



December 2017

# The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas

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## Self-Care

Stewart Smith, General Presbyter

I used my second week of continuing education to attend a CREDO conference (November 28-December 4) that is hosted by the Board of Pensions. The Board of Pensions has been offering these conferences for pastors for about the last ten years, adopting the same model used by the Episcopal Church. This was the first CREDO offered for presbytery executives.

CREDO is a gift of time and reflection from the Board of Pensions that I found extremely helpful. I encourage any pastor to immediately accept the invitation when it comes in the mail. You pay a registration fee of \$500.00 and the rest of the costs are covered by the Board of Pensions.



Participants spend time reflecting on four vital components of their life - spiritual vitality, vocational call, financial well-being, and physical and emotional health. The week is a blend of plenary sessions, individual consultations, excellent worship, small group sessions with fellow participants, and individual reflection time. Participants are asked to work towards a CREDO "Rule of Life" (formerly a CREDO plan) which examines a person's core values and how those integrate into all areas of his or her life. Before the conference, homework assignments consist of various exercises to gauge our current level of health in the four areas mentioned above which includes a complete medical physical. It had been two years since my last physical, right before I took the General Presbyter position. I guess I shouldn't be surprised that my blood pressure levels have risen since then along with some other areas that need attention.

The result of my week produced my "rule of life" that is guided by two passages of scripture. One is the great commandment *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* (Matthew 22:37-39 NRSV) These verses have guided me through the years of my ministry as our denomination has wrestled with various difficult issues such as sexuality. In the congregations I served I would say, "I don't claim to know God's mind on these issues, but I do know that God calls me to love my neighbor. And the parable of the Good Samaritan teaches us that everyone is our neighbor." This "Great Commandment" has been foundational to me throughout my ministry. The other passage that guides me is from John chapter 10 verse 10. Jesus said, *"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."* (NRSV)

I discovered in my CREDO work and reflection time that there are times when the demands of ministry become so heavy, that the attempt to love and give to my neighbors (i.e. congregation or presbytery) takes precedent over the need to love and take care of myself. It can become difficult to embrace and live into the abundant life that Jesus came to bring us. My annual physical produced tangible results that illustrated the lack of self-care in my own life. Failing to take a day off, failing to exercise regularly, failing to adhere to a healthy diet, failing to find productive ways to deal with stress, internalizing and carrying home difficult issues from work; have produced some medical markers that have reminded me of the need for self-care. I have already begun to make some needed changes related to diet and exercise and managing stress.

I share this as a reminder to the pastors reading this not to neglect taking care of yourself. Give yourself permission to take steps in your own life that lead to better self-care. And I share this to members of congregations to encourage your pastors to take those steps. Ministry is a demanding and stressful vocation. Encourage your pastor to take a day off during the week. Allow your pastor time to interact with colleagues who understand very well the demands and stresses of ministry. Support them if they need to visit with Rebecca

Spooner or one of the counselors from the Wellspring Center or another mental health provider. Your pastor will be able to better attend to the needs of your congregation (your neighbors) if your pastor is taking care of him or herself.

This is a special time of the year in the life of the church. In the midst of the busyness that comes with all of the preparations to celebrate Christmas, I remind you that God sent Jesus Christ into the world for you. Yes -- Christ came for everyone -- but specifically also for you. And he came so that we might have abundant life. We are called to share that gift with others, and I hope that this Christmas, if it is needed, you can share that gift again with yourself. Self-care is extremely important, if we are going to be the people that God calls us to be. We will love our neighbors more effectively, if we are taking time to take care of ourselves.

May each of you experience once again the wonder and the joy of Immanuel, God with us. And may God richly bless your celebrations of Advent, Christmas and the New Year! I am grateful to call you friends and neighbors and to be joined with you in the task of making visible the body of Christ in this special time and place!!

*Stewart*

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## **Nominations Sought for Committee, Ministry Area Service**

Presbytery's Committee on Nominations is seeking names of qualified and willing persons to serve on presbytery ministry areas or committees or subcommittee beginning in 2018. To download the current form, [click here](#).

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## **Church Employment (and Other) Opportunities in our Presbytery**

**Pastor -- Huntsville First Presbyterian Church** --First Presbyterian Church (Huntsville) seeks a half-time pastor to help lead their congregation. Full details are available through the CLC portal through [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org). Inquiries can be directed via email to Jason Holt at [jholtmd@gmail.com](mailto:jholtmd@gmail.com). The website for the church is:

<http://fphar.church>.

**First Presbyterian Church of Walnut Ridge** is searching for a full-time minister. Full salary and benefits are available. The church is prepared to help that person repay educational debt over a several year period. For more information, please contact Tom Moore, (870) 219-9379, [thomasmoore929@gmail.com](mailto:thomasmoore929@gmail.com).

**Central Presbyterian Church (Fort Smith, AR)** is searching for a full-time pastor. The church is between 251-400 members, with average worship attendance of 86 members. Desired experience is Solo Pastor/Head of Staff with 5-10 years of experience. Central Presbyterian Church is a welcoming community of faith that seeks to serve Jesus Christ through sharing our collective talents, proclaiming the Gospel, feeding the hungry, healing the brokenhearted, supporting local and worldwide missions, and enjoying the journey with the Triune God. For more information, visit the church's website at [www.centralfortsmith.org](http://www.centralfortsmith.org), email at [info@centralfortsmith.org](mailto:info@centralfortsmith.org) or call 479-783-8966.

**Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock** seeks *Associate Pastor for Congregational Nurture*. The person in this full-time ordained position will provide leadership and support for the church's ministries of pastoral care and counseling, hospital visitation, and congregational fellowship. Job Description can be found at <http://www.secondpreslr.org/search-for-associate-pastor/>. Personal Information Forms can be sent to Philip Shell at [pshell88@gmail.com](mailto:pshell88@gmail.com).

**Presbytery of Arkansas -- Interim Staff Resource for Youth (Part Time)**

The search committee for an *Interim Staff Resource for Youth* position is now accepting applications. Members of the search committee are Catherine Allsbury, Kristi Button and Geoff Ryken.

Responsibilities include serving as the staff resource for the Youth Advisory Team and the Youth, Young Adults and Campus Ministry Area and Coordinating Youth Events and registrations. For a full job description of this position, [click here](#). Applications and inquires can be sent to General Presbyter Stewart Smith at the presbytery office (9221 N. Rodney Parham, Little Rock, AR 72227) or by email ([stewart@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto:stewart@presbyteryofarkansas.org)).

**First, Clarksville** has 23 blue choir robes, approximately 100 place settings of china embossed with "Presbyterian Church" in gold, and approximately 100 Blue Hymnals. These items are free to anyone who will come get them. For a file with photos, [click here](#). Contact Pat Farmer at [nyphinny@gmail.com](mailto:nyphinny@gmail.com).

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## Synod Educators "Adopt a Class" Hurricane Relief Project

Would Sunday School Classes or members of your congregation like to assist congregations in New Covenant and Mission Presbyteries who were impacted by Hurricane Harvey? Do you have a Christmas market or other mission opportunities coming up this month? What about adopting a Sunday School Class or two?

The Southcentral Region of the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (SCRAPCE) is sponsoring an "Adopt a Class" program. Impacted congregations will be able to apply for grants of up to \$1000 per classroom to help them replace supplies, curriculum, and equipment. We are working with Presbytery staff who have identified the need. In order to provide the funds, SCRAPCE Educator members are asking congregations across the Synod of the Sun to consider collecting funds to help with the project. Then a Sunday School Class (or group) from a particular congregation will be matched with an impacted Sunday School class so that they can exchange cards, pictures, prayers, and build a relationship.

Contributions are being received through the spring and grants (and class matching) will be made when requests arrive and funds are available. SCRAPCE asks that contributions come as one check per church sent to the treasurer in Houston with a donation form. Go to [www.apcenet.org/south-central](http://www.apcenet.org/south-central) to download a flyer with information including the address to send the checks and the needed donation form. Contact Miatta Wilson at [Miattaw@fpcdallas.org](mailto:Miattaw@fpcdallas.org) with questions.

For a flyer about the program, [click here](#). For a donor form, [click here](#).

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**From the Temporary Stated Clerk: Calling All Clerks!!!**

Clerks of Session are the glue of Presbyterianism - you record who we are, what we're doing, and what direction God is calling us. Every month it is the Clerk who tracks the actions of the Session, and generally reports to the congregation.

A few times of the year you have additional tasks - tasks that your Temporary Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Arkansas thanks you for - and those times are quickly approaching. They are:

1. Completing PC(USA) Statistical Reports - Due February 1, 2018
2. Having the records of the church reviewed annually - Between February 1 and May 31, 2018

**Since Friday, December 1 you may enter your "Statistics of the Church" report for year-end 2017. You have all of December and January to complete this report - they are due the first of February!!! To fill out the report go to <http://oga.pcusa.org/stats>. If you don't know your PIN I can help you.**

If you're new to your position take heart - all of this is new to me, too, so we'll learn together! If you have any questions please contact me at [lesliebeld@aol.com](mailto:lesliebeld@aol.com) or 479.466.1061. If I can't immediately answer your questions I'll contact our friends in Louisville and find out.

Also, **I want to remind all Clerks of Session that all congregational records need to be reviewed annually.** This includes your church rolls and records, and your minutes of session meetings and congregational meetings. This year we will be offering multiple ways of accomplishing this task, beginning with gathering all Clerks of Session, or their representative, of a region together to review one another's records. **This regional gathering for records review needs to be scheduled between February and May.** If your region is geographically large, two such gatherings may be scheduled in different places.

**I encourage Moderators/Pastors to communicate among yourselves in your region and assist in setting up a time for the records review sometime in February-May, and to also attend and take part in the review.**

Thanks so much for all that you do to keep us doing things "decently and in order!" I am...

Yours in Christ,  
Rev. Leslie Belden  
Temporary Stated Clerk

P. S. -- the Annual Church Information Form will also be coming your way early in 2018.

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## People and Church News

### NEWS OF OUR PEOPLE

--Christian sympathy goes to the family of **Rev. W. Guy Delaney**, 86, of Perryville who died in Little Rock on November 17, 2017. He was an honorably retired minister member of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

Guy was born in Houston, TX; graduated from Texas A&M, Austin Presbyterian Seminary with a M.Div and Union Seminary in Virginia with a D.Min. Ordained by Brazos Presbytery, he served churches in TX and Virginia, was Director of Continuing Education at Union Seminary, and for eight years was president of Mo-Ranch Presbyterian Assembly, Hunt, TX. In the Presbytery of Arkansas, Guy was associate pastor at Second, Little Rock and pastor at Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village before retiring in 1999. Returning to AR he served as interim pastor at First, Jonesboro; First, Little Rock; and First, Morrilton. His service to this Presbytery included terms on Committees on Ministry, Christian Education and Administration and as chairman of the board of trustees of Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services. Guy was preceded in death by his wife Charlotte, daughter Rebecca, and sister Billie. Guy is survived by daughters Amy Young, Annette Delaney, and Elaine Delaney; two sons-in-law; his sister and brother-in-law; and seven grandchildren. A memorial service will be scheduled in 2018 at First, Morrilton.

--**Kimberly Rodriguez** has completed duties as the administrative assistant at Westminster Presbyterian, Hot Springs.

--Two new staff members have been added to the team at Second Presbyterian, Little Rock, led by Rev. Jen Evans, Associate Pastor for Youth, Young Adult, and Young Family Ministries. **Ashley Nipp** is the part-time Director of Young Adult Ministry and will be remembered as a Young Adult Volunteer with the PC(USA) working at Ferncliff who preached at the June presbytery meeting. **Ruth Arnold** is the part-time Director of Youth Ministry while finishing her English degree at UCA, Conway. She will be remembered as the daughter of Revs. John and Susan Arnold, now of Texarkana and formerly of Hot Springs, and a student at Lyon College, Batesville.



New and returning ruling elders for churches in northwest Arkansas met on Nov. 20 for their annual training classes and fellowship meal at First, Springdale. This long-standing tradition supplements training that occurs in the local church before new elders are examined, ordained (if needed) and installed.

### **NEWS OF OUR CONGREGATIONS**

--**First, Prairie Grove** publicizes events in the community that benefit non-profits such as high school scholarships and the local library as well as church events such as the Young Folks Cookie Baking & Cookie Exchange on Dec. 11 to benefit Vera Lloyd Children's Home.

--**First, Springdale** has started their Advent Wednesday night Fellowship Series Nov.29 through Dec. 20, featuring a meal and book study.

--**Graham Memorial Presbyterian, Forrest City** plans solos and duet music on Dec. 17 and a Living Nativity outdoors.

--Audio broadcasts of Sunday's sermons are now available from the webpage of **First, Hot Springs**.

--**Second Presbyterian, Little Rock's** capital campaign commitment Sunday is set for Feb. 11 with funds designated to replace the organ, renovate the choir loft and the Great Hall, update the church's technology and install solar panels.

--**Central Presbyterian, Pine Bluff** celebrated the 20th anniversary in their current building on November 5.

--**First, Benton** "Christmas Delights" on the evening of December 2 included Christmas trains, photos with Santa, silent auction, bake sale and decorated trees.

--Members who joined in 2017 will be recognized at the All **Kirk, Hot Springs Village**, Dinner on Jan. 29 at Presbyterian Kirk in the Pines.



--In November **First, Fort Smith** members collected pieces (photos, short stories and anecdotes) for an exhibit about the role their Hobson Preschool has played in people's lives.

## Resource Center News

by [NiAnn Thompson](#), Resourcing Director  
Phone 501.663.2424, ext. 104  
Monday & Wednesday, 7:45 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](http://www.facebook.com/PresbyteryOfArkansas). Rev. Anne Russ at First, North Little Rock (Argenta) at 501.374.7677 or email [revruss@gmail.com](mailto:revruss@gmail.com) will be glad to answer your questions.

### RAVE REVIEWS

--Elder Karen Herbert, Grace Presbyterian, Little Rock compliments "**Bethlehem Year Zero**" DVD as being well received by one of their adult classes in its format of retelling the old, old story as you would see on the evening news. (This might be a thought for Dec. 24 intergenerational Sunday School this Christmas Eve morning.) She also reports that a church group liked very much "**Vanishing Grace: What Ever Happened to the Good News?**" by Philip Yancey (Acc. #DVD9849). This 5-part small group Bible study kit (DVD with 19 to 21 minute segments, hardback book and study guide) explores what kind of news is good to a culture that thinks it has rejected the Christian version.

--Church Educator Jeannie Ford, Second Presbyterian, Little Rock reports a good response from the monthly book/DVD study of "**Half Truths: God Helps Those Who Help Themselves and Other Things the Bible Doesn't Say**" (Acc.#DVD9915). The 5-week session looks at common sayings (like the subtitle) that capture some element of truth but miss the real wisdom to be found in Scripture.

**LAST MINUTES CHRISTMAS OPTIONS** are available from YOUR Resource Center for loan. The office and the Center close on Friday, Dec. 22, and reopen on Wednesday, January 3, 2018.

## LOOKING TO THE NEW YEAR

Can't go wrong with a video-based Bible study to kick off 2018!

--"Book by Book," an ongoing series on the books of the Bible with co-hosts Richard Bewes and Paul Blackham, has released two new offerings. "**Job** with Glen Scrivener" with 10 segments of 15 minutes each, wants to teach us to think again about suffering as containing some of the deepest treasures from God. "**Mark** with Rico Tice," also with 10 video segments of 15 minutes each, calls us to turn around and allow our world to be turned upside down by Jesus Christ. The Job video covers highlights from three to six chapters in each segment, and Mark video covers about two to three chapters in each segment.

--For many church members, caregiving of family or friends is a way of life. When that ends, they would benefit from new DVD study from Paraclete Press, Inc. "**The Transforming Power of Caregiving: Returning to Life After Caregiving Ends.**" Segments include "A New Beginning," "A New Normal" and "New Life Discoveries." This might be of interest to neighbors beyond the church walls.

--With the new year come new possibilities. "**Saying Yes: Discovering and Responding to God's Will in Your Life**" book and DVD offer clear, practical spiritual advice with concise counsel and real-life examples of the benefits of the ancient practice of discernment.

**Website Opportunities for training and Lent observance** come from these suggestions from sister and fellow educators in our Synod. Webinars of Practical Resources for Churches ([www.prcli.org](http://www.prcli.org)) on this curated website of training resources include: Children's Literature for Lent and Easter, Jan. 11; Youth-Created VBS: A Leadership Lab on Feb. 1, Asset-Based Approach to Transforming Community, Feb. 15; and Confirmation and Special Needs, March 1. [www.40act.org.uk](http://www.40act.org.uk) offers daily blog entries with stories of generosity, challenges for action of time/energy and resources for all ages for Lent. "More than One Story" Story Cards from [www.welcomingamerica.org/mtos](http://www.welcomingamerica.org/mtos) facilitate the process of integration and inclusion for youth groups, small groups, interfaith and intergenerational conversations as we see what we have in common rather than what separates us.

## THANK YOU AT YEAR'S END

To the members of the Resource Center Advisory Board, the Mission of the Church Ministry Area which oversees and encourages Christian Education and Mission in and for the presbytery, and the patrons of YOUR Resource Center. We are so glad to be in partnership with you as you encourage the spiritual development and ministry of your congregations' members and their families and friends in communities all over Arkansas.

Reminder that I will be out of the office for medical leave beginning December 11. Kenneth and Stewart will be pinch-hitting so please act early to contact Kenneth by phone or email or in person to facilitate your resource loan. My office phone will not be monitored during my absence.

Adventurous Advent, Merry Christmas and True Epiphany, I wish for all of you.

(Your Resource Center receives funding from the presbytery's Mission of the Church ministry area.)

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## **Presbytery of Arkansas Youth News**

### **Upcoming Youth Events and Trips sponsored by the Youth Advisory Team**

**Youth Advisory Team Winter Meeting (location tbd) - January 19-20, 2018**

**Youth at Presbytery (Lyon College) - February 9-10, 2018**

**Sr. High Youthquake (Ferncliff) - April 13-15, 2018**

**Trip to PC(U.S.A.) General Assembly (St. Louis) - June 15-21, 2018**

**Jr. High Jubilee (Mo Ranch, TX) - June 30-July 5, 2018**

**Montreat Youth Conference (Montreat, NC) - July 21-28, 2018**

**(These dates are also posted at [www.presbyteryofarkansas.org](http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org) under "Ministries," then "Youth Council.")**

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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](http://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 new Ministries with Youth, Young Adults, and Campus Ministry.)

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### **Apply for the Next Honduras Mission Trip**

The next mission trip to Honduras is Feb 10-17, 2018. This is a community development, home building trip in the region of Trinidad de Copan with a tourist day in the Copan Ruins area.

Members from all PC(USA) churches are invited to apply to participate. The trip maximum is 20 participants. More information to follow along with application.

Leigh Woodruff Harvey of First United Presbyterian of Fayetteville will be directing this trip.

You can contact Leigh at [leigh.woodruff@yahoo.com](mailto:leigh.woodruff@yahoo.com) or (479) 601-1437.

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### **INTERFAITH ARKANSAS YOUNG CLERGY ECUMENICAL FORMATION COHORT APPLICATION**

**Interfaith Arkansas** is creating an annual year-long ecumenical formation

cohort. The purpose of the cohort will be to work with other young pastors to study the roots of the ecumenical movement, to develop relationships with other young pastors in Arkansas of different denominational backgrounds and to take a trip to either the World Council of Churches offices in Geneva or the National Council of Churches in New York City (dependent upon adequate funding) in November of 2018. The cohort will consist of 10-12 participants.

**CRITERIA:** The pastor must meet the two following requirements: **A.** Be pastors who are 25-40 years of age or within the first 5-10 years of ordination or in the ordination process and, **B.** Must have willingness to be engaged in ecumenical life and conversation.

**MEETINGS:** The cohort will meet monthly for three hours.

**COST:** There will be no cost for participants.

### HOW TO APPLY

The cohort will begin after January 17, 2018. Applications will be due December 15, 2017. Please send the following information: Name, age, denomination and why you feel being in an ecumenical formation experience will be important for your ministerial growth.

- a. Name
- b. Age
- c. Denomination
- d. Why you feel this ecumenical formation experience will be important for your personal growth in ministry
- e. A reference from a denominational supervisor.

Please send your application to either [interfaithark@gmail.com](mailto:interfaithark@gmail.com) or to P. O. Box 2441, Little Rock, AR 72203.

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### Year-End and Winter Weather Reminders

The presbytery office will be closed from Monday, December 25th through Tuesday, January 2nd. Communications or vouchers must be in the office by Wednesday, December 20th to be processed before year-end.

As a reminder, the presbytery office is closed for winter weather if the Little Rock School Districts close for weather. We appreciate your patience.

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## Do You Have News for the Banner?

If you have something you would like us to consider for inclusion in the Banner newsletter, please send it

to: [kenneth@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto:kenneth@presbyteryofarkansas.org), [niann@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto:niann@presbyteryofarkansas.org),  
and [stewart@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto:stewart@presbyteryofarkansas.org). We cannot guarantee your submission will be published, but we will do our best to include what we can.

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**Prayer List for Congregations -- 2017** can be found [here](#).

**Prayer List for Congregations -- 2018** 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](#)

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### PRESBYTERY STAFF:

General Presbyter [STEWART SMITH](#)

Temporary Stated Clerk [LESLIE BELDEN](#)

Resourcing Director [NIANN THOMPSON](#)

Director of Mission Support [KENNETH RICH](#)

Staff Resource for Youth [BRITTON VARN](#)

Staff Resource for Vital Congregations [MICHAEL VINSON](#)

Treasurer [BOB BOEHMLER](#)

Moderator of Presbytery [RUTH HAMILTON](#)

Moderator of the Coordinating Team [LACY SELLARS](#)

Vice Moderator of Presbytery [LESLIE ROPER](#)



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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 12,000 Presbyterians gathered in 83 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>

Presbytery of Arkansas, 9221 N. Rodney Parham Rd., Little Rock, AR 72227