



August 2015

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

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"Yet Not Yet"

At the June meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas, my pending retirement was announced. Since that time, I have continued to serve as your General Presbyter. You will recall that the transition plan includes my serving month-to-month as the General Presbyter Nominating Committee conducts its search for a new leader. Even though many have been surprised that I'm still around, I will be working with you for the near term.



Thank you, again, for the privilege of serving in this capacity. It has been a joy to be a co-worker in the ministry to which Christ has called us. Thank you for the gracious recognition of my service, the many cards and other expressions of appreciation, the monetary gift but, most of all, for being friends in ministry.

It is encouraging to hear that the General Presbyter Nominating Committee is moving with dispatch and optimistically believes it will be ready to present a candidate at the October meeting of Presbytery. In anticipation of that time, I have begun to pack books, clean out files and generally get the office ready for your next partner in ministry. Please join me in prayer for the GPNC and those toward whom God may be directing them.

Some have asked, "What's next for you?" Honestly, I don't know what's in store. It's taken about a year to get comfortable with the idea that, "What's next?" hasn't become clear. When the day comes to leave this Presbytery, I anticipate spending quiet time listening for God's nudgings and taking stock of what needs I might help address. One commitment which will continue is serving Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly as Chair of its Board of Trustees. Other opportunities will unfold as I take up residence closer to family in Goldsby, Oklahoma, just south of Norman.

There are circles in life which bring us to a fuller recognition of how God has been guiding us. My call to ministry was formed through camping and conference experiences. Now, I am blessed to serve as a volunteer leader of one of our best camp and conference centers, Mo-Ranch. I will return to Oklahoma and Indian Nations Presbytery, the location of a very happy long-term parish ministry and a wonderful place for our children to grow up. Now, a new generation of our family is taking root just around the corner from our home. My hunch is that part of the new calling is to be a more present grandfather to Cassidy and Carter and Ryan and Jake - two Sooners and two Texans but, praise be, not a Longhorn in the bunch.

The circle will remain unbroken bye and bye, of this we can be sure.

Gratefully,

Bill

General Presbyter's Out of Office Commitments

August

- 11 Honduran Mission Network, Fayetteville, FUPC
- 13 Region 3 Gathering -- Guy Delaney's, Little Rock
- 15 Administrative Committee Budget Hearings -- Little Rock
- 18 Meeting with Session
- 20-21 Executive Presbyter Forum, Irving, TX
- 21 COM Training Event, Irving, TX
- 22 General Committee, FPC, Conway
- 25-26 Governor's Restore Hope Conference, Little Rock
- 29 Mission Committee, Little Rock

September

- 9-11 Seminary Support Network, Atlanta

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Church Employment Opportunities in or near our Presbytery

Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry -- First United Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville, Arkansas is praying for a proactive leader with a love for youth and young adults and a shepherd's heart, a mature faith consistent with the Reformed Christian tradition, personal integrity, and an enthusiastic sense of humor and fun combined with a passion for teaching and forming youth and young adults to be committed followers of Jesus. Focus is 80% youth ministry and 20% college and young adult ministry. This is a full-time position with a generous continuing education allowance and healthcare. Complete position description and contact information available at <http://www.fupcfay.org/leadership/positions-open.aspx>. The position will begin as soon as possible in 2015.

Choirmaster/Organist -- Arkadelphia First Presbyterian Church seeks a Choirmaster/Organist. If interested, please contact Adrienne Queen for more information: adriennecamillequeen@gmail.com or 910-280-8232.

First Presbyterian Church--Bentonville is seeking a **Full-time Teacher's Assistant** for their *My Friends & Me* Daycare for the 2015-2016 school year. For more information, contact Mrs. Z Cooper at 479-273-5450 or zkcooper@fpcbentonville.org.

First Presbyterian Church--Bentonville is seeking a Church Administrative Assistant. For more information, including a description of the position, [click here](#). Interested applicants may email their resumes to Rev. Katie Cummings at kcummings@fpcbentonville.org.

Other Opportunities

Counseling Center Clinical Director (Monticello, AR) -- Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services is seeking a Clinical Director for a new nonprofit counseling center in Monticello, AR, which will serve youth, adults and families. A detailed description of the position is available [here](#). You may send a letter of interest and resume to: Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services, 1501 N. University Ave., Suite 345, Little Rock, AR 72207 or email to donnamahurin@veralloyd.org.

Manager of Administration--Office of the General Assembly -- The Office of the General Assembly in Louisville, KY seeks a Manager of Administration. This position will provide administrative leadership in the areas of human resources, financial management and policy. A detailed description of the position and contact information is available [here](#).

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People and Church News

News of Our People

--Christian sympathy goes to **Rev. and Mrs. "Mike" McCracken** on the death of his father Don McCracken on July 15 in NC. Mike is pastor of Wynne Presbyterian and a member of the presbytery's Christian Education Committee, and wife Jennifer is a member of the Ferncliff board.
--First, Springdale member **Andy Spaulding** is a Young Adult Volunteer with the PCUSA and has

applied to study at Columbia Seminary, Decatur, GA.

--Christian sympathy goes to **Certified Christian Educator Jeannie Ford** and husband Collins Andrews on the death of his sister Marty Nord on July 28 in Nashville, TN. Jeannie is church educator at Second Presbyterian, Little Rock.

News of Our Congregations

--**Presbyterian Church of Bull Shoals** has a busy Thursday with coffee, pastries and fellowship from 10 to 11 and Bible study from 11 to noon.

--**Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village** will offer a "Christian Friendship Class" from Sept. 11 through Nov. 6 from 9 to 11 a.m. to learn skills for helping and social relationships.

--**First, Springdale** offered a one-day mission opportunity for children in Grades 3-6 and a week for mission for youth in grades 7-12.

--**Wynne Presbyterian** will host the Presbyterian Women's fall gathering of Cluster 4 on Sept. 19.

--**First, Jacksonville** collected school supplies for Kenyan students during VBS.

--**First, Morrilton** plans an annual "Talents for the Lord" fundraiser for projects and needs of the church including a bake sale and silent auction.

--**Holiday Island Presbyterian** enjoyed an ice cream social on July 19.

--Youth and college students led a musical spectacular for worship on August 2 at **First, Fort Smith**.

--**First, Newport** congregation is saving their change for the School Backpack feeding program for students who do not have food security over the weekend.

--**First, Rogers** will host Cluster 1 Presbyterian Women's fall gathering on Sept. 12.

--**First, Little Rock** celebrated 187 years of ministry on Sunday, July 19th. Below are some photos from the day's events.





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Resource Center News

by [NiAnn Thompson](#), Resourcing Director
Phone 501.663.2424, ext. 104
Tuesday-Wednesday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.



PRESBYTERY FACEBOOK PAGE

If you have events that you want the people of the Presbytery to know about, post them to our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/PresbyteryOfArkansas. Rev. Anne Russ at First, North Little Rock (Argenta) at 501.374.7677 or email revruss@gmail.com will be glad to answer your questions.

--Seven copies of the 2015-2016 Presbyterian Planning Calendar are available for sale at the presbytery office for \$15.00 per copy. It's not too late to transfer all those "things to do" to a fresh calendar.

--It's the time of the year when many churches start considering who will serve in the ordered ministries of deacon or ruling elder. Following that election comes the time of training and preparation when each should receive the new "**Book of Order 2015-2017**" (part II of the PCUSA Constitution) which is available from Presbyterian Distribution Services in regular print, large print or downloadable file.

--RAVE REVIEWS

--Rev. Gordon Garlington, pastor of Park Hill Presbyterian, North Little Rock, writes about Adam Hamilton's book "**Making Sense of the Bible: Rediscovering the Power of Scripture Today**" (Acc. #DVD9806 which is accompanied by a DVD) "I picked it up and could not put it down!... What I liked about it is how it openly, honestly faces several of the challenges 21st century Christians have as they read the Old and New Testaments...how dangerous treating the Bible as a rule book for how to earn God's favor or as an answer book can be to authentic, life-giving Christian discipleship...Hamilton laments how some seem to give up on the Bible because it contains explanationsthat seem to contradict our scientific understandings or passages attributing to God commands that seem totally at odds with...Jesus Christ. (Hamilton) sets forth suggestions for how to understand what the Bible is..and the study of it that set it free to become the Word of God inviting us to the abundant and eternal life we are promised in Jesus."

--**The PLACE** was the place to be on August 8th as almost 200 Presbyterians attended 27 workshops at Second Presbyterian, Little Rock. Watch for a full report next month!

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE FALL, HOW ABOUT THESE OPTIONS?

"**An Odd Couple, Jonah and Ruth: Lessons for our Fractured World**" by Kerygma contains four lessons in a resource book on Jonah and five lessons on Ruth plus a leader's guide and bonus material on a DVD.

"**Vanishing Grace: What Ever Happened to the Good News?**" by Philip Yancey contains five sessions on DVD, a hardback book and study guide. This small group Bible study explores "what kind of news is good to a culture that thinks it has rejected the Christian versions" and includes "stories of how faith can disarm even the most cynical critics" and "effective ways to share grace with others in a

jaded society that is often hostile to the church."

"The Call: The Life and Message of the Apostle Paul" by Adam Hamilton includes a leader guide, DVD, hardback book, youth study book, and children's leader guide so the entire congregation can study the same thing at the same time. This is a six-week study of the writer who traveled thousands of miles by sea and land, to be beaten, imprisoned and finally murdered for his faith who today continues to inspire 1/3 of the world's population.

This year I will be working each Tuesday and Wednesday (7:45-5:15) and can easily be reached other weekdays by email, text or cell phone (501.337.2360).

Self-service hours in the Resource Center are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Thursday and Friday. If these latter days are the best for your visits, I'll gladly gather resources for you to pick up and as usual, I'll mail resources to patrons on the days I'm here.

REMEMBER OUR ONLINE CATALOG! Just go to the www.presbyteryofarkansas.org website, click on "Resources," then on "Resource Center" and "click here to search the catalog" to conduct a simple or advanced search for just the right item.

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

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Why Are We Here?

*Rev. Michael Vinson, Staff Resource
Congregational Vitality*

People have posed this question for all time. And it is an important question for the church and especially each congregation to consider. When working with churches who are discerning next steps in ministry, I will always ask "what is the purpose?" And for me, purpose answers the question: "why are we here?"

In discerning new directions in ministry it is a basic question to answer. If you are a congregation filling out a Mission Information Form (MIF) in preparation to call a new minister you will be asked to state your mission. Your mission statement could be your purpose but most MIF's that I see do not clearly answer the purpose question. Frequently when talking about mission, congregations begin to tell me about their mission projects like feeding the hungry, the clothes closet ministry or many other good and faithful ministries, but how does that help you accomplish your purpose? In fact some congregations are involved in very appropriate ministries but these ministries do not drive the congregation in any particular direction and sometimes become an obstacle to accomplishing the purpose.

Sometimes congregations will give me a vision statement. This is fine if it answers the question of why are we here. But for me, vision statements articulate where you see yourself as a congregation at some point in the future.

Another thing to consider in answering the purpose question is the assumptions about the purpose of the church. Some groups will say very clearly and strongly what the purpose is. Further discussion usually reveals many assumptions about that purpose. Some of those assumptions are helpful and some are not. When this happens in a group, family, organization or church this is an indication that more discernment may be needed.

The answer to the purpose question also helps in getting leadership to help accomplish what you feel called as a congregation to be doing. People looking to serve are more likely to connect when they understand the purpose and how their own sense of purpose connects to the purpose of the church.

A clear sense of purpose also helps attract people to the faith community who are eager to join you in ministry. When you are clear about why you are here, more people are likely to want to be a part of what you are doing. Clearly articulating your purpose invites people who are discerning their own sense of call and purpose.

As faith communities we can draw from a rich source of scriptures to discern our purpose. The institutional church is in a time of great transition. A clear sense of purpose helps a congregation discern where God is calling and keeps them organizationally flexible in times of rapid change.

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General Presbyter Search Committee Update

The search for a new General Presbyter of the Presbytery of Arkansas is continuing, as current General Presbyter Bill Galbraith continues in that position on a month-by-month basis.

Rev. Jeff Price, moderator of the seven-member GP search committee, is very pleased to have received so many applications from strong men and women candidates from across the nation for the position. The committee is in the process of setting up interviews and is confident that they will be able to introduce the candidate to the presbytery at the stated meeting on Oct. 9-10 at Central Presbyterian, Russellville. He requests continued prayer for insight and discernment for the search committee and potential candidates.

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Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News

Want to stay updated about Youth Ministry happenings in the Presbytery?

"Like" us on Facebook!

Search

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on Facebook,

or go to

www.facebook.com/PresbyteryofArkansasYouthMinistry

This page is for anyone wishing to stay updated about Youth Ministry happenings in the Presbytery -- Youth Workers, parents, youth, Educators, Pastors.

(Presbytery's Youth Ministry receives funding from Presbytery's Committee on Christian Education.)

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"Unmet Needs Table"

YOUR Contributions to Mayflower & Vilonia Tornado Recovery

From the funds that you and your churches donated in 2014, the Presbytery Disaster Preparedness and Response Committee has contributed to several cases brought before the Mayflower and Vilonia Unmet Needs Table and most recently voted to provide \$5,000 to a fund that insures that contractors are paid promptly for satisfactory work. Total unfunded requirement for seven houses identified as needs is approximately \$400,000.00. Your donations have helped greatly; if you can offer more--or can tell us of other funding sources, the DPRC would be very grateful.

The communities of Mayflower and Vilonia each has a stake in what they call an "unmet needs table." The "unmet needs table" is the group of faith-based and other organizations offering funding to meet the needs of survivors of the April 27, 2014 tornado that swept through Pulaski, Faulkner, White, and Searcy Counties. After a case management process, needs are presented to the member organizations.

To date, since the 2014 tornado, the faith-based Unmet Needs Table has built 13 new houses and completed major repairs on an additional 8 homes.



Newly-constructed house on Fortner Rd. in Mayflower, AR

Together the two long-term recovery groups (LTRG), Vilonia Disaster Recovery Alliance and Inter-Faith and Partners Disaster Response Alliance have identified need for eight (plus three more "possibles") additional new houses. Materials for one of the eight are funded, and two more are partially funded.

The two LTRGs have commitments from volunteer organizations to provide the construction labor. These volunteer construction organizations are asking for at least 6 houses to build, over a 6-month period. That means that the LTRGs need to come up with funds for building materials and hiring state licensed contractors (electrical, plumbing etc.).

For further information, contact James Anderson at jandersonret@gmail.com or Liz Branch at erbranch@comcast.net.

--This message is brought to you by the Presbytery of Arkansas Disaster Preparation and Response Committee. Additional information is available at <http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/frmDisasterResponse.aspx>

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United Campus Ministry of Fayetteville Highlighted in Synod of the Sun's "Mission Stories"

Recently, the Synod of the Sun published the following article in their "Mission Stories" newsletter:

United Campus Ministry (UCM) launches its new program--the intern position of Student Outreach Coordinator.

In the past month, the Student Outreach Coordinator Lauren Cambias, and the UCM Campus Minister Susan Rose worked several days of orientation for the Council of Religious Organizations (CRO) over two weeks. CRO is a universal religious presence that works at an organization fair introducing incoming freshman and their parents to various opportunities for involvement on campus. Each organization has a display, and CRO representatives try to connect freshmen that are interested with one of the many existing religious organizations. United Campus Ministry was put in contact with 50 students in the past 5 weeks alone. The Student Outreach Coordinator has made contact with all interested students through Facebook, Twitter, email, and even snail mail.

Considerable effort has been spent working on applying for a Lily Grant that would allow students who have a passion for different elements of church leadership to get experience working various jobs in local churches while being paid. New marketing ideas have also been brainstormed and implemented, like the design of new posters and lawn signs.

The Synod of the Sun Grant has allowed United Campus Ministry to maintain contact with many freshman students who have a genuine interest in the Presbyterian & Disciples of Christ center at the University of Arkansas. It has also allowed for diligent behind the scenes work that will make our campus center a welcoming place for any and all students that participate in our ministry.

(UCM receives funding from Presbytery's Committee on Christian Education)

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Registration is now open for Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage #23- -October 15-18 at Ferncliff Camp & Conference Center

Are you looking for a boost in your faith journey? Consider attending the Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage to be held at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center from October 15 through 18, 2015. The pilgrimage weekend will begin at 5:30 pm on Thursday, and will end about 5 pm on Sunday. There will be plenty of worship, prayer, food, study, fellowship,

and much more. The cost to attend the weekend is \$200. Scholarships are available if you need financial aid.

Applications are available on the Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage website www.pilgrimage-arkansas.org.

You may also pick up participant applications from the Presbytery Office in Little Rock. If you have any questions, you may contact the Registrar at ARPC.registrar@gmail.com

The deadline for applications is October 5, 2015.

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Arkansas Presbyterian Women Attend Churchwide Gathering in Minneapolis

Eleven women from the Presbytery of Arkansas attended the Presbyterian Women's Churchwide Gathering in Minneapolis June 18-21 at the downtown Hyatt Hotel along with over 1,700 other women.



Front row (left to right): Karene Jones (North Little Rock), Ginni Miller (Eureka Springs), Kathy White (Hot Springs), Betty Glenn (Little Rock), Betty Jean Moore (Little Rock).
Back row (left to right): Liz Branch (Little Rock), Mary Beth Lysobey (Norman), Ila Blackketter-Wolfe (Bentonville), Emily Hall (Little Rock).
Not pictured: Miriam Murthy (Hot Springs) and Mary Ann Sweeney (Bella Vista)

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Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services

Thanks You For Changing Lives!

Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services is deeply grateful to Presbyterian churches and their members who have enriched the lives of boys and girls who are living at Vera Lloyd's children's home this summer.

Ferncliff Camp

First Presbyterian, Fort Smith; Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village and Trinity Presbyterian in Little Rock gave gifts to allow 15 youth, ages 14 to 17, to attend camp at Ferncliff in late July.

They took part in camp activities, including:

- * Completing a low ropes course
- * Touring the Eco Center
- * Participating in a nature study
- * Harvesting vegetables in the garden
- * Baking cookies in a solar oven
- * Spending time at the pool, pond and creek
- * Learning archery and bouldering
- * Playing field games
- * Writing and performing for skit night
- * Packing foodstuffs for the Stop Hunger Now program
- * Attending Vespers Services each evening

Mission Trip

Trinity Presbyterian Church in Little Rock hosted a mission trip at Vera Lloyd's children's home in July. A group of 20 church members deep-cleaned the Lewis Home, one of five homes on campus. They improved landscaping and drainage in front of the home, brought new chairs for the dining table and replaced blinds in the home. They packed personal hygiene supplies for boys and girls who come to the children's for emergency shelter services.

Trinity's members invested more than 300 hours in mission service to Vera Lloyd. Robert and Ashley Webb, house parents, and the boys who live in the Lewis Home are inspired to maintain improvements and keep the home looking its best.

School Supplies

Several churches are providing school supplies for the 40 youth at Vera Lloyd who begin school on August 17. We are grateful to First Presbyterian, Morrilton and Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church (Little Rock) for hosting church-wide school supply drives for our boys and girls. Thank you to Trinity Presbyterian Church in Little Rock, Westover Hills Presbyterian Church in Little Rock, First Presbyterian Church in Camden (from Pines Presbytery), Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock and others who are helping to make sure Vera Lloyd youth are ready for the first day of school.

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New Region Map

The Presbytery Restructure Task Force presented a new map of Regions for the Presbytery of Arkansas. This new map was approved by a vote of the presbytery in October 2014. For a list of the churches in each region, [click here](#). For a map with the new regions, [click here](#).

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Presbytery Welcomes Nomination Suggestions

The Committee on Nominations asks for your suggestions for names of people who would be good candidates to serve on presbytery committees. You may submit these names by completing the Nominations Form at the following link: [2015 Nominations Form](#).

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Prayer List for Congregations -- 2015 can be found [here](#).

(Note: some web browsers may require you to press and hold the "Ctrl" key while you click the link to reach the linked website).

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PRESBYTERY STAFF:

General Presbyter [BILL GALBRAITH](#)

Stated Clerk [ROBERT LOWRY](#)

Assistant Stated Clerk [DAVID DYER](#)

Resourcing Director [NIANN THOMPSON](#)

Director of Mission Support [KENNETH RICH](#)

Staff Resource for Youth [BRITTON VARN](#)

Staff Resource for Congregational Care & Development [MICHAEL VINSON](#)
Treasurer ["BUZZ" ROBERTS](#)
Moderator of Presbytery [ED WILKINSON](#)
Moderator of the General Committee [CLARE KELLEY](#)
Vice Moderator of Presbytery [LACY SELLARS](#)

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The Presbytery of Arkansas is a council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), which is part of the Reformed family of churches within the universal Church of Jesus Christ. Our vision is *to make visible the body of Christ* (Acts II).

We are composed of over 14,000 Presbyterians gathered in 87 active churches, a new church development and one ministry 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>