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THE BANNER

IGPonderings by Interim General Presbyter Rev. Sallie M. Watson

Dear friends,

If the last month of my life had a theme to it, it would be “The Marks of an Effective Spiritual Leader.” It seems that everywhere I turned, this was a topic of discussion. At the Clergy/Educator/Commissioned Lay Pastor retreat, Gradye Parsons shared with us lessons to be learned from Claude Monet, lessons like:

- Honor your calling
- Look for teachers along the way
- Challenge yourself with big aspirations
- Embrace everything that life brings
- Get carried away with a meaningful mission: leave behind masterworks!

Austin Seminary is undergoing a review of its curriculum. At the trustees’ meeting a couple of weeks ago, they shared with us their constituents’ idea of what makes for an effective pastor:

- Is a spiritual person
- Has solid theology
- Is trustworthy
- Is caring
- Enjoys being with people

When I saw Synod Executive Rev. Judy Fletcher earlier this month, she shared with me the results of a recent Lilly Foundation study on essentials for a successful pastor:

- The ability to be a storyteller
- A good sense of humor
- A lifelong learner
- A “refiner’s fire” experience which shapes one’s call

There is much meat in all of these findings, especially as you compare, contrast and combine them




into your own picture of what makes for effective ministry. If you’re a minister or educator or CLP, ask yourself where you’re doing well in these areas and where you could challenge yourself to improve. If you work with Committee on Ministry, or a Pastor Nominating Committee, or just care about the health and strength of your spiritual leaders, ask yourself what you can do to encourage those persons to care for themselves in these ways. If you serve on your church’s Session, strike up a conversation with your pastor: find out about their “refiner’s fire” experience. Get them started telling stories (that will keep you busy!). Ask them about their teachers and mentors. Give them an opportunity to show you care and to earn your trust, and offer to do the same for them.

Sometimes we get so carried away with the business of the church that we all forget to be the church. I hope you’ll find the time and the means in these “lazy days of summer” to get in touch with your call, or to encourage your pastor, CLP or educator to do the same.

Blessings to you,
 Sallie

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The Presbytery of Arkansas is a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the northern two-thirds of the State of Arkansas. We are composed of almost 15,400 Presbyterians gathered in 93 congregations and one fellowship, two New Church Developments and one ministry located in various towns and cities in this geographical region.

Grace Presbyterian, Little Rock Hosts 108th Stated Presbytery Meeting

(Commissioners may copy this page as their report to Session.)

The 108th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas convened Saturday morning, June 7, in the sanctuary. Morning prayers were led by Revs. Shauna Silmon, Ruskin Falls, Debra C. Freeman and Interim General Presbyter Rev. Sallie Watson with music by organist Scott Seidenschwarz and two cantors. The worship offering for construction of Camp David in the Chiapas region of Mexico totaled \$1,435.00. Commissioners and guests numbering 178 donated many boxes of supplies for the work of the Presbytery's Disaster Response Team.

The Presbytery voted to: approve the status of active and non-active Honorably Retired ministers for 2008; concur with the sale of the manse of First, Marianna; elect the members of an Administrative Commission for Ferguson Memorial Presbyterian, Coal Hill; a commission for First, Des Arc; and a commission to merge Belair Presbyterian with Central, Pine Bluff; elect three new members of the Administrative Commission of the Northwest Arkansas New Church Development at Rogers; permit Yellville, First to obtain permanent financing; approve the sale of First, Harrison's downtown church property; approve the lease of a portion of Dallas Oaks, Fort Smith, worship space for a year; delete a section of the "Standing Rules" requiring an excused absence for missing part of a presbytery meeting; form a Disaster Preparedness and Response Committee; delete "Choir Camp" from the responsibilities of the Christian Education & Nurture Committee; give responsibility for preparing the new job description of the General Presbyter to the General Presbyter Search Committee; approve "2008 Clergy Compensation"; grant status of honorably retired to Rev. David King of Little Rock and Rev. Tom Carter of Fort Smith; approved Rev. Tiffany McClung as temporary supply at Graham Memorial, Forrest City; commission Joshua Bridges as the Commissioned Lay Pastor for First, Beebe; elect Marty Shepherd as moderator and Dotty Rector and Liz Hardin as members of the Committee on Care & Nurture of Church Professionals, LaNoir Dawkins Leeper to General Council, John Dickins and Bill Bush to Ferncliff Board, Rev. Bill Galbraith to Committee on Ministry, Rev. Ruskin Falls to Congregational Care & Development, and Rev. Fern Davis as G.A. Alternate Commissioner and the Search Committee for the General Presbytery (Rev. Steve Hancock, moderator;



Carter

Revs. Nancy Benson-Nicol, Jim Fleming, Alan Ford, Elders Susan Anderson, Sam Highsmith, Karene Jones, Toney McMillan, and Heather Kilpatrick); approve a covenant for common ministry in the Argenta district of North Little Rock; renew the revised covenant/contract between the Laurence Schmidt Center and the Committee on Care & Nurture of Church Professionals; and change all two-day presbytery meetings to Friday-Saturday and one-day meetings to Saturday beginning in 2010.

The Presbytery heard or read reports: from Interim General Presbyter Sallie Watson; about the Synod of the Sun Foundation; on the presbytery's finances and audit; from the Committee on Ministry that Rev. Darwin Wolfe resigned as pastor of Lost Bridge Community Church; a change in the terms of call of Rev. Nancy Benson-Nicol, Rev. Robert Hadley and Rev. Mark Lenneville; an extension of term of Rev. Judith Kelley's position as designated pastor; election of regional COM vice-moderators; of extension of covenant of Rev. Ruskin Falls as temporary supply at Pulaski Heights Presbyterian; Lon Hardin resigned as interim Commissioned Lay Pastor at First, McGehee; changes were made to the pulpit supply list; Brien Hall resigned as pulpit supply at Faith in Horseshoe Bend; and witnessed the commissioning of four commissioners and the youth advisory delegate to General Assembly June 21-28; of ways to keep connected to college students; the MERGE event; services offered by the Resource Center; and upcoming lay academy beginning in January; from the Mission Committee; and from the Northwest Arkansas New Church Development in Rogers.



Commissioned to General Assembly Meeting by Rev. Cathy Ulrich (back row), Moderator of the Committee on the Office of the GA, were Elder Dawn Scarborough, Clarksville, Youth Advisory Delegate Nate Pyle, Jonesboro/Lyon College, Rev. Kris Crawford, Benton, Rev. John King, Prairie Grove (back row), and Elder Art Ritter, Westminster, Little Rock..

Presbytery's Disaster Response Shifts to Long-term Aid



Presbytery Disaster Response Team Leader Rev. Emmett Powers (right) met with denomination Presbyterian Disaster Assistance first-responders Kathy Montgomery and Terry Coggins on May 15-16 to evaluate long-term response to Stuttgart, Damascus and Holly Grove. A large supply of new clothing was delivered to the Hensley/Woodson area.

"Pink Hat" Tradition Continues to Link Vera Lloyd Home and Presbyterian Women



In this file photo Presbyterian Women gathered at Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Children's Home at Monticello for an annual celebration. This year's gala occasion occurred on April 26.

Together in God's Grace

by Associate General Presbyter Joan Erickson

How do we know if we are doing a good job as the church? Our life in God's grace frees us up from the expectation of perfection by our own efforts. But that very gift of grace inspires us to dedicate great effort in response to God's love for us. So how do we know if what we are doing and how we are doing it is OK?

We hope to do what is pleasing to God! I offer three instruments to measure our effort.

1.) Christ tells us that if we want to follow the most important laws, then we are to love God and love our neighbor. How do our plans fit into those criteria?

2.) Confessionally we are directed to our most important purpose which is to glorify God and enjoy God forever. Not just sometimes, not just glorify God but glorify God and enjoy God forever.

3.) Then there is the To Do List for the church offered in the Book of Order - the great ends of the church. Have we touched on all the great ends: proclamation, nurture, worship, truth, and justice as we strive to capture a glimpse of the Kingdom of Heaven to share with the world? Each of these goals is great, otherwise it would be called "one great end and five sort of good ends." Does the scope of the mission of our congregation include all the great ends?

It takes courage to dare to think that we can be great. It takes courage to actually be all that God has gifted us to be. It takes courage to be the church. "I

believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!" Psalm 27:13-14

Joan

Children Take Musical Message on Tour



The Covenant children's choir of Second Presbyterian, Little Rock, composed of children in grades two through five, took their Pentecost musical on tour in May to Central, Pine Bluff; Parkway Village, Little Rock; and joined with the children's choir at Central, Russellville for music in worship. Mary Ibis is the director.

PEOPLE and CHURCH NEWS

NEWS OF OUR PEOPLE

- Congratulations to **Rev. Debra Carl Freeman**, pastor of Westover Hills Presbyterian, Little Rock, who received the Doctor of Ministry degree from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary on May 25.
- Congratulations to **Susan Rose**, Director of Christian Education at First, Springdale, on receiving the Master of Divinity degree from Memphis Theological Seminary (Cumberland Presbyterian) on May 10.
- **Rev. Josh Leu** has resigned as director of youth at First United, Fayetteville effective June 1.
- **Theresa Spragins**, Director of Christian Education at Central Presbyterian, Russellville, is recuperating from eye surgery performed May 8 and 29.
- Graham Memorial Presbyterian, Forrest City, interim pastor **Rev. Tiffany McClung** will take on responsibilities as the chaplain and Dean of Chapel at Memphis Theological Seminary this summer. McClung is a minister in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.
- First, Pocahontas, temporary supply pastor **Rev. Robert Norvell** of Jonesboro was recognized in the spring, 2008 magazine of Memphis Theological Seminary "The Lamp" as a military chaplain with the Tennessee National Guard.
- Christian sympathy goes to **Elder Martha Carvill**, a member of Second Presbyterian, Little Rock, on the death of her husband H.C. "Bo" Carvill on May 20. She is a member of the Committee on Ministry and was moderator of Presbytery in 1986.
- Inquirer in Ministry **Susie Wiggins**, formerly of Little Rock, wrote an article on Schlegel Hall at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary for the seminary's spring magazine "Mosaic."

NEWS OF OUR CONGREGATIONS & MINISTRIES

- **Conxion, the New Church Development in Rogers**, presented "Movies in May" on Friday evenings to connect film with faith.
- **First, Eureka Springs**, church garden and Victorian building will be judged by America in Bloom for beauty, cleanliness and preservation.
- **First, Heber Springs**, is offering a Wednesday afternoon Bible study on Ephesians through June 18.
- **Central Presbyterian, Fort Smith**, held a fund-raising dinner and talent show on June 8 after worship.
- **Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village**, memorial garden was chosen as "yard of the month" by the County Beautification Commission.
- **First, Newport**, honored all children, youth, and their parents, teachers and helpers of their mid-week Christian Education program at a cookout on May 23.

- **First, Alma**, celebrated Pentecost by setting off red balloons following worship.
- **Dallas Oaks Presbyterian, Fort Smith**, began summer worship with an outdoor communion service at a local park followed by a potluck picnic.
- **First, Conway**, dedicated their prayer shawls in worship on May 25.
- **Mountainburg Presbyterian** offered four classes on Thursday nights in May for officers and members on congregational visiting to members at home, hospital and in difficult situations.
- **First, Huntsville**, published a newsletter article about the colors of paraments and liturgical seasons.
- **Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista** celebrated their 23rd birthday on June 8 with recognition of Charter Members during the worship service and a party with birthday cake, punch and coffee. Members were encouraged to give a dollar for each year of the church's existence with the contribution going to the endowment fund.
- **First, Arkadelphia**, conducted training for all who will serve communion to homebound church members.
- **First, Fort Smith**, now offers three different types of wireless receiver units for members with different types of hearing aids.
- **Spring River Presbyterian, Hardy**, Session is encouraging their members to put "their church image" under the microscope of questioning what they like, what should be adjusted or eliminated and what should be re-evaluated.
- **First, Jonesboro**, honored their high school and college graduates on May 4 and collected the Presbyterian Women's Birthday Offering on May 18.
- **Good Shepherd Presbyterian, Greenwood**, has applied to be placed on the National Historic Registry.
- **First, Helena**, provides the volunteer at the local food pantry one day a month.
- **Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian, Fairfield Bay**, published tributes to Mother's Day, Armed Forces Day (May 17), and Memorial Day in their May newsletter.
- **First, Van Buren**, hosts a Boy Scout Troop that will be active in swimming and fishing this summer.

Idea of the Month

First, Springdale, invites its gardening members to bring their extra fresh vegetables to church on Sundays for delivery to the local food pantry for distribution on Mondays.

NEWS and OPPORTUNITIES

2nd Annual Presbytery-Wide Mission Trip to the Gulf Coast October 12-18, 2008

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

When: We will leave on Sunday, October 12th at 9:00 a.m. and return late Saturday, October 18th from Westminster Presbyterian Church in Hot Springs.

What: While specifics are still unknown, most likely we will be doing light construction assistance work.

Where: We will be working in the area of Orange Grove, Mississippi through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

Why: We want to help rebuild and restore hope to the people of the Gulf Coast.

Cost: The cost is \$20.00 per day for room and board.

Deadline for Registration: September 1, 2008

More Information: Contact Susie Wright (501.525.1367 or 501.620.3335) to let us know of your interest in this mission trip.

* * * LAST CALL * * *

“Song, Sacrament, & Silence:
Giving Voice to All Our Sighs”



Presbyterian Association of
Musicians
West Conference on Worship & Music

Thursday, July 17 - Saturday, July 19

First Presbyterian, Little Rock

For church musicians & pastors, especially those in smaller churches. Register at www.presbysmusic.org by June 15 or phone 888.728.7228 (ext. 5288) or register on-site at First Presbyterian, 800 Scott St. (corner of 8th and Scott), Phone 501.372.1804.

Presbyterian Women Set Fall Gatherings

by PW Moderator Kathy White

The Spring Gathering of Presbyterian Women in Arkansas Presbytery was held on a chilly April 5 at the Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista. Worship was led by the Rev. Georgia Senor, and Synod PW Moderator Sheron Antczak of San Antonio shared her experiences as a member of PW's Global Exchange to Palestine in 1999. Sheron returned to Palestine last year to see how conditions have changed for Christians in that area.

Arkansas Presbytery is honored that Mary Beth Lysobey has been chosen as one of 30 representatives of PW in the PC(USA) to participate in the 2008 Global Exchange to Eastern Europe in September. After her return, she will be sharing her experiences across the Synod of the Sun.



Cluster PW Fall Gatherings have been scheduled on Saturdays as follows:

Cluster	Church	Date
1	First, Fayetteville	Sept. 27
2	First, Harrison	Sept. 13
3	Faith, Horseshoe Bend	Sept. 13
4	First, Marianna	Sept. 20
5	First, Malvern	Sept. 13
6	First, Ft. Smith	Sept. 13
7	First, Morrilton	Sept. 27
9	Westover Hills, Little Rock	Sept. 20

NEWS OF OUR RETIRED PERSONS

- **Rev. Maurice Roberts** of Fayetteville is recuperating from heart surgery performed on May 7.
- Christian sympathy goes to **Rev. and Mrs. Jimmie Thames** of Pangburn on the recent death of his sister Jewell McKetney.
- **Rev. Bill McWeeny** of Little Rock is currently hospitalized.
- **Rev. Walter Swetnam** of Batesville is recuperating from surgery performed June 5.

Are you receiving The Banner by e-mail?

Here are the top four advantages to e-mail reading:

- Same day delivery
- Full color photos
- Live links - go directly to websites to read more
- Savings of trees, paper, time and money

Just e-mail info@presbyteryofarkansas.org to receive the next Banner by e-mail.

Seeking Information on Overnight Childcare Program

The Missions Committee of First Presbyterian, Conway, is gathering information about operating a third-shift and/or overnight child care program.

Churches in the Presbytery of Arkansas and in other Synod of the Sun presbyteries who have such programs are encouraged to contact Doug Corbitt, committee chair, at 501.327.2077 or dougc@uca.edu.

Lay Pastor Training Coming in 2009

by Rev. Heinrich Eiler

The Christian Education and Nurture Committee has received sufficient interest in another Commissioned Lay Pastor training class to begin planning for a class to commence in January, 2009.

While designed to train prospective CLPs, recent classes have been open also to persons open to, but not immediately interested in such a ministry, as well as adult church members who seek an intensive educational experience to deepen their faith and understanding. Details will appear in the July and August issues of The Banner.

MISSION CORNER

(How is our benevolent offering to Presbytery used?)

Last year the Presbytery of Arkansas sent a mission team to the Mississippi Gulf Coast to help with continuing recovery efforts there. Led by the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Hot Springs, the group from this presbytery had 54 members from 16 churches participating. Funds from the Presbytery of Arkansas helped to make the trip possible. (see page 5)

While there the volunteers worked on six houses. There are plans for a return trip this coming October. Again, part of the cost will come from money that the churches of this presbytery send to help with presbytery mission. People sometimes ask, "What does the presbytery do?" Tell them that mission and ministry are alive and well in the Presbytery of Arkansas.

2009 Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study

"Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with your God"
(Micah 6:8)

\$8.00 each through the Presbytery Office

Mail your check made out to "Presbytery of Arkansas" with the number of books you want to:

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

(Payment must accompany order.)

Deadline to order is Friday, August 15, 2008.

Yearbooks will be available in November.

(Mailing cost to congregation that orders is included.)

Coming This Fall

Campus Ministry event

Saturday, September 13

At Ferncliff Camp

Keynote: John Williams,

Chaplain at Austin College

Music, food, connecting (life, faith, people – all that stuff)

For more info contact: Theresa Spragins
theresa.spragins@gmail.com



Junior High Youth Quake

Friday-Sunday, September 26-28

At Ferncliff Camp

Theme: You've Got a Friend in Me

A camp full of youth, faith, and more fun than you can imagine

For more info contact: Bud McConkie
501.450.3558 or
widgetb@conwaycorp.net

Look for future details on the presbytery web site, in this newsletter and to be mailed out.



RESOURCE CENTER NEWS

June, 2008

9221 North Rodney Parham Road

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Phone 501.663.2424, ext. 104

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

NiAnn Thompson, Director

niann@presbyteryofarkansas.org

—The lazy days of summer are culturally upon us, and soon the calendar will agree. The different pace of these long, hot days brings to mind recent great ideas from our “RAVE REVIEWS.”

Interim pastor Fred Taylor, First, Mountain Home suggests using www.biblemap.org for preaching and teaching purposes.

Pastor Gordon Garlington, Park Hill Presbyterian, North Little Rock makes regular use of YOUR Resource Center’s collection of “**Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching**” as he prepares sermons and classes.

Elder Betsy Gillaspy-Williams of Central Presbyterian, Russellville and a member of the presbytery’s Committee on Christian Education and Nurture wrote “In our search to find a guide for a study of caring for the environment, we found the right one! J. Matthew Sleeth’s “**Serve God, Save the Planet**” (Acc. #BK9014) begins with Jesus’ first commandment—to love God with all our heart and soul. Part of loving God is to honor and care for

God’s creation. This story of Sleeth’s journey to taking action, filled with suggestions and an earth-care to-do list, is fascinating reading. Our study led us to look at our individual lives and find new ways we can serve God and save the planet, one step at a time...This is a must read!”

Rev. Shauna Silmon of Grace Presbyterian, Little Rock recommends the Alban Institute book “**40 Days and 40 Bytes: Making Computers Work for Your Congregation**” touted as combining computer savvy with compassion for congregational ministry through humor and healthy decision-making models.

Websites worth visiting: Ministers and Christian Educators who are members of the Board of Pensions might want to check out the newly designed website www.pensions.org to glimpse benefits, life stages, educational resources, giving opportunities, forms and publications. And keep up with the General Assembly meeting June 21-28 at www.pcusa.org/ga218

GOOD IDEAS FOR SUMMERTIME CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

—The first is a mindset and a decision rather than resources. Several of our congregations, most notably those in retirement communities, enlarge their educational offerings in the summer with an eye toward “grandchildren who are passing through and visitors who move to town during the summer months.” What genius! They are prepared, in case children or youth are in attendance on Sunday mornings and do not miss the opportunity, rather than assuming or predicting attendance patterns. We could all learn something from their optimism!

—The General Assembly has approved the following studies, available in hardcopy in YOUR Resource Center or free to download at the www.pcusa.org/acswp/resources website: “**Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future**” (approved by the 2004 GA), “**Serious Mental Illness: Seeking a Comprehensive Christian Response**” (written in 2006), “**A Social Creed for the 21st Century**,” plus three items recommended to the 2008 General Assembly for approval “**Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future**,” “**Lift Every Voice: Democracy, Voting Rights, and Electoral Reform**” and “**God’s Work in Women’s Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation.**”

—Ideas for adult classes and small group studies with strong Presbyterian roots abound in “**Foundations of Christian Faith**” series from Westminster/John Knox Press, some with study guides; “**Real Faith/Real Life**” and “**Push It!**” books for young, and not so young, adults; a wide variety of offerings in the series of “**Interpretation**” Bible Studies, “**Disciple**,” “**Kerygma**,” and the online curriculum for youth and adults “**The Thoughtful Christian.**”

—NEW DVDs for youth classes and groups from Bluefish include “**Surviving School**,” “**Identity**,” and multiple session kits “**Sex. Dating.**” and “**I Am: Getting to Know God.**”

(Keyboard/Computer Monitor Calendars to remind you of YOUR Resource Center are being sent to all congregations.)

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ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED

CALENDAR

- Jun 13 Committee on Nominations, First, Conway, 10 a.m.
- Jun 14 Cluster VIII Annual Picnic, Dupree Park, Jacksonville
- Jun 17 Cluster IX meeting, Grace, Little Rock, 11:30 a.m.
- Jun 17 Cluster III, First, Batesville
- Jun 21-28 General Assembly Meeting, San Jose, CA
- Jun 21-28 Presbytery Youth Mission Trip, Houma, LA
- Jun 28-29 Barr Memorial Presbyterian, Norman's 100th Anniversary
- Jul 1 Committee on Ministry, First, Conway, 10:00 a.m.
- Jul 1 Deadline for submission of articles and photographs for the July Banner
- Jul 4 Presbytery Office closed in observance of Independence Day
- Jul 5-11 Junior High Jubilee, Mo-Ranch, Hunt, TX
- Jul 15 Cluster IX meeting, Grace, Little Rock, 11:30 a.m.
- Jul 15 Cluster III meeting, Faith Presbyterian, Horseshoe Bend

For details and additional activities please go to our website.
<http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/firmEventCalendar.aspx>

Hispanic New Church Development Branches Out



On June 29 Jacob's Well in Springdale will be dedicated as the social outreach arm of the Northwest Arkansas Hispanic New Church Development program through Comunidad Presbiteriana Hispana. Located in the downtown section of Springdale, Jacob's Well will offer English as a Second Language, Spanish as a Second Language, handcrafts, Bible studies, non-profit and community meeting space, and information to the Hispanic community about available public and private resources.