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March 2011

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas



In Touch by General Presbyter Rev. Dr. William F. Galbraith

"Hank Died Last Monday..."

Weekdays, Henry would come through the church house door with a whistle or some ditty he'd learned at an earlier age. Occasionally, it would be a takeoff on some familiar hymn, like, "Love Lifted Me." The lyrics, after Henry had taken his compositional license, were often a tad ribald. There was nothing schmaltzy about Henry, especially when it came to theology, or to hymnody, for that matter. That church, Fairfax Presbyterian, outside the Washington D.C. beltway, had been molded for over twenty-nine years, at the time, by Henry's devotion to loving God with the mind as well as the heart, but the mind always had the upper hand. It was a place of rigorous faith and freeing grace.



Henry read everything and one time gently scolded me for slipping up in having Karl Barth hail from Germany instead of Switzerland. Of the things Henry and I had in common, one was that we were both preachers' kids. Yet, Henry was only two years younger than my dad. Henry was the pastor I never had.

I looked up to Henry. His precision of thought was uncanny. Some thought that if Henry hadn't become a pastor, he would have been well suited for the CIA. He never forgot a name, nor where one went to school, nor where "the kids were." His joyful humor brought even the testiest situations with the most anxious members into manageability. Early in his ministry, Henry was given a fifth of Jack Daniels whiskey by an appreciative parishioner. He put it away on a closet shelf and forgot it. When the office was broken into one night, the police report in the next morning's paper reported assorted missing items including, "a fifth of whiskey from the pastor's office."

After seminary, Henry studied at the University of Chicago and later taught at Hanover as well as Davidson College. He was at the forefront of the civil rights movement and marched at Selma. He opposed the Vietnam War in a congregation filled with military officers and government employees. They were among Henry's staunchest supporters because Henry's thoughtful preaching never sought so much to indict as to point to that realm of God's intention where spears are fashioned into pruning hooks and war will be studied no more.

When Pat, Henry's wife of 62 years, wrote early this week to say, "Hank died last Monday," I was taken aback. Our years together, as pastor and associate pastor, were back in the early 1980's but they seem like last week. Important relationships have a way of compressing time like that. We are distinctly blessed when we have them, when we remember so much for which we are grateful and through which we have become better people.

Today, I give thanks for Henry Baumann, mentor and friend, colleague in ministry, a "sheep of God's fold, a lamb of God's flock, a sinner of God's redeeming."

In faith,
[Bill](#)

General Presbyter's Out of Office Meetings and Visits

March

- 08 Austin Seminary Partner Lunch, Little Rock
- 11 COM Exam Training, Central Presbyterian, Russellville
- 12 Mission Committee, First Presbyterian, Conway
- 13 Ordination/Installation Service, Joy Carrington, Hopewell Presbyterian, Morrilton
- 15 Session Meeting, Mt. Comfort Presbyterian, Fayetteville
- 17 Solar Under the Sun School, Ferncliff
- 18 Solar Under the Sun School, Ferncliff
- 19 Solar Under the Sun School, Ferncliff
- 20 Solar Under the Sun School, Ferncliff
- 29 Executive Presbyter Forum, Irving, Texas
- 30 Executive Presbyter Forum, Irving Texas
Synod Convocation, Irving, Texas
- 31 Synod Convocation, Irving, Texas

A Polity Point by Rev. Cathy Ulrich, Stated Clerk

Session is responsible to Presbytery

"Christ gives to his Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its officers and ordinances." (G-1.0100b)

We understand that our form of government, and the officers who vow to follow it, are Christ's gift to the church.

Even though we are experiencing tremendous change at this time in the mission of the church, we continue to be stronger when we keep in mind how we are accountable to one another in Christ.

The session of a particular church does need to keep the congregation informed of its decisions (G-10.0102i). The session has oversight of and leadership for the particular church. However, it is the presbytery which annually reviews the session records, coordinates the work of the member churches, provides guidance and resources to churches, visits sessions and ministers on a regular basis. (G-11.0103b,e,f,g,x)

The work of the Presbytery is a shared responsibility. There is no Presbyterian "bishop" to make decisions. The governing body is a collective bishop [Kirkpatrick & Hopper, Louisville: Geneva Press, 1997, *What Unites Presbyterians* p. 139]. If you would like to see the collective bishop at work, there is a Presbytery meeting near you, come take a look. Ask your session or your pastor, or your educator to recommend you to a committee or task force. There are lots of jobs that need willing hearts and hands to carry on Christ's work.

We are all in this together.
Thanks be to God.
Blessings & peace,
[Cathy](#)



117th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas
Saturday, June 4 - Trinity Presbyterian, Little Rock
 by [NiAnn Thompson](#), Assistant Stated Clerk

8:15 a.m. Registration opens
8:45 a.m. Annual training of Cluster Records Review Teams
9:30 a.m. Gavel
9:45 a.m. Worship, including renewal of baptismal vows
10:30 a.m. Order of the Day on proposed new Form of Government by Rev. Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the PC(USA), debate and vote.
Highlights: Recognition of Pauline Rhodes as she retires from Presbytery staff, welcome of new ministers, annual report of Committee on Mission, and fellowship at lunch by cluster groupings.
The meeting packet will be posted on the Presbytery web site by May 16th.

Education for Elders Opportunity

Rev. Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, will conduct "Education for Elders" at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 4, concurrent with the Presbytery meeting at Trinity Presbyterian, Little Rock.

Officers, active and inactive, who are **not** commissioners to the Presbytery meeting will have the benefit of Gradye's vast experience with Presbyterian polity and officer training.

This will be a "continuing education" opportunity for elders who are currently serving on session or have served in the past. It will be a time to learn more about the vocation of serving as an officer of the church, what that looks like and how we are uniquely equipped to do it.

Please notify the Presbytery office by email (info@presbyteryofarkansas.org) or phone (501.663.2424) of your plans to participate.

Mission Corner

by [Rev. Dr. William Branch](#), World Mission Advocate, Presbytery of Arkansas

In her recent book, [Better Together: the Future of Presbyterian Mission](#), Sherron George says, "Our primary mission field today is not distant lands but our own backyard, our own neighborhood, our own city, our own county. It is hypocritical to participate in worldwide mission and not share the gospel with the invisible groups of people in our own communities" (p. 54). She goes on to point out the reciprocal nature of mission in our world today by saying, "Our international neighbors can help us minister to new immigrants and be global Christians who grasp the global implications of the things we consume and of the political actions we support" (p. 54).



While Dr. George looks at local mission as vital for the health of the local church, she does not think that we should jettison world mission. "A congregation that practices only local mission without commitment to the global church (or vice versa) will never experience the fullness of God's mission" (p.52).

Furthermore George says that there are three aspects of mission for local churches and the world-wide church. They are evangelism, compassionate service and social justice. All three are necessary for a solid mission, locally and world-wide. As I look at the churches of the Presbytery of Arkansas, I see congregations that are strong in compassionate service to the homeless, the poor, and others but weak in evangelism (sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and inviting people to receive Christ as their Savior) and social justice (speaking up for the poor, the outcast, and those with no voice in the halls of justice and in the legislatures of our state and nation). To truly be strong in doing the mission of the sovereign God, we must engage in all three aspects of mission.

(This book is available for loan from Presbytery's Resource Center.)

People and Church News

News of Our People

- Congratulations to **Rev. Bob and Kathleen Hadley** on the birth of grandson Ben Brown in Austin, Texas on January 25. The proud parents are Alissa and Dan Brown. Bob is pastor of Presbyterian Kirk of the Hills, Fairfield Bay and a member of Presbytery's Committee on Disaster Preparedness and Response.
- The home of **Rev. Dennis and Regina Bennett** caught fire on February 4 causing significant roof damage. Dennis, honorably retired, is pulpit supply at First, Heber Springs and an ex-officio member of Presbytery's Committee on Care and Nurture of Church Professionals.
- **Maruka Reecer** resigned as Director of Children and Youth at First, Benton on January 31.
- Christian sympathy is extended to the family of **Mary Ann Forbes**, and the congregation of First, Gravette on her recent death. She was Clerk of Session.
- Christian sympathy is extended to **Rev. Bob and Judith Cox** of Batesville on the death of his mother.
- Christian sympathy is extended to the family of **Mimi Dortch** of Little Rock on her death. She was founder and director of the Arkansas Interfaith Conference.
- The Department of Philosophy and Liberal Studies at UALR, along with the Socratic Society and Phi Sigma Tau, invites the public to a lecture in honor of **Rev. Dr. Richard Frothingham** (Honorably Retired), Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies. "The Sustainability of the Humanities and the Challenge of Scientism" on Wednesday, March 9, 7:00 p.m. in Dickinson Hall Auditorium.

News of Our Congregations & Ministries

- **Presbyterian Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village** will hold worship services each Wednesday during Lent beginning with Ash Wednesday, March 9. Pastor Bill Bailey and Parish Associate Don Trent will be assisted by retired ministers in the congregation. A traditional soup and bread lunch provided by Kirk members will be served to all after the worship service.
- **West End Presbyterian, Arkadelphia's** congregation hosted the people of **First, Arkadelphia** recently for a fish fry at the Community Center.
- **First, Mountain Home** is planning a trip for church members on March 18 to two musical shows in Branson, Missouri.
- **Mount Vernon Presbyterian, Pea Ridge** sent five youth to Confirmation Camp February 25-27, thanks to donations of the congregation.
- **First, Batesville** is encouraging conversations between children/youth and adults through "Did you know?" paper slips to encourage talking together to discover something they didn't previously know and depositing the slips into a box in the narthex.
- **Wynne Presbyterian** schedules a potluck dinner after worship on the fourth Sunday of the month, as many congregations have started doing.
- **Harmony Presbyterian, Clarksville** fed students at University of the Ozarks an Italian lunch after chapel service on February 15.
- **Park Hill Presbyterian, North Little Rock** observed on February 27 "Celebrating Gifts of Women" Sunday.
- **First, Jonesboro** celebrated a Kirkin' O' the Tartans service on February 7 with the Lyon College pipe and drums present in worship.
- **Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista** hosted a Valentine's potluck on February 12.
- **Second Presbyterian, Little Rock** held a Mission & Ministry Fair on March 6 to assist new and continuing members who are looking for a place to serve and may have questions to ask leaders about the time or commitment involved in various projects.
- **First, Heber Springs** will host Dr. David Lipschitz on "Aging Successfully" on March 17.
- **Kirk of the Hills, Fairfield Bay** built a new outdoor cross in the front parking area.
- **First, Conway** will observe Scout Sunday on March 13 for youth and adults active in Boy Scouts or Girls Scouts.
- **First, Yellville** members vote on their favorite potluck dish at their monthly fellowship meals and then publish the winning recipe in the following month's newsletter.
- **First, Eureka Springs** will celebrate its 125th anniversary on May 15. Worship, an open house, and

dedication of the new steeple are planned. First is housed in the original church building.

Idea of the Month - Central Presbyterian, Russellville and First, North Little Rock (Argenta district) recently had a pulpit exchange with the pastors leading worship in the other church.

Second, Little Rock Receives Earth Care Congregation Certification

by [Ann Owen](#), Moderator, Environmental Stewardship, Second Presbyterian, Little Rock

Second Presbyterian Little Rock became one of eight charter Earth Care Congregations (ECC) in July after participating in the pilot for the new certification program of the General Assembly Mission Council's Environmental Ministries. The Earth Care Congregation certification is designed to recognize churches that make the commitment to take seriously God's charge to "till and keep" the garden.

Earth Care Congregations become certified when they have committed to the Earth Care Pledge and accomplished a specific number of steps toward caring for God's earth in four categories: worship, education, facilities and outreach. A congregation earning 25 points in each of the four categories will be certified as an ECC and receive various honors. Each year, renewal certification is achieved by earning a total of 50 new points in the four categories with a minimum of 5 points in each category. Churches meeting the renewal requirements will be awarded an updated certificate, permission to use the ECC logo, and continued listing on the PC(USA) Environmental Ministries website.



The Social Justice and Peacemaking Unit of the PC(USA), in consultation with congregations and presbyteries across the denomination, developed a five-part resolution as a model for mobilizing congregations to respond to the General Assembly's "CALL TO RESTORE THE CREATION." The resolution was simplified to a four-part pledge in 2010. Churches applying to be an ECC must have the Earth Care Pledge affirmed by their session and signed by the clerk.

For more information on the Earth Care Congregations program go to <http://www.pcusa.org/environment>.



See you at the Big Tent in Indianapolis, June 30 through July 2 where nine partner conferences will be meeting under one roof, all at one time and we will all worship together.

Choose from Clergy Women's Leadership Institute, Evangelism and Church Development Conference, Healthy Ministry Conference, National Elders Conference, National Multicultural Church Conference, Peacemaking Conference, Presbyterian Communicators Network National Conference, Racial Ethnic and Immigrants Convocation, World Mission

Conference ... or don't choose any one conference and design your own schedule. (Contact Stated Clerk Cathy Ulrich at 479.461.4042 regarding joint transportation.)

Registration fee: \$285 / Hotel rate: \$99 per night (J.W. Marriott)

Information and registration are available [here](#).

Souper Bowl of Caring Prompts Service Blitz



Youth and adults from Grace Presbyterian and Second Presbyterian, Little Rock; First, Jacksonville; and Park Hill Presbyterian, North Little Rock took part in the Souper Bowl of Caring service blitz 2011 by participating in a workday at Rice Depot. They spent time bagging rice, labeling peanut butter, and boxing food for storage in the warehouse.

Youth Ministry in 2011

by [Whitney Bordelon](#), Presbytery Staff Resource for Youth Council



Senior High YouthQuake!
April 1-3

Check for registration information on the [Presbytery website](#) or in your email inbox. All youth grades 9-12 are invited to join us for a fabulous April Fool's weekend hosted by Youth Council! Registration begins at 7:00 p.m., April 1st (no foolin'!!) at Ferncliff Camp & Conference Center.

For more information contact Whitney Bordelon at whitneysingleton@hotmail.com



Prayer List for Congregations - 2011 can be found [here](#).

Disaster Preparation Resources

by [Brian Perry](#), Communications Director

Recent tornadoes and earthquakes have everyone thinking about emergency readiness. Presbytery's Committee on Disaster Preparedness and Response has been busy monitoring the weather events and collecting information that can be of help to churches and families.

On the [Committee's web page](#) there are several resources for coping with natural and man-made disasters. Recently added are links to the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service on the topics "Being Prepared: Tornadoes," "Being Prepared: Earthquakes," "Being Prepared: Floods," and "Disaster Response Handbook."

The Committee will continue to train disaster event directors, monitor the effect of disasters on churches in the Presbytery, and take action when necessary. Hopefully, the resources provided will lessen the extent of the damage caused.



Financial Corner: The Presbytery Budget

by [Pauline Rhodes](#)

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| February Revenue | \$26,518.28 | Year-to-date Revenue | \$ 74,303.13 |
| February Expenses | <u>\$68,872.52</u> | Year-to-date Expenses | <u>\$116,823.99</u> |
| February Deficit | -\$42,354.24 | Year-to-date Net | -\$ 42,520.86 |



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the churches for submitting their Statistical Reports. The Presbytery of Arkansas had a 91% completion rate. Hopefully, next year, the eight churches that did not complete their report this year will do so. Our goal is 100%. Thanks again for all of your hard work especially since the workbook and the Clerk's Annual Report were only available online and not mailed directly to the churches.

[Pauline](#)

Save the Dates

Minister, Educator, CLP Retreat

May 8-10 (*note that these dates have changed*)

Ferncliff Camp & Conference Center

Speaker: Dr. David Jones, Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program, Austin Seminary
(Sponsored by Presbytery's Committee on Care & Nurture of Church Professionals.)

Solar Under the Sun's McRae Honored



Chris McRae, elder at Central Presbyterian, Fort Smith and a graduate of Presbytery's Lay Academy, was featured in [Arkansas Green Guide](#) as an Eco-Hero for his work with Solar Under The Sun (SUTS). Chris is a founding member of SUTS and currently serves as program director. He has also served as an instructor for Living Waters for the World (where he conceptualized Solar). He is pictured at the February meeting of Presbytery demonstrating the solar-powered water purification system to University of the Ozarks students.

Presbyterian Women News

by [Mary Beth Lysobey](#), Moderator, Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team

The Presbyterian Women's Spring Gathering will be held at Central Presbyterian, Fort Smith on Saturday, April 16th. The theme is "I was thirsty and you gave me drink." Chris McRae, Program Director of Solar

Under the Sun and Co-Coordinator for the Haiti Network Living Waters of the World project, is the keynote speaker.

Reverend Leslie Bethell Roper, associate pastor for youth and children's ministries at First, Batesville and moderator of Presbytery's Youth Council, will lead worship. It will be a homecoming for her as she was baptized, confirmed, ordained as a youth elder, married, and ordained as a Minister of Word and Sacrament at this church!

You are encouraged to bring items for the Community Clearing House, which is responsible for the Meals for Kids program. The program provides take-home food each Friday for 2,480 public school students in the Fort Smith area. Donations must be INDIVIDUAL servings of cereal, juice boxes, Slim Jims, pudding cups, fruit cups, cheese and crackers, breakfast bars, pop tarts, Vienna sausages, animal crackers, Beenie Weenies, Rice Krispy Treats, Jello cups, or raisins.

Mission outreach from the clusters will be displayed. Please send photos and other items highlighting your local PW's mission outreach to your cluster leader as soon as possible.

Download the poster for Spring Gathering at [here](#).

Other news:

- Five ladies from the Presbytery of Arkansas attended the Synod of the Sun Coordinating Team Meeting on March 4-6th in Irving, Texas: Karene Jones, Churchwide representative; Kathy White, PW synod treasurer; Cissy Rose, PWPCT moderator-elect; Kaye Lowe, synod leadership trainer; and Mary Beth Lysobey, PWPCT moderator.
- Cissy Rose, moderator-elect, has her committee working hard to have a stupendous Women's Retreat at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center on August 11-13th. Mark your calendar!
- Mary Beth and David Lysobey leave for Ukraine on March 13th to partner with local leaders to install two water systems. They will meet up with the Angis (who visited our Presbytery last month) in Budapest. The governing board for the Carpathian Basin project was approved at the February Presbytery meeting.

(The PW Coordinating Team receives funding in the Presbytery budget.)

Arkansas Presbyterian Cursillo

What? Next Cursillo Retreat

When? April 7-10 and October 19-23

Where? Ferncliff Camp & Conference Center

What is Cursillo? Cursillo is a short course in living the Christian faith with the objective to inspire, challenge and equip church members for Christian action.

Who are the leaders? The staff is lay led and composed of Presbyterian laity and clergy who have previously attended a 3-Day Weekend.

What will we do? Experience short talks, music, fellowship, small group discussions and great food.

How do I apply? Applications are available [here](#), by calling 870.688.9189, or by e-mail request arpc.registrar@gmail.com.

(Cursillo receives funding from Presbytery's Committee on Christian Education and Nurture.)

Resource Center News



by [NiAnn Thompson](#), Resourcing Director
 Phone 501.663.2424, ext. 104
 Tuesday-Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.



Great ideas came out of the pre-presbytery workshops at the University of the Ozarks on February 18! Church Educators Jeannie Ford and Linda LeBron led a gathering which looked at Vacation Bible School options as well as Summer Sunday School models. One useful tool was a curriculum evaluation survey to help churches ask the right questions about the materials they use with their own and visiting children ([here is the link](#)). YOUR Resource Center has three 2011 VBS exam kits: "**Shake It Up: Where Kids Carry Out God's Recipe**" from Cokesbury, "**Hometown Nazareth: Where Jesus was a Kid**" from Group, and "**Island Odyssey: To the ends of the Earth with Jesus Christ**" from Abingdon Press for loan to churches as well as a number of "permanent, undated" kits and books for use in VBS and a selection of "retired" kits which are free for the taking. Rev. Dick Shinkle led a vivacious group of Clerks of Session in their annual training and recommends a variety of training resources for clerks available from the Resource Center. Just ask!

A win/win story. When Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista decided to use the new study in **Revelation** by Union Seminary president Brian Blount, their parish associate Rev. Laura Fleetwood asked if the Resource Center had this study. We negotiated between their Christian Education Committee and our Resource Center Council and shared the substantial cost. Bella Vista will use the study materials first and then the kit will be housed at the Resource Center for use by all of our congregations. Could we do the same for your congregation?

WHAT ARE YOU READING THERE?

Rev. Lacy Sellars and the session of First, Hot Springs are reading "**Christianity for the Rest of Us**" by Diana Butler Bass. Rev. Carl McCormack, pastor of First, Malvern, used the Thomas Long book "**Accompany Them with Singing: The Christian Funeral**" (Acc. #BK9479) for his workshop on funerals at the Small Church Retreat. Lynn Condra, Educator at Central, Fort Smith, suggests the tiny books "**What's Making You Angry?**" (Acc. #BK9385) and "**We Can Work It Out**" (Acc. #BK9386). All are in the Resource Center.

SERIOUS DVD STUDIES FOR LENT, EASTER AND BEYOND

For Children: "**Read and Share Bible: Jesus Series**" (Acc. #DVD9476) and "**How Can I Celebrate Passover?**" (Acc. #DVD8789)

For Adults: "**Zwingli and Calvin**" (Acc. #DVD9492) or "**Bonhoeffer: Agent of Grace**" (Acc. #DVD9497) or "**Book by Book: Daniel**" (Acc. #DVD9501) or "**Book by Book: Acts**" (Acc. #DVD9495)

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

[Presbytery Calendar](#)

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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 almost 15,000 Presbyterians gathered in 88 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>

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