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THE BANNER

IGPonderings by Interim General Presbyter Rev. Sallie M. Watson

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

One of the things I love most about being your Interim General Presbyter is the opportunity to get out among you and see what life is like in your world. Over the past month I have met with Pastor Nominating Committees from Central Pine Bluff, First Fort Smith, and Mountain Home to help them get started with evaluating Personal Information Forms for interviews; I've worshiped at First Malvern, First Rogers, Second Little Rock and Bella Vista (as they installed their new pastor); I've preached at First Pine Bluff and helped with a triennial visit there; I've met with Presbyterian Women from Cluster 2 in Harrison; I've been to more meetings than you'd like to hear about; and I've helped make a bunch of flood buckets with our children out at Ferncliff.

So what do I see in all those places? I see God at work: in you, among you and through you, in a variety of ways. Even in times like these. It's exciting.

The times in which we are living are unprecedented. What do we make of the stock market uproar, the astronomical government bailout, the contentious national election which seems to get more bizarre each day? Some are calling it the end of modernity; some, the end of American world dominance; some, simply the end of the world. Some of those things may be true. But what I *know* is true comes from Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever."

One lesson for me in all of this is that we are not nearly as much in control as we seem to believe. If we think that our security rests in our checkbooks or in our leaders, perhaps we should think again. I believe that our security rests in many of the moments I have shared over this month with you: in worship, in confession, in Bible study, in prayer, in bread broken and wine poured, in baptisms remembered and performed.



Perhaps in times like these, you and I can share some of that with those who need to hear it the most. Let's share the good news of God's abundance with neighbors and friends. Provide them a sense of hope. Share God's plans for us, "plans for good and not for evil, to give [us] a future and a hope." (Jeremiah 29) Amid all the changing voices of our generation, speak the Word of truth which does not change.

I may be biased, but I believe that what you and I know to be true is exactly what is needed in our cities, our state, our nation and our world. In what you're doing every week, you have the good news the world needs to hear. Let's not keep it to ourselves. More than ever, this is the time to share it.

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.

First Presbyterian, Harrison Hosts 109th Stated Presbytery Meeting

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

The 109th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas convened Thursday night, Oct. 9, in the sanctuary of First, Harrison. Five pre-presbytery workshops attracting 71 people preceded the first business session. Leading evening worship were Cluster II Clergy Revs. Mark Lenneville, Duane Farris, Fred Taylor, and Elder Joy Henning, youth Claire Doshier, host pastor Rev. "Chip" Andrus and Rev. Art Fogartie, who preached with music by the organist and an ensemble. The worship offering for payment on Disaster Assistance forklift at Ferncliff Camp totaled \$2000.19. Commissioners and guests numbering 178 donated many staple foods to Ozark Care and Share as their Ingathering. Early prayers and morning worship on Friday preceded business sessions and a fellowship luncheon.

The Presbytery voted to: allow the construction loan for Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista; permit Communion at Cursillo weekends and YouthQuakes; elect Elders Ila Wolfe and Kim Dewey to the Hispanic NCD Administrative Commission; re-word the "Manual of Operations" and "Standing Rules" to reflect a Friday-Saturday presbytery meeting as of Oct., 2010; form a commission to close Dallas Oaks Presbyterian; examine candidates Mark Hoehne and Elizabeth Gabbard for ordination, set their specific ordination services and Administrative Commissions; delete the campus ministry board from the "Manual"; approve the new covenant with the Black Presbyterian Caucus; change documents to add the new Committee on Disaster Preparedness and Response; alter "Standing Rules" to clarify the treasurer's financial duties; create a Task Force to look at vision and mission statements and presbytery structure; elect five members and a moderator to Committee on Nominations; approve policies on church and minister loans; approve an evaluation of and extend the term of Associate General Presbyter Joan Erickson; elect Claire Rhodes as 2009 presbytery moderator, Rev. Debbie Freeman as vice moderator, nine moderators of committees and council for 2009, 43 members of committees of the Class of 2011, and 29 members filling unexpired terms; grant honorably retired status to Revs. James Miller, Richard Miller, and Darwin Wolfe; receive Rev. David Schneider, Rev. Dennis Ritchie, and Rev. Craig King and Rev. Don Wardlaw (honorably retired) as minister members; commission Jim Keyes at One-O-One Presbyterian; endorse a new synod-level outreach initiative involving solar power to global mission projects; and endorse The Arkansas Death Penalty Study and Moratorium Campaign.

The Presbytery heard or read reports of: Permanent Judicial Commission action restoring a min-

ister to exercise of office; referral to an Investigating Committee of a statement of a minister's alleged offense; receipt of Session records review reports from six of nine clusters; interim progress from the commission to merge Belair and Central, Pine Bluff and the commission to close First, Des Arc; the Search Committee for the General Presbyter; final assessment of Candidate Will Fletcher and continued inquiry status of Susie Wiggins and Wambugu Gachungi; Sylvia Wilson, General Assembly Staff for Higher Education; dismissal of Rev. John Conley to John Calvin Presbytery and Rev. Gail Perkins to Greater Atlanta Presbytery; extension of interim covenant of Rev. Jim Freeman at Central, Pine Bluff; appointment of Revs. Ken Upham and Michael Vinson as parish associates at First, Conway; changing covenants for temporary pastors to include \$1,200 for continuing education; raise in recommended honorarium for pulpit supplies and mileage reimbursement to Session moderators; approval of Rev. Clif Ford as temporary supply at First, Alma; necrology service for Rev. Dean Waychoff and Rev. Joe Nathan Cole, Sr.; Committee on Representation's comparison of those elected to presbytery committees, councils and boards to membership; a "Minute for Mission" on Texas coast damage and the need for flood buckets there; commissioning of participants to the presbytery-wide mission trip Oct. 12-18 to Orange Grove, MS; Christian Education events and programs; and commissioners attending Synod meetings and the General Assembly meeting.



Ministers granted honorable retirement were Rev. James Miller, Rev. Richard Miller and Rev. Darwin Wolfe.



Honorably retired Rev. Don Wardlaw of Little Rock was welcomed into membership.

More News from the Presbytery Meeting



Ministers welcomed into the Presbytery as pastors were Rev. Dennis Ritchie (Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista), Rev. Craig King (Wynne Presbyterian) and Rev. Dave Schneider (interim pastor, Central Presbyterian, Russellville).



Jim Keyes of Flippin was commissioned as lay pastor to One-O-One Presbyterian in Gamaliel. He is pictured with One-O-One's Clerk of Session Karen McWilliam.



Rev. James Fleming, honorably retired, was honored for 50 years of ordained ministry as were 27 others celebrating milestone anniversaries.



Candidates for ministry Elizabeth Gabbard of Fort Smith and Mark Hoehne of Conway were examined and ordination dates set.

Together in God's Grace

by Associate General Presbyter Joan Erickson

It was a great joy to have Mark Hoehne and Elizabeth Gabbard approved for ordination at the presbytery meeting last week. Their call and gifts are obvious and our church is enriched by their inclusion as ministers of word and sacrament.

Now, who else can the Committee on Preparation for Ministry walk with on the journey through inquiry and candidacy into a call as an ordained minister?

Is God calling you to ordained ministry? Talking with others is a part of the process of discernment. And when you are ready to make that discernment process "official" talk with your session and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. To learn about the process, read your Book of Order and check out <http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/>.

Do you know someone who seems like they may be called to ministry? Let them know. A call is from God, to an individual and confirmed by the community. So if you think someone might be called, it is vital that they hear affirmation from the community.

The purpose and pattern of leadership in the church in all its forms of ministry shall be understood not in terms of power but of service, after the manner of the servant ministry of Jesus Christ. Book of Order G-14.0110

October, Clergy Appreciation Month, is the perfect time to thank all the pastors, tent-makers, and commissioned lay pastors for their good work, dedication and faithfulness. - Your Presbytery Staff

Cookbook Sales Benefit Hunger Agencies

As part of the celebration of its 125-year history, the Presbyterian Women at Second Presbyterian, Little Rock have published Second Servings, a cookbook of 600 favorite family recipes. Profit from the cookbook sales will be distributed to local non-profit agencies that fight hunger. The book is for sale at the church, 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, (501-227-0000) or may be ordered by sending a check or money order to Cookbook, 1 Countryside Cove, Little Rock, AR 72223.

NEWS OF OUR CLUSTERS

- Elder Sheree Niece, First, Clarksville, was elected as **Cluster VII** representative to General Council, Class of 2011.

- **Clusters I, V, and VI** are reminded to submit their reports on Cluster Session Records (register and minutes) Review to the Assistant Stated Clerk at the presbytery office as soon as possible.

PEOPLE and CHURCH NEWS

NEWS OF OUR PEOPLE

- Christian sympathy goes to **Rev. Arthur Fogartie** and family on the death of his father, Rev. James E. Fogartie, on Sept. 24. Art is pastor of First, Bentonville.
- **Rev. Gordon Garlington** is recuperating at home from hospitalization Sept. 29 for heart surgery. He is pastor of Park Hill Presbyterian, North Little Rock.
- **Sandy Nelson** has resigned as youth director at First, Clarksville.
- **Cameron Highsmith** is the new youth director at Grace Presbyterian, Little Rock.
- Congratulations to **Susie and Curtis Wright** on the birth of their granddaughter Emily Sue Wolf on Oct. 8 in Alexandria, LA. Susie is DCE at Westminster, Hot Springs.
- **Commissioned Lay Pastor Kenneth Rhodes**, West End Presbyterian, Arkadelphia requests prayers as he begins medical treatment.

NEWS OF OUR CONGREGATIONS & MINISTRIES

- **First, West Fork** collected and delivered a pickup bed full of food for the local elementary school backpack program.
- **First, Pine Bluff** conducts Evening Vespers on the first Sunday of the month and on other Sunday evenings "Sacred Spaces" will offer programs on leadership, suffering, stewardship and gratitude.
- **First, Eureka Springs** hosted a "faith journey/faith statement workshop" on Sept. 17 and 24 to compose personal faith statements.
- **Holiday Island Presbyterian** has Wednesday morning Men's Bible Studies and a monthly movie night.
- **First, Berryville** reports that readers from 35 states and D.C. have visited their blogspot to read the pastor's sermons.
- Presbyterian Women at **First, Prairie Grove** are creating a photo directory as their fall project.
- **Kirk of the Hills, Fairfield Bay** hosted the first concert of the North Central Arkansas Foundation for Arts & Education with violin, piano and saxophone Sept. 14.
- **Mount Vernon Presbyterian, Pea Ridge** held a Visitor and Fellowship Worship and Picnic at a local park on Sept. 7.
- **First, Rogers** offers regular noon meetings of Healing Hearts for anyone who has lost a spouse for any reason.
- The **Northwest Arkansas New Church Development Comunidad Presbiteriana Hispana** celebrated independence days for six Central American countries on Sept. 15 and 16 with fellowship time after worship on Sept. 21. Classes in English as a

Second Language and Spanish as a Second Language and in piano are offered at the new agency of the NCD, The Jacob's Well.

- **First, Dardanelle** served an average of 49 daily sack lunches to needy persons this summer.
- **Ferguson Memorial Presbyterian, Coal Hill** now has a website www.fergusonmemorial.org and invites local people to worship with them at 5:30 p.m. on Sundays and at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesdays.
- **Wynne Presbyterian** celebrated Sunday School Kick-off, Church 2008 Olympic Games and a Potluck Brunch at a farm on Sept. 7.
- **Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village** chose to list members' cell phone numbers, leave phones "on" during power interruptions and use the list for emergency contact.
- **First, Jacksonville** combined a fellowship meal, ice cream social and talent show on Sept. 28.
- **First, Lonoke** will sponsor a Fall Fest "Trunk or Treat" on Oct. 31.

- **Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista** hosted a two-day workshop featuring four classes on breaking down inter-generational barriers, spiritual lessons from baseball, spirituality of aging, and looking at life like playing monopoly. Area museums brought displays, and a local Christian bookstore offered a variety of books and gifts.

NEWS OF OUR RETIRED PERSONS

- Christian sympathy goes to **Rev. Tom Carter** of Fort Smith and family on the death of his wife Sally on Sept. 11. The memorial service was held at First, Little Rock on Sept. 14. Tom is a member of Presbytery's General Council.
- **Rev. Donald Corley**, former pastor of First, Arkadelphia, released his ninth self-published book, "The Congregation," on September 8, 2008, his 82nd birthday.
- **Rev. and Mrs. Harvard Kruienza** have moved from Walnut Ridge to Holland, Michigan.
- **Rev. and Mrs. Jimmie Thames** of Pangburn have moved to Rogers, AR. Jimmie is pastor emeritus of First, Jacksonville.
- **Rev. Bill Branch** of Little Rock has been employed as Interim Associate Pastor for Outreach & Evangelism at Second Presbyterian, Little Rock, as of Oct. 1.

Idea of the Month

First, Clarksville, held a training session for "Specialist Greeters" on Sept. 21 to develop skills in remembering names, making people feel welcome and avoiding unintentionally saying or doing things that prevent visitors from returning.

NEWS and OPPORTUNITIES

Financial Corner: The Presbytery Budget

Are you current with your congregation's pledge?

September Revenue	\$48,727.76
September Expenses	\$82,729.84
September Deficit	\$34,002.08-

Year-to-Date Totals as of 9.30.08

Revenue	\$582,776.78
Expenses	\$750,722.16
Sub-Total Deficit	\$167,945.38-
Money from Reserves	\$ 50,000.00
Total Year to Date Deficit	\$117,945.38-

Presbytery needs your support. If you are not current with your pledge, please make an effort to "catch-up."
 Thank you, The Committee on Administration

Commissioned Lay Pastor Recognized



Rev. Heinrich Eiler (right), dean of the lay academy, preached at a worship service on Sept. 21 at First, Beebe after which the commission of Josh Bridges as their lay pastor was celebrated. Joan Erickson, Associate General Presbyter, was a guest.

SMALL CHURCH TOOLBOX II

More Tools and Resources
 For a Healthy Church

MARCH 5-7, 2009

Fernclyff Camp and Conference Center

Keynote Speaker Rev. Jeff Gill
 Speaking on "Unbinding the Gospel"
 Plus 10 workshops

And time for worship, sharing, music, entertainment,
 great food and simply enjoying the scenery.

Each workshop will be offered twice; attend either one
 or both days.

Harmony Dedicates Carillon



On Sept. 14 Harmony Presbyterian, Clarksville dedicated a carillon at the church which was donated by friends and family of Billie and the late Burley King.

IGP ITINERARY

Interim General Presbyter Sallie Watson will be in the following settings when not in the office between now and the next Banner publication:

- Oct. 12 Worship at First, Rogers and attend installation of Rev. Dennis Ritchie, Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista
- Oct. 14 Visit First, Mountain Home
- Oct. 19 First, Arkadelphia's 150th anniversary celebration
 Celebration of Ministry of First, Des Arc
- Oct. 23-24 Synod of the Sun meeting
- Oct. 27-Nov. 3 Interim Executive Presbyter Training
- Nov. 6-8 Synod Executive/General Presbyters Forum
- Nov. 10-11 Austin Seminary Board

Notices to Church Professionals

October 31 is the absolute deadline to submit your digital photo (mug shot) for inclusion in the pictorial directory on the presbytery's web site. Pastors, Commissioned Lay Pastors, Christian Educators, Church Musicians, and Youth Directors are invited to send a current photo to brian@presbyteryofarkansas.org.

Ministers, Educators and Commissioned Lay Pastors who have begun service since fall of 2007 are reminded of an e-mail invitation to attend the Annual Orientation for New Staff on Thursday, Nov. 20, at the presbytery office.

Search Committee Continues to Seek Readers' Input on New Job Description

by Rev. Steve Hancock, Committee Moderator

The General Presbyter Search Committee is seeking your input on a possible General Presbyter job description (see "Presbytery News" at <http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org>). This document is the result of work done by a task force of the presbytery that was charged to consider the future of the General Presbyter position, including a job description. Our search committee solicits your comments, both positive and negative, on this suggested job description. Your comments will help guide us as we finalize a job description and present it for approval at the February, 2009 presbytery meeting. We need to receive your comments by **Monday, November 10**. Please send them to any **one** of our search committee members listed below.

General Presbyter Search Committee members:

Rev. Stephen Hancock stevehancock@secondpreslr.org
 Ms. Susan Anderson andersons67@cox.net
 Rev. Nancy Benson-Nicol nbenson@ozarks.edu
 Rev. James P. Fleming jeanneijimpfleming@hotmail.com
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Ms. Elizabeth Hauptert ehauptert@cox.net
 Ms. Karene Jones kjonesnr@aol.com
 Ms. Heather Kilpatrick heather@westoverhills.org
 Mr. Toney McMillan mcmillan@mtmc-law.com

Damage from Weather Continues: PC(USA) Responds



First, Pocahontas sustained damage to their vestibule on Sept. 13 from a fallen tree caused by Hurricane Ike. Temporary supply Rev. Robert Norvell reports (and suggests to all Sessions) that insurance coverage had been regularly reviewed and was appropriate to this point in time.

Leaders of the PC(USA) acknowledge this "extraordinary year of disasters" and invite congregations to engage in a month-long fast (from Friday evening to Sunday worship) in October to discern "faithful responses to the global food crisis."

Save the Date
for
"The Big Tent"
June 11-13, Atlanta, GA
<http://www.pcusa.org/bigtent/>

Junior High Quake Attracts 215



Youth in grades 6-9 and adults from 26 congregations enjoyed a fun fall weekend around the theme "F³: You've Got a Friend in Me" on Sept. 26-28 at Ferncliff. Senior High YouthQuake for youth in grades 9-12 is set for March 13-15, 2009 at Ferncliff. Both events are planned and led by Youth Council, a subcommittee of Presbytery's Committee on Christian Education & Nurture.

Scholarships Available

The 2009 Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women will meet July 11-15 in Louisville, KY around the theme "God will do wonders among you." A large group from the Presbytery of Arkansas is expected to attend. Scholarship applications for the Churchwide Gathering are posted on presbytery's website (<http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org/frmPresWomen.aspx>) and should be sent in by December 1.





RESOURCE CENTER NEWS

October, 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

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— This presbytery is full of wise people. They find and use great resources (which are already or are then added to YOUR Resource Center) and then tell others about them! For example, Interim General Presbyter Rev. Sallie Watson endorses “**A New Zealand Prayer Book**,” (and Ferncliff Camp Director Rev. David Gill agrees) with the former saying that often the book offers just the right word in its collection of liturgies, psalms, prayers and readings. Commissioned Lay Pastor Kelly Pearson at First, Dardanelle uses the video “**The Rabbi’s Gift**” (Acc. #VC6262) to conclude or introduce officers’ training. Revs. Tom and Cathy Ulrich, co-pastors at Central Presbyterian, Fort Smith are getting double usage of the DVD series “**Eclipsing Empire**” for a church retreat and to teach “Footsteps in Faith” teenagers at Ferncliff about the

world in which the Apostle Paul lived. Rev. Susan Gray at Mountainburg Presbyterian Church heard of the children’s animated DVDs in the **NEST** series and instead of pursuing their purchase, checked with the Resource Center — which owns (and will loan) any of the entire collection. George Anne Draper of Wynne Presbyterian knows the dates when their children’s classes will study particular Bible stories and reserves resources from the Resource Center for those studies months in advance. Sherry Joyce of First, Little Rock realizes that their congregation’s teenagers would benefit from doing a moms and daughters Sunday School class and borrows “**Bad Girls of the Bible**” (Acc. #VC7515). How very wise are all of these Presbyterians! How about you?

FALL CONCERNS PROMPT PARTICULAR CHURCH PROGRAMS

—The Economy. The denomination has released a list of resources that relate to the credit crisis, short and long term. Several have been publicized as General Assembly study papers previously, but new to the list are: the **Washington Office letter**, communicating a summary of social witness concerns to our congressional representatives encouraging wise use of public resources in restoring confidence in the financial sector and **A Reformed Understanding of Usury**, 2006 report on exorbitant interest evident in “sub-prime” mortgages, credit card debt and abuses in short term loans, plus regulation that protects students and working poor people.

—Presbyterian Identity. “**Presbyterian Handbook for Pastors**” (Acc. #BK9054) is a blend of historical and theological plus fun-filled facts and practical tips, complete with illustrations. “**The Presbyterian Elder**” (Acc. #BK9057) newly revised is “the standard work for all session members.” “**The Joining Hands Journey: Sharing New Paths of Hope**” (Acc. #BK9070) describes “a new Presbyterian model for mission designed to help communities get to the root causes of hunger and poverty.” “**Connectional Church Development**” (Acc. #BK9071) is the Presbyterian Handbook for Creating New Churches. “**Annie, the Kitchen Queen and Other Dispatches from Forbearance Presbyterian Church**” (Acc. #BK9076) introduces in fiction “gently amusing, always compassionate portraits of one congregation.”

—Looking ahead to Advent, which begins Nov. 30. “**Abingdon Worship Photos: Volume 1**” (Acc. #DVD9059) presents a colorful array of projection backgrounds suitable for programs or worship on Advent/Christmas. “**Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference**” (Acc. #DVD9062) by Philip Yancey presents six sessions with DVD, leader guide and participant book on relating to God. “**A Clear View of Jesus’ Birth**” (Acc. #DVD9031) spotlights Dr. Kenneth Bailey’s research on the Nativity from an Eastern perspective. **Many more books, videos, DVDs, curricula and CDs are available for all age groups on Advent/Christmas.**

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**ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED**

CALENDAR

- Oct 12-18 Presbytery-wide Mission Trip to the Gulf Coast
 - Oct 16-19 Arkansas Presbyterian Cursillo, Ferncliff
 - Oct 18 Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team,
Presbytery Office
 - Oct 21 Cluster III Meeting, First, Pocahontas
 - Oct 23-24 Christian Educators/Youth Directors Retreat,
Ferncliff
 - Oct 23-24 Administrative Personnel Association (Arkansas
Chapter) Meeting, First United, Fayetteville
 - Oct 25 Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Presbytery
Office
 - Nov 1 Disaster Preparedness & Response Committee, First,
Conway
 - Nov 2 First, Walnut Ridge 130th Anniversary, 2:30 Worship
and reception
 - Nov 3 Cluster IX Meeting, Grace Presbyterian, Little Rock
 - Nov 4 Deadline for November Banner Submissions
 - Nov 8 First, Springdale, Stephen Series Caring Ministry
Workshop. 9am-1pm, to register
www.caringministry.org or phone 314.428.2600
- For details and additional activities please go to our website.

Congregation Celebrates New Location



On Sept. 14 First Presbyterian, Yellville dedicated their new building at 2250 Highway 62E with a joyful worship service.