

July 2012

The Banner

Newsletter of the Presbytery of Arkansas



"Letter From 220th General Assembly"

The following pastoral letter from Presbyterian Church (USA) moderator, Neal Presa; Vice-Moderator, Tom Trinidad; Executive Director, General Assembly Mission Agency, Linda Valentine; and Stated Clerk, Gradye Parsons may be helpful as you consider the recent 220th General Assembly. Please use it to help interpret the actions of the Assembly to your families, congregations and neighbors.

Grace always,
Bill Galbraith
July 7, 2012



To congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Earlier today, the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) adjourned after a week of worship and work as the highest council of the denomination. Just under 900 elected commissioners and advisory delegates from every presbytery came from north, south, east, and west to discern together the mind of Christ for the PC(USA).

This assembly's theme, "*walking, running, soaring into hope*" (Isaiah 40:31) was a fitting description of the assembly in many ways. At one level, the commissioners worked tirelessly-meeting literally well into the early morning hours today to complete their work-and doing so with much energy and passion. At a deeper level, the deliberations and discernment of this assembly reflect a church that is endeavoring to know how to demonstrate faithfully and effectively the gospel of Jesus Christ in the 21st century.

Some of the highlights:

Worship - The assembly paused daily in the midst of its business, in the same space, to worship. Each of the preachers used the same text, Mark 2:1-12, chosen by outgoing GA Moderator, Cindy Bolbach. Commissioners and advisory delegates prayed and sang often, using selections from the upcoming new hymnal from the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, *Glory to God*, which the assembly voted to commend to the church (available in 2013; www.presbyterianhymnal.org).

Community - Those who have experienced a General Assembly speak overwhelmingly of the sense of connectedness that develops over the course of the assembly, and this one was no exception. Group meals, committee work, mission tours, exhibit hall, and more provided opportunities to make new friends and reconnect with those for whom an assembly is a "family reunion." You can get a sense of that community through the photo and video gallery and more at www.pcusa.org/ga220. The community extended beyond Pittsburgh, as well-thousands gathered in this country and around the world through social media to watch the proceedings (www.twitter.com/search/ga220).

Business - The assembly addressed roughly 800 items of business in the form of overtures, reports, commissioner resolutions and more. We recommend to you PC-biz (www.pc-biz.org), the online site where you can read about each item of business. Some topics that were before the assembly are likely to draw media attention-perhaps they already have where you live. We want to highlight some of them, sharing with you the actions taken by the assembly:

- *Definition of marriage* - The assembly chose not to change the current definition of marriage that is in the PC(USA) constitution, namely, that marriage is a civil contract "between a man and a woman." Rather, through its action to approve a two-year study, the assembly is inviting the entire church to engage in serious, deliberate conversation on this issue.
- *Middle East* - The assembly chose not to divest from three companies participating in "non-peaceful pursuits" in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. Rather, the assembly voted "to pursue a positive and creative course of action with respect to the current Palestinian/Israeli conflict," and to "devise a plan of active engagement and projects that will support collaboration among Christians, Jews, and Muslims." The assembly also approved a boycott on "all Israeli products coming from the occupied Palestinian territories."
- *1001 Movement* - The assembly overwhelmingly supported a movement to create 1001 worshiping communities (www.onethousandone.org). Those communities of faith will perhaps look much different from traditional congregations, but those that are already underway-in coffee shops, shopping malls, even on bicycles-are changing the world and the church for the sake of the gospel.

Commissioners and advisory delegates wrestled passionately together in heart, mind, and prayer, yet did so respectfully and graciously. Rarely were votes taken that had a wider margin than 60%-40%. On marriage and the Middle East issues, the voting results were extremely close. More than once, commissioners rose with requests to reconsider items

already approved.

Obviously, we are working through difficult issues that do not get easily resolved by one or two votes, or even within one or two years. Nevertheless, we stand firmly in the conviction and hope that God is present with us - behind, before, and beside us.

Each assembly committee opened its meeting with prayer and reflection on Paul's encouragement to the church in Ephesus: "...making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (4:3). This is our prayer, as well.

We pray that every effort will be made to continue conversation at every level of the church- from congregations to presbyteries to synods to the General Assembly-encouraging and engaging one another, maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

May the good and faithful work begun in Pittsburgh continue, remembering that "those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31).

In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who is our peace,

The Rev. Neal D. Presa
Moderator, 220th General Assembly
The Rev. Gradye Parsons
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

The Rev. Tom Trinidad
Vice Moderator, 220th General Assembly
Elder Linda Bryant Valentine
Executive Director, Presbyterian Mission Agency
(formerly General Assembly Mission Council)

Presbytery Mission Trip to Tuscaloosa, AL

September 16-22, 2012

WHO: Anyone (age 18 and older) is invited to go on this trip.

WHEN: We will leave on Sunday, September 16th and return late Saturday, September 22nd.

WHAT: While specifics are still unknown, most likely we will be doing clean-up and light construction assistance work.

WHERE: We will be working in the area of Tuscaloosa, AL through the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

WHY: We want to help to rebuild and restore hope to the people of Tuscaloosa

COST: The cost is \$220.00 (\$20 per day for room and board plus a \$100 deductible donation).

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION: August 31, 2012 (Limited to 30 persons)

MORE INFORMATION: Contact Susie Wright (501.525.1367 or 501.620.3335).

"Christ has no body on earth but yours; no hands but yours; no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which his compassion will look upon the world; yours are the feet with which he will go about doing good; yours are the hands with which he will bless others now."

--St Teresa of Avila

Presbytery Seeks Youth Ministry Leader for Staff

The Administration Committee has appointed a Youth Ministry Advocate Search Committee to seek a part-time staff member to serve as the primary liaison between the Presbytery and the A-Team (formerly, Youth Council). This person will serve as a part-time member of the Presbytery's staff and provide support to the A-Team. He or she will lift up youth ministry as a key focus of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

Organizationally, the staff member will be related to the Christian Education and Nurture Committee with accountability to the General Presbyter and the Personnel Sub-committee of the Administration Committee. Additional responsibilities may be assigned by the General Presbyter with the concurrence of the Administration Committee.

The staff person will be expected to participate in Presbytery staff meetings and assist the Presbytery in developing its ministries with youth. He or she will be the primary resource in planning A-Team events, such as YouthQuakes, mission trips and conferences etc. and will ensure that registration and all logistical matters are appropriately addressed.

This position is a 25-hour per month position and does not include benefits. Compensation will be based on Presbytery norms and the experience of the selected candidate. Knowledge of and participation in a Presbyterian Church (USA) congregation, a Bachelors degree and demonstrated experience in youth ministry leadership are desired.

Members of the Youth Ministry Advocate Search Committee are: Guy Delaney (moderator), Theresa Spragins (FPC, Conway), Gail Phillips (FPC, Jacksonville), Jeannie Ford (Second Presbyterian, Little Rock), and Mary Shaw (FPC, Springdale). The General Presbyter, Bill Galbraith, will serve as the staff support. Interested persons are invited to send résumés to the Presbytery office marked to the attention of Guy Delaney.

Church Employment Opportunities in our Presbytery

Director of Music Ministries -- First United Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville, Arkansas is seeking a part-time (25-30 hours per week) professional staff person to

plan, coordinate, and direct worship music in a variety of styles from traditional to contemporary. We are seeking an experienced leader with a mature faith consistent with the Reformed Christian tradition, and an appreciation and understanding of both historic and contemporary worship traditions and music. For more information, please consult the church website and the full position announcement at the following website address: <http://www.fupcfay.org/leadership/positions-open.aspx>.

Director of Children's Ministry -- First Presbyterian Church, Bentonville, Arkansas is seeking a part-time (approx. 20 hours per week) professional staff person to develop, coordinate, and direct our children's ministries. We are seeking an experienced individual with a committed Christian faith, a love for children, and a strong set of interpersonal, organizational, leadership, and child-management skills. For a full position description and to submit a résumé with references, please contact Debi Havner, either by mail, care of First Presbyterian Church of Bentonville, 901 NE J St, Bentonville, AR 72712, or by email at: dahavner@me.com.

Request from Your Presbytery Disaster Preparation and Response Committee

The hurricane season has already started. That can mean flooded houses and belongings. To help Church World Service prepare to help, can you or your congregation fill some disaster buckets?

Thanks to an Illinois Presbyterian who has an ice cream factory, Ferncliff received a windfall of 500 empty buckets and lids. You are invited to drive by the Disaster Assistance Center (DAC) at Ferncliff and pick up a bucket or buckets. Call ahead at 501/821-3063 to be sure someone can meet you at the DAC; preferred times: Monday through Friday between 8 am and 4 pm.

When you have filled the buckets, please return them to the DAC.

Here's the "bucket list":

- Five scouring pads
- Seven sponges, assorted sizes
- One scrub brush
- Eighteen cleaning towels (reusable, like Easy Wipes®)
- One 50-78 oz. box dry laundry detergent
- One 12 oz. bottle of liquid concentrated household cleaner (like Lysol®)
- One 25 oz. bottle liquid disinfectant dish soap (like Dawn®)
- One package of 48-50 clothespins
- Clothesline, two 50 ft. lengths or one 100 ft. length
- Five dust masks
- Two pairs latex gloves (like Playtex®)
- One pair work gloves
- 28-bag roll of heavy-duty trash bags (30-45 gallon)

One 6-9 oz. bottle of insect repellent (pump, drops or lotion, not aerosol)
Please provide all liquids in new, unopened plastic bottles. Be sure to send only new materials. Place all items in the plastic bucket, making sure they are packed securely to avoid damage during shipment, and seal lid with packing tape.

--The Presbytery of Arkansas Disaster Preparation and Response Committee

People and Church News

News of Our People

--**Rev. J.Q. Williams**, honorably retired, and wife **Mavis** have moved from Mena to Springdale. He is recuperating from open heart surgery.

--**Rev. Milton Davis**, honorably retired, has moved from Siloam Springs to Heber Springs.

--Congratulations on the birth of twin grandchildren, **Ellie Brooke** and **Jude Travis Lopez**, born to **Dan and Kristin Lopez** in San Antonio on May 3. The proud grandparents are **Rev. Drew and Rhonda Travis** of Conway and **Revs. Sally Johnson and Carlos Lopez**, both honorably retired of Little Rock. Drew is pastor of First, Conway.

--**Rev. David Dyer** of Little Rock, moderator of the presbytery, has completed his service as interim pastor at First, Searcy.

--**Rev. C. Michael Seitz** and wife **Merilyn** of Hot Springs Village celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 10 with their family in Broken Bow, OK. They were married in Junction City, KS. Mike is honorably retired.

--**Heather Rey** began her duties as Youth Director at Second Presbyterian, Little Rock on July 3rd.

--**Rev. Emmett Powers** of Pocahontas has finished his duties as temporary supply pastor at First, Batesville.

--Christian sympathy goes to **Rev. John Foss**, honorably retired of Bella Vista, and family on the death of his wife **Elaine** on June 26. Memorial service was held at Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista on July 7. Condolences may be sent to: 1 Highlands Crossing Drive, #214, Bella Vista 72715.

--Christian sympathy goes to the family of **Norma Grace Johnson** of Little Rock who died on July 5. She was a member of Allison Memorial Presbyterian, Little Rock and a member of the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry.

--**Revs. Andrew King** and **Melissa McNair-King** have resigned as co-associate pastors at First, Bentonville so that she could accept a call in another presbytery.

--**Whitney Bordelon** of North Little Rock has resigned as Youth Ministry Advocate on the presbytery staff, effective July 1, to resume her masters' degree preparation.

News of Our Congregations

--**First, Hot Springs** has written a nursery policy specifying ages for the nursery, illness procedures, sign-in process and health and safety rules.

--**Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista** men's fellowship hosted a blood drive on June 18.

--**Central Presbyterian, Pine Bluff** is collecting three-ring binders to distribute to children of low-income families on August 14-16.

--**First, Dardanelle** held their first day to assemble food-sacks and distributed them in June as part of their Food Pantry ministry.

--**Second Presbyterian, Little Rock** started a "summer social" time on July 1 before worship to visit and make friends, hear of summer plans and have coffee and a treat.

--**Mountainburg Presbyterian** will have a "Healthy Congregations" workshop on July 14.

--**First Presbyterian, Hot Springs** collects aluminum cans from members, recycles them and uses the proceeds to supplement the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

--**First, Van Buren** will host a performance by the California Baptist University choral group "Light" on July 23 and share a potluck supper with the group.

--**First, Harrison** held a Church Family Olympics for all age members on June 27 with 10 competitive events such as foot race, drawing a picture, threading a needle and spelling words.

--**Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian, Fairfield Bay** newsletter included articles on charitable gift funds, wills and bequests as ways faith plays a role in estate planning.

--**Trinity Presbyterian, Little Rock** offers a time of fellowship after morning worship with refreshments and an open playground for the children.

--**First, Batesville's** "Knit Wits" knitted and crocheted 80 caps for young patients at AR Children's Hospital in Little Rock.

--**First, Conway** has committed to offer prayer, workers, food for workers and funds for the Habitat for Humanity Apostles' Build this summer.

--**First, Yellville** Fellowship Committee is working on a church cookbook, especially featuring "Golden Spatula" winners whose recipes are shared in the monthly newsletter.

Prayer List for Congregations - 2012 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).

Presbyterian Women News

The PW Newsletter for July can be found [here](#).

The Rev. Nancy Benson-Nicol will lead a special overview of her new 2012-2013 *Horizons* Bible Study on Saturday, August 4 at the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, AR. [Click here](#) for a registration form with more information.

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

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

Presbyterian Pilgrimage

The next Presbyterian Pilgrimage is scheduled for October 18-21st, 2012.

The leader for this session is Janice Ray.

For more information, or to register, visit the Presbytery's website section dedicated to Pilgrimage [here](#), or visit www.pilgrimage-arkansas.org for more information.

Resource Center News

by [NiAnn Thompson](#), Resourcing Director

Phone 501.663.2424, ext. 104

Tuesday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

In the heat of summer, relax...while checking out these DVD resources for this fall for who you are and who you minister to.

If you're in Children's Ministry or are a parent or grandparent of children: **"What's**

in the Bible, Volume 4 on Battle for the Promised Land" (Acc. #DVD9519),

"Storybook" (Acc. #DVD9533), **"Created by God: Tweens, Faith and Human Sexuality"** (Acc.

#DVD9576), **"Carlos Caterpillar: Cheater Critters, a lesson on honest work habits"** (Acc.

#DVD9585)

In Youth Ministry or a parent/grandparent of teenagers: **"Which Way to God?"** (Acc. #DVD9534),

"The Jesus Creed for Students" (Acc. #DVD9588), **"Christ: The Life of Christ--The Basis of**

Faith" (Acc. #DVD9610)

In adult ministry or are an inquiring grown-up: **"Psalmist's Cry"** (Acc. #DVD9527), **"From Jesus to**

Constantine: A History of Early Christianity" (Acc. #DVD9538), **"Serving from the Heart-**

updated" (Acc. #DVD9559), **"Book by Book: Exodus"** (Acc. #DVD9562), **"Book by Book:**

Genesis" (Acc. #DVD9563), **"Book by Book: Jonah"** (Acc. #DVD9564), **"Book by Book: Joshua"**

(Acc. #DVD9566), **"Real Women, Real Faith: Volume 2"** (Acc. #DVD9575), **"Three Faiths, One**

God: Judaism, Christianity, Islam" (Acc. #DVD9577).

Anyone interested in particular pastoral situations: **"We Will Miss You: Support for Grieving the Death of a Pet"** (Acc. #DVD9647) and **"Footprints on Our Hearts: Walking through grief after a miscarriage, stillbirth, or newborn death"** (Acc. #DVD9596).

Women preparing to lead the Horizons PW Bible Study beginning in August or September:

"Dispatches to God's Household" (Acc. #DVD9648) by Rev. Nancy Benson-Nicol, chaplain at the

University of the Ozarks, Clarksville, who is the author of the study of the General Epistles in the New

Testament. Audio recording of the study read by Rev. Benson-Nicol is also available (Acc. #CD9649).

SUMMARY OF THE PC(USA) GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 2012 which met in Pittsburgh June 30-July 7

is attached to this edition of "The Banner" ([click here](#)) for reprinting and distribution to our

congregations as a gift from YOUR Resource Center. It was produced by "The Presbyterian Outlook"

magazine. Please notify NiAnn if you need multiple hardcopies. The "Assembly in Brief" 16-page

bulletin insert produced by the denomination will be available on July 12.

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 and Nurture.)



[Presbytery Calendar](#)

From the Committee of Care & Nurture of Church Professionals

For our Pastors who are in need of being pastored due to an illness or are the care-giver for a person with a life-threatening or life-altering medical condition, we are offering you help. But the Presbytery Committee on Care & Nurture of Church Professionals needs your help. We need names of people you know who have "been there" and are willing to volunteer with their experiences to pastor our pastors.

If you know of anyone, please contact Rebecca Spooner at the Laurence Schmidt Center (phone: 501-664-7777). The information will match up needs and our pastors can be cared for and nurtured.

Growing Personal Stewardship

Expanding Ministry Through Legacy Gifts

Mark Your Calendar

TPF's Conference: **GPS**, *Expanding Ministry Through Legacy Gifts*

Texas Presbyterian Foundation is hosting a two-day conference at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church located at 9800 Preston Road, Dallas, TX 75230.

Wednesday, September 26th from 1:00p.m.-5:00p.m.

Thursday, September 27th from 8:30a.m.-2:30p.m.

Principal Speaker & Conference Leader:

Kathryn Miree

Presbyterian Elder and nationally recognized speaker on Estate & Planned Giving
Topics Will Include:

- * From Theory to Practice: Building a Church/Nonprofit Endowment
 - * Planned Giving Fundamentals
 - * Getting Started in Planned Giving
- * Talking to Donors About Endowment and Planned Gifts

[Click Here to RSVP](#)

Conference Fee: \$75



PRESBYTERY STAFF:

General Presbyter [BILL GALBRAITH](#)

Stated Clerk [CATHY ULRICH](#)

Resourcing Director & Assistant Stated Clerk [NIANN THOMPSON](#)

Director of Mission Support [KENNETH RICH](#)

Presbytery Evangelist [JESSE GONZALEZ](#)

Staff Resource for Youth [WHITNEY BORDELON](#)

Staff Resource for Congregational Care & Development [MICHAEL VINSON](#)

Treasurer [WES SHAVER](#)

Moderator of Presbytery [DAVID DYER](#)

Vice Moderator of Presbytery [SHEREE NIECE](#)

Moderator of the General Committee [SAM HIGHSMITH](#)



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

We are composed of over 14,000 Presbyterians gathered in 87 active churches, two new church developments and two fellowships located in various towns and cities in the northern two-thirds of the State of Arkansas.

Phone 501.663.2424 Fax 501.224.2429 <http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org>