

BIBLE STUDIES FOR A PNC
Presbytery of Arkansas
Compiled by Bill Branch

1. I Samuel 16:1, 4-13 – God does not look on the outward appearance but on the heart. What are some “heart” qualities that God might want in your next pastor? Samuel had to go through the whole number of Jesse’s sons. He even had to have Jesse bring in one more. What is this saying to your PNC about patience and the time this process may take? How can you listen for God’s voice as you look at the parade of candidates for your next pastor?
2. Genesis 12:1-9 – Discuss the faith of Abram to go into the unknown with only God to guide him. God made promises to Abram at several points along the journey. What were they? What do you think are God’s promises to you and your PNC?
3. Luke 1:26-38 – What do you think of God’s unorthodox methods? How can we have the same kind of faith in God that Mary had that God will do “great things” (cf. v.49) for us? Remember that it took nine months for Mary to see the results of her “labor.”
4. I Corinthians 12:4-14 -- What are some of the “gifts” that we believe this congregation needs in our next pastor? What are the “gifts” that we can and should supply from the congregation?
5. I Timothy 5:17-18 – What is fair compensation for a minister? What does this congregation (and session) have to change in order to pay your next pastor fairly?
6. Jeremiah 1:4-10 – Why was Jeremiah an unlikely prophet? What surprises might God have in store for this PNC?
7. Isaiah 6:1-8 – Where was Isaiah when he heard the voice of God? What does that say about how we ought to go about our task as a PNC? Did it matter that Isaiah was a sinner? How did God deal with Isaiah’s sin? How will God deal with our sin?
8. Philippians 2:1-11 – What does this passage say about our need for humility? Is it possible for us to look beyond our own interests and selfishness to the interests of others? What are some qualities mentioned here that we should seek in our next pastor?
9. Romans 12:1-21 – What does this say about the role of the PNC and the congregation in the leadership of the congregation: Before a pastor is called? After the next pastor is called? What does this say about the tendency of some churches to expect the pastor to be all things to all people?
10. Judges 4:1-10 – Was Deborah an unlikely leader for God’s people in her day? Why do you think that God chose her? Note that she work together with Barak. Are there ways that your congregation could work with an unlikely leader to bring glory to God and to God’s church today?
11. Exodus 3:1-12 – Note that God says that he will go with Moses. What helps you to know that God is/will be with you as you fulfill the call of God to find a new pastor? What kind of challenges can you place before the candidates with whom you talk about being your new pastor?
12. Matthew 5:1-16 – Which of these attributes do you think it will be important for your next pastor to have? Which of them will be the most important?

13. Psalm 100 – How important is it for you and your PNC to worship God as you go through this journey? How important is it that your next pastor be a person of joy and thanksgiving? What should you look for in that person’s worship leadership that speaks of joyful celebration. What in his or her life should you look for to see if s/he can “serve the Lord with gladness”?
14. Luke 15:3-7 – What qualities should you look for that tells you that a pastor cares about single individuals? What should the next pastor’s attitude toward sinners be?
15. Psalm 23 – Do you feel the presence of the Lord with you? Where do you feel God’s presence most: In prayer? In Bible study? In your work as a PNC? In worship? What quality of “righteousness” should you look for in a new pastor? In what way do you want the new pastor to be a shepherd?
16. Philippians 4:8-9 – Have you treated the people with whom you have dealt with grace? With justice? Have you spent time thinking about excellence in your church and have you given praise for the Presbyterian Church and its process?
17. Mark 1:1-8 – In what ways do you want your next pastor to be like John the baptizer? In what ways do you NOT want your next pastor to be like John?
18. I Timothy 3:1-7 – Remember that these were the characteristics of a church leader in the first century C.E. Which of these still apply to pastors today? Which of them do not apply?
19. Psalm 13 – The Psalmist is obviously discouraged as the Psalm begins. Do you feel discouraged in this task? What did the Psalmist do to work through his discouragement? Is it O.K. to complain to God? Note the element of faith with which the Psalm ends.
20. II Timothy 1:3-7 – When you think of the pastors (or candidates) with whom you have spoken or whose PIFs you have read, what should you be praying for them about? Have you prayed for each person whose PIF you have read? How would that change her or his life? How would it change yours?
21. John 1:29-34 – What are the ways that you would like your new pastor to witness to Jesus Christ? What are ways that you and s/he together can allow Jesus Christ to be the Head of the Church (Book of Order G-1 0100)?
22. Isaiah 40:1-5 – In what ways do you want your next pastor to bring comfort to you; to the congregation? What are some ways that YOU can bring comfort to the congregation; to the next pastor?
23. Philippians 4:4-7 – In what ways have the prayers which you have prayed during this journey brought you closer to God? What are some things that you can do to help your next pastor have time to rejoice and to spend time with God in prayer?
24. Hosea 11:1-9 – The Prophet speaks of the amazing love of God that will not turn against God’s people. In what ways have you seen this love in the process of seeking a pastor? How can you show that love to others, including your next pastor?
25. I Corinthians 13:1-14:1a – What are the ways that the PNC can show love toward our new pastor? What are the ways that we would like the congregation as a whole to show that love? How can we communicate that to the congregation?
26. Psalm 133 – Is there within our congregation a spirit of love and unity? If not, what can we do to promote it? If so, what can we do to continue it?