



Presbytery of Arkansas

Draft Minutes of the One Hundred Fifty-Fifth Stated Meeting of The Presbytery of Arkansas University of the Ozarks, Clarksville, AR

March 1-2, 2024

Friday, March 1, 2024

The 155th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas was hosted by University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Arkansas. The in-person meeting also was comprised of a livestreaming component on Friday and a Zoom with participation component Saturday.

Call to Order and Opening Prayer

The 155th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas was called to order by the gavel tapping and lighting the Christ candle, by Moderator RE Mike Szabo who said the opening prayer at 6:30 p.m. on March 1, 2024 at University of the Ozarks in Clarksville.

Welcome

Moderator Szabo welcomed everyone to the worship service and opening of the 155th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas. He introduced Lori McBee, Vice President for Advancement and Alumni Engagement for the University of the Ozarks. She welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a brief rundown of the university's history and current events. She also discussed the Thriving in Ministry grant from the Lilly Foundation and Phil Blackburn, who will go full time with the grant this year.

Moderator Szabo called on Stated Clerk Brinegar who described the hybrid meeting and said that there will be no voting on Friday, just streaming. The Consent Agenda will be moved to Saturday morning. Voting will be held Saturday in person and from Zoom.

Moderator Szabo asked for four volunteers to be tellers for the meeting. He announced that the appointed tellers were: Judi McMillan, pastor of Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista; David Clark, commissioned pastor at First Presbyterian in Heber Springs; Alice Kutz, commissioner from First Presbyterian in Springdale; Katie Cummings, pastor at First Presbyterian in Bentonville.

General Presbyter's Report

General Presbyter MWS Stewart Smith welcomed all attendees including corresponding members, first-time commissioners, and visitors. Commissioners who were attending for the first time were:

Moderator Szabo asked the General Presbyter to give his report to the presbytery. General Presbyter Smith reported that the Synod of the Sun has elected a new leader, Rev. Mitch Miller, Santa Fe Presbyterian Church in Edmond, Oklahoma, who will start his new position in the summer. He introduced Kathy Lee-Cornell, who is the director of the Synod Partnership for Disaster Recovery. She said that she has been in her position for 18 months and this partnership of all 11 presbyteries in the synod was the first of its kind. She appreciates all of the support she has received and she encourages continued support for the Presbytery of Arkansas subcommittee on disaster preparedness.

General Presbyter Smith said that he plans to transition out of the general presbyter's position in 2024 after serving for eight years. He will be looking for transitional work and his last day at the presbytery will be August 2, 2024. He described motions the Coordinating Team will be bringing regarding this transition. He said that disciplinary charges will be read, four presentations will be given tomorrow asking for funding and about money received from the property sale of the Argenta and Brinkley and funds from Westminster in Little Rock. He offered a word of thanks to Jeremy Wilhelmi for his help in preparing for this stated meeting.

Worship and Installation of Moderator Emmett Powers

The meeting was moved to worship. Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was observed. The offering totaled \$728.00 to benefit the University of the Ozarks Presbytery of Arkansas Scholarship. Emmett Powers was installed as the next moderator of the presbytery for 2024.

Everyone was invited to gather downstairs from the sanctuary, for a reception following worship. The meeting was adjourned until 8:30 a.m. Saturday morning.

Saturday, March 2, 2024

Call Back to Order with Worship and Vice Moderator Installation

The 155th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas continued Saturday morning with Moderator Emmett Powers calling the 155th Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas back to order at 8:30 am, and

opened the meeting with prayer. A worship service was held with Rev. Stewart Smith and Julie Price with music. Vice Moderator Judi McMillan was installed by Moderator Emmett Powers. RE Mike Szabo is now the moderator of the Coordinating Team.

Consent Agenda

A quorum for the stated meeting is at least 20 Ruling Elders and 20 Ministers of the Word and Sacrament with at least 20 congregations represented overall, as approved at the February 10, 2018 Stated Meeting. A quorum was present with a total of 146 in attendance and on Zoom, of whom 117 could vote. The attendance is included in the Appendix as Section I.

Moderator Powers called on Stated Clerk Brinegar to present the Consent Agenda. The moderator explained all motions may be voted on as in total or anyone is welcome to remove any item for discussion. Moderator Powers asked if anyone wanted an item removed. No changes were made. Moderator Powers entertained a motion, one was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The consent agenda may be found in the Appendix, Section II.

Stated Clerk Brinegar explained the technology of Zoom and welcomed attendees on Zoom and explained the electronic voting process. Technical Moderator Katie Flood was monitoring Zoom to help with questions and counting votes.

Order of the Day-Ministry Architects Report

At 9 a.m., Ministry Architects joined the meeting via Zoom and Mark Devries gave a report on their activities and the visioning process the presbytery is undertaking. The plan is set to take about 17 months. A question and answer period was held after the presentation.

Announcements

Two corresponding members were in attendance: Josh Kerr from the Presbyterian Foundation and Kathy Lee-Cornell, director of the Synod Partnership for Disaster Recovery.

Alice Kutz from Springdale announced the registration for the Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering at Ferncliff April 12 & 13, 2024.

John Arnold announced an April Workshop called Persuasive Promotion, sign up by QR code on tables.

Julie Price announced that there will be a Job Board on the presbytery's website for job postings in churches. She was asking for job listings, any type of position to be emailed to her. She also added that there is a part time position at Trinity Presbyterian for an educator.

Peg David invited everyone to attend the Presbytery Pilgrimage to be held at Ferncliff on April 18-21.

Stewart Smith announced that the next step in the visioning process is the visioning retreat to be held at Ferncliff on April 15. Encouraged committee members, committee chairs and anyone else interested in the process to attend.

Presentations

Joel Gill and Jocelyn Wildwright gave a presentation about Ferncliff future plans regarding remodeling and restoration to occur at the Ferncliff campus. He said that they have been in a visioning process for the last three years. He described renovations that will be made at Ferncliff. Their goal is \$7.6 million dollars; they have already raised \$3.85 million and are pursuing grants from the Maybe Foundation and Walton Family Foundation and are looking to raise \$1.52 million by January 9, 2025. He is suggesting 10% of the goal or approximately \$760,000 to support this campaign from the presbytery. He said that the donation could be a pledge over a time period of less than five years. Joel said that this is allowed by the grants they are seeking from the foundations. He said that every dollar raised can be turned into \$3 by the foundation matches.

Donna Mahurin and Kerri Daniels gave a presentation regarding the 2023 Centennial Celebration that Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services just celebrated and the preparations they are making to serve the next 100 years. They had a campus master plan created in 2022 that the first renovation is the multi-purpose gym. The estimated price is over one million dollars with the first phase at a cost of around \$500,000. They have already raised \$400,000 to date and are asking the presbytery for a gift of \$250,000 to complete the renovations on the gym and set up a \$150,000 maintenance fund for the facility. Phase two would begin when they have the funds to start the project, which will include updating the housing for residents.

Phil Blackburn has been working with the University of the Ozarks Thriving in Ministry grant from the Lilly Foundation and is starting the third year of the grant. The program has created two cohorts in the Presbytery of Arkansas, one for Ministers of the Word Sacrament and Commissioned Ruling Elders. They also held the first retreat for the CREs in 2023. In January 2024 the next part of the grant is Thriving Rural Congregations in the POA with a one million dollar grant, which has two full time people working on it now. He said new cohorts will form, they will expand their work with Ruling Elders and write a sustainability grant for the long term. Lilly will match \$1 to \$1 up to \$500,000 for sustainability and they are asking for the match amount.

Business of the Presbytery

Coordinating Team Report

Committee Moderator RE Mike Szabo gave the report for the Coordinating Team, the written report may be found in the Appendix, Section III with four action items. Moderator Szabo asked if there were any questions, none were asked.

Motions for Presbytery Action

Motion 1: That the presbytery search for a Transitional General Presbyter. A motion was made from a committee so no is second required. No questions were asked, **motion carried.**

Motion 2: That Nominations will bring the names of 3-5 people to the Coordinating Team by April 1, who will elect the Transitional General Presbyter Search Committee on behalf of the presbytery. A motion was made from a committee so no second is required. No questions were asked, **motion carried.**

Motion 3: That a task force be formed to study the requests brought from today's presentations from Ferncliff, Vera Lloyd, Thriving in Ministry, and the suggestions for possible uses of the sale of First Presbyterian North Little Rock from the AC, and report back to presbytery with a planned response for presbytery approval. A motion was made from a committee so no second is required. The motion was amended to include **report back to the June presbytery meeting.** **Motion carried** after the lunch break.

Motion 4: The task force consist of a member from the Committee on Administration, a member from the Future of the Church Committee, a member from the Mission of the Church Committee, the Presbytery Treasurer, the General Presbyter and the Stated Clerk. A motion was made from a committee so no second is required. The motion was amended to include **plus one at-large committee member elected by the Nominating Committee.** **Motion carried** after the lunch break.

Order of the Day—Report from Youth at Presbytery

Youth Co-Moderator Lizzie Howard reported to the presbytery meeting about the youth events from 2023. She continued with events planned for 2024 to include confirmation classes, Mission Possible, High School Sabbath Saturday, Montreat for both high schoolers and middle schoolers.

Lunch Break

Business of the Presbytery Continues

Stated Clerk Blake Brinegar repeated for clarity, motions 3 & 4 from the Coordinating Team report and asked for questions, there were none. Votes were taken and both passed unanimously.

Josh Kerr, Ministry Relations Officer from the Presbyterian Foundation introduced himself and explained what he does at the foundation. He is available to help work with pastors and congregations with stewardship.

Stated Clerk Report

Stated Clerk Blake Brinegar's written report can be found in the Appendix, Section IV. The item for action:

At the 154th Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas the Nominations Committee in consultation with the Committee on Representation moved, **That the Presbytery of Arkansas instruct the Coordinating Team, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, to return to the March 2024 Stated Meeting of the presbytery with necessary revisions to the presbytery by-laws, standing rules, and other policies to reduce the size of the Committee on Representation from nine (9) members in three (3) equal classes to three (3) members in three (3) equal classes.** The motion was made and seconded. No questions were

asked. **Motion approved.** See the Presbytery Ministry Manual Part 1: Organization and Structure page in the Appendix, Section IV.

The stated clerk read charges against Steven Frazier.

**CHARGES AGAINST REV. STEPHEN FRAZIER
INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE, PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, U.S.A**

January 26, 2024

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) charges you, Steven Frazier, a teaching elder, with the following offenses:

1. Between September 1989 and June 1990, you committed the offense of sexual abuse by engaging in a course of sexual conduct by means of

a) physical contact (a prolonged hug; a swat on the butt) that, while not explicitly sexual in nature, was inappropriate and

b) inappropriate nonphysical intimacy

in relation to a person who was then a minor 14 to 15 years old and with whom you had a teaching and coaching relationship. This course of conduct constituted sexual grooming of the minor and took place where you were a teacher/coach and the minor was a student, and at other school-associated locations.

2. Between September 1990 and June 1991, you committed the offense of sexual abuse by engaging in a course of sexual conduct by means of

a) physical contact (two hugs) that, while not explicitly sexual in nature, was inappropriate and

b) inappropriate nonphysical intimacy

in relation to a person who was then 15 to 16 years old and with whom you previously had a teaching and coaching relationship. This course of conduct constituted sexual grooming of the minor and took place where you were a teacher/coach and the minor was a student.

3. On multiple occasions beginning in or around July 1991 and continuing until in or around October 1991, you committed the offense of sexual abuse by engaging in sexual conduct in relation to a person who was then 16 years old and with whom you previously had a teaching and coaching relationship and who served as your assistant in your role as a basketball coach. These actions took place in various locations related to where you were a coach, and a teacher and the minor was a student.

4. On multiple occasions beginning in or around October 1991 and continuing until in or around December 1991 or January 1992, you committed the offense of sexual abuse by engaging in sexual conduct in relation to a person who was then 16 years old and with whom you had previously had a teaching and coaching relationship.
5. Beginning in on or around December 1991 and continuing through sometime prior to May 1992, you committed the offense of sexual abuse by engaging in a course of sexual conduct by means of inappropriate non-physical intimacy (e.g. intimate correspondence that stated, "I love you" or was signed with "Love"; concealing the relationship from family) in relation to a person who was then 16 years old and with whom you had previously had a teaching and coaching relationship. This conduct constituted sexual grooming of a minor.
6. On multiple occasions beginning in or around June 1992 and continuing through December 1992, you committed the offense of sexual abuse by engaging in sexual conduct in relation to a person who was then 17 years old and with whom you had previously had a teaching and coaching relationship.
7. In December 1992, you committed the offense of sexual abuse when, to further a course of sexual conduct in relation to a minor with whom you had previously had a teaching and coaching relationship, you made a purported offer of marriage to the minor, who was then 17 years old.
8. On multiple occasions between approximately December 1992 and April 1993, you committed the offense of sexual abuse by engaging in sexual conduct in relation to a person who was then 17 years old, with whom you previously had a teaching and coaching relationship.
9. In or around September 1993, you committed the offense of sexual abuse by engaging in sexual intercourse with a former student who was then 18 years of age. This sexual conduct was inherently coercive because of the emotional dependency you fostered in the former student through years of sexual grooming and sexual conduct while the former student was a minor.
10. In or around September 1993, you committed the offense of sexual abuse by engaging in sexual intercourse with a former student who was then 18 years of age. This sexual conduct involved the misuse of your position as the former teacher and coach of the 18-year-old and/or as a student at the Presbyterian School of Christian Education.
11. In November 1993, you committed the offense of sexual abuse when, to further a course of sexual conduct involving coercion, misuse of position, or both, you induced a person, then 18 years of age, to get an abortion. These actions involved coercion by means of threats of financial and emotional consequences if the sexual relationship between you and your former student was discovered.
12. On multiple occasions between April 1993 and May 1997, you committed the offense of sexual abuse by engaging in sexual conduct, including sexual intercourse, with a person then 18 to 22 years of age.

13. On multiple occasions between April 1993 and May 1997, you committed the offense of sexual abuse by engaging in sexual conduct, including sexual intercourse, with a former student then 18 to 22 years of age. This sexual conduct involved the misuse of your position as the former teacher and coach of the 18 to 22-year old, as an Inquirer, and/or as an intern.

Stated Clerk Brinegar concluded his report, he asked MWS Georgia Senor to lead the presbytery in a prayer.

Committee on Nominations

MWS Judi McMillan did not have a written report but due to the Coordinating Team motions approved by the presbytery today, she requested that names be sent to her or Robert Lowry by April 1, for the Transitional General Presbytery Search Committee. She also requested that names be sent for the at-large committee member to be elected by the nominating committee to the task force to study the request of funds brought from today's presentations.

Committee on Administration Report

The Appendix, Section V, has the 2024 Asking Budget and the financial reports and the revised Small Church Loan Agreement. Treasurer Tom Verdery had two motions for presbytery approval.

For Presbytery Action:

Motion 1: The Committee on Administration recommends the following terms of call for General Presbyter Stewart Smith.

Note 1 - Amounts are unchanged from 2023 except for the increase in Board of Pensions dues.

Note 2 – Stewart is enrolled in the Board of Pensions “Minister’s Choice” option and not Pastor’s Participation.

General Presbyter’s Proposed Terms of Call For the Year 2024

Salary	55,208.28
Housing	32,700.00
FICA	6,724.75
Pension/Medical	19,477.20
Continuing Education (Reimbursable up to)	1,500.00
Professional Expenses (Reimbursable up to)	15,000.00
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Total	127,955.59
Continuing Education	2 weeks
Vacation	4 weeks
Sabbatical Leave per presbytery policy	
Family Leave per Book of Order Requirement	

The motion came from a committee and did not need a second. Questions were asked and answered. **The motion carried without opposition.**

Motion 2: The Committee on Administration recommended approval of the proposed 2024 operating budget. (See Appendix, Section V, Exhibit B). Tom Verdery presented the 2024 Asking Budget which was very similar to the budget from 2023 with a reduction in Mission Acceptance or money from congregations. He asked for questions, there were none. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Committee on Ministry Report

Committee Moderator MWS Leslie Roper gave the report for the Committee on Ministry with four action items, the written report can be found in the Appendix, Section VI.

For Action:

- 1. Motion to grant retirement status to MWS Steven Kurtz effective December 31, 2023 and to approve the dissolution of call of MWS Steven Kurtz as pastor of Central Presbyterian Church, Fort Smith, AR concurring with the dissolution of call in a duly called congregational meeting on December, 31,2023.** No questions were asked, **motion carried.**
- 2. Motion to grant retirement status to MWS Mark Clark (member at large) effective February 29, 2024.** No questions were asked, **motion carried.**
- 3. Motion to recognize retirement status to Kenneth and Claire Rhodes effective December 31, 2023 and to express our gratitude to God for their faithful years of service to the West End Presbyterian Church of Arkadelphia.** They were recognized for their work, no questions were asked, **motion carried.**
- 4. Necrology. The Committee on Ministry requests a moment of silence to reflect on the life and ministry of the following:**

**Rev. Dr. John Barklind
Rev. Hartley Jones (CRE)
Rev. Jim Miller**

whose work on this earth has ended, and who have received their reward and are at home with God and all the saints in the Kingdom of God. The presbytery held a moment of silence to honor their life and ministry.

Mission of the Church Committee Report

Committee Moderator CRE Peg Falls-Corbitt gave a report on the Mission of the Church grants. The next round of grants deadline is April 15 and the presbytery website has the grant application guidelines. A copy of the grant guidelines can be found in the Appendix, Section VII.

Honduras Covenant

MWS Phil Butin reported that a mission trip to Honduras is planned during spring break. Among the attendees, there are five international students and three MSWs-Jesse Gonzales, Jeremy Wilhelmi and himself. They will be putting a roof on a new church in El Rosario. He made a **motion have the presbytery approve the following covenant:**

A Covenant Between the Presbytery of Arkansas and the Presbytery of Honduras

- I. Goals of the Partnership
 - a. Mutual friendship, solidarity, fellowship, and support.
 - b. A deeper mutual awareness of the global scope of God's work in and through the church of Jesus Christ, and the ways it takes various forms in different cultural contexts.
 - c. Mutual encouragement in Christian discipleship and shared worship that includes faith sharing, mutual prayer commitment and support, and joyful, creative interchange of cultural expressions of discipleship and worship.
 - d. Mutual address of shared concerns:
 - i. Sharing God's love and grace with neighbors from all walks of life.
 - ii. Serving those in need in our churches and communities, especially for pure, safe water; solar power; adequate housing; and the basic necessities of life.
 - iii. Specific ways our churches can help address human needs and guard human dignity, safety, and flourishing in the midst of changing patterns of international immigration.
 - iv. Mutual support of theological education and leadership development that will help ensure faithful, growing congregations and new church development.
 - v. Mutual commitment to maintaining safe and functional church buildings for existing and new congregations, and homes for retiring pastors as needed.
- II. Financial Matters
 - a. Based on available resources and needs, the Presbytery of Arkansas (through its congregations) will joyfully assist in funding needed materials for projects undertaken under the direction of the Presbytery of Honduras.
 - b. In the spirit of generosity, the financial costs of international and internal travel needed to sustain and deepen our partnership (whether to Honduras or to the United States for shared events, retreats, church gatherings, etc.) will be shared in ways that reflect the greater available financial resources among U.S. Presbyterians and churches.
- III. This covenant will be reviewed every three years, to reflect the changing realities, resources, and needs of both presbyteries.

The motion was seconded and questions were asked and answered. **Motion carried.**

Report from Young Adult Ministry

Sarah Leer, presbytery transitional youth and young adult developer, reported on the young adult ministry including Montreat camp that was for college age students was held with 20 from UCM, Lyon and Ozarks attending. She reported on UCM activities including their bike-a-thon and the SOS food pantry that has been set up for students at Lyon.

Future of the Church Committee Report

Moderator Cindy Lanphear, moderator of the committee told everyone that the next round of grants deadline is April 15 and the presbytery website has the grant application guidelines. A copy of the grant guidelines can be found in the Appendix, Section VIII.

New Business

Scharmél Roussel brought a **motion to concur with Overture 14, *On Becoming Free from Plastic Pollution***, which can be found in the Appendix, Section IX. Motion was seconded. Questions were asked and answered. Motion passed.

Carol Young, on Zoom, brought a **motion to concur with Overture 7, *Adoption of the Sustainable Peace Pledge***, which can be found in the Appendix, Section X. Motion was seconded. Questions were asked and answered. Vote was taken, tellers counted 42 yes and 16 no (Zoom votes included). Motion carried.

MWS Elizabeth Brinegar brought a **motion to direct the Coordinating Team to evaluate the efficacy and continued use of hybrid meetings**. Motion was seconded. Discussion was held and Move the Question motion was made. It was seconded. The original **motion was carried** to direct the Coordinating Team to evaluate hybrid meetings.

Closing Prayer and Adjournment

With no more business needing to be conducted before the presbytery, Moderator Emmett Powers offered the closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Palmer
Administrator

Blake Brinegar
Stated Clerk

Appendix

I.	Attendance	11
II.	Consent Agenda	14
III.	Report from the Coordinating Team	18
IV.	Report from the Stated Clerk	21
V.	Report from Committee on Administration	23
	2024 Asking Budget, Balance Sheet, Income Statement, & Benevolence	26
VI.	Report from the Committee on Ministry	33
VII.	Report from the Mission of the Church	45
VIII.	Report from the Future of the Church	47
IX.	Overture 014	50
X.	Overture 007	54

Section I – Roster of Attendance/Enrollment

Voting as Ministers of Word and Sacrament

Ministers of Word and Sacrament – 32 in attendance (voting)

Alsup, Maggie	Hadley, Robert	Saul, Cinthia
Arnold, Susan	Harris, LaWanda	Secrest, Alisa
Berger, Sara Anne	Hatcher, Chip	Seitz, Bill
Blackburn, Phillip	Jones, Ron	Senor, Georgia
Blackburn, Tasha	Kane, Ben	Smith, Stewart
Brinegar, Blake	King, John	Thurmond, Yvonne
Brinegar, Elizabeth	Kwak, Jai	Vogado, Lindy
Butin, Phil	McMillan, Judith	Wildwright, Grant
Cummings, Katie	Mainard-O’Connell, Marie	Wildwright, Jocelyn
Denne, Krista	Purcell, Becky	Wilhelmi, Jeremy
Falls, Ruskin	Roper, Leslie	

Ministers of Word and Sacrament – 12 on Zoom (voting)

Arnold, John	Carrington, Joy	Schaller, Patricia
Anderson, Barry	Davis, Fern	Wooley, Dan
Bacon-Latina, Courtney	Humphries, Marion	
Brock, Brian	Price, Jeff	
Butin, Jan	Schaller, David	

Excused Absences

Lowry, Robert	Spooner, Rebecca	Vinson, Michael
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Honorably Retired Ministers of Word and Sacrament – 9 in attendance (voting)

Clark, Carol	McCormack, Carl	Ritchie, Dennis
Gill, David	Powers, Emmett	Tropansky, Joseph
Lewis, Bo	Reed, David	Whitworth-Reed, Linda

Honorably Retired Ministers of Word and Sacrament – 3 on Zoom (voting)

Akin, Karen
Gray, Susan
Jones, Lance

Temporary Members of the Presbytery – 1 in attendance (voting)

Qualls, Michael – Forrest City, Graham Memorial

Excused Absences

Ratliff, Jim

Total of 57 voting as a Ministers of the Word and Sacrament with 42 in attendance and 15 on Zoom.

Voting as Ruling Elders

Ruling Elder Commissioners 37 in attendance (voting) representing congregations

Alma, First – Enke, Jan	Jonesboro, First – Ross, Ann
Arkadelphia, First – Mortenson, Autum & Chris	Little Rock, First – Ingram, Libby
Benton, First – Kubler, Kate	Little Rock, Pulaski Heights – Lewis, Becky
Bentonville, First – Blazer, Grace	Little Rock, Second – Yancey, Joseph; Young, Carol
Clarksville, First – Castleman, Linda	Little Rock, Westover Hills – Branch, Elizabeth
Clarksville, Harmony – Lanphear, Cindy	Mena, First – Dixon, Mary
Conway, First – Roussel, Scharmell	Morrilton, First – Mobley, Max
Fayetteville, First – Olsen, Julie; Driver, Claudia	Morrilton, Hopewell – Morris, Susan
Forrest City, Graham Memorial – Carter, Neely; Danehower, Kim	Newport, First – Davis, James
Fort Smith, Central – McClure, Mike	North Little Rock, Park Hill – Boggs, Tamara
Harrison, First – Davis, Brian & Melody	Pea Ridge, Mt. Vernon – Ronnie & Peggy David
Hot Springs Village, Kirk – Gardner, Sharon; Hamilton, Ruth	Searcy, First – Szabo, Marcia
Hot Springs, Westminster – Grubb, Deborah	Springdale, First – Kutz, Alice; Cole, Bobby
Huntsville, First – Presley Prophet, Susan	Wynne – Gardner, Lynn
	Yellville, First – Haynes, Misty

Ruling Elder Commissioners – 13 on Zoom (voting) representing congregations

Arkadelphia, West End – Fallin, Gloria; Wright, Patricia	Jacksonville, First – Matthews, Barbara
Bella Vista – Warner, Sharon	Little Rock, Grace – Thannisch, Martha
Bentonville, First – Dixon, Kim	Little Rock, Second – Byrd, Alicia
Fairfield Bay, Kirk – Slaughter, Wayne	Little Rock, Westover Hills – Stephens, Ray
Heber Springs, First – Brown, Melissa	Pine Bluff, First – Harris, Don
Hot Springs, First – Cattaneo, Dawn	Rogers, First – Leer, Peter

Excused Absence

Atkins, Memorial—Murdoch, Mike

Absent Without Excuse – Congregations

Amity, Alpine	Cane Hill	McGehee, First
Beebe, First	Gurdon, First	Mountain Home, First
Bentonville, Vaughn	Helena, First	Pine Bluff, Faith
Bull Shoals		

Ruling Elder Voting Members of Presbytery Council – 2 in attendance (voting)

Szabo, Mike – Coordinating Team	Verdery, Tom - Treasurer
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Commissioned Ruling Elders – 4 in attendance (voting)

Benson, Janet – Wynne	Falls-Corbett, Peg – Morrilton, First
Clark, David – Heber Springs, First	Thomas, Issac – Fayetteville, First United

Commissioned Ruling Elders – 3 on Zoom (voting)

Olson, Chuck – Atkins Memorial
Rhodes, Claire – Arkadelphia, West End
Rhodes, Kenneth – Arkadelphia, West End

Certified Christian Educators – 1 in attendance (voting)

Button, Kristi

A total of 60 voting as Ruling Elders with 44 in attendance and 16 on Zoom.

Total Voting of 117, with 86 in attendance and 31 on Zoom .

Non-Voting Attendees

Corresponding Members – 2 in attendance (non-voting)

Kerr, Joshua Presbyterian Foundation
Lee-Cornell, Kathy South Louisiana Presbytery/SPDR

Inquirer/Candidate – 3 in attendance (non-voting)

Flood, Katie Bentonville, First
McDonald, Amanda Fayetteville, First United
Yarbrough, Baxter Morrilton, First

Members of the Presbytery Staff – 3 in attendance (non-voting)

Leer, Sarah Palmer, Kimberly Price, Julie

Visitors - 6 in attendance (non-voting)

Gill, Joel – Ferncliff Camp & Conference Center
Gonzalez, Jesus (Jesse) - Gethsemane Fort Worth, TX
Grubb, Lawrence - Hot Springs, Westminster
Hays, Annette - Mena, First
Hays, Bill - Mena, First
Mortenson, Marianne - Arkadelphia

Total Non-Voting of 29 with 14 in attendance along with 15 youth and young adults.

Total Attendance

A total of 146 were registered, of whom 117 who could vote and 29 who could not vote (86 in person and 31 on zoom who could vote and 29 in person who could not vote).

Section II - Consent Agenda

MWS Blake Brinegar
Stated Clerk

For Action:

1. **Motion to adopt the docket.**
2. **Motion to approve the minutes of the 154th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas, October 6-7, 2023, held at Westover Hills Presbyterian Church in Little Rock with worship led by Dr. Lester Ruth.**
3. **Motion to enroll corresponding members with voice but not vote.**
4. **Motion to grant privilege of the floor (voice) to those persons registered, but without vote.**
5. **Motion for the technology of Zoom Technology to count votes, serving as what the Presbytery of Arkansas has historically termed the "Tellers."**
6. **Motion for the Stated Clerk to record those absent and those present and include those names and numbers in the minutes, serving as what the Presbytery of Arkansas has historically termed the "Leaves of Absence Committee."**
7. **Motion to receive the minutes of the Administrative Commission to Install MWS Ben Kane at Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock, on October 8, 2023 at 3pm, and to dismiss them with thanks.**
8. **Motion to receive the minutes of the Administrative Commission to Ordain and Install MWS Grant Wildwright at First Presbyterian Church, Benton, on November 11, 2023, and to dismiss them with thanks.**
9. **Motion to receive the report of the Administrative Commission assigned to work with Park Hill Presbyterian Church, North Little Rock, and to dismiss them with thanks. See section A, Exhibit I.**
10. **Motion to receive the report of the Administrative Commission assigned to work with First Presbyterian Church, North Little Rock/Argenta, and to dismiss them with thanks. See section A, Exhibit II.**

Section II, Exhibit A

Report of the Administrative Commission
Park Hill Presbyterian Church, NLR
November 15, 2023

The Administrative Commission appointed to work with the Session of Park Hill Presbyterian Church met with the Session and Transitional Pastor Carl McCormack on November 2, 2023, to give Session members a sense of how we see the congregation's future prospects for healthy and productive ministry, in light of the crisis in the congregation over the last couple of years.

We told them that our job has been to listen and, according to these words taken from the Presbytery's charge to the AC, "counsel the Session of Park Hill Presbyterian Church in the discernment of God's future for the congregation." We also told them that, as we have been listening for almost a year, we have been impressed by the hopeful spirit they have manifested and by their responses to Carl's leadership. Further, we told them that we have been struck by the near-total absence of any discussion of the crisis the congregation has experienced and that our purpose in the meeting of November 2 was to give them our thoughts on the future and to answer any questions they might have.

The immediate response by a couple of Session members was that they feel "talked out" about the crisis and that the general feeling was that they had agreed to "push forward" without further discussion with the remaining membership they have and try to make the best of it. We assured them that no one wants to reopen or revisit the entirety of the crisis, how it began, and how it was handled, but that our strong advice is that they do two things: (1) pursue healing and reconciliation and (2) prepare the congregation to call its next installed pastor, no matter how far in the future that search may take place, especially in light of the fact that prospective candidates for the position will have questions about the drop-off in membership and giving the congregation experienced between 2021 and '23. Regarding the first point, the AC's advice was that Session members cannot wait for people to come forward and say they feel betrayed and abandoned, that that is not the responsibility of the injured, but that the Session needs to take the initiative with those people. Regarding the second point, there was particular concern that it might not be possible to find five or six members to serve on a Pastor Nominating Committee who could agree on how to describe the crisis and its aftermath. We said that, nonetheless, something needs to be put in writing now, including the counsel of the AC, while it is fresh in people's minds.

Carl added that he has seen at Park Hill a "reluctance to take responsibility" and a lack of transparency about the crisis, especially having to do with the congregational meeting in February of 2022 that precipitated the departure of so many members. He also expressed concern that there doesn't seem to be much "movement" toward being ready to accept visitors and prospective members and that there may be increasing opportunities to welcome members of immigrant, minority, and/or LGBTQ communities especially. He said Park Hill has got to be willing to let God show them the kind of church they can be.

Based on responses to what we and Carl said, the AC members had the sense that the Session is ready to follow our recommendations, especially as they prepare for Carol Clark's return to the role of Transitional Pastor. They seemed receptive to suggestions that they find ways to get groups of Park Hill members involved in ministry work directly tied to the life of Presbyterian-related institutions such as Presbyterian Village, which can help them strengthen relationships among themselves and give prospective members a look at how they work in ministry

beyond themselves. The sense of the meeting, as Quakers might say, grew to be that they were ready to move forward without the AC's presence, though we pressed them to make sure they felt that way. There was some back-and-forth about that, but it came down to the acceptance that any of us would still be available, as individual friends of the congregation, to offer suggestions and to look over drafts of documents, if needed, and that we were prepared to write the Presbytery and say we believe our work is done and that the Session of Park Hill has agreed to do the following two things:

1. Engage in a process of healing and reconciliation of their design, focusing both on people who are still in the congregation and those who have left
2. Create a file that can be given to a future PNC, describing the crisis and its aftermath, which can include the acknowledgement that there are multiple versions of what happened and what it meant

Given what has been stated above, it is the request of the Administrative Commission assigned to work with the Session of Park Hill Presbyterian Church that this AC be dismissed.

Karen Akin

Cyril Hollingsworth

Jane Anne Spikes

David Stricklin

Section II, Exhibit B

Report of the Administrative Commission for First Presbyterian Church of North Little Rock March 2, 2024

After four years of prayerful discernment regarding the property of First Presbyterian Church of North Little Rock, the AC approved the sale of the property to Allen Engstrom for one million dollars. The closing occurred on December 29, 2023 with the presbytery receiving proceeds of \$ 975, 123.62. Expenses incurred by the AC totaled 40,380 which will be repaid which leaves a net proceeds to the presbytery of 934,743.62.

The Administrative Commission would like to recommend the following use of the proceeds from the sale.

1. A \$50,000 gift to “The Van”, a ministry that serves the homeless population of Little Rock and North Little Rock and a mission partner of 1st North Little Rock.
2. A \$50,000 gift to Ferncliff, another mission partner of 1st North Little Rock.
3. 100,000 undesignated to the Presbytery of Arkansas.
4. To establish a fund with the remaining proceeds (734,743.62) to give direct support to congregations in the Presbytery of Arkansas. We recommend that oversight of the fund be from the Future of the Church Committee and that interest and principal would be used to support congregations in a variety of ways. We recommend that the funds be unfettered from over regulation/over stipulation in order to ensure that the funds will be used.

The following served faithfully on the Administrative Commission.

1. MWS Carol Clark, HR
2. MWS Mike Ulasewich, First Conway; Future of the Church representative
3. RE Leah Shell, Second Little Rock
4. RE Ted Belden, First United Fayetteville; Future of the Church representative
5. RE Melanie Gibson, Grace Little Rock
6. RE Karene Jones, Park Hill North Little Rock
7. RE Joel Gill, First North Little Rock (Argenta)
8. MWS Leslie Belden then MWS Blake Brinegar, Stated Clerk (ex-officio)
9. MWS Stewart Smith, General Presbyter (ex-officio)
10. RE Sarah Keith-Bolden, First Little Rock (legal counsel, ex-officio)

The Administrative Commission has concluded its work and requests that the Presbytery dismiss the Administrative Commission from its duties.

Section III-Report of the Coordinating Team

March 2, 2024

The following actions were taken at meetings of the Coordinating Team held in November, December and February.

1. Accepted the invitation from Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock, to host the 157th meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas on October 25-26, 2024.
2. Approved the Committee on Ministry's recommendation to commission Ruling Elder Isaac Thomas to service at First United Presbyterian Church of Fayetteville on November 19, 2023 at 11:00 am. (See Section G, Exhibit II on page 33 in Committee on Ministry Report).
3. Approved the following Administrative Commission for the Commissioning Service for Ruling Elder Isaac Thomas:

John King (Minister of Word and Sacrament, Honorably Retired) Moses Chan (Minister of Word and Sacrament, Springdale) Kelly Pearson (Ruling Elder, Prairie Grove) Charge the CRE Lorraine Brewer (Ruling Elder, FUPC - Fayetteville) Charge the Congregation Libby Lizarraga (Minister of Word and Sacrament), Mt. Comfort)
4. Elected MWS David Shaller and CRE Ed Wilkinson to the Nominations Committee to serve in the Class of 2026. Two additional members for Nominations are needed.
5. Approved the amendments to the Small Church Loan Policy as recommended by the Committee on Administration. (See Section F, Exhibit I on page 20 in Committee on Administration Report).
6. Approved the closure of First Presbyterian Church of Brinkley and First Presbyterian Church of North Little Rock.
7. To assist with the real estate sale of the First Presbyterian Church of North Little Rock, the Coordinating Team adopted the attached resolution. (See Section C, Exhibit I).
8. The Coordinating Team, acting on a request from Central Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith to list their property "for sale" appointed an Administrative Commission of three members to advise the Central Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith on the sale of their real property. The AC shall have authority to enter into a listing agreement with a realtor and may approve a listing price on behalf of the presbytery. Members of the AC are Robert Lowry, Susan Arnold and Elizabeth Brinegar. Note: The property is currently listed for sale.
9. Approved Stewart Smith and Kim Palmer as signers on the Presbytery's checking account with Simmons Bank. (See Section F, Committee on Administration report on page 18).
10. Approved presentations from Ministry Architects, Ferncliff, Vera Lloyd and the Thriving in Ministry program for the 155th stated meeting of presbytery.
11. General Presbyter Stewart Smith shared his plans to resign from the position effective August 2, 2024.

Section III, Exhibit A

RESOLUTION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS

The PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS, an Arkansas non-profit corporation (the “Presbytery”), acting by and through the Administrative Commission for First Presbyterian Church, North Little Rock/Argenta (the “Administrative Commission”), meeting after having provided any required notice, passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS, until its dissolution on December 14, 2023, First Presbyterian Church of North Little Rock (the “Church”) was a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and subject to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

WHEREAS, under Section G-4.203 of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) “[a]ll property held by or for a congregation . . . , whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association . . . is held in trust nevertheless of the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

WHEREAS, under Section G-3.0301(a) of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), each congregation falls within the jurisdiction of a presbytery. The responsibilities of each presbytery include “organizing, receiving, merging, dismissing, and dissolving congregations in consultation with their members.”

WHEREAS, the Presbytery of Arkansas is a duly constituted presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with jurisdiction over churches in the northern part of Arkansas.

WHEREAS, until its dissolution on December 14, 2023, the Church fell within the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Presbytery formed the Administrative Commission and empowered the Administrative Commission to, among other things, “[a]ssume original jurisdiction of the [C]hurch” and “[s]ell or encumber any real property” of the Church.

WHEREAS, under Section G-3.0303(e) of the Book of Order, the Presbytery has authority to “assume original jurisdiction [over any church within its jurisdiction] in any situation in which it determines that a session [the governing body of the church] cannot exercise its authority.”

WHEREAS, on December 19, 2019, the session of the Church met with the Administrative Commission and requested that the Administrative Commission assume original jurisdiction of the Church.

WHEREAS, also on December 19, 2019, the Administrative Commission assumed original jurisdiction of the Church.

WHEREAS, on December 14, 2023, the Presbytery of Arkansas, acting by and through the Coordinating Team, formally dissolved the Church.

WHEREAS, under Section G-4.0205 of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), “[w]henver a congregation is formally dissolved by the presbytery . . . such property as it may have shall be held, used, and

applied for such uses, purposes, and trusts as the presbytery may direct . . . or such property may be sold or disposed of as the presbytery may direct, in conformity with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A).”

WHEREAS, the Presbytery desires to convey the property described in Exhibit A to Regal Beagle Holdings, LLC.

WHEREAS, the Presbytery wishes to authorize the General Presbyter to execute any and all documents necessary to consummate the conveyance of the property described in Exhibit A to Regal Beagle Holdings, LLC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:

RESOLVED, that the Presbytery authorizes the transfer of the real property described in Exhibit A to Regal Beagle Holdings, LLC; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Stewart Smith, General Presbyter of the Presbytery (the “Authorized Officer”), is hereby authorized, directed, and empowered to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Presbytery which may be required to consummate the transfer, including but not limited to deeds and all other related instruments and documents of every kind and character as the Authorized Officer may in his sole discretion deem necessary, advisable, or proper in connection with the consummation of the transfer.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed our names on this ____ day of _____ 20____.

PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS
an Arkansas nonprofit corporation

Carol Clark, Chair of the Administrative Commission for First
Presbyterian Church, North Little Rock/Argenta

EXHIBIT A

[LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY]

A fractional part of Lot 10, Block 2, Clendenin’s Addition to the City of Argenta, now North Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas, described as follows: beginning at the Southwest corner of said Lot 10, thence North along the west line of Lot 10, 4375 feet, thence Southeast on a straight line across said lot 10 to a point on the East line of Lot 10, which is 33.10 feet North of the Southeast corner thereof, thence South to the Southeast corner of Lot 10, thence West to the point of beginning.

Section IV -Report of the Stated Clerk

MWS Blake Brinegar

For Information:

1. Will be attending a seminar on the new Board of Pensions program in April.
2. Working on the Harassment policy, and Anti-Racism Policy for the Presbytery.

In a letter to the stated clerk of Arkansas Presbytery, dated February 2, 2024, Steven Frazier renounced the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Arkansas. At that time an Investigative Committee had filed charges which had been forwarded to the Permanent Judicial Commission. Upon receipt of the letter renouncing the jurisdiction of the presbytery, the judicial process came to an end. The renunciation of Jurisdiction removes Mr. Frazier from membership and ordered ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Mr. Frazier's name has been deleted from the rolls (G-2.0509). The charges were filed with the stated clerk and the Permanent Judicial Commission.

Amended October 9, 2021

- 243 C. Institutional Support- Institutional Support comprises those
244 committees, and the Permanent Judicial Commission, who focus on the efforts
245 of the Presbytery to conduct its business decently and in order, in keeping with
246 the PC(USA) *Book of Order*.
247
- 248 1. Permanent Committees- There shall be three permanent committees
249 under Institutional Support: Administration, Representation, and
250 Nominations. Also within the purview of Institutional Support is the
251 Permanent Judicial Commission and such other committees and
252 commissions required by the most recent edition of the *Book of Order*.
- 253 a. Administration- Administration shall oversee the budget and
254 financial operations of the Presbytery, act as the Personnel
255 committee of the Presbytery, and relate to the constitutionally
256 required committees and commissions of the Presbytery,
- 257 1) Membership- Six members shall be elected for a three-year
258 term, divided into three classes of two members each, with
259 each region of the Presbytery represented by at least one
260 member. Members may serve no more than two terms, or
261 six years total, without at least one year off the committee.
- 262 2) Sub-committees and Task Forces- Administration may
263 establish such sub-committees and task forces needed to
264 carry out their duties.
265
- 266 b. Committee on Representation- The Committee on Representation
267 promotes and reviews the Presbytery of Arkansas' implementation
268 of the Presbytery's commitment to inclusivity and representation.
269 The Committee on Representation fulfills the following functions:
270 to advise the Presbytery "regarding the implementation of
271 principles of unity and diversity, to advocate for diversity in
272 leadership, and to consult with the Presbytery on the employment
273 of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and
274 diversity in F-1.0403," in the *Book of Order*. *G-3.0103*
275
- 276 1. Membership- Six **three** members shall be elected for a three-year
277 term, divided into three classes of ~~two~~ **one** members each.
278 Members may serve no more than two terms, or six years total,
279 without at least one year off the committee. The Committee on
280 Representation shall be intentionally comprised of the diversity
281 of the presbytery, such diversity to include, but not be limited
282 to, gender, racial ethnic background, age, geographical location,
283 congregation and community size, and persons with disabilities.
284

Section V-Report of the Committee on Administration

March 2, 2024

For Information:

The following actions were taken at meetings of the Committee on Administration at meetings held in December and February.

1. Approved amendments to the Presbytery of Arkansas Small Church Direct Loan Policy. (See attachment)
2. Approved Simmons Bank as the bank for the Presbytery's primary checking account. Texas Presbyterian Foundation no longer provides third party accounting and payroll functions. Funds will be moved from the Bank of America operating account to Simmons.
3. Approved a salary adjustment of an additional 5 hours per week – based on her current salary for Presbytery Administrator Kim Palmer who will be performing the duties previously supplied by Texas Presbyterian Foundation.
4. Approved a 3% cost of living adjustment for the part-time staff of the presbytery. The adjustment was not given to General Presbyter Stewart Smith (upon his request) with his resignation occurring later in the year.

Section V, Exhibit A

Approved Amendment

PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS SMALL CHURCH DIRECT LOAN POLICY

October 10, 2008

Revised December 14, 2023

Direct loans are small loans from the Presbytery of Arkansas Small Church Loan Fund to qualified churches for capital repairs, ministry initiatives, or “extreme makeovers” for struggling congregations participating in the Small Church Loan initiative of the Presbytery.

To qualify for this loan, a church should show a need to be financed by the Presbytery. Ordinarily, the interest rate will be zero (0) percent and the maximum amount of a loan will be \$25,000 per church.

The maximum term of any loan shall be ten years. The term of each loan will be determined on a case by case basis. If church property is sold before the loan is repaid, the small church loan will be repaid to the Presbytery after any Superior Liens are paid and before any other funds are disbursed.

Total loans will not exceed the total amount in the Small Church Loan Fund.

All requests must go to the Committee on Administration for approval.

An application would require:

- Plans and purposes for the loan
- Explanations of how the loan fits into the church’s mission and vision
- Current membership and average weekly attendance
- Description and value of church properties
- Current financial situation

Applications would include the following

- Narrative explanation for the request
- Contributions and Operating Expenses for prior three years
- Session Approved Annual Budget

Attachment

Loan Agreement

Presbytery of Arkansas Small Church Direct Loan Agreement

1. Parties:

Borrower:

Church Name:

Church address:

Lender: The Presbytery of Arkansas.

2. Date of Agreement: _____.

3. Loan Amount: _____ Annual Percentage Rate: Zero (0) %

4. Promise to Pay: Within 120 months from the first day of the month following the date of this agreement.

5. Repayment: Borrower will choose one of the following methods of pay back:

a. Borrower will repay the amount of this note in 120 equal continuous monthly installments of \$_____ each on the _____ day of each month preliminary on the _____ day of _____, 20____, and ending on _____, 20____. Or

b. Borrower will repay the amount of this note in 40 equal continuous quarterly installments of \$_____ each on the _____ day of each month preliminary on the _____ day of _____, 20____, and ending on _____, 20____. Or

6. Prepayment: Borrower has the right to pay back the whole exceptional amount at any time or to increase the amount paid.

Agreed:

Borrower:

Lender: Presbytery of Arkansas

Date Approved by the Session:

Date Approved by the Presbytery:

Clerk of Session

General Presbyter

Section V, Exhibit B

Presbytery of Arkansas
2024 Asking Budget

	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
Revenues		
Mission Acceptance	520,000.00	455,000.00
Miscellaneous Revenue	16,200.00	16,200.00
Income from Investments	222,750.00	241,686.41
Previous Year Pledges	6,157.00	-
Total Revenues	765,107.00	712,886.41
Expenses		
Coordinating Team	3,500.00	4,850.00
Administration	56,428.00	57,708.00
Ministry of the Church, COM & CPM	14,700.00	16,500.00
Youth Collegiate and Young Adult	62,500.00	62,500.00
Future of the Church	35,000.00	35,000.00
Mission of the Church	65,225.00	65,225.00
Nominations	100.00	100.00
Representation	50.00	50.00
Administrative Commissions	-	-
Presbytery Office	63,000.00	63,400.00
Staff Salaries	261,307.00	234,448.28
TPF Bookkeeping Fees	9,190.00	-
Payroll Taxes	10,605.00	8,893.13
Staff Pension/Medical	16,823.00	19,477.20
Staff Continuing Ed/Travel	31,275.00	28,275.00
General Assembly Per Capita	88,404.00	75,959.80
General Assembly Benevolence	26,000.00	22,750.00
Synod of the Sun Benevolence	21,000.00	17,750.00
Total Expenses	765,107.00	712,886.41
 Surplus / (Deficit)	 -	 -

THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS

Balance Sheet
December 31, 2023

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash TPF - undesignated	279,848.07	
TPF Investment Cash - designated	684,115.45	
TPF Investments	5,066,632.72	
N/R Ministers	8,500.08	
N/R Churches	25,000.00	
TPF Mark to Market 52190	1,098,502.36	
	<hr/>	
Total Current Assets		7,162,598.68

Property and Equipment

Furniture & Fixtures	51,521.89	
Land	383,571.00	
Buildings	1,261,516.12	
	<hr/>	
	1,696,609.01	
Accumulated Depreciation	(368,231.31)	
	<hr/>	
Net Property and Equipment		8,490,976.38

TOTAL ASSETS	\$	8,490,976.38
		<hr/> <hr/>

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

Current Liabilities

Payroll & Other Withholdings	0.00	
	<hr/>	
Total Current Liabilities		0.00

Fund Balance

Equity Beginning Balance	\$	4,343,422.31	
Fund Balance		4,882,421.88	
Unrealized Gains/Losses		(758,342.22)	
Net Income		23,474.41	
		<hr/>	
Total Fund Balance		8,490,976.38	

TOTAL LIABILITIES & CAPITAL	\$	8,490,976.38
		<hr/> <hr/>

Unaudited - For Management Purposes Only

**The Presbytery of Arkansas
Benevolence as of December 31, 2023**

LOCATION	2020 Benevolence	2021 Benevolence	2022 Benevolence	2023 Benevolence
Alma	-	-	-	-
Amity	-	-	-	-
Arkadelphia, First	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Arkadelphia, West End	1,106.00	1,110.00	1,110.00	1,110.00
Atkins	-	-	-	-
Batesville	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Beebe	600.00	1,200.00	900.00	900.00
Bella Vista	24,999.96	20,000.00	20,000.44	11,250.00
Benton	8,600.00	8,600.00	9,000.00	6,300.00
Bentonville, First	32,000.00	33,500.00	32,000.00	10,000.00
Bentonville, Vaughn	2,000.00	-	-	-
Brinkley	-	-	-	-
Bull Shoals	-	50.00	116.74	116.74
Cane Hill	-	-	-	-
Clarksville, First	-	-	-	-
Clarksville, Harmony	-	-	-	-
Conway	7,700.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00
Dardanelle	6,000.00	5,500.00	3,500.00	-
Elkins	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	500.00
Eureka Springs	2,550.00	2,750.00	2,250.00	2,750.00
Fairfield Bay	350.00	350.00	350.00	350.00
Fayetteville, First United	41,000.00	41,000.00	41,000.00	41,000.00
Fayetteville, Mt. Comfort	1,660.00	1,660.00	900.00	2,000.00
Forrest City	9,000.00	9,000.00	8,250.00	9,625.00
Ft. Smith, Central	16,000.00	16,000.00	16,000.00	-
Ft. Smith, First	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Greenwood	-	-	1,000.00	-
Gurdon	300.00	-	-	-
Hardy	297.00	-	-	-
Harrison	-	-	-	-
Heber Springs	525.00	950.00	-	450.00
Helena	500.00	-	-	-
Holiday Island	6,200.00	6,200.00	6,200.00	6,200.00
Holly Grove	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00
Horseshoe Bend	3,000.00	2,290.00	2,300.00	1,600.00
HSV, Kirk	27,270.00	27,270.00	27,270.00	22,000.44
H. Springs, First	20,000.00	20,013.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
H. Springs, Westminster	10,012.04	8,012.04	8,012.04	8,212.04
Huntsville	2,200.00	2,400.00	2,400.00	2,200.00
Jacksonville	2,800.00	3,250.00	3,000.00	3,224.95

The Presbytery of Arkansas Benevolence as of December 31, 2023

LOCATION	2020 Benevolence	2021 Benevolence	2022 Benevolence	2023 Benevolence
Jonesboro	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Lincoln	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-
LR, Allison	-	-	-	-
LR, First	-	-	-	-
LR, Grace	7,900.00	7,900.00	7,900.00	3,900.00
LR, Pulaski Heights	3,636.00	3,636.00	3,618.00	3,606.00
Little Rock, Second	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	190,000.00
LR, Trinity	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00
LR, Westminster	400.00	400.00	400.00	-
LR, Westover Hills	10,500.00	7,500.00	2,500.00	3,000.00
Lonoke	-	-	-	-
Malvern	5,241.71	5,241.72	5,241.60	-
Marianna	-	-	-	-
McGehee	2,520.00	2,520.00	2,520.00	2,520.00
Mena	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,500.00
Morrilton, First	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,100.00	1,300.00
Morrilton, Hopewell	-	-	-	-
Mountain Home	1,000.00	750.00	500.00	-
Mountainburg	-	-	-	-
Newport	3,225.00	2,700.00	2,700.00	2,700.00
Norman	2,000.00	-	-	-
NLR, First	-	-	-	-
NLR, Park Hill	16,000.00	16,000.00	13,000.00	8,000.00
Paragould, First	-	-	-	-
Pea Ridge	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Pine Bluff, Central	-	-	115.80	-
Pine Bluff, Faith	-	-	-	-
Pine Bluff, First	4,999.92	4,583.26	6,996.00	5,000.00
Prairie Grove	7,150.00	6,960.00	4,730.00	6,022.00
Rogers	6,999.96	6,999.96	7,000.01	7,611.96
Russellville	-	-	-	-
Searcy	2,000.00	-	-	2,000.00
Springdale	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00
Stuttgart	-	-	-	-
Van Buren	-	-	-	-
Walnut Ridge	6,400.00	-	-	7,350.48
Wynne	7,500.00	7,500.00	9,999.96	5,000.00
Yellville	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	3,000.00
TOTAL	589,342.59	566,495.98	555,380.59	474,799.61

THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS							
Operating Income Statement							
For the Twelve Months Ending December 31, 2023							
		Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	Year to Date Actual	2023 Budget	Over/(Under) Budget
6000-01	Mission Acceptance	\$ 230,090.27	208,333.37	21,756.90	\$ 474,799.61	520,000.00	(45,200.39)
Misc (Acct. 6015)	Investment Spend Rate	22,889.22	18,562.51	4,326.71	274,036.22	222,750.15	51,286.07
6000-01-1-101	Previous Years Pledges	0.00	6,157.33	0.00	6,157.33	6,157.33	0.00
6001-00-1-000	Miscellaneous Revenue	2,700.00	1,350.00	1,350.00	15,850.92	16,200.00	(349.08)
	Total Revenues	255,679.49	234,403.21	27,433.61	770,844.08	765,107.48	5,736.60
	Expenses						
7000-01-1-000	Coordinating Team--Meeting Exp, Meals, Worship	0.00	8.33	(8.33)	1,309.82	100.00	1,209.82
7000-06-1-000	Coordinating Team--Gifts	0.00	4.17	(4.17)	50.00	50.00	0.00
7000-09-1-000	Coordinating Team--Moderator's Expense	0.00	37.50	(37.50)	0.00	450.00	(450.00)
7000-10-1-000	Coordinating Team--Vice moderator's Expense	0.00	91.67	(91.67)	0.00	1,100.00	(1,100.00)
7000-20-1-000	Coordinating Team--Presbytery Workshop/Speaker	0.00	125.00	(125.00)	531.43	1,500.00	(968.57)
7000-31-1-000	Coordinating Team--Background Checks	20.00	25.00	(5.00)	291.50	300.00	(8.50)
		20.00	291.67	(271.67)	2,182.75	3,500.00	(1,317.25)
7100-01-1-000	Administration--Meeting Expense, Financial Review	0.00	516.67	(516.67)	7,278.70	6,200.00	1,078.70
7100-05-1-000	Administration--Femcliff General Site Support	13,000.00	2,166.67	10,833.33	26,000.00	26,000.00	0.00
7500-21-1-000	West End Operation Support	3,375.00	1,125.00	2,250.00	13,500.00	13,500.00	0.00
7500-53-1-000	Laotian Ministry support	900.00	300.00	600.00	3,600.00	3,600.00	0.00
7500-98-1-000	Faith Presbyterian Operation Support	1,782.00	594.00	1,188.00	7,128.00	7,128.00	0.00
		19,057.00	4,702.34	14,354.66	57,506.70	56,428.00	1,078.70
7200-01-1-000	Min. of the Church--Cmte on Prep. for Ministry--Travel, food, lodging, supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
7200-02-1-000	Min. of the Church--Cmte on Prep. for Ministry--ConEd--Emergency Fund, Etc.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
7700-01-1-000	Committee on Ministry--travel,food,meeting support	1,038.95	166.67	872.28	1,727.18	2,000.00	(272.82)
8000-01-1-000	Min. of the Church--Cmte on Prep. for Ministry--Meeting Expenses, etc.	0.00	41.67	(41.67)	265.00	500.00	(235.00)
8000-09-1-000	Min. of the Church--Cmte on Prep. for Ministry--Eval, Retreat, Support, Bkg Checks	0.00	166.67	(166.67)	850.00	2,000.00	(1,150.00)
8400-08-1-000	Min. of the Church--Wellspring Contract	0.00	850.00	(850.00)	10,200.00	10,200.00	0.00
		1,038.95	1,225.01	(186.06)	13,042.18	14,700.00	(1,657.82)
7300-29-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--Campus Ministry/Program Support	2,356.66	2,500.00	(143.34)	28,279.92	30,000.00	(1,720.08)
7300-71-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT--Planning Retreats & Materials	0.00	83.33	(83.33)	3,331.75	1,000.00	2,331.75
7300-73-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT Scholarships	0.00	41.67	(41.67)	0.00	500.00	(500.00)
7300-74-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT Denomination Trips	2,000.00	166.67	1,833.33	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
7300-75-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT-Youth @ Presbytery	0.00	41.67	(41.67)	382.65	500.00	(117.35)
7300-76-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT YouthQuake	0.00	750.00	(750.00)	10,355.80	9,000.00	1,355.80
7300-78-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT Montreat	0.00	291.67	(291.67)	2,277.52	3,500.00	(1,222.48)

THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS							
Operating Income Statement							
For the Twelve Months Ending December 31, 2023							
		Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	Year to Date Actual	2023 Budget	Over/(Under) Budget
7300-79-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT--JR High Summer Trip	0.00	208.33	(208.33)	5,011.63	2,500.00	2,511.63
7300-80-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT--Matthew 25 Account	0.00	41.67	(41.67)	373.76	500.00	(126.24)
7300-84-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--Young Adult Ministries	436.00	125.00	311.00	636.00	1,500.00	(864.00)
7300-86-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT--Student Leadership Development	0.00	41.67	(41.67)	(145.50)	500.00	(645.50)
7300-99-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--Campus Ministry-Special Event Support	3,000.00	916.67	2,083.33	6,026.88	11,000.00	(4,971.12)
		7,792.66	5,208.35	2,584.31	58,532.41	62,500.00	(3,967.59)
7500-01-1-000	Future of the Church--Admin., Listening	0.00	83.33	(83.33)	0.00	1,000.00	(1,000.00)
7500-25-1-000	Future of the Church--Presbytery Technology Needs	0.00	625.00	(625.00)	3,500.00	7,500.00	(4,000.00)
7500-51-1-000	Future of the Church--New Ministries' Development	0.00	2,208.33	(2,208.33)	26,500.00	26,500.00	0.00
		0.00	2,916.66	(2,916.66)	30,000.00	35,000.00	(5,000.00)
7300-01-1-000	Christian Education--Meeting Expenses	0.00	37.50	(37.50)	0.00	450.00	(450.00)
7300-10-1-000	Christian Education--Special train. Events/presb	0.00	166.67	(166.67)	0.00	2,000.00	(2,000.00)
7300-21-1-000	Christian Education--Ferncliff. Prog/Supt. Summer Camp	11,500.00	1,916.67	9,583.33	23,000.00	23,000.00	0.00
7300-24-1-000	Mission of the Church--Ferncliff--Block Grant	0.00	416.67	(416.67)	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00
7300-30-1-000	Christian Education--Presbyterian Pilgrimage	0.00	166.67	(166.67)	0.00	2,000.00	(2,000.00)
7300-90-1-000	Christian Education--Resource Center Resources	0.00	166.67	(166.67)	1,051.64	2,000.00	(948.36)
7300-91-1-000	Christian Education--Resource Center. Admin.	42.50	91.67	(49.17)	334.06	1,100.00	(765.94)
7600-03-1-000	Mission of the Church--Scholarship for Mission Trip	0.00	83.33	(83.33)	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
7600-05-1-000	Mission of the Church--International Mission Initiative	0.00	166.67	(166.67)	1,500.00	2,000.00	(500.00)
7600-26-1-000	Mission of the Church--Arkansas Interfaith Conference	875.00	208.33	666.67	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00
7600-44-1-000	Mission of the Church--Lyon College	250.00	83.33	166.67	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
7600-45-1-000	Mission of the Church--Presbyterian Village Support	125.00	41.67	83.33	500.00	500.00	0.00
7600-49-1-000	Mission of the Church--University of Ozarks	250.00	83.33	166.67	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
7600-51-1-000	Mission of the Church--Vera Lloyd Mission	625.00	208.33	416.67	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00
7600-62-1-000	Mission of the Church--Mission Initiative Grants	0.00	1,172.92	(1,172.92)	14,075.00	14,075.00	0.00
7600-96-1-000	Mission of the Church--Solar Under the Sun	250.00	83.33	166.67	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
8300-01-1-000	Mission of the Church--PW Exp., travel, postage, etc.	66.00	41.67	24.33	749.93	500.00	249.93
8300-07-1-000	Mission of the Church--PW--Spring & Fall Retreats, Synod Gathering	2,000.00	291.67	1,708.33	2,372.40	3,500.00	(1,127.60)
9400-01-1-000	Mission of the Church--Disaster Preparedness	0.00	8.33	(8.33)	50.00	100.00	(50.00)
		15,983.50	5,435.43	10,548.07	57,633.03	65,225.00	(7,591.97)
7800-01-1-000	Nominations--travel, food	0.00	8.33	(8.33)	0.00	100.00	(100.00)
8100-01-1-000	Representation--Meeting Expenses	0.00	4.17	(4.17)	0.00	50.00	(50.00)

THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS							
Operating Income Statement							
For the Twelve Months Ending December 31, 2023							
		Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	Year to Date Actual	2023 Budget	Over/(Under) Budget
8400-01-1-000	POA/Supplies & Office Exp.	239.55	125.00	114.55	2,628.79	1,500.00	1,128.79
8400-02-1-000	Utilities/Telephone	373.89	833.33	(459.44)	11,900.94	10,000.00	1,900.94
8400-03-1-000	Copy Machine	78.58	500.00	(421.42)	9,366.16	6,000.00	3,366.16
8400-05-1-000	Technology	2,377.99	1,291.67	1,086.32	14,838.26	15,500.00	(661.74)
8400-07-1-000	Replace Equipment	0.00	83.33	(83.33)	0.00	1,000.00	(1,000.00)
8400-09-1-000	Insurance	0.00	1,583.33	(1,583.33)	21,191.00	19,000.00	2,191.00
8400-10-1-000	Miscellaneous Expenses	0.00	41.67	(41.67)	300.00	500.00	(200.00)
8400-12-1-000	Maintenance(Grounds, Building Upkeep)	1,194.88	791.67	403.21	7,547.72	9,500.00	(1,952.28)
		4,264.89	5,250.00	(985.11)	67,772.87	63,000.00	4,772.87
8400-13-1-000	Stated Clerk Professional Exp	89.08	0.00	0.00	1,954.94	3,000.00	(1,045.06)
8400-22-1-000	K. Palmer/Professional Exp	0.00	64.58	(64.58)	577.11	775.00	(197.89)
8400-25-1-000	S. Smith/Professional Exp	3,109.82	1,250.00	1,859.82	16,320.37	15,000.00	1,320.37
8400-29-1-000	Salaries	15,095.21	18,490.28	(3,395.07)	195,312.60	221,883.33	(26,570.73)
8400-30-1-000	Pension/Major Medical	1,467.18	1,401.88	65.30	17,606.16	16,822.56	783.60
8400-31-1-000	S. Smith/Continuing Ed.	0.00	125.00	(125.00)	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00
8400-33-1-000	Payroll Taxes	656.22	883.78	(227.56)	8,958.59	10,605.34	(1,646.75)
8400-34-1-000	Housing	2,725.00	2,725.00	0.00	32,700.00	32,700.00	0.00
8400-40-1-000	S. Smith/FICA	546.86	560.40	(13.54)	6,562.32	6,724.75	(162.43)
8400-41-1-000	Bulder/Connector Professional Expenses	161.40	833.33	(671.93)	3,278.25	10,000.00	(6,721.75)
8400-49-1-000	Youth Developer Professional Expenses	0.00	83.33	(83.33)	496.39	1,000.00	(503.61)
8400-53-1-000	TPF Bookkeeping Fees	2,005.26	765.81	1,239.45	8,146.99	9,189.75	(1,042.76)
		25,856.03	27,183.39	(1,416.44)	293,413.72	329,200.73	(35,787.01)
8600-01-1-000	General Assembly	15,790.47	2,166.67	13,623.80	26,000.00	26,000.00	0.00
8700-01-1-000	GA Per Capita	7,366.98	7,366.98	0.00	88,403.76	88,403.75	0.01
8800-01-1-000	Synod Mission	10,790.47	1,750.00	9,040.47	21,000.00	21,000.00	0.00
		33,947.92	11,283.65	22,664.27	135,403.76	135,403.75	0.01
	Total Expenses	107,960.95	63,509.00	44,362.87	715,487.42	765,107.48	(49,620.06)
	Net Income	\$ 147,718.54	\$ 170,894.21	(\$ 16,929.26)	\$ 55,356.66	\$ 0.00	\$ 55,356.66

Section VI-Report on the Committee on Ministry **MWS Leslie Roper, Moderator**

For Information: COM Approved the following at meetings in November, December, and February.

1. The Committee reorganized into five working sub-groups:

- Call Process (For Full Time Called and Installed Pastors)
- Pastoral Leadership Needs (Less than full time)
- Conflict
- Financial Crisis
- Non-traditional Ministry

COM members will serve as liaison to congregations. (See Section VI, Exhibit A of the Appendix for the updated list for 2024)

2. The Committee on Ministry approved the report of the NW Examinations subcommittee and approved the commissioning of ruling elder Isaac Thomas to First United Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville.
3. The Committee on Ministry approved the covenant between ruling elder Isaac Thomas and First United Presbyterian Church of Fayetteville. (See Section VI, Exhibit B)
4. The Committee on Ministry approved the following Administrative Commission for a commissioning service to be held on November 19, 2023 at First United Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville.

- John King (Minister of Word and Sacrament, Honorably Retired)
- Moses Chan (Minister of Word and Sacrament, Springdale)
- Kelly Pearson (Ruling Elder, Prairie Grove) Charge the CRE
- Lorraine Brewer (Ruling Elder, FUPC - Fayetteville) Charge the Congregation
- Libby Lizarraga (Minister of Word and Sacrament), Mt. Comfort)

5. The Committee on Ministry approved the report of the Central Arkansas examinations committee and approved the call of MWS Rev. Carol Clark as Part Time Pastor of Park Hill Presbyterian Church of North Little Rock, effective January 1, 2024 with the following terms of call:

- Salary-----\$ 23,000.00
- Housing -----\$ 23,000.00
- Vacation-----4 weeks paid
- Auto Allowance (Reimbursed at 58.5 cents per mile)

Note: This is a temporary pastoral relationship with 12 months term of service, subject to renewal upon mutual consent of both parties and the approval of the Presbytery of Arkansas. A copy of the covenant is attached. (See Section VI, Exhibit C of the Appendix).

6. Approved ruling elders from Barr Memorial Presbyterian Church in Norman permission to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper upon completion of a "Communion Training Class" provided by MWS Phil Butin.

7. Approved the sabbatical plan for MWS Mike Ulasewich at First Presbyterian Conway.
8. Approved the following to moderate sessions:
 - MWS David Reed for First Presbyterian Pine Bluff.
 - RE Ruth Hamilton for Kirk in the Pines Presbyterian Church while Bill Bailey is on disability leave.
 - RE & Stated Supply Stephen Moody to moderate First Presbyterian Little Rock.
 - RE Mary Jane Fisher to moderate a session meeting on Easter Sunday at First Presbyterian Jacksonville to receive new members.
9. Approved the renewal of the covenant between Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church, Pea Ridge, and Rev. Brian Timmons (ordained United Methodist) covenant attached. (See Section VI, Exhibit D)
10. Approved CRE Ronnie Prevost to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on June 2, 2024 at the Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista.

Section VII, Exhibit A
Presbytery of Arkansas
Committee on Ministry
Congregational Liaison Assignments 2024

Sara Ann Berger

Alma, First
Amity, Alpine
Arkadelphia, First
Arkadelphia, West End
Atkins, Memorial
Batesville, First

Marion Humphrey

Beebe, First
Bella Vista
Benton, First
Bentonville, First
Bentonville, Vaughn
Brinkley, First

Jean Nichols

Bull Shoals
Cane Hill
Clarksville, First
Clarksville, Harmony
Conway, First
Dardanelle, First

Barbara Webb

Elkins
Eureka Springs, First
Fairfield Bay, Kirk of the Hills
Fayetteville, First United
Fayetteville, Mt. Comfort

Kade Curry

Forrest City, Graham Memorial
Fort Smith, Central
Fort Smith, First

Fort Smith, Laotian Ministry
Greenwood, Good Shepherd

Fern Davis

Gurdon, First
Hardy, Spring River
Harrison, First
Heber Springs, First
Helena, First
Holiday Island

Don Harris

Holly Grove
Horseshoe Bend, Faith
Hot Springs Village, Kirk in the Pines
Hot Springs, First
Hot Springs, Westminster

Mike McClure

Huntsville, First
Jacksonville, First
Jonesboro, First
Lincoln, First
Little Rock, Allison Memorial
Little Rock, First

Alisa Seacrest

Little Rock, Grace
Little Rock, Pulaski Heights
Little Rock, Trinity
Little Rock, Westminster
Little Rock, Westover Hills

Linda Whitworth-Reed

Little Rock, Second

Malvern, First
Marianna, First
McGehee, First
Mena, First
Morrilton, First

As of 1/3/2024

Janet Benson

Morrilton, Hopewell
Mountain Home, First
Mountainburg
Newport, First
Norman, Barr Memorial

Brian Brock

North Little Rock, First
North Little Rock, Park Hill
Paragould, First
Pea Ridge, Mount Vernon
Pine Bluff, Central

Ed Wilkinson

Pine Bluff, Faith
Pine Bluff, First
Prairie Grove, First
Rogers, First
Russellville, Central

Don Mixon

Searcy, First
Springdale, First
Van Buren, First
Walnut Ridge, First
Wynne
Yellville, First

Leslie Roper

The Table LR (NWC)
First Church LR (NWC)
Queer Collective (NWC)

Section VII, Exhibit B

A COVENANT

Between a Session and a Ruling Elder

To Commission or Recommission to Particular Pastoral Service

CHURCH NAME First United Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville, Arkansas

RULING ELDER NAME Isaac Lynn Thomas

SERVICE FROM October 2023—December 2023 (will renegotiate in January 2024)

It is understood that this covenant will be in accord with the provisions of the PCUSA Book of Order. There shall be an annual evaluation of the work of the CRE by the Session of the Church, along with an annual evaluation by the CRE Oversight Subcommittee of the Committee on Ministry. At that time, this covenant may or may not be renewed at the discretion of the Session, the CRE, or the Committee on Ministry.

RESPONSIBILITIES (*Please check those that apply to this commission*)

- Lead worship regularly and preach at least 3-4 times per year
- Administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (Presbytery permission must be granted) The congregation and Session wants the CRE to have the ability to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper particularly through home visitation and occasionally during worship.
- Other duties, In addition to staff responsibilities as Director of Music Ministry:
 - Help the congregation share the Gospel and to be innovative in doing so through technology.
 - Be professionally involved in all aspects of the congregation.
 - Serve as a primary pastoral lead in developing creative, special, and distinctive worship services (including services that do not occur on Sunday mornings).
 - Providing pastoral care for members of the congregation as needed, especially during the upcoming pastoral transition.
 - Lead Bible studies for church groups as able and as requested.
 - Participate regularly in meetings of Presbytery

TIME EXPECTATIONS (hours per week) 40 hours per week including music ministry.

SPECIFIC DAYS OF THE WEEK (if applicable) Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday

COMPENSATION

- Cash salary: \$36,157 annually
- Housing Allowance: \$12,000, to be used and documented according to IRS tax law
- Medical coverage: \$8,600 available to be reimbursed annually through a pre-tax reimbursable account. Receipts will be submitted for health costs allowed by the IRS.
- Continuing education and Ministry Expense Allowance: \$1,000.
- Vacation Time: 14 normal workdays, including no more than 4 Sundays away.
- Continuing Education Time: as needed for specific continuing education events, to be agreed upon with the Head of Staff.

These terms will be reviewed after 2024 pledges are received, and thereafter annually. Potential increases will depend on pledges received. A 3.2% increase in salary/housing has been proposed for all staff by the Personnel Ministry Team. Additional increases for this position are under consideration, depending on pledges received.

COVENANT FOR RULING ELDER COMMISSIONED TO A CHURCH

Isaac Lynn Thomas

Ruling Elder

Date

Head(s) of Staff

Date

Clerk of Session

Date

Approved by Presbytery COM

Date

Approved by the Presbytery of Arkansas

Date

Section VII, Exhibit C Pastoral Relationship Agreement

- 1) This agreement is by and between Rev. Carol Clark and the Session of the Park Hill Presbyterian Church, the terms of which are subject to the approval of the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Arkansas. It establishes a temporary pastoral relationship between the two parties subject to the requirements of G-2.0504(b) of the Book of Order of the PCUSA and commences on January 1st, 2024.
- 2) The designated title for the position shall be "Part-Time Pastor," and the terms of service shall be for twelve months, renewable upon the mutual consent of both parties and subject to the approval of presbytery. Either party may terminate the agreement for any reason upon thirty days' written notice to the other party.
- 3) Rev. Clark agrees to perform various duties typical of a pastor serving the needs of a congregation, the weekly hours of which are not to exceed 19.5 hours, as follows:

- preparing for and leading worship, including funeral and special services;
- visiting the sick and providing pastoral care for the congregation;
- moderating meetings of the Session and congregation;
- training newly elected officers;
- serving as a resource for various committees;
- supervising the church staff

- 4) The Session of the Park Hill Presbyterian Church agrees to pay to Rev. Clark the following annual compensation, payable in even monthly installments:

Salary	\$23,000.
Housing Allowance	\$23,000.
Automobile Allowance	\$0.585 per mile (reimbursed as used)
Continuing Education	\$0.
Vacation	Four Weeks

Carol B. Clark Date: 10/4/2023
Rev. Carol Clark

Deborah Mathis Date: 10/4/2023
Clerk of Session

For the Committee on Ministry Date: _____

Section VII, Exhibit D

TEMPORARY PULPIT SUPPLY AGREEMENT BETWEEN MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PEA RIDGE, ARKANSAS AND REV. BRIAN TIMMONS

Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church, Pea Ridge, Arkansas enters into an agreement with Rev. Brian Timmons, a United Methodist minister, to become its Temporary Supply Pastor. He will devote up to nineteen hours per week fulfilling the following responsibilities:

1. Lead worship, preach, and administer the sacraments on Sundays and at other worship services scheduled by the Session.
2. Co-ordinate pastoral care with the Deacons and the Session.
3. Lead Bible studies and other study groups as approved by the Session.
4. Officiate at funerals if requested to do so.
5. Moderate meetings of the Session and the Congregation.
6. Other duties agreed upon by the Session and Rev. Timmons.

In return, Rev. Timmons will be compensated in the following manner:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Salary | <u>\$400.00 per month</u> |
| 2. Housing | <u>\$ 19650.00 per month</u> |
| 3. Automobile Expense (Current IRS rate) | |
| 4. Funerals — an honorarium | |
| 5. Four (4) vacation days per year | |
| 6. Other compensation agreed to by the Session and Rev. Timmons for additional duties not listed above. | |

During the length of this agreement, Rev. Timmons will be accountable to the Session and the Presbytery through the Committee on Ministry. This agreement is for a period of 12 months beginning January 1, 2024. Either party may terminate this agreement with a thirty day written notice to the other and the Committee on Ministry.

Temporary Supply Pastor <u><i>Brian Timmons</i></u>	Date: <u>1-14-24</u>
Clerk of Session <u><i>Ronnie L. David</i></u>	Date: <u>1/14/2024</u>
Committee on Ministry _____	Date: _____

Section VII, Exhibit E

Necrology

MWS Rev. Dr. John Barklind
January 21, 1943 – October 13, 2023

Retired Minister of Word and Sacrament and member of the Presbytery of Arkansas, Rev. Dr. John Barklind died at his home on Friday, October 13, 2023.

After graduating from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, John was ordained in 1969 as pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Fullerton, NE. In the 1970's and 80's John served at two other churches in Nebraska at Fairbury and Holdredge and while serving at Holdredge John earned his Doctorate of Ministry degree at San Francisco Theological Seminary.

In 1986 John accepted the call to become pastor of Central Presbyterian Church in Fort Smith, AR. In 1994 John moved to become pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Independence, MO until 2002 when he became pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Sun City, AZ. John retired in Grand Canyon Presbytery in 2009. John served as an Interim pastor in Washington, MO in 2010 and 2011 before moving to Arkansas in 2012 and transferring his membership from Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery to the Presbytery of Arkansas. Most recently, John served the First Presbyterian Church in Beebe, preaching once a month and moderating the session.

John is survived by his wife of 57 years, Rosemary, three daughters and six grandchildren. A memorial service was held on Saturday, October 21 at 11:00 am at Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock. Thanks be to God for the life and ministry of Rev. Dr. John Barklind.

The obituary is printed below.

The Rev. Dr. John D. Barklind, 80, passed away on October 13, 2023, peacefully at home in Maumelle, AR. He was born and raised in St. Paul, MN, where he attended Johnson High School in 1961. He attended the University of Minnesota and went on to graduate from Rocky Mountain College in Billings, MT, in 1966. He served as President of the student body at Rocky Mountain College.

He attended Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY, where he received his Master of Divinity degree. He went on to get his Doctor of Theology at San Francisco Theological Seminary in 1983. His thesis was "Children at Worship in the Presbyterian Church." He served in Presbyterian churches in Kentucky, Indiana, Nebraska, Arkansas, Missouri, and Arizona.

John married Rosemary Zuroff from Richey, MT, in 1966. They celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary on June 4, 2023. John and Rosemary have three daughters, Sharla (Chad) Artz of Alexandria, VA, Stacy Deutschmann of Conway, AR, and Tracy (Jay) Howell of Conway, AR. He has six grandchildren, Grace and Carter Artz, Chaise and Charlotte Deutschmann, and Payton and Paxton Howell. He is also survived by his brother-in-law Ira A. Zuroff and wife Wanda and their family, and by brother-in-law Ernest Fischer all of Richey, MT.

He is preceded in death by his parents Albert and Bonnie Barklind and infant brother Douglas Barklind all of St. Paul, MN, and his sister-in-law Sylvia Zuroff Fischer of Richey, MT.

A visitation was held at Ruebel Funeral Home on Friday, October 20, 2023, from 4 to 6 p.m. Burial was Saturday, October 21, 2023, at 9:30 am at Riverwood Memorial Gardens in Maumelle. The funeral will was held later that morning at 11:00 a.m. at Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock, AR.

Necrology

CRE George Hartley Jones December 10, 1936 – November 28, 2023

Hartley Jones, CRE at Barr Memorial Presbyterian Church in Norman, died on Tuesday, November 28, 2023. Hartley was the son of a minister and was ordained as a deacon and elder in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Hartley was a graduate of the Lay Academy program of the presbytery and was commissioned to serve Barr Memorial Presbyterian Church in Norman as a co-pastor with CRE Carolyn Beane. Hartley enjoyed a long career in the insurance industry and served for over 60 years as a volunteer/leader in the Boy Scouts of America.

A Memorial Service was held at First Presbyterian Church of Hot Springs at 1:00 P.M., Saturday, December 9, 2023 with Pastor Leslie Bethell Roper officiating. Suggested memorials are First Presbyterian Boy Scout Troop #1, Presbyterian Pilgrimage, First Presbyterian Church Hot Springs or Barr Memorial Presbyterian Church in Norman, Arkansas.

The obituary is listed below.

George Hartley (nicknamed Bill, a family tradition) Jones, Jr. of Hot Springs, died Tuesday, November 28, 2023.

He was born December 10, 1936 in Kansas City, Missouri, the son of Rev. George Hartley Jones and Lela Avanelle (Reich) Jones. He was preceded in death by his parents and sister, Frances Helen Jones-Detamore; his wife of 51 years Kathryn Yvonne Meggers-Jones, and son, George Hartley (Bill) Jones, III.

Hartley is survived by his son Timothy Brian Jones and wife Joy Anna Humphreys-Jones of Hot Springs; his sister, Mary Ellen Jones-McEvoy of Chula Vista, CA.; his grandchildren, Autumn Lela Jones of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Luke Coleman Jones, Fenton Mack Jones, and Olivia Mae Jones and many nieces and nephews.

His unusual grade school experiences involved attending more than 300 schools in ten states, as his father moved and trained Christian Church ministers. His business career began in high school, with door-to-door sales, and expanded by training and employing fellow high school students in his business. After a brief tour in Mexico he attended Phillips University in Enid, Oklahoma; military service in the 45th Infantry Division; then Army Reserve: 89th Infantry Division; XII Corps; and the 102nd Infantry Division. College education continued at the University of Wichita, (Kansas) earning a B.M.E. degree, in voice. His work experience was equally varied: farming, selling encyclopedias and Bibles, teaching in Jr-Hi and High School, selling securities and mutual funds as a registered securities representative and insurance sales. He was employed twice with the Ouachita Area Council in Hot Springs as District Scout Executive and in the Tri-Trails Council of North Platte, Nebraska. A licensed Arkansas insurance agent and broker continuously since 1970, he held non-resident licenses in eight other states in order to serve clients there. As a trained Estate Planning Consultant brokered the products of 124 insurance companies. He was a lifelong student, through certificate training courses and avid reading in his extensive library. He was honored as a 60-year Veteran of volunteer and professional service to the Boy Scouts of America and recipient of the Order of the Arrow Vigil Honor and the B.S.A. Silver Beaver Award. Hartley lived a

joyful life. He was happiest in serving others: first his family, loved without reservation. His service included backpacking at Philmont Scout Ranch with Scouts, a volunteer Cubmaster, and Scoutmaster (twice), Staffing at National Scout Jamborees; and serving insurance clients. His greatest joy was in serving his Lord and Savior, whether on the school board for St John's School, preaching at Crown Trace, Christian (Disciples) Churches or pulpit supply in Presbyterian Churches. Ordained as both Deacon and Elder, he graduated Arkansas Presbytery Lay Academy to be Certified Ruling Elder serving Barr Memorial Presbyterian in Norman, AR as co-pastor. For several years he staffed Arkansas Presbyterian Cursillo-Pilgrimage and helped Gretta Lane Missions in Norman.

A celebration of his life was held at First Presbyterian Church 1:00 P.M., Saturday, December 9, 2023 with Pastor Leslie Bethell Roper officiating. In lieu of flowers, suggested memorials were First Presbyterian Boy Scout Troop #1, Presbyterian Pilgrimage, First Presbyterian Church Hot Springs or Barr Memorial Presbyterian Church in Norman, Arkansas.

Necrology

MWS Rev. Jim Miller
May 8, 1941 – January 20, 2024

Jim Miller, honorably retired member of the Presbytery of Arkansas, died on January 20 in Little Rock. Jim graduated from college at the University of North Carolina and was a second career seminary student, attending and graduating from Columbia Presbyterian Theological Seminary. It was there that he met Catherine Allsbury, a fellow student, and they were married in 1987.

Jim was ordained by the Presbytery of Arkansas on July 29, 1986, at the First Presbyterian Church of Pine Bluff, where he was called as an Associate Pastor. Jim served First Presbyterian Pine Bluff through February of 1991 when he followed Catherine who had received a call to Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church in Clearwater, FL. While in Florida, Jim served as interim pastor to congregations in Largo, FL and Odessa, FL. Jim and Catherine moved back to Arkansas in 1996 and Jim served as Associate Pastor at Second Presbyterian Church until his retirement in 2008.

Many remember Jim's courageous spirit as he recovered from a successful heart transplant in 2003. After retirement Jim served as an Interim Pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Little Rock. Jim served on numerous committees of the presbytery including a lengthy service on the Committee on Preparation for Ministry where he nurtured dozens of inquirers and candidates over the years. Thanks be to God for the life and ministry of Rev. Jim Miller.

The obituary is listed below.

James B. Miller (Jim), of Little Rock, AR, died on Saturday, January 20, 2024, at the age of eighty-two. He was born in Albemarle, NC on May 8, 1941.

Jim attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) and remained a lifelong supporter of the Tar Heels. He met his first wife, Katherine Taylor, while at UNC. After graduation in 1963 he entered the Air Force and served until 1968. During his tenure Capt. James B. Miller was awarded a commendation medal for meritorious service.

For his second career, Jim worked for J. P. Stevens & Company (textiles) as a manager in the Human Resources department in Greenville, SC.

Jim began preparing for his third career by entering Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, GA) in 1983. After graduation he was ordained as a Pastor in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in July 1987. He served churches in Arkansas and Florida until his retirement in 2008. His final position was Associate Pastor at Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock, AR. In his work with the Outreach Ministry of Second Presbyterian Church he became involved with a wide range of non-profit organizations in the Little Rock area. As a recipient of a heart transplant in 2003, he was an active supporter of ARORA (Arkansas Organ Recovery Agency).

Jim is survived by his wife, Catherine Allsbury, sister Fran Miller Way (Clyde), daughter Lynn Miller Holcombe (Chris), son Scott Miller (Sarah), and six grandchildren: Bryce Miller, Jae Miller, Ashley Holcombe Payne, Maggie Holcombe Williams, Jack Holcombe, and Patrick Holcombe.

A memorial will be held at Second Presbyterian Church on March 2, 2024, 2:00 p.m. Arrangements are under the direction of RuebelFuneralHome.com

Section VII-Mission of the Church Committee

Mission Initiative Grants



GUIDELINES FOR FUNDING FROM MISSION INITIATIVE GRANTS BUDGET

THE PURPOSE of funding for the Mission Initiative Grant portion of the Mission of the Church Committee’s budget is to assist congregations and ministries of the Presbytery of Arkansas in proclaiming the love of Christ beyond their walls; efforts that extend the power of congregations and ministries to serve the most vulnerable in our society are particularly welcome.

Application Process

1. The Mission of the Church Committee receives and acts on grant proposals three times a year. The three submission deadlines are as follows: April 15, July 15, and October 15.
2. A request to the Mission of the Church Ministry Area should include a written proposal, no longer than two pages detailing:
 - a. the amount of funding requested;
 - b. the need or needs the Session or Ministry wants to address with that funding;
 - c. a brief description of specific goals of the project and how the funds requested will be used;
 - d. a copy of the budget for the project;
 - e. total estimated costs and other sources of funding that are committed or have been applied for;
 - f. the date the Session *or* Ministry approved the request,
 - g. Session’s *or* Ministry’s designated contact for the project, including name, address, telephone number and email address;
 - h. name of Treasurer or other administrative official to whose attention the check should be sent.

The proposal should be sent as an attachment emailed to Peg Falls-Corbitt (fallscorbitt@hendrix.edu), Moderator of Mission Committee, AR Presbytery.

Please include the church or ministry name in the title of the attachment and subject line of email. For example: [church name].Mission Initiative Grant 2024

Other Details:

3. The Committee’s budget is limited, and **requests of more than \$1,500 are generally not approved**. However, there may be occasions when a larger amount could be granted:
 - a. if the applicant can make a case for it, and
 - b. if they have made a good-faith effort to secure other funds but are still short of their goal.

4. The Mission of the Church Committee will give priority to requests where:
 - a. the applicant is addressing this need with their own gift or gifts;
 - b. other sources of funding have been secured or are being sought.

5. Please note that part of the mission of the Future of the Church Committee is to “*Assist churches to re-develop their mission and ministry*” and to “*Assist congregations seeking funding or grants*” to help in that process. The mission of that Committee and this one are somewhat similar but are not the same, and it may be that a request to that ministry area would be more appropriate.

The Committee reviews and acts on applications within 30 days of each deadline.

Revised 2/1/24
Revised 1/2023
Revised 11/2021
11/2018

Section VIII-Future of the Church Committee



FOTC Grant Guidelines Application 2024

Purpose of the Future of the Church committee. The Future of the Church (FOTC) committee of the Presbytery of Arkansas serves as a catalyst to engage congregations and Presbytery Ministry Areas in creative thinking and planning beyond current models of ministry and programming. The Future of the Church committee assists with visioning, branding, technology, and development of new ministries and supports new church developments of the Presbytery.

Purpose of the Grants. There are two aims of the FOTC grants: (1) supporting congregations in extending their ministries to reach new communities or populations, as well as; (2) encouraging congregational growth, vitality and mission.

Eligibility and Timeframe. The FOTC is accepting one year proposals from Presbyterian churches within the Presbytery of Arkansas. Completed Application Forms will be received from **February 15 –April 15**. The funding year is from August 1 to July 30. Funding may be applied for again, for a total of three years.

Application Guidelines. The following factors are considered although not exclusively in reviewing proposals:

- Potential benefit to the congregation
- Potential benefit to new populations or communities Capacity of your organization to achieve the result outlined Evidence of a plan for evaluating the project or program Potential for sustainability beyond the grant period
- Evidence of cooperation or collaboration with other organizations Innovation and creativity of the approach
- Evidence of support for at least one of the 3 prongs of the Matthew 25 Initiative: Building Congregational Vitality; Dismantling Structural Racism; Eradicating Systematic Poverty.

Each request is considered on its own merits. The following requests would generally be denied:

- Support for routine facility improvements, maintenance, or upkeep.
- Multi-year proposals
- Projects that are partisan (i.e. favor one political party over another). For example, a project aimed at expanding the child income tax credit which reduces poverty without favoring one party or another, would be considered. A project that sends money to a political party to support the issue would not be considered. We will support projects aimed at dismantling structural racism and/or ending systematic poverty that rise above partisan interests.

Revised: February 2024

Selection Process. FOTC reviews proposals based on the guidelines stated above. Generally, grants will be in the \$2000-\$5000 range. Notification of grant approval will be made in June with funds distributed in July.

Documentation. The FOTC expects a year-end project report so that the grants news can be shared with the Presbytery.

To submit or ask questions - Email: Cindy Lanphear, chair of the Future of the Church Committee, cjlanphear@ca-mfg.com. Or, if you know someone on the FOTC committee, they can answer questions also. You can also call: 479-979-7160.

Section 1: ABOUT YOUR CHURCH

Name of Pastor:	Phone:
Email:	
Name of Clerk of Session:	Phone:
Email:	
Name of contact for grant application:	
Phone:	Email:

Section 2: PROPOSAL INFORMATION

1. Please give a 3-5 sentence summary of the project for which you are requesting funding:
2. Number of people who will be served: _____ Geographic area served: _____
3. List other congregations or organizations with which you will be collaborating or cooperating (briefly, how?):
4. Project start date: _____ Project end date: _____
5. Total budget for the project for which you're requesting funding: _____
6. Dollar amount requested for this grant including an itemized budget: _____

Revised: February 2024

Section 3: PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

1. What specific community and/or church needs does this ministry project address? Or, what potential benefit is this project intended to foster?

2. Where do you see God's call in this project? Tell the story of how your congregation developed this project.

3. Who is this project designed to reach—your own church or a new community or population? If a new population, describe the new group you hope to engage or the new community you hope will grow out of this project.

4. What resources—people, spirit, money, talents-- do you currently have for this ministry project and what further resources do you need?

5. How will you evaluate and share the results of this project and your learnings with the Future of the Church Committee and the Presbytery of Arkansas?

Revised: February 2024

Section IX--OVERTURE 014

[OVT-014] On Becoming Free from Plastic Pollution

Source: Susquehanna Valley Presbytery

Event: 226th General Assembly (2024)

Concur: Presbytery of Arkansas

Recommendation

On Becoming Free from Plastic Pollution

The Presbytery of Arkansas overtures the 226th General Assembly (2024) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to commit ourselves as a church, a people of faith and a social organization embodying Christian values, to:

1. Encourage all our settings to commit to changing from a disposable culture to a reusable, sustainable one.
2. Encourage education within our congregations and in our communities to advocate for alternatives to single use plastics, whether through mitigation efforts and campaigns or by supporting local and state bans on single use plastics, and
3. Encourage all settings of the Church to determine the best pathway forward for strategies and actions to mitigate plastic pollution, using as examples the following resources: a. The Story of Plastics, (95-minute documentary)ⁱ
 - b. Sierra Club Solutions to Plastic Pandemicⁱⁱ
 - c. Ten Towns –Ten actions Toolkit of New Hampshireⁱⁱⁱ
 - d. National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF): Join the Fight for Reducing Plastic Pollution^{iv}
 - e. Break Free Plastics: resources, articles, list of the worst corporate polluters and suggestions for actions^v
 - f. The Five Actions Congregations Can Take from the United Church of Christ^{vi}
 - g. Presbyterians for Earthcare webinar and resources on becoming free from plastics^{vii}
4. Reduce the use of single-use plastics and packaging.
5. Commend all settings of the church to join in possible opportunities for participation in addressing plastic pollution including to:
 - a. Encourage all settings of the Church to commit to change from the throwaway and disposable culture and consumptive practices to reusable and compostable products.^{viii}
 - b. Encourage replacement of single use plastics such as cutlery, plates, cups, straws, lids, and bottles with bioplastics, reusable, truly recyclable (like aluminum or paper) or compostable substitutes.
 - c. Preach on ecological sustainability principles articulated by Sallie McFague on responsible use of ecological resources^{Six} and the sustainable goal of mitigating single-use plastics.
 - d. Educate on the importance of mitigation of single-use plastics and plastic straws as well as plastic bottles at our churches, their events, and gatherings.
 - e. Educate on the toxicity of plastic pollutions and microplastics to the health of our environment, to our own health, and the health of non-human life.
 - f. Educate on policies and practices of local recycling and composting services and advocating for better practices.
 - g. Organize low or zero waste events in collaboration with local organizations and infrastructures.
 - h. Support businesses that use sustainable practices such as reusable containers and reusable bags.

- i. Participate in public cleanup of God’s creation, including all bodies of water, parks, and beaches.x
- j. Install fountains for water bottles in church campuses, wherever possible.
- k. Actively support and lobby for local, state, national, and international legislation and policies that align with the intention of this resolution including bans of or fees on single use plastics.
- l. Encourage the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee of the PC(USA) to engage with companies and corporations to reduce their production and use of plastics, particularly eliminating singleuse plastics wherever possible.
6. Acknowledge that accommodations in expectations need to be made for certain impacted groups such as those who are disabled or unhoused.
7. Encourage people in all settings to speak truth to the public square against plastic pollution of our planet.

Rationale

The 222nd General Assembly overwhelmingly agreed that “caring for God’s creation” should be part of our constitution and this received concurrence of 150 Presbyteries^{xi}. Our Book of Order now states “God sends the Church to share in the stewardship of creation, preserving the goodness and glory of the earth God has made”^{xii} and includes “caring for God’s Creation” in the commitment to participate in Christ’s mission. In keeping with this, all Presbyterians should seek to reduce the use of plastics, especially singleuse plastics, in their homes, churches, workplaces, communities, states and nation.

In 2023, our sisters and brothers in the United Church of Christ (UCC) General Synod passed the overture “Free from Plastic Pollution: A Resolution of Witness”^{xiii}. We overture the 226th General Assembly (2024) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to join them. The UCC’s Rationale can be found in their Resolution.

The PC(USA) General Assembly has affirmed that creation care is a fundamental part of who we are as Presbyterians. The biblical mandate for the overture “On Amending G-1.0304, The Ministry of Members, by Adding “Caring for God’s Creation”^{xiv} by Dr. William P. Brown (William Marcellus McPheeters Professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary) applies to our need to become free from plastic pollution as well:

The fundamental biblical mandate for creation care comes from Genesis 2:15, where God places Adam in the garden to “till it and keep it” (NRSV). A better translation from the Hebrew is “to serve it and to preserve it.” In Genesis 1:26–28, God blesses humankind with dominion over the earth. Human “dominion” as intended in Genesis is best practiced in care for creation.

i The Story of Stuff, <https://www.storyofstuff.org/movies/the-story-of-plastic-documentary-film/howtowatch/>

ii Resources on Plastic Pollution Solutions, Sierra Club Maryland Chapter, <https://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/zero-waste/story-of-plastic> iii Ten Towns Toolkit, <https://www.10towns.org/>

iv National Environmental Education Foundation, <https://www.neefusa.org/nature/water/join-fight-reduceplastic-pollution>

v #BreakFreeFromPlastic, <https://www.breakfreefromplastic.org/> vi Free from Plastic Pollution: Five Actions Congregations Can Take, United Church of Christ, 2023 <https://www.ucc.org/free-from-plastic-pollution-five-resolution-resources/> vii Resources for Webinar Free from Plastic Pollution: A United Church of Christ Resolution of Witness,

2023, <https://presbyearthcare.org/free-from-plastic-pollution/>

viii The Solving of the Plastics Issue, Yes Magazine, <https://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/solvingplastic>

Also see eco-friendly alternatives, Eco-Friendly Alternatives for Disposable Plastic Water Bottles | Cedar

Springs Blog (cedarspringswater.ca) ix McFague, A

New Climate for Theology

In Christ “all things hold together” (Colossians 1:17), and “every creature under heaven” is to receive God’s good news (v. 23). According to Revelation, God’s work in the world is “make all things new” (21:5), to bring about a new creation that does not destroy the old but transforms it, renews it. If the church is the sign of the new creation, then the church must lead the way in caring for creation.

Since the UCC General Synod passed their Resolution of Witness, further evidence of the danger of plastics to God’s Creation have been realized. Studies have found plastics in almost every food they tested, often at high levels.^{xv} Water from disposable water bottles contains about 240,000 nanoparticles per liter.^{xvi} Plastics in our bodies can have serious impacts on our health and inhaled plastics have been correlated with lung inflammation, shortness of breath and a higher risk of lung cancer.^{xvii} These impacts disproportionately fall on vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. Mary Johnson (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health) said, “Vulnerable populations are at even greater risk of the negative health impacts from the production, use and degradation of plastics”.^{xviii} Approximately 99 percent of plastic comes from fossil fuels, generating 3.4% of global greenhouse gas emissions.^{xviii} Petrochemical companies have undertaken a massive increase in plastic production referred to as “Plan B for the fossil fuel industry”.^{xviii} Expanded the use of plastics serves to increase demand for fracked gas.^{xix} Leaked methane, the largest component of fracked gas, has 28 times as much impact on warming the climate as does carbon dioxide^{xx} and is responsible for about 30% of the rise in global temperatures since the Industrial Revolution,^{xxi} resulting in 2023 being the warmest year on record, by far.^{xxii} And while governments and international bodies are trying to limit plastic production, petrochemical industries are working to weaken legislation and international treaties.

Currently, 430 million tons of plastic is produced *yearly* resulting in a production of 11 billion metric tons of plastic in the last century, surpassing the biomass of all animals on earth. Despite efforts to convince people recycling is effective, only 9% of the plastic ever produced has been recycled, and 19% has been incinerated.^{xxiv} Plastics are now one of the largest environmental disasters on our planet, polluting the Earth we are passing on to our children and subsequent generations.

God placed Adam in the garden to serve it and to preserve it. It is time for the Presbyterian Church (USA) to preserve creation by becoming free from plastic pollution.

x Greenpeace, <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/campaign/toolkit-plasticfree-future/> xi Minutes of the General Assembly 2016, Presbyterian Church (USA), <https://www.pcusa.org/resource/minutesgeneral-assembly-2016/>

xii Book of Order 2023-2025, Presbyterian Church (USA),

https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/boo_20232023_publishedversion_cover_and_boo_complete.pdf, W-5.0305 pp. 133-134

^{xiii} **[Free from Plastic Pollution: Five Actions Congregations Can Take, United Church of Christ, 2023, https://www.ucc.org/free-from-plastic-pollution-five-resolution-resources/](https://www.ucc.org/free-from-plastic-pollution-five-resolution-resources/)**

^{xiv} On Amending G-1.0304, “The Ministry of Members,” by Adding “Caring for God’s Creation”—From the Presbytery of New Castle. <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/6285> ^{xv} The Plastic Chemicals Hiding in Your Food, Consumer Reports, 2024,

<https://www.consumerreports.org/health/food-contaminants/the-plastic-chemicals-hiding-in-your-fooda7358224781/> ^{xvi} Rapid single-particle chemical imaging of nanoplastics by SRS microscopy, Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, 2024,

<https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2300582121> ^{xvii} Microplastics Are Everywhere. What Are They Doing to Our Health? Discover Magazine, 2023, <https://www.discovermagazine.com/environment/microplastics-are-everywhere-what-are-they-doing-to-our-health>

^{xviii} How the fossil fuel industry is pushing plastics on the world, CNBC, 2022, <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/01/29/how-the-fossil-fuel-industry-is-pushing-plastics-on-the-world-.html> ^{xix} Ibid.

^{xx} Overview of Greenhouse Gases, US Environmental Protection Agency, <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/overview-greenhouse-gases>

^{xxi} Global Methane Tracker 2023, International Energy Agency, <https://www.iea.org/reports/global-methane-tracker-2023>

Approved Minutes March 1-2, 2024

^{xxii} **2023 was the world's warmest year on record, by far, US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,**

2024, <https://www.noaa.gov/news/2023-was-worlds-warmest-year-on-record-by-far> ^{xxiii} Fossil-Fuel Interests Try to Weaken Global Plastics Treaty, Scientific American, 2023, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/fossil-fuel-interests-try-to-weaken-global-plastics-treaty/> ^{xxiv} Think that your plastic is being recycled? Think again. MIT Technology Review, 2023, <https://www.technologyreview.com/2023/10/12/1081129/plastic-recycling-climate-changemicroplastics/#:~:text=Only%209%25%20of%20the%20plastic,and%2019%25%20has%20been%20incinerated>

Section X-OVERTURE 007

[OVT-007] Adoption of the Sustainable Peace Pledge

Source: Charleston-Atlantic Presbytery

Event: 226th General Assembly (2024)

Concur: Presbytery of Arkansas

Recommendation

On Adopting The "Sustainable Peace Pledge"

The Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic overtures the 226th General Assembly [2024] to adopt the following Sustainable Peace Pledge [1]:

"Sustainable peace entails the physical, material, psychological, cultural/religious, and ecological well-being of all peoples. We declare our organizational intention to pursue sustainable peace in our work and our lives"

and in adopting it to call upon:

- a. The Presbyterian Mission Agency to hold a consultation of relevant PC(USA) agencies and PC(USA)-related organizations to begin the process of developing a comprehensive, coordinated, global, and long-term strategy for contributing to the mitigation of the effects of climate change, which imperil "the physical, material, psychological, cultural/religious, and ecological well-being of all peoples."
- b. Representatives from other Christian denominations and other faith communities, but especially denominations of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, to be included in the consultation.
- c. Other councils of the PC(USA) to be encouraged to adopt this pledge and develop their own comprehensive, coordinated, global, and long-term strategies in concert with that of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.
- d. All members of the PC(USA) to be encouraged to personally adopt this pledge.
- e. The Presbyterian Mission Agency to report back to the 227th General Assembly [2026] on the progress toward establishing and implementing a comprehensive, coordinated, global, and long-term strategy for contributing to the mitigation of the causes and effects of climate change.

Rationale

Rationale

1. Earth is warming and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. [3]
2. This warming, accelerated by human activity, is forcing changes in Earth's climate. The primary anthropogenic factor forcing climate change is increasing amounts of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide in the atmosphere, causing a "greenhouse" effect, heating Earth. [4]
3. If no more greenhouse gasses were added to the atmosphere, methane would dissipate in about a decade and nitrous oxide in a bit over a century. [5], [6]
4. About 80% of carbon dioxide would be dissolved in the ocean over two centuries but the remainder would take millennia. In the process the ocean becomes more acidic. [7]
5. However, greenhouse gasses continue to be added to the atmosphere.
6. It is estimated that the level of temperature rise over the next century will overshoot current mitigation targets.
7. The consequences of climate change will affect virtually every aspect of human life and every human being on Earth.

8. The global consequences of climate change (e.g., wide-spread drought, frequency of wild fires, severe weather events, sea level rise, wide-scale flooding, species extinction, etc.) will increase in severity for successive generations even if global efforts to mitigate them are instituted today. [8]

9. In addition to these consequences for the global ecosystem, there will be pronounced human costs. These will include: wide-spread hunger, mass population migration, increased heat-related health challenges and diseases, increased global political violence. [9], [10], [11]

10. Scripture warns that the iniquities of the parents will be delivered upon the children for many generations (Exodus 20:5). Scripture also declares reasons for hope (Jeremiah 32:1- 9, Romans 8:38-39, Revelation 21:5). The opening chapter of Genesis shows God calling upon the existing creation to share in the creation of the future (Genesis 1:11, 20, 24). Scripture witnesses that present actions have consequences on future generations; that by the loving grace of God, the present is not fully determined by the past; and that we are called upon by God to help bring forth the new creation.

11. While some of the consequences of climate change are inevitable, their degree can be mitigated by concerted application of God-called human capacities of intellect and imagination. Efforts to mitigate the most severe consequences of climate change for future generations will need to be comprehensive, coordinated, global, and long- term. Such efforts need to include, at least [12]:

a. Reducing, substantially, current levels of CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions [13],

b. Adopting non-CO₂ emitting forms of energy production,

c. Removing and sequestering CO₂ from the ocean and atmosphere. [14]

12. The PC(USA) currently has formal or affiliated efforts that could address or are addressing some of the issues related to mitigating climate change. These include but are not limited to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy; the Office of Public Witness; the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program; Mission Responsibility Through Investment; Presbyterians for Earth Care; and the Presbyterian Association on Science, Technology and the Christian Faith.

13. However, the PC(USA) does not currently have a comprehensive, coordinated, global, long-term strategy for its efforts to contribute to mitigating the consequences of climate change. Still, the PC(USA) has identified itself as a Matthew 25 Church, and the Presbyterian Mission Agency has taken the organizational lead in fulfilling that Matthew 25 commitment. [15]

14. The Presbyterian Mission Agency has adopted three primary foci and three intersectional priorities as means of fulfilling the Matthew 25 commitment. One of the intersectional priorities is climate change. Without significant mitigation of the already anticipated consequences of climate change, the issues related to the other Matthew 25 foci and priorities (i.e., building congregational vitality; dismantling structural racism; eradicating systemic poverty; gender justice and heteropatriarchy; militarism) will be exacerbated.

15. The Presbyterian Mission Agency is the fitting agency of the PC(USA) to coordinate the development of a comprehensive, coordinated, global, long-term strategy for contributing to the development of a sustainable peace that will incorporate all of the foci of the PC(USA) Matthew 25 initiative.

16. The Sustainable Peace Pledge itself does not provide such a strategy but it is a commitment to seek Shalom in relation to all people and all of God's creatures. The Pledge commits the PC(USA), as a body, to develop and implement a strategy to work toward a comprehensive, coordinated, global, and long-term effort to mitigate the worst consequences of global climate change and provide a foundation for an ecologically sustainable peace that would fulfill Matthew 25 goals.

17. The Pledge commits other Councils of the PC(USA) and individual PC(USA) members, if they adopt it, to work toward a comprehensive, coordinated, global, long-term effort to attain an ecologically sustainable peace.

18. The Pledge also commits the PC(USA) to engage in an ecumenical and interfaith effort to contribute to a comprehensive, coordinated, global, long-term effort to attain an ecologically sustainable peace beginning with engaging members of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

Citations:

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Approved Minutes March 1-2, 2024

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