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September 2009

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas



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

Dear friends,

Roseto, Pennsylvania was a community of men, women and children who had emigrated from a town by the same name in Italy. Residents pretty much kept to themselves; they would share meals, create their own industry, worship together, even continue to speak their particular dialect of Italian. Typically three generations of a family would share the same house. They were a close-knit community.



After being stateside for awhile, their heart-healthy Italian dietary habits began to give way to a more typical American diet loaded with fat and salt. Yet remarkably, there was little to no incidence of heart trouble among them. Most of them were dying from old age alone. Malcom Gladwell reports in his bestseller Outliers: The Story of Success that experts studied everything about them: that particular region of Italy, that particular region of Pennsylvania, other immigrant populations, but nothing could be found to explain their incredible health and longevity. Nothing, that is, except for the thing called "community": staying connected with extended family, breaking bread together, maintaining friendships with people who knew your hometown and (as we say in the South) "your people."

From this study of one community, Gladwell writes, medical experts came to realize that "they wouldn't be able to understand why someone was healthy if all they did was think about an individual's personal choices or actions in isolation... They had to appreciate the idea that the values of the world we inhabit and the people we surround ourselves with have a profound effect on who we are." (pages 10-11)

Hmmm - breaking bread, fellowship, worship - if you were to add "teaching" to that, you would have the description of the early church we find in Acts 2. Make the leap with me: being part of a worshipping community and the extended family we find therein, "knowing as we are known," has a direct impact on our health and well-being.

Two things to take away from that: first, at the October Presbytery meeting, you are going to get to hear an exciting report from the Vision Task Force of the General Council. Listen for those same themes in what they have to say. The most exciting thing the church has going for it today is the "old, old story," and it is still the way forward for us as brothers and sisters in Christ.

And then, thank you. That kind of community is what I have witnessed and experienced here in the Presbytery of Arkansas over this past year and a half. You know who you are, in Whom you are rooted, and you are willing to share that good news with those who need it most. Soon you will hear word of the person who has been nominated to lead the Presbytery of Arkansas as the new General Presbyter. I hope that you will welcome this person and move forward with that person in ministry. Surely, Gladwell would say, the values of this Presbytery and the people within it will have a profound effect on your new leader.

Blessings to you,

[Sallie](#)

Together in God's Grace

by Associate General Presbyter Joan Erickson



In a service of ordination and installation, or commissioning of Elders, Deacons, Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Lay Pastors, and Certified Christian Educators the candidate is asked questions including: "Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?" Those four traits aren't just a random wish list, but can be connected to the part of scripture called the *Shema*: "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might" and to the response by Jesus when asked what is the greatest commandment: "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." So what our scripture calls "might" our Book of Order calls "energy." Similarly the scriptural mention of "mind" and "heart" relate to our words "intelligence" and "love." So that leaves the mention in *Deuteronomy* of "soul." I think that when we hear someone say that they will lead with "imagination" that is the "soul" work. That puts a high premium on imagination. What place do we make in our churches for imagination?

[Joan](#)

A Polity Point

by Rev. Cathy Ulrich, Stated Clerk



COMMISSIONERS TO PRESBYTERY

A responsibility of each session is to elect an elder (or elders) to be its representative to each meeting of presbytery. These representatives are called commissioners. Our Book of Order encourages the session to elect its commissioners to serve for at least one year, preferably two or three years (G-10.0102p(1)). Being a presbytery commissioner for a year or more allows one to gain experience in the business and mission of presbytery. An elder who has served on session knows that one cannot fully understand what God is doing through the governing body of the church after one meeting. This is true of any gathering of God's people. Attending consecutive meetings of the presbytery allows us to better understand the work of the committees, to meet other disciples in the faith, and to gain wider knowledge about our connectional church.

The session is also responsible for allowing time on its docket for receiving a report from the commissioner after a presbytery meeting. There are many facets to presbytery meeting. The report may be given in various formats. It could be a written report, or a description of what the commissioner heard and felt during the meeting, or a hand out of all of the flyers collected during the meeting. There are many conferences, resources, websites, and ideas shared during one presbytery meeting. (*The Banner* also publishes a full-page summary of the presbytery meeting within days of adjournment.)

When circumstances arise and an elected commissioner is unable to attend, it is important that an **excused absence** is recorded with the Stated Clerk. This may be requested online through the Presbytery's website www.presbyteryofarkansas.org after clicking on "Presbytery Meetings."

If a commissioner from a session fails to register, and fails to request an excused absence, the minutes will reflect the name of the congregation and that it is absent without excuse. Questions about number of commissioners, election of alternate commissioners, and other concerns of session can be sent to the Stated Clerk.

The next meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas will be October 8-9 at Westminster Presbyterian, Hot Springs.

Blessings and peace, [Cathy](#)

112th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas Thursday-Friday, October 8-9 -- Westminster Presbyterian, Hot Springs

Registration begins at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday

Concurrent pre-presbytery workshops (choose one), Thursday, 3 to 5 p.m.:

1) "Pastor Search and Call Process" presented by the Committee on Ministry, Rev. Leslie Belden. (Designed to be informative for those serving on active Pastor Nominating Committees, for members of churches anticipating a change in pastoral leadership or anyone who is curious about the Presbyterian Call Process)

2) "Creating Safe Spaces: Church Officers as Mandated Reporters" presented by the Laurence Schmidt Counseling Center and the Office of the Stated Clerk, Rev. Rebecca Spooner and Rev. Cathy Ulrich. (Arkansas law prescribes that pastors are mandated reporters of physical, sexual or other types of abuse to minors or other vulnerable persons and the Presbyterian constitution extends this responsibility to elders and deacons. Workshop will walk people through the process of reporting.)

3) "What NOT to Teach: Choosing Resources for Ministry" presented by Presbytery Resourcing Director NiAnn Thompson. (Bombarded with choices in educational resources to use in the church from the local Christian bookstore to the Internet to members' favorite authors to our own denomination's offerings, we need criteria in choosing how to reach our students. We'll look at theological and educational assumptions of the resource and the ones using the resource so that our teaching will "fit" and reach the learner. This workshop is for all of us who determine what will be taught in the congregation and how.)

Dinner on your own; Gavel at 6:30; Theme: "My grace is sufficient for you" Second Corinthians 12:9; Worship with communion. Ingathering collection of paper towels, toilet tissue, paper plates, paper cups for Charitable Christian Medical Clinic of Hot Springs. The Thursday night offering will go to the Disaster Relief Fund of the Presbytery.

Friday schedule resumes at 8:30 a.m. and continues through lunch hosted by the congregation and afternoon business.

Expected highlights: Reports from General Presbyter Search Committee on Thursday, Committees on Nominations, Christian Education and Nurture, Disaster Preparedness and Response; Synod Commissioners; exam for ordination of a candidate for ministry; and welcome new ministers.

Meeting packet expected to be posted on the presbytery web site on September 17.

- LAST CALL - Junior High YouthQuake



Sign youth up NOW for the Junior High Youth Quake. The registration packet is [online](#) or use the packet that was mailed to each church.

The event supports the faith journey of youth as they ask the question "Who am I?" by celebrating that we each are a child of God.

PEOPLE AND CHURCH NEWS

NEWS OF OUR PEOPLE

- Congratulations to **Rev. Bill Seitz**, son of **Rev. Mike and Marilyn Seitz** of Hot Springs Village, on his call as pastor of First, Wamego, Kansas. Mike is interim pastor at First, Hot Springs and Bill served as associate pastor at Westminster, Hot Springs for several years.
- The success of Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center has caused **Executive Director Rev. David Gill** to resign as Parish Associate at Trinity, Little Rock to cover his increased duties.
- Christian sympathy is extended to **Rev. Craig King and his spouse Cathy** on the death of his father, Charlie King, on August 17 after an extended illness. Services were held August 22 in La Marque, Texas. Rev. King is pastor of Wynne Presbyterian and sits on Presbytery's Committee on Ministry.
- **Cheryl Allison** is the new part-time youth worker and **Karen Price** is the new part-time children's worker at First, Jonesboro.
- Congratulations to **Rev. Drew and Rhonda Travis**, maternal grandparents, and **Rev. Carlos Lopez and wife Rev. Sally Johnson**, paternal grandparents, on the birth July 1 of twin grandchildren Milo and Maren Lopez. Parents are Danny and Kristin Lopez of San Antonio. Drew is pastor of First, Conway and Carlos and Sally are honorably retired and live in Little Rock.

NEWS OF OUR CONGREGATIONS & MINISTRIES

- **Central Presbyterian, Russellville** held their "Pipe Organ Adventure 2009" tour of the sanctuary organ, and the organ at nearby Subiaco Academy, for the community.
- **Wynne Presbyterian** held a "Fun night for families" with children and youth to talk about what the church can do to meet the spiritual needs of families.
- **First, Springdale** members brought surplus homegrown produce to church on Sundays for delivery to Christian United Pantry to distribute on Monday mornings.
- **First, Batesville** members volunteer every Friday afternoon to lead bingo games for residents of a local nursing home.
- **Mountainburg Presbyterian** is planning a fall church retreat at the Fort Smith State Park.
- **Good Shepherd Presbyterian, Greenwood** will begin Wednesday evening fellowship on September 16 with singing, adult study on the "Introduction to the Bible", children's program and fellowship.
- **First, Siloam Springs** will resume this fall their "Dine with Nine" fellowship program and "Eagle Watch" adopt-a-family outreach to students at John Brown University.
- **Westminster Presbyterian, Hot Springs** Chancel Choir will have a brunch and retreat on September 26 to sing fall and Advent music.
- **First, Berryville** packed over 400 backpacks for students in Project Self-Esteem and began a prayer chain on a secure web site.
- **Central Presbyterian, Pine Bluff** is planning the centennial celebration of Central, Belair and Dollarway Presbyterian Churches in Pine Bluff for April 25, 2010. Stories, memories, scrapbooks, photo albums, attendance records and memorabilia of the three congregations may be sent to Central Presbyterian, 6300 Trinity Drive, Pine Bluff 71613.
- **First, Beebe** and **Presbyterian Women of First, Beebe** are sponsoring the Vera Lloyd Walton Home on an ongoing basis. The church held a swim party and cookout on July 18 and August 22 for six boys and their house parents. They also attended worship and a potluck on Sunday. A weenie roast and hayride are scheduled for October.
- **First, Van Buren** will hold a clothing give-away as they move their food pantry into their main building.
- **First, Bentonville** will host a workshop on "what to do in worship" for children in third grade and up with their parents on October 4 to explore engaging the child in worship and forming realistic expectations of their behavior.
- The **Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista** will be sending a team of 12 people on a mission trip to Cedar Rapids, Iowa the week of September 20. The trip is being coordinated by the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program and will provide help to flood victims.
- **First, Harrison** will host a concert by Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver on Friday, September 11 at 7:00 p.m. Doors open at 5:30 p.m.

NEWS OF OUR CLUSTERS

- **Cluster I** (northwest Arkansas) met for a potluck meal on August 27 at First, Springdale and elected Rev. Dan Wooley, pastor of First, Lincoln, as their representative to General Council, Class of 2012, and Elder

Ted Belden of First United, Fayetteville, as their representative to Committee on Clusters, Class of 2012. They also discussed offering Cluster-wide Elder Training three Monday nights in November.

- Elder Frances Holmes, a member of Second Presbyterian, Little Rock, was elected as the **Cluster IX** (Pulaski County) representative to Presbytery's Committee on Clusters, Class of 2011.

Idea of the Month

Mount Vernon Presbyterian, Pea Ridge is starting a book club for the community which is meeting at the home of church pastor Rev. John Gibson.

Presbytery Executives Meet at Ferncliff for Work and Study



Interim General Presbyter Rev. Dr. Sallie Watson recently hosted her presbytery colleagues from Synod of the Sun at Ferncliff Camp. Pictured (with their presbytery listed) are (front) Rev. Alan Cutter (South Louisiana), Rev. Judy Fletcher (Synod Executive), Rev. Watson, (middle) Elder Hilary Shuford (Mission), Rev. Mike Cole (New Covenant), Rev. Jose Luis Casal (Tres Rios), Rev. Rich Schempp (Palo Duro), (back) Rev. Greg Coulter (Eastern Oklahoma), Rev. Aaron Carland (Indian Nations), Rev. Marvin Groote (Grace), and Rev. Jim Bellatti (Cimarron). Not pictured is Rev. Joe Hill (Pines).

Comunidad Holds First Vacation Bible School

Presbytery's Hispanic new church development, Comunidad Presbiteriana Hispana, housed at First, Springdale recently held its first Vacation Bible School. Presbytery evangelist Rev. Jesse Gonzalez is pictured with participants who received their certificates of attendance on August 16.



Validated Ministry - Rev. Rebecca Spooner

by [Brian Perry](#), Communications Director



(First in a series on validated ministries other than traditional work within congregations.)

Rev. Rebecca Spooner serves as Director of The Laurence Schmidt Center, a ministry of Synod of the Sun service agency Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Home & Family Services. She is a graduate of King College (B.A., Biblical and Religious Studies), Princeton Theological Seminary (M. Div., Theology and Pastoral Care) and the University of Central Arkansas (M.S., Psychology and Counseling), and has served as a solo pastor, associate pastor and stated supply.

The Center provides professional psychological services for pastors of all denominations, their families, church professionals and individuals in the central Arkansas area and beyond. The Center's mission is to provide confidential, compassionate care to people seeking emotional, behavioral and spiritual healing and wholeness. Since its inception, more than 180 individuals have found help, healing and hope through the center's ministry.

Prior to opening in 2006 the Center conducted a needs assessment by sending out more than 500 surveys to clergy from five mainline denominations around the state, including the Presbytery of Arkansas. Seventy-five percent of the pastors surveyed reported needing counseling at some point in their lives, but refusing to seek it due to financial constraints or concerns over confidentiality and trust. The assessment also revealed that pastors experience a greater prevalence of mental and emotional issues than the general population, especially in the area of depression and anxiety.



Rebecca states "Not only have I been ordained for 15 years, but I am the sister, daughter and niece of Presbyterian clergy. In my childhood, I watched my family go through challenging times and suffer in silence because they felt there was no one they could turn to. Rev. Reinhold Schmidt had a vision that no pastor in our state, regardless of denomination, would ever go through challenging times and have to say that no one was there for them. He provided funds to get the counseling center up and running. It is named in memory of his son.

Pastors have a hard time letting down their guard and trusting someone to be there for them in their time of need. It is both an honor and a privilege to be able to walk with pastors and their families when times get tough. It is our goal to be a place of restoration and rejuvenation, and by God's grace, we have become just that."

Budget Hearings



Presbytery's Committee on Administration held budget hearings for 2010 at the Presbytery Office on August 15. Each committee of the Presbytery presented their requested budget. Members of the Committee on Administration pictured are Jerry Starkey (First, Pine Bluff), Assistant Treasurer Billy Stone (First, Pine Bluff), and Sandra Barron (Central, Fort Smith). Not pictured are Moderator Tom Verdery (First United, Fayetteville), Rev. Jim Fleming (Honorably Retired), Rev. Steve Hancock (Second,

Little Rock), Rev. Breck Castleman (First, Siloam Springs), Judy Crawford (First, Hot Springs), Rex Anderson (First, Ozark), Rev. Tracy Julian (Harmony, Clarksville) and Treasurer Walls McCrary (First, Lonoke). The committee is staffed by Rev. Sallie Watson and Pauline Rhodes.

Ferncliff Hosts Events Year-round

Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center is the site of picnics, retreats, camps and other events for churches throughout the Presbytery. Pictured are some of the youth from First United, Fayetteville who spent time at Ferncliff this summer. To make your church plans at Ferncliff call (501) 821.3063.



Why Do Worshipers Give to their Congregations?

by Deborah Bruce

Associate Research Manager, Research Services, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Myth or fact? Because the denomination's membership is declining, contributions to PC(USA) congregations continue to decrease as well.

The market downturn concerns many congregational leaders. They wonder about its impact on congregational giving. Coupled with the denomination's declining membership, the picture appears bleak. Learning more about giving can help us clearly see the facts. First, let's look at the big picture:

- From 1983 to 2007, **total contributions from individuals to PC(USA) congregations* more than doubled**, from around \$1 billion to \$2.4 billion. After adjusting for inflation, contributions still grew by 16%.
- **Per-member giving also increased** over the same period: from \$317 to \$1,082 in nominal dollars (240 percent) or from \$661 to \$1,082 (64%) after adjusting for inflation.

Over the years, Presbyterians have been willing to make increasingly larger contributions to their congregations, even during previous recessions. Thus, while membership has declined, total giving has increased. This gives us some hope that our congregations can weather the current recession.

Let's look next at individual giving. Results from a survey of worshipers (age 15 and up) in Presbyterian churches reveal these facts:

- Most worshipers make regular financial contributions to their congregations (83%); 5% don't contribute; and 12% give "a small amount whenever I am here."
- The largest numbers of Presbyterians (38%) give 5% to 9% of net income. Only 16% give more, while 29% give less.
- Fully 90% believe it is important or very important to support their congregation financially.
- One-third (34%) decide how much to give to their congregation based on an annual dollar figure, 27% decide based on a weekly amount, and 13% base their giving on a percentage of their income.

- Six in ten (64%) completed a pledge card or made some other sort of commitment for congregational giving for the year.
- Nine in ten also make financial donations to organizations other than their congregation (such as charities or social service groups).

What Matters?

Presbyterians generously support their congregations. But why? When we asked which two factors most influence worshipers' giving decisions, one stands out: **gratitude for God's love and goodness**. Efforts to maintain or increase financial giving will be more successful if they acknowledge God loves each of us and makes a difference in our lives everyday. How can you use this message in your congregation?

*Contributions from living donors to congregations for program and mission, but excluding donations to capital projects.

Financial Corner: The Presbytery Budget

by [Pauline Rhodes](#)

August Revenue	\$ 47,954.60	Year-to-Date Actual as of August 31	
From Investments	\$112,110.20*	Revenue	\$524,540.12**
August Expenses	<u>\$ 78,801.63</u>	Expenses	<u>\$640,679.61</u>
August	\$ 81,263.17	Deficit	\$116,139.49



* Withdrawal as approved at June meeting of Presbytery.

** \$112,110.20 drawn from investments is included as revenue. Actual current year revenue is \$412,429.92.

IGP Itinerary

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

September 13 - Worship with Graham Memorial Presbyterian, Forrest City
 September 27 - Worship with Kirk in the Pines Presbyterian, Hot Springs Village
 September 28 - Committee on Administration Conference Call
 September 29 - Officer Training with First, Gurdon
 October 1-7 - Polity Conference, Minneapolis
 October 8-9 - 112th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas, Westminster Presbyterian, Hot Springs
 October 11 - Worship with First, Batesville
 October 11 - Preach for Judith Kelley's installation as pastor of Highland Presbyterian, Hot Springs
 October 17 - Preach for Nancy Taylor's installation as pastor of First, Mountain Home

Retreat for Bereaved Parents

Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly is offering "Mapping Our Journeys: A Safe Place" on November 13-15 for parents who have lost a child to illness, accident, violence or suicide. The leadership team is a mix of bereaved parents and professionals who care for them. The goal is to provide a spiritual environment where participants feel free to talk about their bereavement, share what helped them to cope and discuss continuing needs. Visit www.moranch.com for details.

Arkansas Presbyterian Cursillo #11

by [Debbie Cordell](#), Lay Leader

Arkansas Presbyterian Cursillo #11 will mark the fifth anniversary of Presbyterian Cursillo in the Presbytery of Arkansas. It will be held October 15-18 at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center and all Presbyterians are invited to attend.

Cursillo means "short course of Christianity" and ours is led by Presbyterian laity and three Presbyterian ministers.

Cursillo is about God calling you to come to a Cursillo weekend and spending 72 hours to renew your relationship with the Living Christ and to witness the Holy Spirit working in your life.

Each Lay Leader picks a scripture for their Cursillo weekend that serves as the theme. Mine is Psalm 25:4-5: "Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my savior, and my hope is in you all day long." I chose these verses because to me it speaks to what Cursillo is all about: God showing us His ways, His paths and His guidance for our daily lives and that we can place our hope in Him always.

Applications may be found at most churches in the Presbytery, online registration at the ARPC web site www.cursillo-arkansas.org and from the ARPC registrar at arpc.registrar@gmail.com or by mail to ARPC Registrar, 324 W. Mountain View Dr., Hot Springs, AR 71913.

- LAST CALL - POAMN 25th Anniversary Conference

The Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network (POAMN) Conference is scheduled for September 29 - October 2 in Tucson, Arizona. Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow will lead the worship at POAMN's 25th Anniversary Conference. A registration form is available [here](#). For more information you can contact Cindy Wright at 858.509.2587 or by email at wright@solanapres.org.

- LAST CALL - On Retiring from a Congregation

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is offering a seminar designed for pastors who are contemplating retiring in the next 1-5 years. It is sometimes difficult for pastors to think through all the tasks that need to be accomplished, and they are likely to overlook a number of ways to make the entire transition better both for the members of their congregation and themselves. The seminar is scheduled for September 30-October 1 and more information can be found [here](#).

Cluster Meetings for Presbytery of Arkansas Presbyterian Women

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

Cluster meetings of Presbyterian Women will be held throughout the Presbytery of Arkansas during the last three Saturdays of September. Please plan to attend the one most convenient to you. Your participation will prepare you to be the most effective witness for Christ as a Presbyterian Woman. You will be nourished spiritually, entertained, informed, and empowered. At the same time you will become better acquainted with

your Presbyterian Women neighbors; remember we are a **connectional** church and we lift up and support each other.

For **Clusters 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7** registration is at 9:30 a.m. and the program begins at 10:00 a.m.

For **Clusters 1 and 9** registration is at 9:00 a.m. and the program begins at 9:30 a.m.

The meetings will end with lunch.

September 12

Cluster 1 First Presbyterian, Springdale (100 S. Gutensohn Rd.) Lunch: \$6.50

Cluster 3 First Presbyterian, Paragould (303 S. 7th St.) Lunch: no charge

Cluster 9 Second Presbyterian, Little Rock (600 Pleasant Valley Dr.) Lunch: \$7.00

September 19

Cluster 4 Wynne Presbyterian, Wynne (1735 E. Poplar) Lunch: \$8.00

September 26

Cluster 5 First Presbyterian, Hot Springs (213 Whittington Ave.) Lunch: \$7.00

Cluster 6 First Presbyterian, Van Buren (108 S. 10th St.) Lunch: \$6.50

Cluster 7 First Presbyterian, Conway (2400 Prince St.) Lunch \$7.00

Cluster 2 and Cluster 8 have no PW Leaders and have been invited to attend the Cluster meeting most convenient to them.

Also mark your calendar for the **Synod of the Sun Presbyterian Women Gathering 2010** to be held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The hosting church is First Presbyterian (1001 NW 25th Street) and the dates are July 15-18. The keynote speaker is Martha Sadongei, pastor of Central Presbyterian Church in Phoenix, Arizona. Rev. Sadongei's tribal membership is Kiowa/Toshono O'odham. One planned tour is the Presbyterian Urban Mission back-to-school program. *Psalms 16:6* states, "The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage." You will enjoy Native American themes - entertainment, gift ideas, and learning about their heritage. Your whole family will enjoy this opportunity, so make plans to attend.

Going Green in Faith & Life: Water

by [Betsy Gillaspay-Williams](#)

While waiting for your bath's hot water to warm up catch the lukewarm water in a bucket. In my case I let my cat drink some of it and then I water plants.

You can catch "grey" water in the kitchen sink while washing hands or food. This water can be given to plants that don't seem to mind a little soap.

After a meal pour left-over water or iced tea from glasses onto house plants.

Use mulch covered soaker hoses to water your garden. This sends water to the roots instead of evaporating.

Rain barrels are back in vogue and will save rainwater for plants.

Small Church Retreat

Yet another exciting Small Church Retreat will take place next March 4-6 at Ferncliff. Save the date now.

This is a great time of encouragement for members and leaders of small churches with times to learn in the

midst of the fun of being together.

Youth Council at Work



Presbytery's Youth Council, a subcommittee of Committee on Christian Education and Nurture, plans and manages youth events. Here you can see Council members preparing name badges for the upcoming Junior High YouthQuake.

RESOURCE CENTER NEWS

9221 North Rodney Parham Road

Little Rock, AR 72227-6201

Phone 501.663.2424, ext. 104

[NiAnn Thompson](#), Director

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

It's back to school time in Arkansas and in our churches. A few stories follow that illustrate the point.



"Back to School" on campus at Hendrix College, Conway means "Sundaes on Wednesday" Ice Cream Social where churches and college ministry programs reach out to new and returning students. This year on August 27 Hailey Travis (second from right) and Daniel Williams (right), both sophomores at Hendrix, represented First Presbyterian, Conway in handing out bottled water bearing stickers with the PC(USA) seal, the church web address and a quote from John 7:38. This idea originated at First, Arkadelphia and was shared through YOUR Resource Center, since we not only share and loan books, DVDs and equipment-we share plans that work! Great ideas for congregations located in towns with colleges and universities are available in the "Campus Ministry" section of the Resource Center.

Five churches in various regions of the Presbytery have tapped into our small archival section of curriculum and will save money this semester by using out-of-print Bible Quest or older versions of We Believe curricula for children. I was delighted to find good homes for this good material with congregations educating small numbers of children or preparing in case some children visit. If your Sunday School has a similar situation, contact me for help and ideas.

Adults are also going back to school or at least back to regular studies. In Cluster VI (west central Arkansas) 14 people, including three pastors, gathered on August 27 for a Cluster Presbyterian Women Circle Bible

Study leaders discussion of the first lesson in "Joshua: A Journey of Faith," the *Horizons* Bible Study for this year. They hope to meet on October 1 and make this a monthly occurrence. YOUR Resource Center has many Bible study helps from *Horizons* and beyond to aid your local women.

Rally Day or Promotion Sunday is on the calendar (or may have passed) for many churches. "**Children Among Us: Foundations in Children's Ministries**" (Acc. #BK8180) offers "sample objectives for using the Bible with Children," a list of when the student in grades 1 through 6 could be expected to master what skill.

AND NOW, NEW DVD RESOURCES FOR YOUR FALL STUDIES

The popular "Book by Book" study is back with new offerings: "**Book by Book: Selected Psalms**" (Acc. #DVD9203), "**Book by Book: II Timothy**" (Acc. #DVD9204) and "**Book by Book: Leviticus**" (Acc. #DVD9207). Issues studies for adult groups include "**Servant or Sucker**" (Acc. #DVD9153) on how to determine a response to appeals for help. Youth study of "**The Apostles' Creed**" (Acc. #DVD9208).

RAVE REVIEWS: Rev. Gordon Garlington, Park Hill Presbyterian, North Little Rock reports that "**Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People**" (Acc. #VC7193) "was received really well by our adult VBS class...and did a good job in a "down to earth" way of encouraging us to work on developing what I grew up calling daily discipleship or the devotional life--what is today called spirituality."

Deacon Beth Lewis applauds "**The Seeds of Heaven: Sermons on the Gospel of Matthew**" (Acc. #BK8489) which she found a profound blessing in her devotional reading. She read this book by Barbara Brown Taylor after her congregation used Taylor's book "An Altar in the World" for a book discussion.

[PRESBYTERY CALENDAR](#)

PRESBYTERY STAFF:

Interim General Presbyter [SALLIE M. WATSON](#)
Associate General Presbyter [JOAN ERICKSON](#)
Resourcing Director & Assistant Stated Clerk [NIANN THOMPSON](#)
Presbytery & Financial Administrator [PAULINE RHODES](#)
Communications Director [BRIAN PERRY](#)
Stated Clerk [CATHERINE ULRICH](#)
Treasurer J. WALLS MCCRARY
Presbytery Evangelist JESSE GONZALEZ
Moderator of Presbytery CLAIRE RHODES
Vice Moderator of Presbytery DEBRA CARL FREEMAN
Moderator of General Council JACKSON FARROW JR.



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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