



129th Stated Meeting  
of the Presbytery of Arkansas  
Saturday, June 6, 2015  
First Presbyterian Church  
Benton, AR

**PRELIMINARY INFORMATION**

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# NEWS FOR THE 129th STATED MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS

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*"The vision of the Presbytery of Arkansas is to make visible the body of Christ.*

*Called by Christ, we share the promise of our baptism and the hope of God's coming realm. The Presbytery of Arkansas seeks to make visible the body of Christ in Word and sacrament, through teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, prayer and acts of compassion. Trusting the Holy Spirit's guidance, we work to order our life together with glad and generous hearts."*

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**Please respond to the Saturday lunch Reservation Form in this packet by emailing your RSVP as indicated by Monday, June 1. If mailing the form, please allow delivery time to reach the church. E-mailing or phoning will obviously be faster.**

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**If this is the first Presbytery meeting you will attend as a voting ruling elder from your congregation, you are a "first-time commissioner," and you can expect a special, warm greeting, a gift, and a surprise or two. WELCOME! At registration, all will have an opportunity to note on a board any celebrations or concerns that will be lifted up in prayer during the meeting. Please know that one celebration is your presence at this meeting.**

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**The offering at worship on Saturday is designated by General Committee and Presbytery's Mission Committee to help support the Journey Into Hope mission in Dominica. (A mission which is an outgrowth of the work of Faith Presbyterian Church of Horseshoe end.)**

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## REMINDERS

### OTHER PACKETS

Four packets are posted three weeks before the presbytery meeting: 1) the host church packet, 2) preliminary information packet, 3) docket and reports, and 4) minutes of the previous meeting packet. Additional packets – one for other business, one for financial reports and one for informational flyers not included in the business of the Presbytery – will be distributed electronically during the week before the Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas. We hope this practice will allow and encourage you as a commissioner to read and print out only those documents of interest and use to you.

### PRIVILEGE OF VOICE AND VOTE

The exercise of voice and vote at a meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas has been given by vote to those commissioners listed in Section 1.2 Membership of the *Standing Rules* of the Presbytery of Arkansas as follows: “The membership of the Presbytery includes all ordained ministers enrolled by the presbytery and the Ruling Elder commissioners from each Presbyterian Church (USA) congregation within the presbytery’s boundaries, Ruling Elders who are employed as General or Executive Presbyter or Associate General or Executive Presbyter, and Ruling Elders serving as Stated Clerk, Treasurer or their interims, and Ruling Elders who are Certified Christian Educators as defined in the *Book of Order*.

Ruling Elders who are active members of their congregation and are

- i. Moderators of presbytery committees or Moderator of Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Arkansas or Moderator of the Presbytery
- ii. Commissioned Ruling Elders
- iii. Members of General Committee
- iv. Members of Committee on Clusters, or
- v. Current commissioners to General Assembly shall have voice and vote at Presbytery meetings.”

## Properly Prepared Presbytery Participation

We want you to enjoy your days as a commissioner to the Stated Meetings of the Presbytery of Arkansas. It can be confusing at times – even for those who have been coming to presbytery meetings for years! But there is good news to share, success to celebrate, helpful resources to pass along, challenging decisions to be made, dreams to be dared, and good fellowship to be discovered. In order for you to be right in the thick of it, keep reading!

**For starters, what's a presbytery?** It is the representative council of all the Presbyterian churches in the northern 2/3s of the state of Arkansas – 87 churches and 3 fellowships (Hispanic, Korean and Laotian) – about 14,000 members. Voting members of presbytery include Teaching Elders, Ruling Elder commissioners, Ruling Elders serving as presbytery officers, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Certified Christian Educators who are ruling elders, Ruling elders from the Committee on Clusters and General Committee, General Assembly commissioners, presbytery committee moderators who are reporting at the meeting, and Honorably Retired Teaching Elders. We are the Presbytery!

**What's the point of a presbytery?** Presbytery is the second council in the Presbyterian Church (USA) – the Session of a particular church is the first council. Presbytery does the work that can more effectively be done by churches working together. We combine resources to help churches do the work of Christian education, new church development, church redevelopment and mission and provide services to the churches that they could not provide separately. We ordain and install Teaching Elders, oversee the work of the congregations, train Commissioned Ruling Elders, judge disputes, consider changes in our constitution and provide staff services for congregations and committees.

**How often do we meet?** At the present time we meet three times a year for Stated Meetings: two two-day meetings and one one-day meeting. On occasion we meet for special Called Meetings to deal with situations that may arise from time to time between stated meetings.

**What happens when we meet?** A thoughtful pastor offered this excellent answer. At our Presbytery meetings, he noted, we usually deal with five different “agenda,” each one calling for a different approach;

1. Debate and action (sometimes by consent)
2. Education
3. Information
4. Celebration of our community
5. Presbyterian procedures

1. **Debate and action** – We'll be making a few decisions that we may have to talk about before we vote – to clarify, to share different views and to understand alternatives. Adopting Presbytery budgets, approving major expenditures, examining persons moving to become Candidates for Teaching Elders – all these and more might happen. The persons presenting the reports will try to make it clear where each item is located in your packet or in the addendum packet that you receive prior to the meeting. Your role is to listen, to share in discussion as you are led, and to vote your conscience. Other recommendations from committees of presbytery will require discussion and debate and vote. General Committee, a committee or a task force will have carefully reviewed each recommendation. If at any time you wish to enter the debate, please go to a microphone to address your remarks to the Moderator, state your name and the church you represent and your comment or question. Your role is to be a patient and thoughtful participant in this necessary and sometimes unexciting routine. If you are not sure what's going on, let the Moderator know about your difficulty! If you have questions you can bet that others are confused as well. The Moderator and the Stated Clerk of Presbytery when asked to do so will take the time to clear things up.
  
2. **Education** – Being here is an opportunity to learn about our Presbyterian Church (USA). You might hear from Christians from other parts of the world, reports from representatives of Presbyterian schools or agencies, Synods or General Assembly. News of presbytery training and educational events, church renewal or evangelism programs, updates on social concerns of our presbytery are all examples. Your role is to listen and to share what you are learning with appropriate groups in your congregation.
  
3. **Information** – You will receive a lot of information, both written and spoken, to share with your session and church members. Occasionally, you may be asked to share information about your own church for directories, reports and planning. You will hear about programs in other congregations that might benefit your church. Again, your role is to be the communicator – to pass along the good news to your session and local leaders. You will find a summary of the Presbytery meeting to use with your session in “The Banner,” the monthly newsletter that comes out on Tuesday after the meeting. You can go to the Presbytery website at [www.presbyteryofarkansas.com](http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.com) to obtain the Banner.
  
4. **Celebration of our community** – We will worship and sing, pray for each other and our world, sometimes share the Lord's Supper, enjoy mealtime fellowship, give thanks for special accomplishments and enjoy each other's company! Your role is

simple. Join the party! Being with other Christians can be fun. Watch for a gift for first-time elders. As the Apostle Paul reminds us, “Rejoice!”

- 5. Presbyterian procedures** – As with any organization, part of our work is routine – such as adoption of the docket, approval of minutes and perhaps action on small, unbudgeted expenditures. We work on our partnership role with churches approving property transfers and major expenditures, reviewing session records, and naming moderators for churches without pastors. We welcome and release clergy members, or form special committees and task forces. You will receive the Presbytery Packet over the internet several weeks before the meeting or if necessary, it may be mailed to you. Some of this material is handled with little or no discussion and could be considered “housekeeping details” of the partners doing things “decently and in order.” Sometimes they are included in a consent agenda, a procedure for the adoption of non-controversial items that require no discussion or debate.

**Welcome to this ministry! Remember our aim is always to build up Christ’s Church!**

*(Adapted from Cluster V’s New Elder Commissioner Training – Original document by Reverend David Kingsley, former Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Hot Springs)*

\*\*The brochure entitled “Parliamentary Procedures in the Presbyterian Church (USA)” by Marianne L. Wolfe may be downloaded at the PCUSA.org website. [www.PCUSA.org](http://www.PCUSA.org)

## **MOTION BASICS**

### **Steps of the Motion**

- 1. Commissioner** rises and addresses the moderator.
- 2. Moderator** recognizes the commissioner and grants the floor
- 3. Commissioner** makes motion. (Commissioner may not debate before the motion is seconded.)
- 4. Another commissioner** seconds the motion without recognition from the moderator.
- 5. Moderator** states the motion.
- 6. Moderator** calls for debate (Maker of the motion has the privilege of first debate.) All speakers must address the moderator and be recognized by the moderator prior to speaking.
- 7. Moderator** takes the vote, announces the vote and the results of the vote.
- 8. Moderator** states the next order of business.

## EIGHT USEFUL MOTIONS

1. ***Amend.*** There are only three forms of simple amendment

- a. to delete or strike out
- b. to add or insert
- c. to strike out and insert

The words proposed for deletion or additions *must* be *consecutive* words. When the amendment does not involve consecutive words or is longer than a paragraph, the motions “to substitute” (a form of amendment) is used. This is a difficult motion and should *not* be used when the simple form of amendment can be used.

2. ***Commit or Refer.*** To commit or refer back to committee for further study and amendment allows the consultative process to be used in greater depth. When this motion is made, it needs to state clearly which committee; appointment of the committee, if necessary; the task of the committee; and report times.

3. ***Postpone to a Particular Time.*** This motion takes precedence over the preceding two and has the power to grant additional time to a particular member or committee for further study or consultation. It should always be used in preference to “table” because it permits debate on the propriety of postponement.

4. ***Limits on Debate.*** The assembly always has the power, and the moderator the right of suggestion, to limit debate to a particular hour, or extend or shorten speeches according to the necessity of the moment. Limits on the length of speeches are advisable in instances where the issue before the assembly is highly divisive and many members wish to speak.

5. ***Previous Question.*** The maker of the motion “to move the previous question” (close debate and immediately take the vote) must be recognized by the moderator and the motion must receive a second. It is never in order when called from the floor. This motion is not debatable and should never be used to prevent legitimate debate.

6. ***Lay on the Table.*** This motion is seldom necessary. The motion “to postpone” is always preferable because of its lower rank and its debate ability. Misuse of this subsidiary motion can be a strategy that seriously abridges the rights of the assembly because of its high rank and its adoption by a majority vote without debate. The moderator is obliged to explain carefully to the assembly the implications of this motion should it be made.
  
7. ***Consideration by Paragraph or Seriatim.*** Consideration by paragraph or seriatim is an incidental motion that may be suggested by the moderator or any two members of the assembly, allowing an orderly consideration of a complex proposal with several different parts, clarifying for the assembly the controversial aspects of the proposal. Each paragraph of the proposal can be amended without finally adopting the new wording until the final action on the main motion is amended.

*From Parliamentary Procedures in the PC(USA) by Marianne L. Wolfe, P.R.P.*



## We Will Appreciate Your Feedback

Please take Five Minutes Responding to the Following Questions.

How many times have you attended a meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas?  
(Please circle one.)

1

2-5

5-10

10 or more

Why did you come to this Presbytery meeting? (Please rank in order of importance, 1 being most important to 6 being least important.)

\_\_\_ Pre-Presbytery Training

\_\_\_ Other?

\_\_\_ Business to be conducted

\_\_\_ Fellowship

\_\_\_ To represent my church

\_\_\_ Worship

What was your favorite aspect of this Presbytery meeting?

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What do you suggest that would have improved this meeting of Presbytery?

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My *IDEAL* Presbytery meeting would include...

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You may also email Rev. Liz Lindsey with your comments at [scooterpastor38@hotmail.com](mailto:scooterpastor38@hotmail.com)

Please Use Other Side for Additional Comments

**MOTION FORM**

**Presbytery of Arkansas**

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If you wish to make a motion to place before the Presbytery, please **PRINT** the text of your motion **CLEARLY** on this form and submit it to the Stated Clerk:

**MOTION:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Presbytery of Arkansas**

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If you wish to make a motion to place before the Presbytery, please **PRINT** the text of your motion **CLEARLY** on this form and submit it to the Stated Clerk:

**MOTION:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



## PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS

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Little Rock, Arkansas 72227

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[www.presbyteryofarkansas.org](http://www.presbyteryofarkansas.org) • [info@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto:info@presbyteryofarkansas.org)

### LEAVES OF ABSENCE

128<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting, February 20-21, 2015

Request for Excused Absence from this meeting by:

All member churches and minister members (except those who have been granted the status of Honorably Retired and have elected non-active status) are required to attend all stated meeting of Presbytery. Ministers unable to attend, and churches whose commissioners are unable to attend, must request an excused absence through the Office of the Stated Clerk. You may hand this form to David Dyer, Assistant Stated Clerk, mail it to the presbytery office, or email him at [david@presbyteryofarkansas.org](mailto:david@presbyteryofarkansas.org), or you may use the form on the presbytery website under "Presbytery Meetings."

William F. Galbraith  
General Presbyter

Cathy Ulrich  
Stated Clerk

Kenneth Rich  
Director of Mission Support

NiAnn Thompson  
Resourcing Center Director

David Dyer  
Assistant Stated Clerk

Britton Varn  
Youth Ministry

Michael Vinson  
Vital Congregations