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June 2009

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas



IGPonderings by Interim General Presbyter Rev. Dr. Sallie M. Watson

Dear friends,

Last month, several of us had the pleasure of meeting up in Atlanta for the Festival of Homiletics. There were many high points: Desmond Tutu reminding us to "become what we already are - vessels of God's Holy Spirit." Barbara Brown Taylor comparing the shelf life of a sermon to "homemade mayonnaise." Tom Long talking about what the gospel of Luke has to say to us about money (which is a lot). It was quite a week for all of us.



What caused me most to think of you, however, was the lecture by Diana Butler Bass. Looking at our postmodern culture through the eyes of history, Bass said that "what it means to be religious" is shifting all over the planet, especially in Christianity. Note the use of the word "shift," however - not decline, but a change. She says that the whole of Christianity is undergoing a shift the likes of which we have not seen since the 4th century.

There are plenty of others, some even within our own denomination, who would rather buy into the story that our denomination is in decline, that the Bible is out of date, that anyone who would believe the story we profess to believe must have a one-way ticket on the Titanic. And at times we are tempted to agree. Bass said that "we've allowed somebody else's story about us to seep into us so deeply that it has made our souls sick."

Recognizing our current time as the "shift" that it is, rather than buying into the sad story of the demise of the Presbyterian church, is empowering. And it's more than just wordsmithing. It's based in history. Going through the roll of some of the greatest theologians of the 20th century - with names like Schweitzer, Fosdick and Bonhoeffer - she argued that we've been "emerging" for a century and have ignored it because we have been listening to the wrong storyline.

Which brings me to my question for you: how would you write your own history of faith? What names would you include, from great theologians and global figures to grandparents and Sunday school teachers? Bass said that our tradition invites people in "like a sandbox - you can sit in it and play with it." In these slower days of summer, I commend the sandbox of our faith to you. Notice who you include, who you choose to leave out, and how you describe it. I predict you'll have more than enough sand with which to construct your particular story.

As many of you know, this month we celebrate the 500th birthday of John Calvin, the most influential shaper of what we know today as the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition. Times certainly have changed in those 500 years. I suspect Calvin would be puzzled at the use of PowerPoint in worship, but at the Lord's Table he would be right at home. Whether or not you include Calvin in your history, we can be grateful to him for helping us to reflect on it.

It's not a decline - it's a shift. It's hard to tell where things are going when we are in mid-shift. But the good news of the Gospel is that we know Who was there at the beginning of it, and Who awaits us at the end. With God's help, we'll come through just fine.

Blessings to you,
[Sallie](#)

First Presbyterian, Searcy Hosts 111th Stated Presbytery Meeting

(Commissioners may use this page as their report to Session.)

The Presbytery of Arkansas convened Saturday, June 6 in the sanctuary of First, Searcy after a training session for teams who will review Session records in geographic clusters. Moderator Claire Rhodes called the meeting to order. Leading morning worship were Associate General Presbyter Joan Erickson, Heather Kilpatrick, Revs. Frank LeBlanc, Robert Lowry, Leslie Roper and Camille

LeBron Powell who preached and the choir and musician Jim Bennett of First, Searcy. The worship offering for the mission to Lacandon Presbytery in Mexico was \$1,133. A total of 156 commissioners and guests attended the business and worship sessions and shared lunch in geographic cluster groupings. Commissioners donated toiletries for needy families to Good Samaritan of White County as this meeting's Ingathering.

The Presbytery voted to: approve the status of the honorably retired ministers in the presbytery for 2009; receive the report of Synod's approval of presbytery's 2008 minutes; permit sale of property by First, Gurdon; waive a requirement and allow elders at First, Gurdon to serve in excess of six years; elect Jenny Stiles to the Northwest Arkansas New Church Development Administrative Commission, Liz Hardin to Committee on Care and Nurture of Church Professionals, Carolyn Green to Committee on Ministry, Liz Branch to Committee on Disaster Preparedness & Response, Rev. Randi Henderson to Committee on Congregational Care & Development, Roger Shields to Permanent Judicial Commission, and Rev. Cathy Ulrich as Stated Clerk; allow the recording of baptisms and confirmations within Comunidad Presbiteriana Hispana by Clerk of Session of First, Springdale; increase the presbytery's spend rate from 5.0% to 6.5% for the year if needed; approve the Contract Covenant Agreement with Laurence Schmidt Counseling Center for July 1 - June 30; change the presbytery's Standing Rules to gather in one reference the elders who have voice and vote at presbytery meetings by virtue of particular service and election; sustain the exam of candidate Evelyn Coleman for ordination and approve her terms of call as Associate Director in the Center for Youth and Young Adult Ministry at Montreat Conference Center (North Carolina); move Inquirer Susie Wiggins to candidacy; dismiss Revs. Tracy Evans to Indian Nations Presbytery, Rev. Nancy Covington to Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery and Evelyn Coleman (after ordination on June 7) to Western North Carolina Presbytery; approve Rev. Jerry Rice as pastor emeritus at First, Rogers; extend commission of Ted Mealor as commissioned lay pastor at First, Marianna; install Rev. David Schaller as designated pastor at Faith, Horseshoe Bend on June 21 and approve his terms of call; enroll Rev. Dan Festa as a minister member, approve his terms of call and installation on July 12 as pastor at Central, Pine Bluff; approve 2009 Clergy Salaries; approve the policy on "How to Relate to a Former Pastor;" welcome and enroll honorably retired ministers Guy Delaney, Sally Johnson, Carlos Lopez, and Art Bell; dismiss Rev. Roger Patton to Nashville Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church; approve a process under which elders may be trained to administer the Lord's Supper in specific circumstances after instruction; approve two elders from First, Little Rock and four elders from First, Harrison under the aforementioned policy.

The Presbytery heard or read reports of: activities within the presbytery from Interim General Presbyter Rev. Dr. Sallie Watson; the progress of the General Presbyter Search Committee; the work and events of Presbyterian Women; Committee on Representation's comparison of statistics on the membership of the congregations of the presbytery with statistics on those in elected positions and the committee's resulting observations; the auditor's annual financial review for 2008; the previous year of ministry locally and globally by the Committee on Mission through a PowerPoint presentation; Committee on Ministry's actions to renew Rev. Barry Williams' contract at First United, Fayetteville, "First Responder Ministry," their approval of the contract of Rev. Nancy Benson-Nicol at University of the Ozarks, Rev. Guy Delaney's terms as interim at First, Jonesboro, Rev. Jim Freeman's service as interim pastor at First, Pine Bluff, Rev. Mike Seitz's terms as interim at First, Hot Springs, and request for comments on the proposed "Validated Ministry Program"; and Spring River, Hardy making the Commitment to Peacemaking.

Pictured below from left to right: (top row) Rev. Guy Delaney, Rev. Art Bell, Rev. Sally Johnson, Rev. Carlos Lopez, all honorably retired (bottom row) new Candidate Susie Wiggins, Rev. Dan Festa, and Candidate Evelyn Coleman



Update on the Search Process for Our Next General Presbyter

by Rev. Steve Hancock, General Presbyter Search Committee Moderator

I am writing to give an update on the search process for the next General Presbyter of the Presbytery of Arkansas. In addition to myself, members of the search committee are Ms. Susan Anderson, the Rev. Nancy Benson-Nicol, the Rev. Jim Fleming, the Rev. Alan Ford, Ms. Karene Jones, Ms. Heather Kilpatrick, Mr. Toney McMillan, and Ms. Elizabeth Hauptert. The Rev. Judy Fletcher is our staff resource person from the Synod of the Sun.

After advertising the position widely, we received and reviewed 39 Personal Information Forms. Several of these looked quite good and were identified as "continuing candidates." These "continuing candidates" received supplemental questions. The deadline for submitting answers to those questions is June 3. In the meantime, we are checking references of these candidates. Our search committee will meet on June 8 to review the responses to the supplemental questions and conversations with references. At this meeting we hope to select two to three "finalists" for the position. Personal interviews with those finalists will take place in Little Rock in early August. The finalists will also meet with representatives of the Committee on Ministry.

Following those interviews, the search committee hopes to identify the candidate to whom we would like to offer the position. If the way be clear, we hope to present the candidate to the presbytery at the October 8-9 presbytery meeting.

This is our projected time-line, but we are aware it may not be God's time-line. We will continue to pray for and be open to the guidance of God's Holy Spirit as we go forward with this process, and we appreciate your prayers as well.

A Polity Point

by Rev. Cathy Ulrich, Stated Clerk

Dismiss & Dissolve

One of the ways we understand our covenant theology is the manner in which we establish relationships between pastors and the congregations they serve. Unlike some traditions, pastors are not "hired" nor can they be "fired," though we sometimes use that language.

Through a detailed process pastors are elected by the congregation and the presbytery. When the pastoral relationship ends we use an unusual and what can be understood as distressing term: "the relationship is dissolved."

Both the congregation and the presbytery take action on the dissolution of a pastoral relationship. This language might sound odd to those of us who have not been involved with such a request. However, it gives a sense of transition for the pastor and the community of faith. Rather than using the language of "starting" and "ending," our polity understands ministry as being "elected" to a particular congregation and "dissolved" when a new call is discerned.

The presbytery has an additional relationship with Ministers of Word & Sacrament. Each PC(USA) minister is a member of a Presbytery. If that minister is the pastor of a church and is called to a congregation outside of the Presbytery of Arkansas, we must act to "dismiss" that pastor. Or if that minister is not serving a church, and would like to move to another location and transfer membership, it takes the action of the Presbytery to "dismiss" the member.

Because the Presbytery is kept informed of the process of these transitions, it is able to provide support for the churches and the minister members of our Presbytery.

Blessings and peace, [Cathy](#)

Together in God's Grace

by Associate General Presbyter Joan Erickson

We were a group of disciples huddled in a room, anxious about what was going to happen next. Already things had not gone as expected. This group knew that Jesus had lived and died and had ascended to heaven, but what next? How does the message of God's grace get out in a world when communication takes place in so many languages? Suddenly there was a glow and the possibility to communicate in a different language opened up before the group. This group was filled with the Spirit and headed out of the room ready to build up the body of Christ.



You might imagine that these were the apostles huddled in fear who then received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost and were inspired to go out and speak the good news and be understood in many languages. But no - this was just last month and the group consisted of ministers and elders at the Cluster III (northeast Arkansas) gathering who were huddled around a computer to participate in their first **Webinar** which was sponsored by the Church Growth folks at General Assembly. Not everything went as expected. The first log-in attempt was not successful. The sound on the computer never did come on so a cell phone was used to call in to get the audio to go with the presentation on the computer screen. Then the presentation started and it was wonderful.

It is risky to answer the challenge to do something new like participate in a **Webinar**. But we did it together, and we were inspired to encourage our churches and to build up the body of Christ.

There are three more webinars planned throughout the summer on topics related to church transformation. You can go to the presbygrow.net web site to sign up [Webinar registration](#).

Joan

Practical Evangelism Comes to Little Rock

The Magnetic Church Conference is non-confrontational, practical evangelism to help churches attract and retain new members. Noted evangelist Andrew Weeks will be presenting this event on Friday and Saturday, September 11 & 12 in Little Rock, at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. In Sept. 2003, Andy attracted 144 participants to an event sponsored by the Mission Committee of the Presbytery of Arkansas, so if interested, don't wait; Andy's events tend to be sellouts! The Episcopalians and Andy are actively inviting Presbyterian participation! To learn more about his ministry, Andy invites logging onto <http://www.magnetic-church.com>. Especially check out his PCUSA bio and references as he has already been engaged by 91 PCUSA presbyteries and congregations! And, to download an Adobe version of the registration form, click [here](#).

PEOPLE AND CHURCH NEWS

NEWS OF OUR PEOPLE

- Congratulations to **Mary and Ismail Ibis** on the birth of their son, Eren James on April 10. Mary is associate director of music at Second Presbyterian, Little Rock.
- **Megan Jones** has resigned as director of child and family ministry at First, Fort Smith.
- **Abby Cain**, youth director at Trinity Presbyterian, Little Rock, and Assistant Director at Ferncliff, graduated May 16 from UAMS from her Dietetic Internship. She is now eligible to sit for her board exams.
- **Rev. Clare Kelley** will be recuperating from foot surgery performed on June 10. She is pastor of the Northwest Arkansas larger parish of First, Eureka Springs and Holiday Island Presbyterian.
- **Margaret Dorland** is the new Administrative Assistant at Westover Hills Presbyterian, Little Rock.
- **Wambugu Gachungi**, an inquirer in ministry who is a student at Phillips Seminary, is preaching at his home church, First, Clarksville, one Sunday in June.
- **Mary Beth Lysobey**, elder at Barr Memorial Presbyterian, Norman, has retired after 40 years of teaching in public schools. She is 2009-10 moderator of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Arkansas.

NEWS OF OUR CONGREGATIONS & MINISTRIES

- **Pulaski Heights Presbyterian, Little Rock** hosted "bring a friend to church" Sunday followed by a fish fry on May 31.
- **Kirk of the Hills, Fairfield Bay** is completing their new Fellowship Hall with construction help from the Men's Club.
- **First, Bentonville** will gather their younger children for day camp on Fridays and their older children for "service squad" several mornings this summer.
- **First, Van Buren** will have Vacation Bible School for ages 3 to 12 on the evenings of July 13-17 on the theme "Prayer Power".
- **Arkansas State University Campus Ministry** has hired Ismail Kunda as their campus minister this fall through a grant from the presbytery. A religious refugee, Kunda attends Memphis Theological Seminary and pastors a congregation of Episcopalian and Presbyterian refugees from Sudan.
- **First, Batesville** celebrated the graduation of high school and college seniors at their annual church family picnic on May 17.
- **Wynne Presbyterian** youth group raised and donated money from a soup supper to the Presbyterian Disaster Relief Fund.
- **Spring River Presbyterian, Hardy** is sending boxes of gift items to personnel in military service.
- **First, Lonoke** announced in their quarterly newsletter a trip to a Travelers baseball game in April, a rummage sale in May and a fish fry on June 9.
- **First, Siloam Springs** offers Christian Education classes every Sunday morning and adult Bible study every Sunday night.
- **Central Presbyterian, Russellville** Service Committee is working on a database for tracking the needs in the community and patrolling any abuse from overlapping requests for help.
- **First United, Fayetteville** is bringing 20 children to summer camp at Ferncliff.

- **First, Clarksville** will sponsor a float in the county's Peach Festival parade on June 20 and will distribute Vacation Bible School information along the route.
- **First, McGehee** has employed Rev. Troy Pritt, a minister in the Associate Reformed Church, as their temporary supply minister.

NEWS OF OUR RETIRED PERSONS

- **Rev. Bill Henning** of Marshall and **Rev. Guy Delaney**, interim pastor at First, Jonesboro, were honored April 17 as past presidents of Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly, Hunt, Texas on the 60th anniversary of the camp and conference center.

Ideas of the Month

First, Harrison is recycling aluminum, glass, plastic, tin, steel and paper items used at the church.

First, Jonesboro is offering training sessions and a rehearsal to better prepare Lay Readers to lead Sunday morning worship.

New Class Appointed to Lyon's Board of Church Advocates

Lyon College President Walter Roettger has appointed a new class to the college's Board of Church Advocates.

The Board of Church Advocates is an advisory board to the president of Lyon College, with the responsibility for nurturing the relationship between Lyon College and institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including the Synod of the Sun. First, the board is to advise the president on issues that are relevant to the College's mission in church-related higher education and its relationship with institutions of the Church. Secondly, the board is to interpret and articulate the mission and current priorities of the College to the presbyteries and churches of the Synod, and to serve as ambassadors for the college.

New members of the class of 2012 include: Rev. Bill Branch, honorably retired, Second Presbyterian, Little Rock, and wife Liz Branch, Westover Hills Presbyterian, Little Rock; Taylor and Amanda Latimar, Allison Memorial Presbyterian, Little Rock; Don and Jo Neal, First, Pine Bluff; Adam Rule, Second Presbyterian, Little Rock; Don and Mary Vollman of First, Jonesboro; and Mary Mosley, Ann Westmoreland Runsick and Katherine Whittenton of First, Batesville.

Twenty Congregations Represented in Lay Class

Dr. Paul Bube, professor of religion and philosophy at Lyon College, Batesville, (right) led the class of 31 students through an overview of the Old Testament on May 15-17.

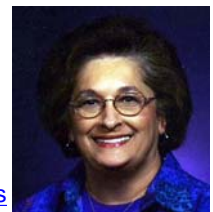


A portion of Presbytery's lay academy attended the second of 10 week-end modules at Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village. The 2-1/2 year commitment of study and writing in a variety of areas, which began in February, will prepare these elders and lay pupils for possible commissioning to serve in a PC(USA) congregation. Extensive assignments are carried out between classes, and a strict attendance guideline is enforced. This program is funded, planned and led by a subcommittee of Christian Education and Nurture.

Financial Corner: The Presbytery Budget

May Revenue	\$50,449.19	Year-to-Date Actual as of May 31	
May Expenses	<u>\$95,071.34</u>	Revenue	\$261,644.25
May Deficit	\$44,622.15-	Expenses	\$387,764.69
		Deficit	\$126,120.44-

[Pauline Rhodes](#)



The Committee on Administration is urging each church to pay its pledge as scheduled as the presbytery office is operating with a

deficit. For those churches who are current with their pledge, a big "Thank you." For the churches who are behind with their pledge, please try to pay at your earliest convenience. We are currently handling our deficit through carryover benevolence giving from late in 2008, but without your support we will most likely have to handle our expenses through our spend rate investments. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Tom Verdery, Moderator, Committee on Administration

IGP ITINERARY

IGP Sallie Watson will be in the following settings between now and the next Banner publication:

June 9 - Solar Under the Sun, Ferncliff
 June 14 - Installation of MWS Randi Henderson as pastor, Mt. Comfort Presbyterian, Fayetteville
 June 21 - Preach at Presbyterian Church of Bull Shoals
 June 21 - Installation of MWS David Schaller as designated pastor, Faith Presbyterian, Horseshoe Bend
 June 23 - Committee on Nominations, Presbytery Office
 June 27 - Perform marriage ceremony in Bonham, Texas
 June 30 - Personnel Committee, Presbytery Office
 July 7 - Committee on Ministry, First, Conway
 July 12 - Worship with Westminster Presbyterian, Hot Springs
 July 12 - Installation of MWS Dan Festa as pastor, Central Presbyterian, Pine Bluff
 July 13-26 - Vacation

Alban Webinars: Congregations and the Economic Crisis Conversation, Perspective, Guidance

The Alban Institute and the Lake Institute on Faith & Giving are co-sponsoring a collaborative effort to learn more about how this economic crisis is being experienced by congregations and how they are responding to it. These webinars (seminars on the web) are one way they are trying to share what they have learned.

Staff Anxieties in a Changing Economy Thursday, June 11 at 2:00 p.m.

Presenters: Susan Beaumont, Senior Consultant, The Alban Institute, and Richard Bruesehoff, Director for Lifelong Learning, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Individual cost: \$49.95 [Register Now](#)

Moving from Financial Survival to Missional Focus Wednesday, June 17 at 2:00 p.m.

Presenters: Diana Butler Bass, Author of Christianity for the Rest of Us and A People's History of Christianity, and Graham Standish, pastor of Calvin Presbyterian Church, Zelienople, Pennsylvania, and author of Becoming a Blessed Church Individual cost: \$49.95 [Register Now](#)

Being Ready for a Rebound Thursday, June 25 at 2:00 p.m.

Presenters: Larry Peers, Senior Consultant, The Alban Institute, and Bruce Reyes-Chow, Moderator of the 218th General Assembly, PCUSA Individual cost: \$49.95 [Register Now](#)

Synod Offers Weekly News

The Synod of the Sun, which covers 11 presbyteries including Arkansas, invites all PC(USA) members to sign up for a simple weekly news digest delivered via e-mail. To sign up:

- Go to PNNews.org
- Click on the Synod's name or map
- Click the "Learn more/Join" link at the top left.
- Enter your e-mail address and your preferences
- Click "Subscribe"

The Synod will not give, sell or rent your e-mail address to anyone. Each week subscribers receive headlines and calendar items while being able to "click" on what interests the reader. If you create a profile name, you may comment on news and mission articles. A test to foil "spammers" involves filling in the answer to a question in the box during registration. Receiving PNNews helps build a better mission and news network.

MAKING HISTORY TODAY: CALVIN'S QUINCENTENNIAL BIRTHDAY

by [James S. Currie, Ph.D.](#), Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest

Most people have heard by now that 2009 marks the 500th anniversary of John Calvin's birthday. This anniversary will be observed in a variety of ways, and many are taking advantage of the occasion to learn more about the man, why he was important, how he has shaped our lives and our beliefs.



As is true with many great persons, much of what we think we know about a person is more of a reflection of his or her followers and interpreters than it is about the person himself or herself. The difference is between Calvin and Calvinism. [read more here](#)

University of the Ozarks Students Receive Scholarship

Rev. Cathy Ulrich, Stated Clerk, represented the Presbytery on Awards Day, April 28, on the campus of the University of the Ozarks, Clarksville. Ethan Harbour (pictured), a freshman from Booneville, Arkansas, and Fallen Shaw, a junior from Perkins, Oklahoma, received the third annual Presbytery of Arkansas Scholarship. Contributions to the Presbytery scholarship can be made to the University of the Ozarks. There is also a Presbytery scholarship at the other denomination-related college in Arkansas, Lyon College in Batesville.



General Assembly Vice Moderator Predicts Change



Jordan Akin, Rev. Frank LeBlanc (First, Morrilton), Rev. Karen Akin (Second, Little Rock), Rev. Byron Wade and Rev. Marion Humphrey (Allison Memorial, Little Rock) enjoy fellowship at a reception given in Dr. Wade's honor. Jordan is the only person from this presbytery currently serving on a General Assembly entity - the Youth Ministries Task Force.

General Assembly Vice Moderator Rev. Byron Wade told church members at a reception on May 31 in Little Rock that across the denomination he hears concerns for growth and mission. Wade suggested congregations and leaders adopt an openness to doing church in new ways and reaching out to retirees as well as young adults and families with children to encourage all in relating to Jesus Christ. Wade visited five presbyteries in the Synod of the Sun in seven days.

Greenwood Church Placed on National Register of Historic Places

A celebration of the placement of Good Shepherd Presbyterian, Greenwood (in western Arkansas) on the National Register took place on Saturday, May 30. Pictured are Senator and Elder Ed Wilkinson, John Paul Wells (who presented a citation from the Governor), Rev. Orin Frank, Rev. Cathy Ulrich, Session Moderator Rev. Tom Ulrich, Greenwood Mayor Ken Edwards and Representative Steve Breedlove. Good Shepherd was established in 1853.





Clergy Support Groups Starting in August

The Laurence Schmidt Counseling Center will soon be offering confidential support groups for clergy and other church professionals in central and west Arkansas.

In Little Rock a "clergy only" support group will meet on Fridays from 2-4 p.m. on August 14, September 11, October 16, November 20 and December 18. The church professionals support group (clergy and others) will meet on Mondays from 6-8 p.m. on August 10, September 14, October 12, November 16 and December 14. The "clergy only" support group in Fort Smith will meet on Mondays from 10-Noon at either Central Presbyterian or St. Scholastica Monastery on Mondays, August 17, September 21, October 19, November 23 and December 21. The cost per session to those covered by the presbytery's covenant with the Center is \$15.

Sign up by contacting Center director Rev. Rebecca Spooner at 501.664.7777 or e-mail rebeccaspooner@veralloyd.org

Cluster Elections Approach

Between now and August 1, Cluster I (northwest AR), Cluster II (north central AR) and Cluster III (northeast AR) will be holding elections to choose representatives to serve in 2010 through 2012 on Committee on Clusters and on General Council. Cluster I and III will be seeking a minister or Certified Christian Educator for General Council and an elder for Committee on Clusters. Cluster II will seek an elder for General Council and a minister or Certified Christian Educator for Clusters. Cluster IX (Pulaski County) is still seeking a minister, educator or elder to serve on Committee on Clusters through 2011.

2010 Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study

"Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water." John 7:38

\$9.00 each through the Presbytery Office (includes mailing cost to congregation). Payment must accompany order and the ordering deadline is Friday, August 14, 2009.

Mail your check made out to "Presbytery of Arkansas" with the number of books you want to:
Presbytery of Arkansas
9221 N. Rodney Parham Road
Little Rock, AR 72227

Yearbook features 16-page color insert of Presbyterian Women mission work and will be available in November.

Planning Calendars

Four Presbyterian Planning Calendars for June, 2009 - May, 2010 are available in the Presbytery Office for \$9.00 each. Contact niann@presbyteryofarkansas.org.

RESOURCE CENTER NEWS

9221 North Rodney Parham Road
Little Rock, AR 72227-6201
Phone 501.663.2424, ext. 104
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

NiAnn Thompson, Director



RAVE REVIEW

Ruby Faught, First, Jonesboro reports that in doing a Bible study on the gospel of John, "we found it slow and ponderous...When I began supplementing the chapters of the book with the corresponding sections of the DVD ("**The Gospel of John**" Acc. #8574) the whole study perked up."

SUMMER IS NEAR. HOW ABOUT A CHANGE OF PACE?

These warmer days invite a lighter fare in our reading, viewing and growing in faith. Check out the following to keep cool!

"**Ten Questions Every Pastor Fears**" (Acc. #BK9170) is a top ten, full of hints, chuckles and struggles, such as "is my Jewish neighbor going to heaven?" and "who did you vote for?" and "why did God let my kitten Fluffy die?" Yes, answers are included.

"**Sisters: Finding Balance-Loving God with Heart and Soul, Mind and Strength**" (Acc. #DVD9134) helps you consider the question of balance in a woman's life by examining narratives of New Testament women Mary and Martha, Lydia, Mary mother of Jesus, Canaanite woman and Mary Magdalene. Six-session set includes video, DVD, leader's guide and books.

"**Simply Enough**" (Acc. #DVD9149) is a six-session reflection on voluntary simplicity lived out in justice, money, "stuff," celebrations, food and lifestyle.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JOHN CALVIN!

If your congregation is saluting the Father of Presbyterianism this month on his 500th, here are three useful resources for you.

"**Cal and Marty's Scripture Memory Game**" (Acc. #CD8793) computer software for ages 8 to adult featuring John Calvin and Father of the Reformation Martin Luther.

"**John Calvin: A Biography**" (Acc. #BK9172) which has been used lately by a group at Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village is an extensive, deep study.

"**Calvin for Armchair Theologians**" (Acc. #BK7808) is a lighter read, complete with illustrations.

Springdale Church Tackles Sex Education

By Susan Rose, Director of Christian Life, First, Springdale

The request for a sex education curriculum originally came from a brain-storming session with our Youth & Children Committee. Collectively, many parents felt that "something needed to be done," but didn't know how to approach it. Two key components emerged in researching sex ed curriculums for our youth. The first was straight forward knowledge: anatomical, biological, and sexual reproduction information. The second component was taking that information and presenting it from the church's point of view. Gathering information for the "knowledge" portion, while at times uncomfortable, was at least the easy part. Presenting information on behalf of the "Christian" point of view or from the "church's" viewpoint gets much more complicated. [Read more.](#)

Young Adults "Grow" into Youth Ministry



Maruka Reecer and Cameron Highsmith (back row) and Abby Cain and Meghan Hawkes (front row) met as teenagers at Presbytery-sponsored YouthQuakes or as summer camp counselors at Ferncliff. Now post-college, each is directing youth activities in a church in central AR (Reecer at First, Benton; Highsmith at Grace, Little Rock; Cain at Trinity, Little Rock; Hawkes at First, Malvern). All were nurtured by their home churches (First, Benton; First, Batesville; Westminster, Hot Springs; and First, Arkadelphia) as well as by activities, trips and service planned and led by the Youth Council Subcommittee of the Christian Education and Nurture Committee of the presbytery.

Ferncliff Offers Opportunity for Military Families

by Rev. David Gill

Our hearts and prayers go out to the families of the military recruiters and soldiers who were killed and injured in an apparent act of deranged religious violence that unfolded just a short distance from the Presbytery office on June 1.

As you put this in your pastoral prayers, we want to remind you that the Presbytery is supporting an act of appreciation to all our

military families this summer with a Military Family 4th of July Appreciation Weekend at Ferncliff (July 3-5). Families just pay \$50 and the rest of the weekend has been generously covered by appreciative Presbyterians.

Thus far 12 families have signed up and Ferncliff can take at least another 8. If you know of families connected to any branch of the military (Presbyterian connection not necessary), direct them to Ferncliff's website (www.ferncliff.org) where they can learn more and register. It will be a fun-filled, R&R weekend for military families.

Youth Pitch In at Ferncliff

Teenagers and their leaders from three central Arkansas churches spent May 16 working at Ferncliff Camp to get ready for the summer camping season which began on May 22 and extends through July. Grace Presbyterian, Little Rock; First, Benton; and First, Malvern youth did projects around camp. Some summer camp sessions still have openings; check out the possibilities for your children and youth at www.ferncliff.org



3rd Annual Presbytery-Wide Mission Trip to the Gulf Coast September 20-26, 2009

When: Leave on Sunday, September 20 and return Saturday, September 26

Where: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Volunteer Village at Port Neches, Texas near Beaumont (new location)

Cost: \$120 per person for room and board payable to "Westminster Presbyterian Church"

Deadline for church to receive registration and payment: Tuesday, September 1

Organizational Meeting: Sunday, August 30 at 3:00 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian, 3819 Central Avenue, Hot Springs, 71913

Supporters who cannot participate may choose to donate to the Gulf Coast mission trip (make checks payable to "Presbytery of Arkansas" and mail to 9221 N. Rodney Parham Rd., Little Rock, 72227) and/or donate gift cards from Lowe's for building supplies or share this information with others and pray for the missionaries and those needing help.



For more information: Contact Susie Wright (501.525.1367 or 501.620.3335) for details.

First United, Fayetteville Encourages Churches to Join PDA Work

One of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) post-hurricane rebuilding sites in Pearlinton, Mississippi is being closed at the end of October. There are currently 49 requests for help yet to be fulfilled with a few work groups scheduled to accomplish only one fourth of that work. First United Presbyterian, Fayetteville urges churches throughout the presbytery to considering sending a work group there so that the work can be completed. Call Penny Noel at the PDA Call Center to schedule a work trip (866-732-6121). [Read more.](#)

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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. As such our mission is to ***Inspire, challenge and help our congregations, agencies, ministers and leaders to fulfill their call to service as faithful followers of Jesus Christ.***

We are composed of over 15,000 Presbyterians gathered in 90 congregations, 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>

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