications reviewed, can be combined with other positions as appropriate, interviews begin in November.

Send resumes and for questions please contact [parkhillpres@sbcglobal.net](mailto:parkhillpres@sbcglobal.net) or call 501-753-9533.

**First Presbyterian Church Dardanelle Searching for New Pastor:** Long-time pastor, Kelly Pearson retired from First Presbyterian Church in Dardanelle at the end of September. The Session is searching for a new pastor. The position will be part-time with details to be determined in discussions with interested individuals. For more information, contact Donna Partain, Clerk of Session ([dcpartain@msn.com](mailto:dcpartain@msn.com)) or Cathy Baker, Ruling Elder ([cathybaker54@yahoo.com](mailto:cathybaker54@yahoo.com)).

**Music Director at Park Hill Presbyterian Church, North Little Rock for 2019**

Our church is looking for the right (part or half time) musician to lead us into God's future! The successful candidate will: have 3-5 years' experience leading church music with a BA in music or equivalent, rehearse and lead choir, play the piano and/or organ with performance-level proficiency, support contemporary and traditional music in worship, be excited about starting intergenerational and children's choir opportunities, possess good interpersonal and communication skills and be interested in growth.

A great candidate may also: accompany choir during rehearsals and Sunday worship, rehearse and lead hand bell choir, interest in intergenerational chime choir, maintain instruments and music library, have interest in professional development and staff leadership. Salary range \$11,000-21,000 as experience/duties and negotiation allows; all applications reviewed, can be combined with other positions as appropriate, interviews begin in November.

Send resumes and for questions please contact [parkhillpres@sbcglobal.net](mailto:parkhillpres@sbcglobal.net) or call 501-753-9533.

**"Sing the Faith" softback hymnals.** 83 copies of this blue softback hymnal published by Geneva Press in 2003 is free for the taking from Christ Presbyterian Church in Terra Linda, CA. The church administrator there, formerly from Little Rock, is willing to box them and pay the shipping charges to send them to any church in our presbytery. Contact Mary Marcom at 415.479.2712.

Bull Shoals Presbyterian Church seeks the **accompaniment edition of The Presbyterian Hymnal (1990)**. Please call Cindy Saul at 879-421-0881 or email: [cindysaul@gmail.com](mailto:cindysaul@gmail.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 2019. To download the current form, [click here](#).

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**Resource Center News**

## **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).

## **THE RESOURCE CENTER**

WE'RE STILL HERE. We miss NiAnn so much, but volunteers are available to help you make good use of many wonderful resources that can spice up your church's education or your own life of faith. To see the full list of resources go to the Presbytery website, click on Resources, then Resource Center, click the link to your left which will take you to a catalog where you can search for resources. To email the resource center in NiAnn's absence, send requests and questions to volunteer Carol Clark at [cbclark05@aol.com](mailto:cbclark05@aol.com), and we'll pull the resources for you and hold them or mail them to you!

For now, [click here](#) for some good ideas!

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

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**Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News**

**Register Now for the Montreat College Conference**

# COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITY



The campus ministries within the Presbytery of Arkansas are organizing a trip to the Montreat College Conference and want to invite all college-age persons in the Presbytery to join us for this great conference. [Click here](#) for more information and a registration form for trip details, costs, and how to register and share it with the college-aged persons in your congregations and help them get signed up to go with us! For more information, contact Jeremy Wilhelmi (Chaplain, University of the Ozarks) at [jwilhelmi@ozarks.edu](mailto:jwilhelmi@ozarks.edu) or 804-767-0812.

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**Save The Date -- Presbyterian Youth Triennium**

**Purdue University, July 16-20**

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

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### **Matt Bussell Installed as Pastor of First Presbyterian, Jonesboro**



On Sunday October 28th, Matt Bussell was installed as the new pastor of First Presbyterian Church (Jonesboro). Pictured above are (left to right) RE Cyril Hollingsworth, Second--Little Rock; MWS and Temporary Stated Clerk Leslie Belden; MWS and Moderator of the Presbytery of Arkansas Leslie Roper, FPC--Batesville; MWS Matt Bussell, FPC--Jonesboro; MWS Maggie Alsup, Chaplain at Lyon College; RE Carla Houston, FPC--Jonesboro; MWS and General Presbyter Stewart Smith, RE Don Eilbott, Trinity--Little Rock

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## **Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) Program Open for Applications**

Spread the word! Applications for the 2019-20 **Young Adult Volunteer (YAV)** program open Oct. 1. All sites are available.

The YAV program is an ecumenical, faith-based year of service for young people, ages 19-30. Volunteers accompany local agencies faithfully working to address root causes of poverty and reconciliation. YAVs serve during the academic year, August to July.

Help plants seeds of service and share!

For more information, contact Blake Collins at [blake.collins@pcusa.org](mailto:blake.collins@pcusa.org). There is also more information about the YAV program at: [youngadultvolunteers.org](http://youngadultvolunteers.org).

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## **EVANGELISM GRANTS AVAILABLE FROM MISSION OF THE CHURCH MINISTRY AREA**

Six grants of up to \$400 each are being offered to congregations desiring to improve or create avenues to evangelize. These grants can be for signage, advertising, a website or website improvements, a special invitation to your neighborhood to attend worship, etc. You have good news to share in your communities, and with the help of a grant from the presbytery, you can do it.

To apply, contact Commissioned Ruling Elder Kelly Pearson, moderator of Mission of the Church Ministry Area, by email at [ktpearson@suddenlink.net](mailto:ktpearson@suddenlink.net). Please include in your email: a brief description of the project, how much the whole project will cost, how much (up to \$400) is being requested, and how the funds will be specifically utilized. Requests should be authorized by the local church Session. If you have questions, you may contact Elder Pearson. The deadline to receive requests is Friday, November 30.

Ideally, if your congregation has applied for and received a grant from the Unified Mission Emphasis in 2018, you might allow other congregations to apply.

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**ATTENTION: Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Arkansas**

MARK THE DATES for this upcoming important event!

Questions? Contact Ila Blackketter-Wolfe at [ila.nb.wolfe@gmail.com](mailto:ila.nb.wolfe@gmail.com) or Cathy Rogers at [ccrogers86@gmail.com](mailto:ccrogers86@gmail.com).

**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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**Save The Date -- Vera Lloyd Turkey Trot!**

Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services' Annual Turkey Trot is on Saturday, November 17th. The 5K walk and 1 mile family fun run take place at the Monticello children's home campus. The Turkey Trot has become one of the largest in southeast Arkansas, and supports the needs of children, youth and families in crisis from throughout the state. Register at: <https://runsignup.com/vlturkeytrot>.

If you'd like to get involved or become a sponsor, please email Kathy French at [kathyfrench@veralloyd.org](mailto:kathyfrench@veralloyd.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](mailto:kenneth@presbyteryofarkansas.org) and [stewart@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto: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](#).

**Prayer List for Congregations -- 2019** 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](#)

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### PRESBYTERY STAFF:

General Presbyter [STEWART SMITH](#)

Temporary Stated Clerk [LESLIE BELDEN](#)

Director of Mission Support [KENNETH RICH](#)

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

Staff Resource for Mission Discernment [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 82 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>

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