



December 2012

# The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

## In this issue:

[Bill Galbraith: "Sentenced to Life"](#)

[David Dyer: Thank You to Outgoing Committee Moderators](#)

[2013 Moderators Meet at Presbytery Office](#)

[Church Employment Opportunities in the Presbytery](#)

[University of the Ozarks to Host February Presbytery Meeting](#)

[Disaster Assistance Helpful Hint](#)

[News of Our People and Our Congregations](#)

[News for Presbytery Youth](#)

[Presbyterian Pilgrimage Offers Scholarships, and a Letter From a Participant](#)

[2012 Fiscal Year-End Approaches](#)

[Presbytery Prayer List](#)

[Link to Presbyterian Women Newsletter](#)

[NiAnn Thompson: Resource Center News](#)

[Presbytery Calendar](#)

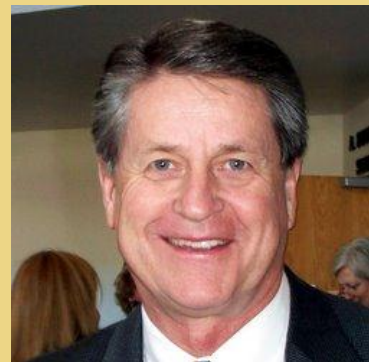
[Staff Contacts](#)

[About the Presbytery of Arkansas](#)

## Sentenced to Life

Last December, good buddies, John, Cesar and Tyler, each 16, hopped in the '09 Chevy pick-up on the outskirts of Muskogee, Oklahoma. Tyler slid behind the wheel. Somewhere on 85th Street, near Hopewell Park, he lost control. The truck veered off the road, struck a tree and vaulted into the air before coming to rest. Tyler and Cesar walked away. John didn't. He was thrown from the truck and crushed. Instantly, gone.

Although unhurt, Tyler was taken to jail on suspicion of driving under the influence. An investigation began immediately but dragged on until last week. Before the case was prosecuted, John's



Dad said, "As far as wanting to grab a rope and go hang someone, no, that's not what we want to do." His mother followed, "Tyler's a kid that just made a bad decision. As far as the legal process goes, it's something that's not in our hands. It just has to be done."

Now, a year later, the judicial process has unfolded and Tyler has been found responsible for John's death. His sentence, however, was a surprise. Tyler's not going to prison. He's been sentenced to church. Causing John's death is a debt Tyler will never repay to John's parents, Mary and James, or to John's siblings. Tyler, too, will forever regret that December night a year ago but regret will not eliminate it. One suspects they all thought the judge would have decided differently.

Did the judge do the right thing? Was Tyler's being sentenced to ten years in church a fitting punishment? Or, was this about punishment at all. One wonders if the unusual sentence arose from the impossibility of settling the unsettleable. It's a hard-to-fathom idea that when justice's scales cannot be balanced, when a loss cannot be undone, reclamation is our next best option. Who knows how Tyler's life will unfold but this judge is confident that church offers a better possibility than prison. Maybe it's the long-shot but better chance for redeeming a life responsible for tragically taking another.

The judge's sentence places an awesome mantel on the church. Here, there's this trust in the church, for all its foibles, to be the community where personal restoration has its best chance. It's an odd thing that people of faith remain so called, to encourage the brokenhearted, to wrap justice in mercy even as we walk through valleys, dark as death, toward the freedom of forgiveness and the promise of new life.

Grace always,

*Bill*

General Presbyter's Out of Office Commitments

December

12-17 Medical Leave (knee surgery)

January

5 General Committee, FPC, Conway

6 Preach, FPC, Rogers

7-10 Executive Presbyter Forum, New Orleans

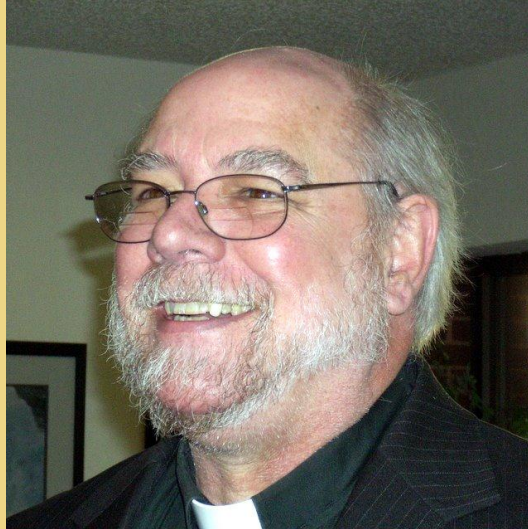
8 Committee on Ministry, FPC, Conway

27 Annual Meeting, Spring River Presbyterian, Hardy

---

**Outgoing Committee Moderators Thanked**

by Rev. David H. Dyer, Moderator of Presbytery



One of the great delights of the work of the Moderator of the Presbytery is being allowed to hear the reports of the work of the various committees of the Presbytery. These committees are the real muscle of the council and it is often the moderators of those committees who are the guiding forces of their various committees. We have been blessed, over the decades, with excellent leadership in our presbytery and when a moderator comes to the end of his or her term it is well that we pause and give thanks to God for such talented and gifted, committed and energetic people. This year **Sam Highsmith** of General Committee; **Bill Bailey** of the Committee on Ministry; **Liz Branch** of Disaster Preparedness and Response; **Cissy Rose** of Presbyterian Women (who will rotate off in April); **Gordon Garlington** of the Mission Committee; and **Jeff Cranton** of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry will be completing their service as moderators. These loyal servants deserve our thanks for their work and our praise to God for all they have done to add to the mission of the Presbytery of Arkansas. I hope you will join me in saying, "Well done, friends!" to these our sisters and brothers in ministry. They will have a time to rest, a little, and then, no doubt, new calls to new ministry will come to them. We look forward to the future with them all.

[Back to the top of this email](#)

---

**2013 Committee Moderators Meet**



Attending the annual training of presbytery committee and group moderators at the presbytery office on Nov. 27 were:

(front row) Sherée Niece, Clarksville, incoming presbytery moderator; Rev. Rita Wilson, Yellville, Congregational Care and Development; Kim Danehower, Forrest City, Mission; Betty Glenn, Little Rock, Presbyterian Women; Susie Wright, Hot Springs, Preparation for Ministry; Linda LeBron, Little Rock, Christian Education and Nurture; James Anderson, Batesville, Disaster Prep. and Response.

(back row) Rev. Guy Delaney, Little Rock, Administration; David Dyer, Little Rock, General Committee; Julie Agee Gillaspay, Conway, Nominations; Led Davis, Malvern, Representation; Rev. Frank LeBlanc, Morrilton, Committee on Ministry; Marty Shepherd, Dardanelle, Care and Nurture of Church Professionals; Al Glover, Pine Bluff, Clusters; Rev. Bill Galbraith, General Presbyter.

[Back to the top of this email](#)

---

### **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](mailto:jane@fpcharrison.org).

**Director of Children's Ministry** -- First Presbyterian Church of Bentonville. Part-time position, 20 hours per week. Committed. Experienced. Christian. Dynamic Children's Leader. Questions about the position contact Teaching Elder Kris Crawford, Interim Pastor, (479) 273-5450. Please send resumes to Ruling Elder Ed Carson at [ed.carson5@gmail.com](mailto:ed.carson5@gmail.com) or mail to: Ed Carson @ First Presbyterian Church, 901 Northeast 'J' Street, Bentonville, AR 72712.

[Back to the top of this email](#)

---



**UNIVERSITY OF THE OZARKS, CLARKSVILLE  
TO HOST PRESBYTERY MEETING**

On Friday, February 15, the Presbytery of Arkansas will gather for the 122nd stated meeting at the University of the Ozarks, Clarksville. Pre-presbytery workshops scheduled for Friday afternoon follow two timelines: 2:30-5:30 p.m., Reformed Theology and Preaching, for commissioned ruling elders, graduates of the lay academy and interested ruling elders, led by Rev. Dr. Phil Butin; and 3:30-5:30 p.m., Annual Clerk and Moderator of Session Training, led by Rev. Clare Kelley and Glory to God: the new Presbyterian Hymnal, led by members of Presbyterian Association of Musicians. Registration beginning at 3:00 p.m. and concurrent workshops will be held in the new Rogers Conference Center on campus.

Gavel falls at 6:30 p.m. Friday in Munger Chapel with business and worship scheduled for the evening. Outgoing moderator Rev. David Dyer will preach and Ruling Elder Sherée Niece of Clarksville and Rev. Clare Kelley of Holiday Island will be installed as moderator and vice moderator, respectively, for 2013. Youth Advisory Delegates will be special guests of the presbytery.

Business continues at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 16 in Rogers Center with an Order of the Day set for 10 a.m. to vote on proposed amendments to the Book of Order.

Highlights of the meeting include welcoming new ministers, voting on the 2013 budget and Standing Rules, commissioning a ruling elder, and worship with communion. Worship offering will benefit the Presbytery of Arkansas scholarship at UofO, and the Ingathering items requested (non-perishable foods and toiletries) will be given to Interfaith Service Network of Johnson County.

The read-ahead packets for this presbytery meeting will be posted by January 26.

[Back to the top of this email](#)



**PRESBYTERIAN  
DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

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

**Q: Do you know -- how long it would take your worshipping congregation to evacuate the sanctuary in case of a fire or an approaching tornado?**

**A: If you don't know, then you may not have had a fire/tornado drill lately. How about planning a drill for the beginning of a worship service soon?**

According to the [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) website, "Fire spreads quickly . . . In just two minutes, a fire can become life-threatening. In five minutes, a residence can be engulfed in flames." According to [www.nssl.noaa.gov](http://www.nssl.noaa.gov), "The current average lead-time for tornado warnings is 11 minutes." So see if you can get everyone to safety while the organist plays the prelude.

**Pay particular attention to people who need assistance with walking.** When bad weather threatens, seat these people close to your pre-planned evacuation destination, and seat enough deacons or other caregivers close to them to enable a safe exit for them. **By thinking these things through now, you may be able to keep an emergency from becoming a disaster.**

--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>

[Back to the top of this email](#)

## People and Church News

### News of Our People

--Christian sympathy goes to Ruling Elder **Karen Young-Vinson** and husband **Rev. Michael Vinson** of Conway on the death of her mother Virginia Jokisch in Jacksonville, IL on Dec. 7. Karen is a member of presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry and Michael is parish associate at First, Conway.

--Christian sympathy goes to Ruling Elders **Beth and Sam Highsmith** on the death of her mother Sylvia Pegg in Little Rock on Dec. 10. Sam is moderator of presbytery's General Committee and clerk of session at Second Presbyterian, Little Rock and Beth is a former moderator of Presbyterian Women of the presbytery and the synod.

--Christian sympathy goes to Ruling Elders **Barbara and Doyle Webb** of Benton on the death of her father Joe Womack on Dec. 1. Barbara is a member of the presbytery's Committee on Disaster Preparedness and Response and is a former moderator of the presbytery and Doyle is a former Stated Clerk.

--The staff of the **Presbytery of Arkansas** selected as their Christmas charity this year the Board of Pensions Assistance Fund in honor of the ten teaching elder members of this presbytery who have entered the church triumphant in 2011 and 2012.

### News of Our Congregations and Ministries

--**United Campus Ministry at UofA, Fayetteville** hosted youth groups from across northwest AR at their annual early Thanksgiving dinner on Nov. 4 and will host a confirmation retreat for Cluster 1 congregations on Feb. 1-2.

--**First, Huntsville** deacons mobilized to collect items for emergency clean-up

buckets to be assembled at Ferncliff's disaster center and sent to people in the northeast affected by Superstorm Sandy.

--**First, Springdale** gathers Christmas gifts for a foster family and students at a nearby elementary school.

--**First, Jonesboro** is helping a student at AR State University set up an apartment after leaving an abusive relationship.

--**Graham Memorial Presbyterian, Forrest City** co-hosted the community Thanksgiving dinner and will present a live nativity scene on Dec. 21-22.

--**University of the Ozarks in Clarksville**, in cooperation with **First and Harmony** churches in Clarksville and **Central, Russellville**, hosted the annual community service of Lessons and Carols on Dec. 9 at Munger Memorial Chapel.

--**Park Hill Presbyterian, North Little Rock** youth joined youth from **Allison Memorial, Little Rock** for the latter's Youth Sunday service on Nov. 18.

--**First, Malvern** will again host the Blue Christmas service on the evening of Dec. 16 for those feeling less than jubilant during the holidays.

--**First, Harrison** offered their monthly newsletter via email beginning in December.

--**First, Van Buren** hosts Sunday evening programs of a meal and discussion of Advent on Dec. 2, 9, 16 and 23.

--**First, Newport** held their annual planning meeting of Session on Nov. 17.

--**Comunidad Presbiteriana Hispana** new church development in Springdale is preparing and selling homemade tamales as a fund-raiser during the holidays.

--**First, Bentonville** has organized a children's library for church members and their preschool patrons.

[Back to the top of this email](#)

---

## Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News

**Want information about Presbytery of Arkansas Youth Ministry events? "Like" us on Facebook!**

We have a new Facebook Page to help you stay informed about youth ministry happenings in the Presbytery (Youthquakes, Youth at Presbytery, Summer Trips, etc.). This Page is for Youth Workers, parents, youth, Christian Educators, Pastors ... anyone who's interested in knowing what's up with our Presbytery's Youth Ministry! "Like" our Page to receive notification in your Newsfeed when new posts are made, or simply check in frequently to see what's new!

Search for **Presbytery of Arkansas Youth Ministry** on Facebook, or go to [www.facebook.com/PresbyteryOfArkansasYouthMinistry](http://www.facebook.com/PresbyteryOfArkansasYouthMinistry).

---

## Presbytery of Arkansas Delegation to the Presbyterian Youth Triennium 2013!

The Presbytery is currently putting together its delegation to the 2013 Triennium, July 15-20! Triennium is a HUGE and WONDERFUL youth event hosted every three years by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches. It attracts between 5,000 and 6,000 participants, who spend five days

together at Purdue University in amazing Worship, small groups, recreation, and mission. It is a faith-building, friendship-making, and very often life-changing experience!

The Presbytery is currently accepting registrations from youth who are currently in grades 8 through 12 who attend a Presbyterian church. The cost is \$640.

Registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until the trip is full.

The deadline to register is Feb. 1. More information and a registration form can be found on the Presbytery's website at

<http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/documents/YouthCouncil/Triennium%20FAQs%20and%20Registration%20form.pdf>

This trip is sponsored by the Youth Advisory Team of the Presbytery of Arkansas. The Presbytery's budget and a grant from the Synod of the Sun supplement the cost of the trip.

Contact Britton Varn, Coordinator for Youth Ministry, at

[britton@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto:britton@presbyteryofarkansas.org) with questions! Please let her know if you would like a Triennium registration packet mailed to your church!

---

**Save the dates!**

**Youth Summer Trips**

**Jr. High Jubilee at Mo Ranch, Texas**

Current 6th-8th graders

July 6-11, 2013

**Montreat Youth Conference (Montreat, North Carolina)**

Current 8th-12th graders

July 20-27, 2013

Registration information will be out soon! Check the Presbytery webpage ([www.presbyteryofarkansas.org](http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org)) or the Presbytery of Arkansas Youth Ministry Facebook page for more information!

[Back to the top of this email](#)

---

**Presbyterian Pilgrimage Offers Scholarships**

[Click Here to Read an Encouraging Letter about Pilgrimage](#)

[Back to the top of this email](#)

---

**2012 Year-End Approaches**

As a reminder to all committee chairs -- the 2012 Fiscal Year closes on December 31st. Since the presbytery office is closed from December 24-January 1, all vouchers that need to be paid in 2012 should be in the office by December 14th. If you have



any questions, contact Kenneth Rich at 501-663-2424 x103, or email to:  
[kenneth@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto:kenneth@presbyteryofarkansas.org).

Winter schedule: When Little Rock Schools close for winter weather, the presbytery office closes, too.

[Back to the top of this email](#)

---

### **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).

[Back to the top of this email](#)

---

[Click here for the latest PW newsletter.](#)

[Back to the top of this email](#)

---

### **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.

***Special wishes for a joyful Advent and holy Christmas to all the patrons of the presbytery's Resource Center from the Resource Center Advisory Board!***

**START 2013 WITH GREAT PLANNING AND DEEP HOPE**



For teenagers, check out "**INformed Adolescent Development Resources**" from the PC(USA). It's a new online resource helping parents, leaders and young people talk about subjects that are sometimes difficult to discuss such as gender differences, internet and technology, bullying and mean girls, faith on the athletic field, body image, honesty, good decisions and sexuality. Visit [www.informedteens.org](http://www.informedteens.org) for free articles, downloadable samples and \$5 lesson plans.

For adult classes, the "Book by Book" DVD and book study series of an individual book of the Bible has released three to check out: "**Isaiah**" (Acc. #DVD9681) in 10 sessions, "**Ephesians**" (Acc. #DVD9680) in 6 sessions and "**Galatians**" (Acc. #DVD9673) in 6 sessions. Video segments are about 15 minutes long, allowing time for class discussion of the readings.

For individuals and groups, "**Your Whole Life**" kit includes an inspirational CD, book and journal to "eat right, live well, love God" (Acc. #CD9624)

For older teens and young adults, "**God's Story, your story**" by Max Lucado (Acc. #DVD/BK9682) presents a fresh perspective of how one's daily life relates to God's epic story in a six sermon presentation.

For families or children's classes, "**Help Me Remember: Bible Stories for Children**" (Acc. #CD/BK9552) invites parents, clergy and educators to share Bible stories with children ages 4 to 8, including the scripture passages in story format with simple illustrations and 3 CDs of the author narrating Old Testament stories and one CD from the New Testament. Included are Creation, Noah's Ark, Moses, David, up on the roof, the good neighbor, Mary Magdalene, and others.

#### **RAVE REVIEWS:**

--Both Rev. Jeff Price, Trinity, Little Rock and Rev. Lindy Vogado, interim pastor, Grace, Little Rock endorse the DVD/BK study by Adam Hamilton of "**Christianity's Family Tree: What Other Christians Believe and Why**" (Acc. #DVD9618 or 9524) which contends that each denomination has a "unique, valuable perspective to offer on the Christian faith." The set includes a DVD with 14-18

minutes on each group, giving a brief history, major beliefs and what we can learn from that group. Price said it was very helpful in presenting to Presbyterians who they really are, and Vogado said it helped her class understand why other Christians place their priorities where they do.

**REMEMBER OUR ONLINE CATALOG!** Just go to the [www.presbyteryofarkansas.org](http://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 and Nurture.)*

[Back to the top of this email](#)

---

[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 [DAVID DYER](#)

Vice Moderator of Presbytery [SHEREE NIECE](#)

Moderator of the General Committee [SAM HIGHSMITH](#)

[Back to the top of this email](#)



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>