

November 2015

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

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"On the Way In and Out"

Breaking with tradition, your new General Presbyter is not another, "Bill." It was a privilege to follow the other, "Bills" - McLean, Henning and Branch. It is a delight that Stewart Smith has been elected as the next General Presbyter of the Presbytery of Arkansas. Stewart will officially begin his term as General Presbyter toward the end of November. The Presbytery has been blessed by Stewart's ministry through his years as a member of this presbytery. The congregations he has helped lead have thrived under his caring and personable leadership. As Stewart and his wife, Laura, an elementary school teacher, begin the new phase in their vocations, please pray for them as they make the transition from their long-time relationship with the good folk of Springdale and First Presbyterian.



As you know, I will soon be moving from Arkansas to Oklahoma. The years in this Presbytery have been a blessing and a source for personal thanksgiving. Moving into retirement, I look forward to different ways of serving and hope that our paths may continue to cross. I also anticipate ventures in learning how to thrive in retirement. Maybe it comes with age, but one of the gifts of the years is the realization that we are better together than alone. We are more alive when receiving love and extending love. Wholeheartedly loving God and others is our life task and, according to Jesus, our main calling.

This greatest of all commandments is one we are challenged to live into. We love because we've been loved. The expectation is to pass it on. Over six years ago, a small group from one of our congregations reached out to me. "Come over for dinner," they invited. I accepted and found so much more than I'd expected from a pork tenderloin supper. I didn't wind up joining their church but regularly they showered me with their genuine care and the fun to be had with those who take themselves lightly enough to laugh at their silliness. Even though the miles between us will be greater, I take friendship with me that will last over the years.

Writers credit those who have helped them in specific ways. When it comes to this chapter of life unfolding to the next, I thank these special companions on the way: David, Debbie, Mary Ellen, Ellen, Debbie, Shep and Kaye, the "Dinner Group," people of God with whom there is always a joyful feast.

Grace always,

Bill

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Church Employment Opportunities in or near our Presbytery

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.

Other Opportunities

Office Manager (LifeQuest of Arkansas) --

Hours: 24-32 hours per week, Monday through Thursday

Benefits: Annual leave; sick leave; holidays; 50% health plan premium; annual employer contribution to individual IRA

Minimum requirements: 50+ wpm keyboarding with high degree of accuracy; excellent computer skills; ability to manage database software and QuickBooks financial recordkeeping. Experience with audio-visual equipment a plus. General responsibilities: Maintain database and financial records; provide support for operations of education programs, fundraising activities, volunteer leaders, and Executive Director.

Pay: commensurate with skills and experience

To apply: provide a resume with references and contact information to Ann Leek, Executive Director, at: aleek@lifequestofarkansas.org

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](#).

YOURS FREE FOR THE TAKING! -- Park Hill Presbyterian Church in North Little Rock has available free for the taking on a first-come, first-served basis 215 copies of the red 1955 *The Hymnbook* and 132 copies of the blue 1990 *Presbyterian Hymnal: Hymns, Psalms and Spiritual Songs*. Contact Amy Jones at 501-753-9533 or parkhillpres@sbcglobal.net.

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People and Church News

News of Our People

- Dr. Andrew Kreckmann** is the new choirmaster/organist at First, Arkadelphia.
- Don VerKuilen** is the new organist/choir director at Westminster Presbyterian, Hot Springs.

News of Our Congregations

- Wynne Presbyterian** enjoyed a Kirkin' of the Tartans service on Oct. 25 when they celebrated the 130th anniversary of the church and distributed booklets of memories created as a keepsake.
- First, Springdale** has begun a Fresh Start for Singles Group meeting on Thursday evening for a book discussion.
- First, Rogers** started a Lunchtime Express Workout on Tuesday and Thursday from 1 to 1:45 and offers Yoga on Tuesday evening.
- Comunidad Presbiteriana Hispana** in Springdale established a Saturday evening Bible study in Rogers.
- Holiday Island Presbyterian** will share a Stewardship Thank You dinner on Nov. 15.
- First, Dardanelle** was among several churches that honored those saints who died in the Lord this year in the worship service on Nov. 1, All Saints' Day.
- First, Newport** has been approved to form a Pastor Nominating Committee to search for a called and installed pastor for the congregation. Several of the churches in the presbytery are likewise searching.
- Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center**, Little Rock, recently received a "Champions for Kids" award for their Stop Hunger Now Meal Packaging event.
- Central, Fort Smith** hosted the Presbyterian Women's fall gathering of Cluster VI on Nov. 7.
- The Laotian Fellowship** nested at **First, Fort Smith** prepared and served a Laotian Holiday Luncheon on Nov. 8 as a "thank you" for the partnership they have with the host church.

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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.

END OF THE YEAR READING FOR TEACHING ELDERS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES

--"**Understanding Effective Salary: Benefits through the stages of your life**" from The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and "**Benefits Administration Handbook for Churches and Employing Organizations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)** developed for church treasurers, clerks of session, and business administrators" from The Board of Pensions of the PC(U.S.A.)

IDEAL FOR DECEMBER 27 or JANUARY 3

Not sure how to prepare for low or high attendance of children right after Christmas? Here you go!

Animated DVDs for Children from Veggie Tales: "**The Star of Christmas**" with book (Acc. #DVD9608 [45 minutes] and book8004) teaches that it's the true story of God's love that shows us how to love one another at Christmas and year-round. "**It's a Meaningful Life: A Lesson in Being Content**" (Acc. #DVD9475, 48 minutes) allows Stewart to re-live the biggest football game of his life and see how having everything he (thought he) always wanted would affect his family, friends and job. "**The Little Drummer Boy**" (Acc. #DVD9584, 45 minutes) is the Veggie-version of a holiday classic of a lonely child who finds the meaning of Christmas in the unexpected birth of a baby. "**Saint Nicholas: A Story of Joyful Giving**" (Acc. #DVD9328, 45 minutes) relates a family in danger of losing dad's job to the story of little Nicholas who discovered the true joy of giving to others.

More for children.

"**Oscar Wilde's The Story of the Selfish Giant, A Christmas Parable**" (Acc. #DVD8944, 25 minutes) features original artwork and music in the gentle story of love and sacrifice.

"**Three Christmas Classics**" (Acc. #DVD9110) features English and Spanish tracks on the collection of three favorites. "Christmas Is" animated classic about the boy who played second shepherd until his

dream of visiting that first Christmas (22 minutes). "The City that Forgot about Christmas" is reminded by a woodcarver to claim the joy of Christ (22 minutes). "The Stableboy's Christmas" is a life action return to Bethlehem where a stableboy gives the baby his pet lamb (27 minutes).

And for that adult small group or class...

"Star Over Bethlehem" (Acc. #DVD9774, 30 minutes) is the Christmas story from the Annunciation in Nazareth to the Nativity in Bethlehem on the actual locations with rites, traditions, sights and chants.

"A Thrill of Hope: The Christmas Story in Word and Art" (Acc. #DVD9581, 50 minutes) with discussion guide features biblical scholars and professor of preaching discussing how the stories from Matthew and Luke are brought to life in John August Swanson's brilliantly colored paintings and prints.

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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Rev. Elizabeth Gabbard Installed at First--Arkadelphia

On Sunday, October 18th, Rev. Elizabeth Gabbard was installed as pastor at First--Arkadelphia.



Left to right: Presbytery moderator RE Ed Wilkinson, RE Ed McCorkle, Rev. Bill Galbraith, RE Charlotte Scott, RE Julie Gillaspay, Rev. Elizabeth Gabbard, CRE Claire Rhodes, Rev. Dari Rowen, Rev. Lacy Sellars

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Courtney Bacon-Latina Ordained and Installed at First--Malvern

On Sunday, October 25th, Courtney Bacon-Latina was ordained and installed as pastor at First--Malvern.



Front row, left to right: RE Cyril Hollingsworth, Rev. Courtney Bacon-Latina, RE Pat Watkins.
Second row, left to right: Rev. Dari Rowen, Rev. Anne Russ, Rev. Erin Potter Kaye, Rev. Sally Johnson
Third row, left to right: RE Corbet Lamkin, RE NiAnn Thompson, RE Ed Wilkinson

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Rev. Mike Ulasewich Installed at First--Conway

On Sunday, November 1st, Rev. Mike Ulasewich was installed as pastor at First--Conway.



Left to right: Rev. Anne Russ, Rev. Mike Ulasewich, Rev. Marie Mainard-O'Connell, Rev. Robert Lowry, RE Ed Wilkinson, Rev. Ruskin Falls, RE Julie Adkisson.

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Interfaith of Arkansas Pilgrimage to be held April 28 - May 1, 2016

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 April 28 through May 1, 2016. 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 from our Scholarship and Endowment Fund. Also, if anyone is interested in contributing to the Scholarship and Endowment Fund, information is available at the website below.

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 April 18, 2016.

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

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Interfaith Arkansas Annual Assembly -- Thursday, Nov 12th

The Interfaith Arkansas Annual Assembly will meet Thursday, November 12th from 10 am - 2 pm at Christ Episcopal Church, 509 Scott St, Downtown Little Rock. The cost is \$10, which includes lunch. The speaker is Dr. Jessica Martinez. Dr. Martinez will give a presentation related to her report titled "America's Changing Landscape." For a flyer of the event, [click here](#).

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Park Hill (North Little Rock) and Second Presbyterian (Little Rock) Host "Comfort For Those Who Mourn" Retreat on Saturday, December 5th

Park Hill Presbyterian church in North Little Rock will host a one-day retreat for those who have lost loved ones. The retreat is also sponsored by Second Presbyterian Church's Pastoral Care Ministry. The cost is \$15 per person, and includes lunch, snacks, and all programming. For more information, you may email Karen Akin (Second Presbyterian) at karenakin@secondpreslr.org or call Park Hill at 501-753-9533. For a flyer with more information, [click here](#).

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Second Presbyterian (Little Rock) Hosts a Special Service for Those Living With Memory Loss--Tuesday, December 1st

"All Are Welcome In This Place," a service for all who are living with memory loss (and their caregivers) will be held at Second Presbyterian (600 Pleasant Valley Dr.) in Little Rock on Tuesday, December 1st from 1:00pm-2:00pm. For more information or to RSVP, contact Karen Akin at karenakin@secondpreslr.org or 501-227-0000. For a flyer with more information about the event, [click here](#).

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Forming Community

*Rev. Michael Vinson, Staff Resource
Congregational Vitality*

For the last few months we been putting together a list of important things to work on as a faith community that is healthy, thriving in change and developing leaders to accomplish its ministry. The next step in this process is to develop the community to accomplish its mission.

After you are clear on the purpose of your faith community, after you have the leadership to help you accomplish that purpose and have developed a vision of what the future might look like related to the purpose and the leadership then you are ready to explore community. By the time you have spent some time getting clarity about purpose, developing leadership and casting a vision for the future you may be wondering if you have the right community to accomplish your purpose. One of the great things about being clear about your purpose is that it attracts a community that can help accomplish the purpose. But the opposite is also true. Once you get clarity of purpose there may be some folks who realize that this is no longer a community they want to be a part of or have the gifts to serve. Believe it or not, that is OK. We all go through phases of life where things change. Part of change is knowing when to move on and knowing when to recommit.

It is important to have the right community to help you accomplish your purpose. When we are unclear about our purpose we have a group of people trying to form community but are not sure what they are to focus on. Sometimes, this lack of focus sends the faith community in many directions doing good things but never really making any progress in any area. A healthy community knows what it is doing and why it is doing it and what it is going to look like. The strong, flexible community is able to discern what things help move it in the direction of its purpose and which things distract it from its purpose. When resources of people, skills, facilities and money are short it is important to have a community moving in the same direction. A healthy community always asks the question: "How does this help us accomplish our purpose?"

A healthy community always takes time to reflect together through some large group process such as Open Space Technology or Whole Person Process Facilitation to assess how it is doing in accomplishing its purpose, setting missional priorities and providing opportunities for leadership in accomplishing its purpose. Each congregation in the PCUSA is encouraged to have an annual meeting. At this meeting, issues of the corporation/business side of the church are dealt with and this is also a good time for the community to reflect on how it is doing in accomplishing its purpose through one of these large group strategies.

A strong, healthy, flexible community takes time to figure out what things work, what things need improvement and when it's time to let things go. If you are interested in assessing your community for how it is doing in accomplish its mission, developing its mission or if you are interested in exploring some part of your mission through a congregational meeting process please feel free to contact me at mvinson17@gmail.com

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Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News

**Presbytery of Arkansas Delegation
to Presbyterian Youth Triennium!**

July 18-23, 2016

**Purdue University
West Lafayette, IN**

**\$685 per youth (entering 9th grade through
graduated 12th) and Work Crew (at least 1
year out of high school, approx. 19-23 years)**

\$400 per adult (21+)

Registration deadline: January 15

www.presbyterianyouthtriennium.org
www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/frmyouthcouncil.aspx

Trip Information and Registration for Presbyterian Youth Triennium 2016 will be posted to the Presbytery website on Friday!

**Want to stay updated about Youth Ministry happenings in the Presbytery?
"Like" us on Facebook!**

Search

PresbyteryofArkansasYouthMinistry

on Facebook,

or go to

www.facebook.com/PresbyteryofArkansasYouthMinistry

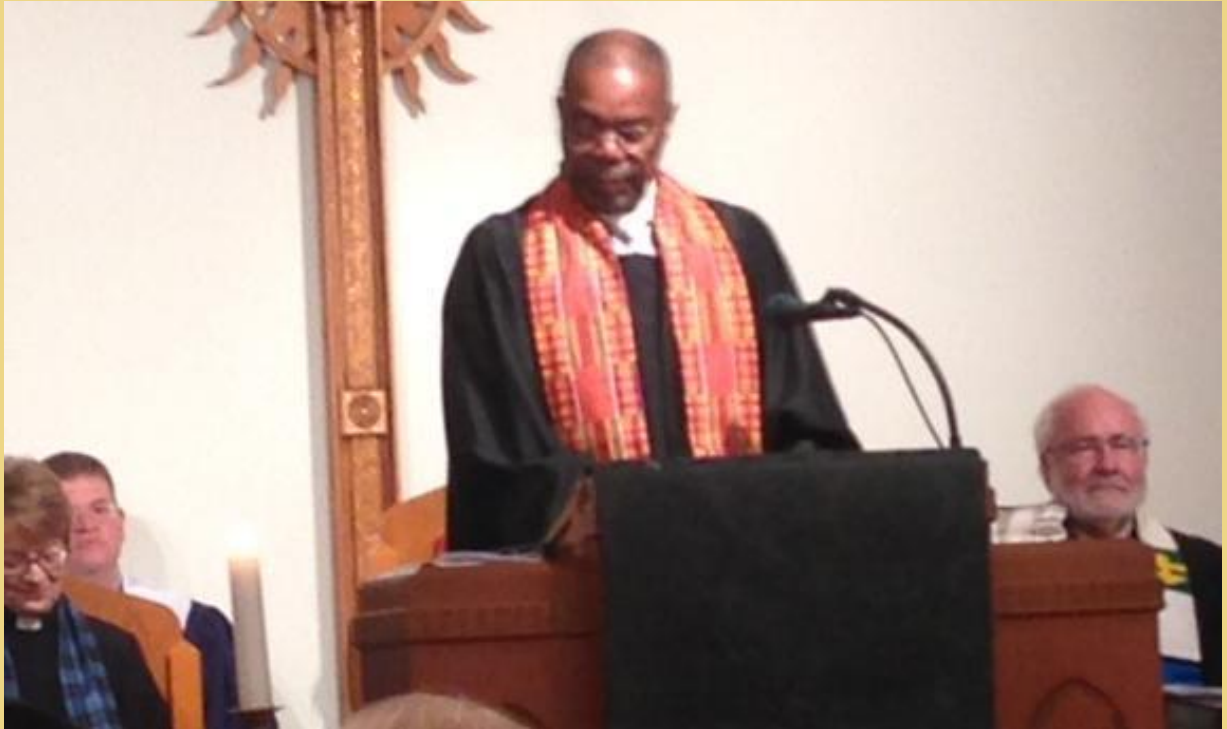
This page is for anyone wishing to stay updated about Youth Ministry happenings in the Presbytery -- Youth Workers, parents, youth, Educators, Pastors.

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

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Presbyterian Heritage Celebration in Pine Bluff

The Faith, Central and First Presbyterian congregations of Pine Bluff gathered on November 1, to celebrate Presbyterian Heritage Sunday. The celebration has been an annual tradition of the Pine Bluff congregations. Worship leadership was provided by Commissioned Ruling Elder Harlis Wright, commissioned ruling elder of Faith; Susie Wiggins, transitional teaching elder of First Presbyterian; and David King, transitional teaching elder of Central Presbyterian along with others including: Ruling Elder Dr. Bettye Wright, Ruling Elder Jo Neal, Judge John Kearney, Dr. Mary Benjamin, Ruling Elder Rick Pierce, Dr. Jess Anthony and Marty Shell. Following a time of silent preparation, Wendall Hall led the procession of all the worship leaders. Commissioned Ruling Elder Wright preached focusing on the heritage of Presbyterians who sought a church in which all were welcome. Holy Communion was celebrated and a blessing of the tartans was also offered for all who desired. At the conclusion of worship, the congregations joined for lunch hosted by the Faith congregation. The morning's offering was designated for the Neighbor to Neighbor program, an ongoing ministry in Pine Bluff.





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SOS! Get Out Your Bucket List for Ferncliff Buckets and Kits!

Here's a cool way to give thanks this holiday season. After the October 4 flooding in South Carolina, Ferncliff cleared its Disaster Assistance Center shelves of all the buckets and Gift of the Heart kits they had on hand. We ask you to help re-supply them with flood buckets, hygiene kits, school kits, and/or baby kits before the next disaster.

Arkansas -- and other -- Presbyterians have been very generous in the past, and we are confident we will rise to the occasion again. We just don't know when the next big thing (ice storm, flood, tornado, hurricane, or wildfire) will happen. So we ask that all of us give thanks for our material and spiritual blessings and help Ferncliff prepare for our neighbors' future needs.

Bucket lists and kit supply lists are available at <http://www.cwsglobal.org/get-involved/kits/>

Information on Ferncliff Disaster Assistance center is at <http://ferncliff.org/outreach/disaster-assistance/>

--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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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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Prayer List for Congregations -- 2016 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 Calendar](#)

PRESBYTERY STAFF:

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>