



August 2013

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

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Praying For You

Dear Friends in Christ,

A postcard arrives in the morning mail with the simple line, "We are praying for you." When we receive one of these notes in the Presbytery office, we put it up on the break room cabinet. It is a reminder that we are being held up before God by others for whom we are also praying. It is also an encouragement to continue in the work God has set before us knowing that we are not "in this alone" and that first and foremost, it is God's work that we are privileged to share.



Many of our Presbyteries find the Presbytery's prayer list helpful in focusing their prayers for congregations within our Presbytery. Each week, two congregations or institutions are featured. We are invited to pray specifically for these folk, their leaders and the ministries to which they are being called. This list is available on the Presbytery's website. Another helpful resource for praying for others while gaining insight into the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is the Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study. 365 inspiring mission stories from around the world including the Presbytery of Arkansas are featured along with a suggested prayer for each day. The Mission Yearbook is available through the Church Store of the Presbyterian Mission Agency at \$16.95 for a single copy.

Within our Presbytery, let us continue to remember our calling to shared mission and to prayer for one another as we seek to make visible the Body of Christ.

Gratefully yours,

Bill

General Presbyter's Out-of-Office Commitments

August

17 General Committee, First Presbyterian, Conway

19 Cluster Dinner, Little Rock

20 Session Meeting, Second Presbyterian, Little Rock

22-24 Synod Symposium, Highland Park Presbyterian, Dallas, TX

25-Sep 2 Vacation

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Church Employment Opportunities in our Presbytery

Choir Director -- First Presbyterian Church, Harrison, Arkansas, seeks a choir director for Wednesdays and Sundays. A job description and an application form are available by contacting the church at 870-741-2464 or jane@fpcharrison.org.

Last Call for Resumes for Assistant Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Arkansas -- Effective January 1, 2014, part-time Assistant Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of

Arkansas. [Click here](#) to view job description. Current Assistant Stated Clerk NiAnn Thompson (niann@presbyteryofarkansas.org) will gladly answer questions about the position she will vacate next year. Stipend offered and mileage reimbursed. Send resumes to Rev. Guy Delaney, moderator of Committee on Administration, at info@presbyteryofarkansas.org by Aug. 31 for election on Oct. 5.

Pianist -- First Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville is in need of a pianist. The ability to play the organ is an asset but is not required. We are a small church of very friendly people. We are looking for someone to play the piano; someone who will support our Praise & Worship Band as well as play solo. Church service is 11-12 on Sundays. The choir and band practice once a week; the pianist would be wanted for the practice. Salary is negotiable.

Youth Director -- Trinity Presbyterian Church of Little Rock is seeking a Youth Director. This is a part time position and requires loving the Lord and loving Junior and Senior High kids. A short job description is available [here](#). If you are interested, please call the church office at 501-868-5848 or email at office@trinitypreslr.com for more information.

Youth Intern -- First Presbyterian, Harrison is seeking a young adult who has the ability to lead our junior and senior high youth into deeper Christian discipleship as they grow physically, mentally and spiritually. This person would need to be available on Sundays, mornings and evenings. For a more complete job description and application form please contact the Pastor/Head of Staff, the Rev. Jane Huffstetler at jane@fpcharrison.org, check out our website at www.harrisonfpc.org, or contact the church office at 870/741-2464.

Director of Youth Ministries and Christian Education -- Westminster Presbyterian Church, Hot Springs seeks qualified candidate for the position of Director of Youth Ministries and Christian Education. This is a professional, full-time lay position with primary focus towards Youth Ministries with additional responsibilities for Christian Education for the entire congregation. Email your resume and cover letter to wpchsar@sbcglobal.net. A complete job description is available if requested. [Back to the top of this email](#)

People and Church News

News of Our People

--Christian sympathy goes to **Rev. Walter Swetnam** of Batesville and family on the death of his wife Norma on July 15. Her memorial service was held at First, Batesville on July 17. Walter is an honorably retired minister member of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

--**Rev. Terry Hart** has resigned as interim pastor at Presbyterian Church of Bull Shoals and has begun work as a patient information assistant at AR Children's Hospital in Little Rock. With husband James, Terry is now at home in Lonsdale, outside Benton.

--**Hilta Straight** celebrated in July 20 years as church secretary/office administrator at First, Dardanelle.

--Congratulations to **Carolyn and Jack Beane** of Hot Springs on the birth of their great grandson Jackson Blurton on June 12 in McKinney, TX. Proud parents are Justin and Liz Blurton. Carolyn is one of two Commissioned Ruling Elders serving Barr Memorial Presbyterian, Norman.

--**Leah James** has finished her service as administrative assistant at Park Hill Presbyterian, North

Little Rock, and **Amy Jones** has assumed that position.

--**Bob Henson** has begun work as the Director of Youth and College Ministries at First United, Fayetteville.

--**Justine Anton** is the new administrative assistant at First, Pine Bluff.

News of Our Congregations and Ministries

--**Woodlands Presbyterian, Hot Springs Village** Presbyterian Women hosted a linen shower for the campus homes at Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Home and Family Services, Inc. in Monticello.

--**Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista** regularly offers a Saturday lunch with games following for all single people and hosted "Bring a Friend to Church Sunday" on July 14.

--**Central Presbyterian, Pine Bluff** hosted annual Vacation Bible School for their congregation and **First, Pine Bluff** on August 1-3.

--**Presbyterian Church of Bull Shoals** spotlights an agency the church supports on the "mission minute" page of their monthly newsletter.

--Candidate for Ministry Lindsay Rae Conrad of Heartland Presbytery preached at **First, Malvern** on July 14, as the third winner of the Chidester Preaching Award established by the congregation and given annually to a student at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

--**Spring River Presbyterian, Hardy** awarded a scholarship to a Lyon College (Batesville) student in the Class of 2013.

--**First, Hot Springs** senior high youth went on a trip to Rescue Mission in Nashville, TN July 23-25.

--**First, Yellville** plans 2013 Sunday School Rally Day on Sept. 8 to kick off study opportunities for all ages and will commission teachers and leaders of youth during worship.

--**Westover Hills Presbyterian, Little Rock** Presbyterian Women will hold a treats and treasure sale Aug. 17-18 to support missions.

--**Grace Presbyterian, Little Rock** began a food pantry open once a month in the evening and has invited area churches to participate with funds or manhours.

--**First, Batesville's** children will lead the congregation in a special litany prayer for the coming school year in worship on Aug. 18.

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New Possibilities Solar Under the Sun in Honduras

By Rev. Leslie Belden

On July 14th Cluster One in NW AR celebrated a new commitment to global ministry with an ice cream social! About 30 people gathered at First Presbyterian, Springdale, judging a homemade ice cream contest won by Sara Koenig of First United Presbyterian, Fayetteville with her delicious pistachio ice cream! Sebastian Melgar, his wife Ada, and friend Mary (a dentist), all from Honduras, visited NW Arkansas to dream with Cluster One leaders of exciting partnership possibilities! Along with David Gill of Ferncliff Camp and Chris McRae of Solar Under the Sun, members and leaders of churches asked questions and listened to the possibility of a new type of ministry for Solar in Honduras.

The idea is to use a loan to set up a revolving fund for remote communities in the far western mountainous region of Honduras who have no way to get on "the (electric) grid". With help, Solar Under the Sun can establish a plan through which members of their community can be trained to install solar panels purchased and "sold" to them through a loan that they will pay-off with savings in fuel costs. Communal water purification systems may also be set up for each community.

Together, the churches of NW Arkansas also hope to build and strengthen relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ in a totally different cultural environment. Families will be able to be a part of this ministry for a week during Spring Break to learn from and work with new friends in Honduras. Participants could lead a Bible School, assist with other building projects, and (hopefully) strengthen Spanish language skills!

The Spring Break trip is anticipated to cost about \$1,000 per person for travel, and room and board will be approximately \$20-25 per day. A steering committee will be formed soon to develop a business plan and work toward establishing a loan and revolving fund, and an exploratory team trained in Solar 1 and 2 will travel to Honduras in October or December. The first group trip is scheduled for March 22-30, 2014. If you are interested in assisting or being involved with this new ministry, please contact Rev. Leslie Belden, 479-466-1061 or LeslieBeld@aol.com.



Participants at the Solar Under the Sun Ice Cream Social

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PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is a mission program of PC(USA)

Q: If the idea of disaster planning overwhelms you or your church, what can you do?

A: DO ONE THING! Here are some examples:

- *Ask your Presbytery of Arkansas Disaster Preparedness and Response Committee (DPRC) for a weather radio to keep at your church.
- *Plan the congregation's evacuation from worship in case of tornado or fire alarm.
- *Start a telephone tree for emergency situations.
- *Name 3 people to a disaster preparedness task force.
- *Have the DPRC give a "Church Disaster Preparedness" presentation at your next session or fellowship lunch.

DO IT NOW! You'll be so pleased with yourself - that you'll want to DO ONE MORE THING!

By thinking these things through now, you may be able to keep an emergency from becoming a disaster.

DISASTER PREPARATION PROJECT GRANTS

Does your church (or other Presbyterian-related entity) want to "beef up" its disaster preparedness--and want some encouragement in the form of startup money to help with the project? The Presbytery Disaster Preparation and Response Committee (DPRC) can help you. The committee is committed to helping congregations prevent and minimize the effects of disasters; preparation grants are one way we can help.

The DPRC is offering funding for use, ordinarily within the Presbytery of Arkansas, by the aforementioned groups who want to create a new, or to re-institute an old disaster preparation project (not for ongoing support or maintenance). Grants may help your church renovate or enhance an existing shelter facility or start a new facility or may help purchase such items as supplies, flashlights, weather radios, cots, non-perishable food or computer back-up media.

The maximum grant is \$500 for the first grant (without match) and a second grant of up to \$500 matched 1:1 by the applicant. The applicant may submit an application at any time and after receiving a grant, needs to submit a progress report, normally before each regular quarterly DPRC meeting.

For information on application requirements, please [click here](#).

A prospective applicant is encouraged to contact the DPRC before applying in order to discuss ideas and plans and to check on availability of funds. Inquiries or applications should go to DPRC Chair, c/o Presbytery of Arkansas, 9221 N. Rodney Parham Road, Little Rock, AR 72227, 501/663-2424, info@presbyteryofarkansas.org

--This message is brought to you by the Presbytery of Arkansas Disaster Preparedness and Response Committee. Additional information is available at:

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

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Resource Center News

by [NiAnn Thompson](#), Resourcing Director

Phone 501.663.2424, ext. 104

Tuesday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

RAVE REVIEW from Linda LeBron, retired Certified Christian Educator and moderator of the presbytery's Christian Education Committee:

"The Spiritual Literacy Adult Sunday School Class at Second Presbyterian, Little Rock really enjoyed our last study book. It is Testimony: Talking Ourselves into

Being Christian by Thomas G. Long (now in YOUR Resource Center). Dr. Long, a respected professor of preaching, gets downright practical and teaches with rich stories about how our talk over the back



fence and at the office water cooler is where the nitty-gritty of what we believe is most powerful. Powerful for those we are in conversation with, but also powerful for us as we practice articulating what is important to us. He says that authentic God-talk is so out of the ordinary, so startling in truth, that it often startles us when we hear it, or speak it.

The book is divided into two parts. The first three chapters are about the hunger for this authentic God talk. We learned how we are witnesses and how our Sunday words help us get in some practice in a safe environment and plant themselves in our hearts. The second part is five chapters that walk us through the routines and opportunities of daily talk from morning, through lunch conversations, the six o'clock news, and the whispered secrets of bedtime prayers.

While there are no questions in the book, there is a free, downloadable study guide from the Practicing Our Faith website. We actually chose this book because we had enjoyed Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People from the same series from Jossey-Bass. We never lacked for good discussion of every chapter. Dr. Long tells deep and delightful stories that you will remember, and you will find yourself paying much more attention to the stories of your own life, and much more comfortable with the idea that we can't really fail to testify, whether we recognize it or not."

This same book was recommended by Resource Center Advisory board member **Sue Rennie, Park Hill, North Little Rock**, who added that "without exception, every member of the class enjoyed it." RAVE REVIEW from Certified Christian Educator Kristi Button, writing about the "**NRSV Children's Bible**" presented as gifts to children at First United, Fayetteville where she serves as Director of Christian Education. Here's the link to details:

<http://www.cokesbury.com/forms/ProductDetail.aspx?pid=443901&rank=1&txtSearchQuery=9780687332458>

"What I like about this Bible is that it is New Revised Standard Version with child-friendly additions. I like what is contained in the boxes interspersed among the pages, and it has some great resource pages in the middle. The introductions to each book of the Bible are helpful and written well for children. It is a really nice-looking Bible on the outside, with burgundy faux leather binding, great to have inscribed with their name. We have the teal-colored hardcover one in our classrooms for children to use, so they are referencing the same translation in class as they have with them at home and which they bring to Sunday School. I also like the paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer and the Beatitudes in the middle of the Bible and the Church Year Calendar."

Older CD-Roms available free and for keeps, first come, first served. We want to find new homes for these older CD-Roms if possible. Resource Center Board member Rev. Marie Mainard O'Connell, pastor at First, Little Rock, explains their limitations: "These programs, most of which are for children, are probably still useable if the computer at the church, school or home still runs Windows 95, 98, 200 or NT, but if the computer is newer than 2007 it probably cannot run these CD-Roms." Titles for children are "The Life of Paul," "The Life of Moses," "The Life and Ministry of Jesus," "The Life of David," "Bibleland.com," "Play and Learn Children's Bible," "Amazing Expedition Bible," "KidWorks Deluxe," "Wordy," "Good Sam, the Samaritan," "Awesome Bible Stories," "The Beginner's Bible: New Testament," "Adventures with Jonah, Ruth and Sam," "SONsoft Bible Computer Games," and "Super 3D Noah's Ark." Titles for youth and adults are: "Pathways through Jerusalem," "Biblical Reference Library," "Teachers Bible Companion," "Giants of the Faith," "Walk in the Footsteps of Jesus," "PC Study Bible," "Quick Verse," and "The Church's Story." Contact NiAnn for details.

As you plan training for your newly elected ruling elders and deacons this fall, please recall that the new Book of Order 2013-2015 was published this summer and is available at Cokesbury and at PCUSA Church Store.

Get ready for fall guests! As programs and events kick-off or resume this month and next, expect and prepare for guests in church classes, events and worship. YOUR Resource Center has bought multiple copies of the third edition of "**Presbyterians Today: Welcome to the Presbyterian Church!**" which we will mail to you for your review and/or use. You may choose to make these available in your narthex to visitors.

REMEMBER OUR ONLINE CATALOG! Just go to the www.presbyteryofarkansas.org website, click on "Resources," then on "Resource Center" and "click here to search the catalog" to conduct a simple

or advanced search for just the right item.

(The Resource Center receives funding from Presbytery's Committee on Christian Education)

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Administrative Commission Installs Benton Pastor

On July 14 an Administrative Commission of the presbytery installed Rev. Dr. Dari Rowen as pastor of First, Benton.



Left to right: Cyril Hollingsworth, Rev. Sally Johnson, Rev. Jim Miller, Rev. Bill Bailey, Rev. Dianne Brown, Rev. Dr. Dari Rowen, Jon Snyder, General Presbyter Rev. Dr. Bill Galbraith, NiAnn Thompson, Presbytery Moderator Sherée Niece.

Wynne Pastor Ordained and Installed

Frank M. "Mike" McCracken was ordained a Teaching Elder and installed by an Administrative Commission of the presbytery as pastor of Wynne Presbyterian in July 28th.



Left to right: Rev. Dr. George Stroup, Rev. Larry Mitchell, Martha Carvill, Carla Houston, Susan Haskell, Rev. Chris Jones, Cecillia Killough, Rev. Mike McCracken, Lane Francis McCracken, Presbytery Moderator Sherée Niece, General Presbyter Rev. Dr. Bill Galbraith.

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First Presbyterian, Beebe Honors Josh Bridges



First Presbyterian Church of Beebe celebrated the ministry of Commissioned Ruling Elder Josh Bridges, on Sunday, August 11th. Josh began assisting in the leadership of the congregation in 2007 and was commissioned as a Ruling Elder in 2009. Following morning worship, the congregation gathered for a reception honoring Josh and his family. Pictured are Josh and his wife, Regina, and their children, Suzanne and Ethan.

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Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News

YOU Can Make a Difference!

Jeremiah 1: 4-10

Presbytery of Arkansas Jr. High Youthquake 2013

September 27-29 Ferncliff Retreat Center

Open to all 6th-9th graders

\$95 per Youth/ Adult Advisor

Keynote by our Presbytery's College Students!!

Registration information will be mailed to each church by Aug. 23.

It will also be posted on the Presbytery's website and the **Presbytery of Arkansas Youth Ministry** Facebook page.

Registration is through churches. **Deadline - September 13!**

Questions? Contact Britton Varn at 501-663-2424 or

britton@presbyteryofarkansas.org

**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.

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Training Offered to Church Support Staff

Is the support staff person at your church an empty-nester who wants to work part-time? Is that person a single parent who wants a job that will work with children's schedules? Is that

person someone who is drawn to service in the Church, has office skills, but no formal education in church-related matters? Did you know that the PCUSA has an organization for these persons? It's called the Administrative Personnel Association (APA) and it was created to provide training and education in basic topics like Church History, Theology, Spiritual Growth and Polity and electives in work and personal areas to enable support staff personnel to truly be "Partners in Ministry." No matter the path taken to church office work, nearly all of those who follow it develop a sense of call and a desire to learn more in order to do their best for the Lord they serve.

On October 17-19, the Arkansas Chapter of APA is hosting the Southwest Regional Conference in Little Rock. This event is open to all support staff personnel in Presbyterian churches, presbytery and synod offices across the county. Courses to be offered are:

- * Spiritual Growth and Discipline
- * Book of Confessions
- * Theology
- * Risk Management
- * The Church and Persons with Disability
- * Healthy Lifestyles (which includes participation in Race for the Cure)
- * PCUSA History Since Reunion
- * Microsoft Access
- * Pastoral Care for Self and Others
- * Social Media
- * Board of Pensions Benefits Plan

The classes will be presented by Teaching Elders and others who are experts in their fields. To learn more about this conference, please contact Pam Luther or Sage Arnold at 501-227-0000. Scholarships are available. Further information about the conference (including a downloadable brochure) and APA is available at www.pcusa-apa.org.

Pam Luther

*President-elect, APA Southwest Region
501-227-0000 or pamluther@secondpreslr.org*

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Presbytery Mission Trip to Moore, OK

Who: Anyone (age 18 and older) is invited to go on this trip.

When: We will leave on Sunday, October 13th and return Saturday, October 19th

What: While specifics are still unknown, most likely we will be doing clean-up and light construction assistance work.

Where: We will be working in the area of Moore, OK

Why: We want to help to rebuild and restore hope to the people of Moore, OK.

Cost: The cost is \$100.00. We will be housed in a local church.

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION:

October 1, 2013

MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Susie Wright ([501.525.1367](tel:501.525.1367) or [501.620.3335](tel:501.620.3335))

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**Last Call to attend Presbyterian Pilgrimage #19 at
Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center**

October 10-13, 2013

The weekend activities begin about 5:30 pm on Thursday, Oct. 10, and conclude about 5 pm Sunday, Oct. 13. Enjoy a weekend of study, worship, fun, and fellowship that will bring you closer to God!

Moderator -- Tommy Watts

To register, visit www.pilgrimage-arkansas.org or contact Sandra Phillips, the Registrar at 870-688-9189. Through the Presbytery's financial support of Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage, the ARPP would like to scholarship up to five Presbyterian participants for the upcoming pilgrimage weekend. You may request up to \$200 in scholarship assistance if needed. You may indicate your need for scholarship assistance when you register.

Deadline to register for Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage #19 is September 8, 2013.

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Ethical Care Conference

October 16-19

Presbyterians for Earth Care will hold their 2013 Conference at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center in Little Rock. For a full brochure, [click here](#).

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Prayer List for Congregations -- 2013 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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[Click here for the latest PW newsletter](#)

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[Presbytery Calendar](#)

PRESBYTERY STAFF:

General Presbyter [BILL GALBRAITH](#)

Stated Clerk [CATHY ULRICH](#)

Resourcing Director & Assistant Stated Clerk [NIANN THOMPSON](#)

Director of Mission Support [KENNETH RICH](#)

Presbytery Evangelist [JESSE GONZALEZ](#)

Staff Resource for Youth [BRITTON VARN](#)

Staff Resource for Congregational Care & Development [MICHAEL VINSON](#)

Treasurer [WES SHAVER](#)

Moderator of Presbytery [SHERÉE NIECE](#)

Vice Moderator of Presbytery [CLARE KELLEY](#)

Moderator of the General Committee [DAVID DYER](#)

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The Presbytery of Arkansas is a governing body 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 14,000 Presbyterians gathered in 87 active churches, two new church developments and two fellowships 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>