



# The 157th Meeting of The Presbytery of Arkansas

**October 25-26  
Trinity Presbyterian  
Little Rock**



## MAIN PACKET

157<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas  
Friday and Saturday October 25-26, 2024  
Trinity Presbyterian Church  
Little Rock, Arkansas



# Presbytery of Arkansas

## 157<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting

Presbytery Website: <https://www.presbyark.org>

Presbytery Facebook Group **PresbyArkConnect**: <https://tinyurl.com/4938rjb7>

Presbytery Database: <https://directory.in-c.net/arkansas/>  
Passphrase: **presbyarkconnect**

Presbytery Online Resources: <https://presbyark.org/our-presbytery/helpful-resources-2/>

Click below to sign up to receive the "Update", the Presbytery newsletter:  
<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/2FgWN9K>

### What You'll Find in This Packet:

Letter from Rev. Jeff Price, Host Church .....	Page	3
Meeting Schedule .....	Page	4
Docket .....	Page	5
Consent Agenda .....	Page	7
Report of the Stated Clerk .....	Page	10
Report of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry .....	Page	12
Report of the Mission of the Church Committee .....	Page	14
Report of the Committee on Ministry .....	Page	15
Report from the Youth, Young Adult and College Committee .....	Page	16
Report from the Coordinating Team .....	Page	41
Report from the Administration Committee .....	Page	43
Financial Statements for August 31, 2024 .....	Page	44
Presbyterian Helps (Acronyms & Parliamentary Procedure) .....	Page	50
Take a minute and complete your online Visioning Survey .....	Page	54
Provide feedback on meeting by completing online survey .....	Page	55

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

In the name of Jesus Christ and on behalf of the members and officers of Trinity Presbyterian Church, I am pleased to welcome you to Little Rock for the 157th meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

We are located on 10 beautiful, tree-covered acres in west Little Rock at 4501 Rahling Road. The easiest way to reach us from I-430 is by traveling west on Highway 10 or Rodney Parham Road to Taylor Loop Road and making a left turn.



Our church is setback from the road, but you'll find us directly across from Fire Station 23. Facing the church, the sanctuary is on your left. Registration will take place through the double doors on that same side. Meals will be served in the Fellowship Hall, located on the right near the covered drive, and the pre-presbytery workshop is on the porch between the Fellowship Hall and the playground.

Restrooms are located to the right of the sanctuary. The WiFi password is ineedwireless with no spaces or capital letters.

If you need assistance with directions or have any other questions, feel free to contact us at 501-868-5848 or via email at [trinitypreslr@gmail.com](mailto:trinitypreslr@gmail.com).

I look forward to our time together!

Pastor Jeff Price





# The 157th Meeting of The Presbytery of Arkansas

**October 25-26  
Trinity Presbyterian  
Little Rock**

## Next Meeting

158<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting  
February 21-22, 2025  
Lyon College  
Batesville, Arkansas

\*All dates tentative subject to change

## Meeting Schedule

Friday, October 25, 2024

6:00 pm	Registration and Check-In	(Narthex)
6:30 pm	Gavel for Start of Meeting	
6:45 pm	Report of General Presbyter	
7:00 pm	Opening Worship –MWS Jocelyn Wildwright	

**A reception will be held immediately following the worship service everyone is invited.**

Saturday, October 26, 2024

8:00 am	Late Registration and Check-In	(Narthex)
	Display Tables	
8:30 am	Reconvene for the Business of the Presbytery	
11:55 am	Lunch	
1:00 pm	Reconvene for the Business of the Presbytery	
3:00 pm	Benediction & Adjournment	

## Presbytery Leadership

Moderator MWS Emmett Powers  
Vice-Moderator MWS Judi McMillan  
Moderator of CT RE Mike Szabo  
Interim General Presbyter MWS Jim Poinsett  
Stated Clerk MWS Blake Brinegar  
Presbytery Connector RE Julie Price  
Youth and Young Adult Developer Dr. Sarah Leer  
Presbytery Administrator Kimberly Palmer

Moderator of Administration  
MWS Carl McCormack  
Moderator of COM MWS Leslie Roper  
Moderator of CPM MWS Elizabeth Brinegar  
Moderator of Subcommittee on Disaster Preparedness and Response RE Ray Stephens  
Moderator of Future of the Church  
RE Cindy Lanphear  
Co-Moderators of the Subcommittee on Honduran Ministry  
RE Leigh Woodruff & MWS Phil Butin  
Moderator of Mission of the Church  
CRE Peg Falls-Corbitt  
Moderator of the Subcommittee Resource Team  
Katie Flood  
Moderator of Nominations MWS Robert Lowry  
Co-Moderators of Presbyterian Women  
RE Patty Minga and RE Cathy Rogers  
Moderator of Youth, Young Adults, and Campus Ministry  
MWS Maggie Alsup



**157<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting**  
**Trinity Presbyterian Church**  
**Little Rock, Arkansas**  
**Docket**

**Friday, October 25, 2024**

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6:00-6:30 pm Registration (Narthex)

6:30 pm	Call to Order/Opening Gavel Lighting of the Christ Candle Opening Prayer	Moderator MWS Emmett Powers
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	Welcome from the Host Institution	MWS Jeff Price
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	Explanation of Electronic Participation	Stated Clerk MWS Blake Brinegar
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	Appointment of Tellers	Moderator MWS Emmett Powers
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6:45 pm	Report of the General Presbyter/Welcome-Transitional/Interim General Presbyter MWS Jim Poinsett	
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7:00 pm	Opening Worship with the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper Offering to benefit Sleep in Heavenly Peace	
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8:00 pm	Reception-Fellowship Hall	
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**157<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting**  
**Trinity Presbyterian Church**  
**Little Rock, Arkansas**  
**Docket Continued**

**Saturday, October 26, 2024**

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8:30 am	Business of the Presbytery Continues Lighting of the Christ Candle Morning Prayer Service	Moderator MWS Emmett Powers MWS Jim Poinsett
9:00 am	Zoom Participation Instruction by Technical Moderator	RE Julie Gillaspay
9:05 am	Consent Agenda (requires a 2nd) Report of the Stated Clerk	MWS Blake Brinegar
9:15 am	Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Home and Family Services	Kerri Daniels
9:20 am	Report of the Committee on Nominations	MWS Robert Lowry
9:35 am	Report of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry	MWS Elizabeth Brinegar
10:00 am	<i>Order of the Day</i> Report from the Strategic Planning Leadership Team	MWS Jocelyn Wildwright
11:00 am	Thriving in Rural Ministry	MWS Phil Blackburn
11:15 am	Report of the Committee on Mission of the Church Subcommittee on Honduran Ministry	CRE Peg Falls-Corbitt MWS Jesse Gonzalez
11:35 am	Report of the Treasurer	RE Tom Verdery
11:45 am	Short Announcements	
12:00 pm	Lunch	
1:00 pm	Report of the Committee on Ministry Report from Youth, Young Adult and College Ministries Coordinating Team	MWS Leslie Roper MWS Maggie Alsup RE Mike Szabo
3:00 pm	Closing Prayer & Adjournment	

**Section A**  
**Consent Agenda**  
MWS Blake Brinegar  
Stated Clerk

**For Action:**

1. **Motion to adopt the docket.**
2. **Motion to approve the 156<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas, June 1, 2024 held at Central Presbyterian Church, Russellville, with Candidate Elizabeth Cahoon preaching.**
3. **Motion to enroll corresponding members 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 to count votes, serving as what the Presbytery of Arkansas has historically termed the “Tellers,” for those voting via zoom.**
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 “Leave of Absence Committee.”**
7. **Motion to receive the minutes of the Administrative Commission to Install MWS Doug Cartwright at First Presbyterian Church, Harrison, on June 23, 2024, at 3:00pm, and to dismiss them with thanks.**
8. **Motion to receive the minutes of the Administrative Commission to ordain and install Elizabeth Cahoon at Second Presbyterian Church, LR, on August 27, 2024, at 2:00pm and to dismiss them with thanks.**
9. **Motion to adopt the Mission Statement section of the Vision document presented by the Strategic Planning and Leadership Team.**

**Mission Statement**

The Presbytery of Arkansas inspires and connects congregations and their leaders, equips people of every generation to hear and respond to God’s call in Jesus Christ, and fosters innovative expressions of ministry in response to the needs of a changing world.

10. **Motion to Adopt the Values section of the vision documents presented by the Strategic Planning and Leadership Team.**

**Values**

- **Faith:** We work, serve, and dream in response to the abundant love of God we have experienced in Jesus Christ.
- **Steadfastness:** We walk with churches and leaders through valleys of disconnection, disappointment, and conflict, seeking together the comfort and call of Christ.
- **Empathy:** We seek first to listen deeply, to understand, and to accompany each other as a supportive community that encourages growth, development, and acts of compassion.
- **Authenticity:** We embrace humble, genuine connection with God and one another, acknowledging that our vulnerabilities and imperfections are not barriers, but opportunities for growth and deeper relationships.
- **Courage:** We recognize systems of oppression in the church and culture, and we take risks faithfully to express God’s love to the world.

- **Adaptability:** We remain nimble and willing to change our strategies and structures to address the needs of a changing world with imagination, innovation, and action.
- **Revitalization:** We celebrate and participate in the Holy Spirit’s ongoing work of renewal in our communities, our congregations, and our own lives.
- **Joy:** We choose joy and gratitude as grounding for our life and work together.

**11. Motion to adopt the Three-Year Revolving Goals of the Vision Document presented by the Strategic Planning and Leadership Team.**

**THREE-YEAR REVOLVING GOALS**

ANNIVERSARY DATE: June 30, 2027 / ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY DATE: June 30, 2025

**1. Receiving New Life**

**2027:** At least five congregations have completed a needs assessment and a revitalization process sponsored by the presbytery or one of its partners.

- **2025:** A revitalization process for interested churches in the Presbytery of Arkansas has been designed and approved for prototyping.

**2. Deepening Financial Health**

**2027:** The presbytery has a clear, written fundraising plan and has received at least \$100,000 in grant funding and other initiatives in the previous year.

- **2025:** A fundraising plan for the presbytery has been drafted and approved.
- **2025:** The presbytery has named a single missional priority for the 2025-2026 program year and has a plan for inviting members of the presbytery to contribute to this cause.

**3. Revitalizing and/or Repurposing Property**

**2027:** In the previous year, three properties in the presbytery have been supported by the presbytery to creatively repurpose their properties in ways that increase the churches’ mission and contribute to their ongoing financial health.

- **2025:** “Choice point” congregations throughout the presbytery have been identified and conversations have begun with those congregations about the future of their church property.
- **2025:** A first draft of a property opportunity assessment has been drafted and is ready for prototyping with interested churches.

**4. Capacity and Capability Building**

**2027:** Momentum has been built within the presbytery by tending to the creation of fundamental infrastructure needed to execute on the broad range of desired priorities, such that the presbytery will be ready to move into a rhythm of revolving three-year goals and one-year benchmarks.

- **2025:** The presbytery is positioned with the infrastructure necessary for the execution of future priorities, starting with the following results:

**i. Small Churches**

1. The presbytery has gained clarity around how the Thriving in Ministry work of the University of the Ozarks will work in collaboration with priorities of the presbytery.
2. Representatives of every church in the presbytery with an average worship attendance under 20 has had at least four conversations in the previous year with a supportive collaborative representative from the presbytery.

**ii. Innovation**

1. An incubation process for new expressions of ministry has been designed and approved for testing in the presbytery.
2. Structures for supporting the emergence of new worshipping communities have been implemented.
3. In alignments with the PCUSA 1001 New Worshipping Communities initiative and following an assessment of the areas/cities/regions most in need of new ministries,



the next prospective worshipping communities for the presbytery have been identified."

4. Alternative metrics for ministry, informed by Gil Rendle's, *Doing the Math of Mission: Fruits, Faithfulness and Metrics*, has been drafted for the presbytery.
5. Clear, written protocols for all available grant funds in the presbytery has been approved and this information is available on the presbytery website.
6. A game plan for launching a young adult leadership corps in the presbytery has been drafted and approved.

### **iii. Culture Building**

1. The stories of all new worshipping communities in the presbytery since 2015 have been compiled, written, and shared with the Presbytery of Arkansas audience.
2. The presbytery has drafted and begun to implement a game plan for diversity and inclusion.
3. Every presbytery meeting in the previous year included the sharing of stories of marvelous work happening throughout the presbytery.
4. A game plan for the sharing of culture-shaping stories in the presbytery has been drafted.
5. A first draft of a presbytery policy for the utilization of the presbytery's endowment and other designated funds has been drafted.
6. A game plan for the presbytery providing supplemental support for churches in paying pension dues has been drafted.

### **iv. Leadership Cultivation**

1. A survey of the variety of pastoral leadership models being utilized in the presbytery has been completed and a clear picture of how many churches are using which non-traditional models of leadership is now available.
2. A pipeline design for leadership development from high school through campus ministry all the way to senior citizens has been drafted for the presbytery."
3. After listening sessions with pastors, ministry staff, and church officers, at least three initiatives have been identified for implementation in 2025 to deepen their spiritual and emotional health.

**Section B**  
**Report of the Stated Clerk**  
MWS Blake Brinegar

For Information:

1. Will attend the Synod Assembly November 5-6 in Metairie, LA.
2. Have been assisting congregations with church records and minutes.
3. Have been contacting and working with ministers needing boundary training. Remember at the last presbytery meeting the Committee on Ministry had the following in their report: *The Committee on Ministry approved plans to contact pastors who have not completed mandatory Book of Order Boundary Training requirements. Notifications will begin on August 31 and on December 31 any pastors that are non-compliant will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the PCUSA constitution. **This applies to all minister members of the presbytery (currently serving a congregation, at-large members, retired members, those serving in validated ministries.)*** If you are retired and would like to be placed on an inactive list, defined as not serving on a presbytery committee, filling the pulpit, teaching a class in a congregation, or other participation in the life of a congregation, except for worship attendance, please let the Stated Clerk know. The addition to the Book of Order applies to all members of the presbytery.
4. Working with another presbytery in the Synod on a potential judicial case.
5. The information pertaining to the Proposed Amendments to the Constitution are available and can be found at <https://oga.pcusa.org/section/departments/proposed-amendments-constitution/>
6. The 2025 Prayer List for Congregations is included in this report as Section B – Exhibit 1. The Prayer List is available any time at the presbytery’s website, [presbyark.org/Resources/Presbytery Documents](http://presbyark.org/Resources/Presbytery_Documents) under the Stated Clerk section.

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## Section B, Exhibit 1 Report of the Stated Clerk

### Prayer List for Congregations, Presbytery of Arkansas – 2025

Jan.	5	First, Clarksville	Park Hill, North Little Rock
Jan.	12	Mt. Vernon, Pea Ridge	First, Huntsville
Jan.	19	Ferncliff Camp & Conference Center	Active Ruling Elders
Jan.	26	University of the Ozarks, Clarksville	Faith, Horseshoe Bend
Feb.	2	First, McGehee	Inquirers and Candidates for Ministry
Feb.	9	Commissioned Ruling Elders	First, Heber Springs
Feb.	16	Synod of the Sun	Church Musicians
Feb.	23	First, Jacksonville	Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
Mar.	2	Second, Little Rock	First, Yellville
Mar.	9	Directors of Children's Programs	First, Mena
Mar.	16	First United, Fayetteville	Lyon College, Batesville
Mar.	23	Kirk of the Hills, Fairfield Bay	Church Pre-Schools
Mar.,	30	Church Secretaries and Treasurers	Holiday Island Presbyterian
Apr.	6	Mt. Comfort, Fayetteville	First, Dardanelle
Apr.	13	Good Shepherd, Greenwood	Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista
Apr.	20	Central, Fort Smith	Active Deacons
Apr.	27	Alpine Church, Amity	Church Groundskeepers
May	4	Presbyterian Village	Vaughn, Bentonville
May	11	First, Hot Springs	Ministries to Hispanic Persons in Arkansas
May	18	Westover Hills, Little Rock	Allison Memorial, Little Rock
May	25	Holly Grove Church, Holly Grove	First, Alma
June	1	Mission Trip Participants	First, Fort Smith
June	8	Presbyterian Women Ministry	Harmony Church, Clarksville
June	15	New Worshipping Communities	First, Pine Bluff
June	22	Graham Memorial, Forrest City	Elkins Church, Elkins
June	29	Pulaski Heights, Little Rock	Presbytery Committees
July	6	Grace, Little Rock	First, Malvern
July	13	Barr Memorial, Norman	Hopewell Church, Morrilton
July	20	First, Mountain Home	First, Newport
July	27	First, Little Rock	Presbytery Staff
Aug.	3	Trinity, Little Rock	Spring River, Hardy
Aug.	10	First, Bentonville	Westminster, Little Rock
Aug.	17	First, Conway	First, Prairie Grove
Aug.	24	First, Morrilton	First, Springdale
Aug.	31	Wynne Church, Wynne	Church Sessions
Sept.	7	Faith, Pine Bluff	First, Beebe
Sept.	14	Central, Pine Bluff	Church Camp Ministries
Sept.	21	Strategic Planning Leadership Team	First, Jonesboro
Sept.	28	First, Gurdon	Churches in Presbyteries in Honduras
Oct.	5	Cane Hill Church, Cane Hill	Active and Retired Christian Educators
Oct.	12	First, Van Buren	First, Batesville
Oct.	19	First, Benton	Central, Russellville
Oct.	26	Children's Church Ministries	West End, Arkadelphia
Nov.	2	Presbyterian Church of Bull Shoals	First, Arkadelphia
Nov.	9	Campus Ministries	Hospital Chaplains and Counselors
Nov.	16	Church Nursery Workers	First, Rogers
Nov.	23	First, Harrison	Westminster, Hot Springs
Nov.	30	Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village	First, Searcy
Dec.	7	Mountainburg Church, Mountainburg	Active and Retired Ministers
Dec.	14	Laotian Ministry, Fort Smith	Youth and Young Adults and Directors
Dec.	21	Memorial Church, Atkins	First, Walnut Ridge
Dec.	28	First, Paragould	Church Custodians

## **Section C**

### **Report of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry**

**Moderator MWS Elizabeth Brinegar**

#### **For Information:**

On September 28, 2024 the Committee on Preparation for Ministry met with Amanda McDonald and examined her regarding her fitness to move from Inquirer to Candidate status. The committee determined that she is more than ready to take this step.

Introduction to the Commissioned Ruling Elder process.

#### **For action:**

**The committee recommends that Amanda McDonald be moved from Inquirer to Candidacy status under the care of the Presbytery of Arkansas.** Her Statement of Faith is included in the packet, Section D, Exhibit I.



**Section D, Exhibit 1**  
**Statement of Faith**  
**Amanda McDonald**

I believe in the one, triune God from whom everything was created. Through creation, God made each and every person in God's image, and we are called to live our lives in a manner that glorifies God. God's love, steadfastness, and righteousness are revealed to us through scripture. I believe that God works for good in all things, and God's will is to redeem and restore creation from the things that separate us from God.

In God's goodness, God chose incarnation through Jesus Christ to both, reveal more of Godself to humanity, as well as, redeem humanity. Jesus was both fully human and fully God. In Jesus' life he proclaimed the good news, sought justice and liberation, and demonstrated inclusion and love. In his death, he suffered in a fully human way, paying the debt for the sins of humanity. In his resurrection, we are assured of God's forgiveness and will to redeem and renew humanity. The incarnation of God in Jesus and Jesus' life, death, and resurrection reveal that God's will carries deep meaning and purpose for creation, our physical bodies, and our lives in this world.

I believe the Holy Spirit is the life-giving nature of God found within us. As described in the Gospel of John, the Holy Spirit is our *paraclete*: our comforter, counselor, and advocate. The Holy Spirit allows us to look past our sinful nature and respond in love to God's call for our participation in creation.

I believe God calls us into relationship with God, but also, that God calls us into relationship with others. Christian living cannot be done alone. Through community we are able to live into the gifts of God through the Holy Spirit. We are called to worship and work together in our faith to glorify God. We are called to live by the example set for us in Christ: bringing in those from the margins, binding up the brokenhearted, seeking what is just and right, and serving all in love. The church's use of the two sacraments ordained by scripture: baptism and communion, are the outward, visible signs and reminders of God's grace working within us and within our community to glorify God. I believe the church universal holds responsibility in God's call to be a place of worship where all are welcomed and loved. The church's active role in sacraments, education, inclusion, justice, and modeling Christian community is essential to our call as Christians.

**Section E**  
**Report of the Committee on the Mission of the Church**  
**October 2024**  
CRE Peg Falls-Corbitt Moderator

A primary activity of Mission of the Church is the awarding of the Mission Initiative Grants. Awards for these grants are made over a 3-cycle period (April, July, October), or as long as the funds last. This year, all funds for these grants were awarded by the July round. Total amount awarded was \$15, 241.67. Funding remains available for scholarships to Mission Trips and support for International Mission Initiatives. Inquiries may be sent to the moderator, Peg Falls-Corbitt at [fallscorbitt@hendrix.edu](mailto:fallscorbitt@hendrix.edu).

**Mission Initiative Grants** were awarded to:

Central Presbyterian Pine Bluff (Backpack program)  
First Alma Blessing Box)  
First Bentonville (Water-bottle Refill Station judged significant for Food Pantry constituents)  
First Jacksonville (Community Garden expansion)  
First Van Buren (Farm Food Pantry)  
Lyon College (Spirituality and Well-Being program)  
Lyon College (Food Insecurity Program)  
Queer Collective (Suicide Prevention Workshop)  
Rogers Presbyterian (Day of Wellness for underserved women)  
Trinity Presbyterian (Welcome Bags for Vera Lloyd)  
Vera Lloyd (Sound system for gym)  
Wynne Presbyterian (Classroom Materials for Day School serving low-income Children)  
Wynne Presbyterian (Blessing Box)

**Ferncliff Camp and Conference** Block Grant funds were distributed to Ferncliff for scholarships for Marshallese students and for their Rainbow Camp.

Funds from the MOC budget continue to support **Stewpot, the Presbyterian Pilgrimage, Presbyterian Women Retreat travel, the Presbyterian Village, both Lyon College and University of the Ozarks, and Presbytery Educational Ministry Resourcing.**

MOC budget has long had funds earmarked for **AR Interfaith Conference**; due to inactivity in that group, we moved all funds from that line to the budget line for Mission Initiative Grants.

At its July meeting, the Committee discussed distribution of the **Gary Gault Fund for the Poor and Needy**. This fund is lodged in a bank and generates interest that had been designated by the session of First Presbyterian Church, NLR. With their dissolution the distribution of these funds in the future will be lodged with the Mission of the Church Committee. Proceeds will probably be in the \$5,000 - \$6,000 range annually. Rather than inviting applications, the committee will review the criteria and make the distributions to agencies that minister to the homeless and poor.

**Section F**  
**Report from Committee on Ministry**  
MWS Leslie Roper

For Information COM approved at their Meeting:

1. Approved Jim Davis to serve Communion August 11, 2024, at Kirk of the Hills, Fairfield Bay.
2. Sustained the exam and approved MWS Jim Poinsett for temporary or regular membership in the Presbytery of Arkansas.
3. Sustained examination for fit for Jim Davis as Supply Pastor at Kirk in the Hills, Fairfield Bay.
4. Approved Russell Wilkins as Supply Pastor at FPC, Pine Bluff, without permission to celebrate Sacraments or moderate session.
5. Approved request from Kirk in the Pines, HSV to elect a PNC.
6. Approved a 1001 Heath Insurance Grant to MWS Marie Mainard-O'Connell of the Queer Collective.
7. Sustained the exam for fit between First Mountain Home and Rev. Lila DeMoss, and enroll her as a temporary member of the Presbytery of Arkansas. (ordained Cumberland Presbyterian).
8. Sustained the exam for fit between MWS Stewart Smith and FUPC, Fayetteville, and approved his terms of compensation:  
Salary/housing \$92,5000  
SECA \$7,076  
Pension/Housing \$36,075  
Professional Exp. \$5,000 (Reimbursable)  
Con-Ed \$1,200 (Reimbursable)  
Total Compensation \$141,851  
  
Con-Ed 2 weeks  
Vacation 4 weeks

**For Presbytery Action:**

1. **Motion to approve a 12-hr. a week contract between Russell Wilkins and First, Pine Bluff, renewable on an annual basis with the following compensation:**  
**\$500.00 per week**  
**Vacation Six weeks per year**
2. **Motion to approve a part-time contract between Rev. Lila DeMoss and First, Mountain Home, renewable on an annual basis, with the following compensation:**  
**\$150.00 a Sunday**  
**\$150 plus mileage for Special Events**  
**\$50 To Moderate Session**

## Section G

### Report from Youth, Young Adult, and College Ministry Committee

October Presbytery Meeting 2024 Report  
Submitted by Rev. Maggie Alsup, Moderator

Happy fall, y'all! We are excited to report that we had another successful Youth Quake. With energizers, fellowship, study, and fun, what's not to love. The Youth A-Team is also working on plans for spring events and summer trips. Stay tuned to updates from the presbytery newsletter and social media for more information.

We also are hosting our first ever Adult Quake November 8-11, 2024 at Ferncliff. If you miss Youth Quake, if you need some sabbath rest, if you are looking for something fun to do this fall—this event is for you. For more information, check out the newsletter or contact Sarah Leer ([sarah@sarahleer.com](mailto:sarah@sarahleer.com)) There are two major updates that come from our committee.

Montreat College Conference is scheduled to take place January 2-5, 2025. After the flooding from Hurricane Helene and its impact, the committee has decided not to travel as a group to the conference. But, students who wish to go are encouraged to reach out to Kristi Button to figure out registration. The committee has also granted some funding for students who wish to go, to help with the costs of travel. We hope to be back to our larger group delegation in 2026.

The last thing we bring to you is our updated protection policy. You can find it in Section G, Exhibit 1 of this packet. It is a lengthy document, so we hope you will take time to be intentional in reading it. At this time, we will present it on the floor from our committee to ask for your comments. The voting for the updated policy will take place at the next presbytery meeting (February 2025). If you have any questions, comments, or things to add, please reach out to the chair, Maggie Alsup ([margaret.alsup@lyon.edu](mailto:margaret.alsup@lyon.edu)) or our presbytery staff member Sarah Leer ([sarah@sarahleer.com](mailto:sarah@sarahleer.com))

Peace,  
Rev. Maggie Alsup, Moderator



**Section G, Exhibit 1**  
**Presbytery of Arkansas**  
**Safe Church Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults**

**POLICY RATIONALE**

The implementation and documentation of a Child/Youth/Vulnerable Protection Policy strives to reduce the risk of abuse and neglect for the following reasons:

- **Children, youth, and vulnerable adults are a gift from God** and the Church has a divine mandate to provide for their safety and nurturing. The Church is called to be a place that **reflects the open arms of Jesus**. In Matthew 19:14, Jesus says, “Let the little children come to me.” The Church is to be, at all levels of council and in all entities, **a place of safety and nurture** reflective of the arms of Christ.
- Any type of **abuse** involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults has **lasting and devastating effects** on the life of the victim/survivor. It is the call of the Church to be a life-giving entity of Christ’s healing and hope for community and individuals, not an entity that brings harm and hurt.
- The larger Church suffers with the victim/survivor and his or her family when abuse and neglect occurs. **The Church is unable to do the full work of Christ, due to the hurt, pain, and distrust that accompanies abuse.** Not only does the Church lose its credibility at all levels, it also suffers considerable financial loss and loss of integrity. More importantly, in instances of child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse within the Church, there is immeasurable spiritual, psychological, emotional, and physical harm that can be perpetrated that woefully hinders God’s call on the Church.
- The [\*Book of Order\*](#) states, “The **congregation** as a whole, on behalf of the Church universal, assumes **responsibility for nurturing the baptized person** in the Christian life,” and Presbyterians believe this baptismal commitment to be a serious one, understanding it to apply to all in the church’s care, including children, youth, and vulnerable adults (*Book of Order* W-3.0403). We take this responsibility seriously for those who have been baptized and those who have not.
- Children, youth, and vulnerable adults are not only persons of care and service in the church, but they are also co-recipients of the graces and love of God. Jesus exemplified this in the Gospel of Mark 10:15–16 when he urged his followers to receive the kingdom of God as a little child. And he specifically takes up the children into his arms and blesses them. So also **the Church**, as the body of Christ, is to be the **presence of Christ’s love**, in the same way taking up all children, youth, and vulnerable adults into its arms and blessing them; **providing for them a safe, thriving, and nurturing environment** in which to grow in every way.

**DEFINITIONS**

The following is a list of definitions of terms and their intended use in this particular Policy. For the purpose of this Policy:

- **Child:** A child is defined as a person between the ages of 0–11.
- **Youth:** A youth is defined as a person between the ages of 12–17.
- **Minor:** A minor is defined as any Child or Youth 0–17 years-old.
- **Child/Youth Worker:** Any person, volunteer, paid staff or contractor who participates at any level at events

or activities involving Children and/or Youth. This includes chaperones who accompany Minors to and during meetings, events, and activities covered by this Policy.

- **Vulnerable Adult:** Any person eighteen-years-old or older without the developmental or cognitive capacity to consent.
- **Child/Youth Abuse:** Any act or failure to act that results in physical abuse, neglect, and or sexual molestation or abuse, sexual, psychological, or emotional mistreatment, or exploitation of a Child or Youth.
- **Vulnerable Adult Abuse:** Any act or failure to act that results in physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse, sexual, psychological, or emotional mistreatment or exploitation of a Vulnerable Adult.
- **Sexual Abuse:**
  - Arkansas Code § 12-18-103 states that “sexual abuse” in a minor under the age of 18 means:
    - Sexual intercourse, deviate sexual activity, or sexual contact (by forcible compulsion or not)
    - Attempted sexual intercourse, deviate sexual activity, or sexual contact (by forcible compulsion or not)
      - Forcing or encouraging the watching of pornography
    - Forcing, permitting, or encouraging the watching of live sexual activity
      - In the *Book of Order*, sexual abuse is defined as “any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to (1) any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone without the capacity to consent; or (2) any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position.” (*Book of Order*, D-7.0901).
- **Misuse of Technology:** The use of technology that results in Vulnerable Adult Abuse, Child/Youth Abuse, or in the harassing or abusing of a Child/Youth.
- **Sexual Misconduct:** Sexual Misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this Policy to include:
  - **Child sexual abuse;** including, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child.
- **Sexual abuse** - see above.
- **Sexual harassment;** defined for this Policy is as follows: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:
  - submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, or their continued status in an institution;
  - submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual;
  - such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or
  - an individual is subjected to unwelcome sexual jokes, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, and/or sexually exploit men, women, or children.
- **Rape;** or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.
- **Sexual conduct;** or offensive, obsessive or suggestive language or behavior, unacceptable visual contact, unwelcome touching or fondling that is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another.
- **Sexual Malfeasance;** defined by the broken trust resulting from sexual activities within a professional ministerial relationship that results in misuse of office or position arising from the professional ministerial relationship.
- **Misuse of technology;** use of technology that results in sexually harassing or abusing another person, including texting or emailing suggestive messages and images to persons with whom one has a ministerial

relationship. It is never appropriate to view pornography on church property. When this includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse. There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or church entity or within the context of ministry.

## SCREENING, TRAINING, AND BACKGROUND CHECKS

### **VOLUNTEERS**

All volunteers who work with children and youth (including, but not limited to trip leaders, adults present at youth events, youth advisors and sponsors) who work with children and youth will satisfy the following:

1. Be at least eighteen years-old and four years older than the oldest Youth whom they are serving.
2. Be an attendee of a Presbytery of Arkansas congregation for at least 6 months unless otherwise approved by the Presbytery staff
3. Have a discussion about volunteer responsibilities with a Presbytery staff person or person designated by the staff person
4. Complete “Children and Youth Ministry Information and Disclosure Form” (see Appendix A)
5. Agree to any background checks deemed necessary by the Presbytery
6. Attend child protection training approved by the Presbytery
7. *If driving or transporting children or youth:* Provide a copy of a valid driver’s license and insurance and agree to a check of a current Motor Vehicle Report

### **TRAINING**

All Child/Youth Workers, paid, contracted, or volunteer, **must participate in training** sometime within the year prior to working with children/youth. The training is to be provided by the Presbytery and shall cover the Child/Youth protection policy thoroughly as well as methods of abuse prevention and a detailed plan of reporting. These trainings shall further cover:

- What constitutes Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Abuse and neglect. ● How to recognize signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect.
- State laws concerning definitions of abuse.
- Mandated Reporting
- Mandatory criminal background checks and the security of those files.
- Explanation of the importance of the application and screening processes.
- Appropriate boundaries with Minors, especially regarding adult/Child/Youth ratios, transportation, and use of technology.
- If an overnight event is planned, discussions of boundaries involving appropriate sleeping arrangements and restroom/shower facilities use shall be discussed.

- Other related topics.

## **\*BACKGROUND CHECKS**

The Child/Youth Worker must **consent to a comprehensive background check, including a criminal background check**. Presbytery of Arkansas will cover the costs of the background checks for all Child/Youth Workers unless it is covered by their congregation. Child/Youth Workers who participate annually in events will be required to have one (1) background check per 24 month period, unless otherwise deemed necessary. The Presbytery admin will receive the results of any criminal background check on applicants, employees, volunteers, or independent contractors.

No person may serve as a Child/Youth Worker who has a conviction on his/her record of certain felonies or misdemeanors, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

- Criminal homicide; Aggravated assault; Crimes related to the possession, use, or sale of drugs or controlled substances; Sexual Abuse; Sexual assault; Injury to a Youth; Incest; Indecency with a Youth; Inducing sexual conduct or sexual performance of a Youth; Possession or promotion of child pornography; The sale, distribution, or display of harmful material to a Minor; Employment harmful to Youth; Abandonment or endangerment of a Youth; Kidnapping or unlawful restraint; Public lewdness or indecent exposure; and enticement of a Youth; Any crime that involves Sexual Misconduct or Sexual Abuse, particularly if it involves misconduct or abuse with a Minor; Any crime that involves Misuse of Technology for sexual purposes, such as collecting or distributing photographs of Minors who are naked or in sexual or inappropriate poses (child pornography); Any crime that involves the use of force, such as assault or endangerment; Any crime that involves abduction and kidnapping; Any crime that involves drinking and driving, such as driving while intoxicated.

No person may act as or be engaged as a Child/Youth Worker if that person has been found guilty of an offense, in local, state or federal court or in an ecclesiastical proceeding, that includes actions that fall under definitions or prohibitions set forth in this Policy.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**

Presbytery of Arkansas shall maintain all Child/Youth Worker applications, results of background checks, and related information in confidential, secured files.



## **GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Employees, volunteers, and independent contractors who work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults in connection with Presbytery of Arkansas activities will comply with the following guidelines:

### **Respect and Consideration**

Child/Youth Workers shall respond to Minors and Vulnerable Adults with **respect and consideration and treat all of them equally**, regardless of race/ethnicity, color, national origin, gender, age (40 and over), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, creed, protected disability status, citizenship status, genetic information, uniformed service or veteran status or religious affiliation. Child/Youth Workers will act as a positive role model for Minors and Vulnerable Adults by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity. They will maintain appropriate boundaries when in positions of power with Minors or Vulnerable Adults.

### **Two or More Adults**

At least **two (preferably unrelated) adults over the age of 18** will supervise all sponsored programs and activities involving children and youth.. Adults must remain in sight or sound of one another at all times except in extenuating circumstances. Adults in leadership roles are expected to avoid situations where they are alone with children and youth. The presence of two or more adults lessens opportunities for child abuse to occur or be alleged, allows shared leadership, and facilitates appropriate discipline. This policy also extends to all overnight events. Under no circumstances can one adult alone take or accompany children or youth on an overnight outing.

Adults are to **avoid one-adult, one-child** situations unless a parent has given prior written permission. If it is necessary for a child to be transported home after an event, an effort should be made to contact the family and inform them of the situation before transporting the child. If it is necessary for an adult to drive alone with a child, the adult should notify another adult before and after the period during which he/she is alone with the child. It is permissible for one adult driver to transport several children and youth in a single vehicle or in a convoy of vehicles traveling to or from an event.

When one-on-one interactions between children and youth and employees, volunteers, or independent contractors are necessary (e.g., in emergency situations or occasions of pastoral care), care must be taken to conduct the meeting in an environment that **provides visibility** by other adults or in which other adults are in and out of an area where an employee or volunteer is working with a child or youth. Another adult must have knowledge of the whereabouts of the employee, volunteer, or independent contractor and with whom they are meeting.

### **Ratios**

The adult to Child ratio for all **Child-related events/activities is 2:10** for both in person and online gatherings. The adult to Youth ratio for all **Youth-related events/activities is 2:16** for both in person and online gatherings. Adults of all genders will be invited to participate in children and youth ministry.

### **Age Requirements**

Adult leaders must be **at least 18 years old and must be at least four years older** than the oldest person with whom they are working. Youth volunteers under the age of 18 years old must be at least 14 years old, unless otherwise approved by the Presbytery Staff or Adult Co-Moderators of the A-Team, and must be under the supervision of an adult. Children under 14 years old may accompany parents who serve as volunteers.

### **Open Door Policy**

Doors to rooms in which children and youth are present are to remain open. If noise increases to a level that disturbs other classes, the door may be shut as long as there is a clear glass window in at least part of the door. Vision through the glass must be unimpaired.

### **Restroom Supervision**

The exact nature of restroom supervision will depend on the age of the children. The Policy seeks to provide protection and privacy for the children and protection for the adult leaders. General guidelines are as follows:

- Adult leaders will stand in sight of the restroom and in sight of another adult while children are using the restroom.
- If adult leaders are assisting younger children, doors without windows to the restroom facility must remain open.
- Adult leaders will always use proper supervision when children are using public bathrooms to ensure their safety.

### **Privacy**

Adult workers/caregivers should respect the privacy of the Minors and Vulnerable Adults to whom they provide care. Responsible use of digital devices and cell phones is required in all situations (ex. Taking age-appropriate photographs and movies, not taking photographs of Minors who are not fully clothed).

### **Healthy Discipline**

The purpose of discipline is to teach the child appropriate behavior in a loving and nurturing way. It is important to work with each child to determine what they need to fully participate but not to the detriment of other children in the group. Appropriate discipline will vary with the age of the child, but **praise and other forms of positive reinforcement for good work/behavior are appropriate**. Distracting the child from the objectionable behavior, separating the child from the group into a different part of the room, and having a choice of activities available are also appropriate. If objectionable behavior persists, parents and other childcare workers or volunteers should be enlisted to help. Any physical punishment is unacceptable.

### **Transportation**

All adult drivers at Child/Youth events must have a valid driver's license and insurance on file with the Presbytery of Arkansas.. All vehicles used must have seat belts for the driver and each passenger. No Minor under eighty-five pounds may sit in the front seat of any vehicle. All drivers transporting Minors and Vulnerable Adults must be **over the age of twenty-four** and must be informed that if their vehicle is used, their insurance would be primary if an accident occurs. If a charter bus is rented, or any outside carrier is contracted, the company hired must ensure criminal background checks on their drivers. Each vehicle must

follow the ratio rules noted in point 2 in this section. Lastly, no minor may be a driver at any event or activity (this includes golf carts at events).

## **Social Media**

Before an event, registration materials will include permission for the image of a youth or child to be shared on the internet. Parents or guardians of children and youth under 18 years old must indicate, via **written permission in registration materials**, before pictures of children and youth are posted on the Presbytery website, Facebook page or other sponsored social media.

- Pictures of children and youth engaged in Presbytery-sponsored activities which are posted on the church website or Facebook page or other sponsored social media will not include identifying information about the children and youth beyond first name and age (e.g. home church, last names, parents names, etc.)

Adults who work with children or youth and who have a Facebook or other social networking site page are urged to set stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile.

- Adults who have a Facebook or other social networking site page and who work with children and youth will not submit “friend” requests to children and youth.
- If a child or youth requests an adult to be a “friend,” the adult shall discuss this with the parents/guardians, giving families the opportunity to disapprove or to participate in a group chat or email thread. In general, it is advised that adults who work with children and youth not be connected through social media.

Adults will not engage in video chats, on-line text chats, blogs, or video blogs with children or youth with whom the adult works at the Presbytery level, except as part of official church activities. Adults may correspond with youth via text if they observe the two-adult rule and engage in group chats with other adults who have been screened and background checked by the Presbytery.

## **Misuse of Technology**

No employee, contractor, or volunteer at Presbytery of Arkansas may misuse technology in the following ways:

- Using technology to send suggestive messages and/or images to a Minor.
- Having contact with a Minor or Vulnerable Adult one-on-one unless pre-approved by parents/guardians. If a youth wishes to engage with an adult for private or pastoral care conversations, care must be taken to conduct the meeting in an environment that **provides visibility** by other adults or arrangements may be made to meet the youth in a public setting.
- To view pornography or sites (ex. dating websites) which include pornography or naked bodies on the premises of Presbytery of Arkansas or at a Presbytery event, activity or meeting, no matter where it is held.

## **Virtual Meetings**

Child/Youth workers, ministers, employees, contractors or volunteers (“Adults”) must follow these virtual meeting policies or protocols when planning and conducting a virtual meeting on virtual meeting platforms (ex. Zoom, Skype) with one or more Minors:

- Leaders shall seek permission of the parent/guardian before inviting the Minor to participate in a virtual meeting. The option to observe the virtual meeting (without visual or verbal participation) should be made available upon request to parent or guardian.
- Adults and meeting organizers should advise a parent or guardian of the following so that the parent or guardian is aware of it when giving permission for the Minor to participate in the meeting: (1) that a meeting will be recorded; and (2) that images, video or audio may be used from the recording in social media.
- There must be at least two (2) Adults in any virtual meetings or breakout room or other virtual meeting space.
- All Adults, Minors, and other participants in virtual meetings shall dress appropriately for the meeting. No meeting participants shall wear inappropriate (that is, sexually suggestive, exploitive or voyeuristic - “Inappropriate”) clothing or clothing that displays inappropriate or offensive (that is, sexually demeaning or suggestive, pornographic, voyeuristic, discriminatory, harassing, bullying, intimidating, threatening, profane or abusive – “Offensive”) messages.
- No Adults, Minors, and other participants in virtual meetings are permitted to make displays of Inappropriate or Offensive messages by putting a sign or note in front of the camera in some form or fashion.
- Adults, Minors, and other participants in virtual meetings should not carry the phone or device they are using to participate into private areas such as bathrooms, with any camera or microphone on and the meeting is in progress.
- No Adults or Minors are permitted to use the chat function, the name section, or any other feature of a virtual platform for Inappropriate or Offensive purposes during a virtual meeting, including, but not limited to:
  - Displaying Inappropriate photographs or images, such as pornography or photographs of anyone who is naked or Inappropriately attired.
  - Displaying Offensive or Inappropriate messages.
  - Providing links to Offensive and Inappropriate websites or platforms.
  - Bullying, discriminating against or harassing anyone based upon their race/ethnicity, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, creed, protected disability status, citizenship status, genetic information, age, or religious affiliation.
- No Adult is permitted to use the private chat function of a virtual meeting platform to communicate privately with one or more Minors except when the privacy or dignity of the Minor requires it. If a private chat is necessary, it must be recorded and must copy another Adult. Otherwise, all chat communications must be done openly so that all participants, including the other Adults, parents or guardians in the virtual meeting can see the chat communications. This should be announced at the start of every virtual meeting.
- Adults and meeting organizers shall provide Minors with information (name, contact information, including telephone/text) on how to report concerns, issues or to make reports of inappropriate conduct or sexual misconduct or abuse by an Adult or any participant that occurs before, during or after a virtual meeting.

## **Injuries to Children and Youth During Church Activities**

For **minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises** while a child is under the care of a volunteer, employee, or independent contractor during a Presbytery activity, the child will receive **first aid** (band-aids, etc.) as appropriate, and the volunteer or employee will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up.

For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple first aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be contacted. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called under implied consent.

A volunteer or employee will complete an **Accident/ Incident Report Form** (see **Appendix B**) if, while in the care of the volunteer or employee during a trip, event, activity, a child or youth becomes ill (i.e. vomiting) or receives an injury that requires medical treatment (i.e. blood beyond the treatment of a band-aid); receives a bump or blow to the head regardless of treatment; is transported by ambulance from the Presbytery event/ activity; or experiences **any other unusual or unexpected incident** that jeopardizes the safety of the child. The Presbytery admin will maintain the Incident Reports in a secure, locked file cabinet.

## **Review of Sex Offender Registry**

The Presbytery admin will be responsible for periodically checking official Sex Offender Registries to determine if any employees or volunteers are listed on such Registries. If an employee or volunteer is a registered sex offender, the General Presbyter and Stated Clerk will review the matter and meet with the individual to: 1) let the individual know that Presbytery of Arkansas is aware of their status on the Sex Offender Registry; 2) explain Presbytery's Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy 3) Remove the individual from the Volunteer list

## **Prohibited Conduct**

Employees, volunteers, and independent contractors will not engage in the following activities:

- Verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse of children and youth
- Discipline of children or youth by use or threat of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care
- Use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or being impaired by legally prescribed drugs during church-sponsored programs
- Smoking or use of tobacco during church-sponsored programs
- Profanity, inappropriate language or jokes, or any kind of harassment while serving in this role
- Possession of obscene or pornographic materials while serving in this role
- Carrying any type of firearms or knives with blades over 3 inches
- Sharing inappropriate details of their personal lives or asking children or youth to share inappropriate details through any form of communication: written, verbal, or electronic

- Dating or having a romantic relationship with youth participants
- Giving gifts to individual children or youth without the knowledge and permission of parents/guardians

### **Other Requirements**

Children and youth experience different levels of comfort with touching and hugging. Youth workers, employees, volunteers, and independent contractors will respect the rights of children and youth not to be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable. To avoid uncomfortable situations, youth workers, employees, volunteers, and independent contractors should seek to ask the child or youth before hugging or otherwise touching. Additionally, adults will discourage children and youth from touching others in an inappropriate manner.

Child/youth workers will not give money or gifts to Minors, except within the context of a group gift given to all participants in the celebration of special events or recognitions.

For each child or youth participating in Presbytery-sponsored activities, a parent/guardian must complete and sign registration information. This form grants permission to participate in Presbytery activities, authorizes emergency medical treatment, requests a photo release, and provides contact and medical information.

### **Non-Church Sponsored Groups**

Outside groups will provide prompt written notice to the Stated Clerk and Presbytery Executive of any claim of abuse that arises from activities during Presbytery-sponsored events or activities and will comply with all applicable laws relating to such claims of abuse.

## **REPORTING AND RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Mandated Reporting**

Under Arkansas Code § 12-18-402, all clergy and all persons who work with children and youth, either as volunteers or employees, are mandated reporters of child sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, physical or mental abuse, or neglect. As per this policy, all clergy and all persons who work with vulnerable adults must also report adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Presbytery of Arkansas' procedures for reporting and responding to reports of suspected abuse or neglect are set forth below and are designed to comply with Arkansas law. All clergy and persons who work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults at the Presbytery of Arkansas, either as volunteers, employees, or independent contractors, must comply with these procedures.

### **Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Response Team**

On an annual basis, the Coordinating Team will appoint a Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Response Team (the "**Response Team**"), which will consist of the Stated Clerk, the Presbytery staff person for youth and young adults, two coordinating team members, and at least two people in the Presbytery with experience



or expertise in working with children and youth, in understanding developmentally appropriate behavior of children and youth or vulnerable adults, and/or in the proper handling of claims or suspicions of child abuse and neglect. The Response Team will have the responsibilities set forth below and will serve as a resource to the Presbytery on policy and procedural matters relating to this policy.

1. Immediately provide for the safety of the alleged victim(s) involved.
2. If the report alleges abuse or harassment of a Minor, the response team will:
  - a. immediately ensure the allegation is reported to the civil authorities under state law;
  - b. immediately notify the parents or guardian of the Minor;
  - c. notify the insurance company of the allegation and that no investigation has yet occurred.
3. Make immediate decisions concerning the temporary removal of the individual accused from any contact with Minors pending an investigation and/or removal of the accused from the event until a determination of the allegations has occurred.
4. Provide for pastoral counseling for the principal parties involved (accuser(s), possible victim(s), accused, family members). Provide victims and their families resources that may aid in the particular spiritual, psychological, or emotional needs and trauma that arise from the devastation of abuse.
5. Work to ensure that any person bringing a report of abuse or assisting in investigating will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment, church membership or affiliation.
6. If the report is against a Staff member, the Response Team shall send a written statement of allegation to the supervisor, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, and personnel committee chair of the Staff person's church or supervising organization (e.g. a ministry outside the bounds of a congregation such as a campus ministry or camp and conference center). If the report is against a Pastor in the Presbytery, the Stated Clerk shall be notified. This written statement of allegation shall trigger the formation of an investigating committee under Church Discipline in the *Book of Order*.

### **Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Suspected Abuse or Neglect**

All matters of reporting and responding to reports of sexual abuse or exploitation, physical or mental abuse, or neglect will be handled with respect and confidentiality in accordance with the procedures set forth below, applicable law, and the polity of the PCUSA.

If you are one of the following people and have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused, you must make a report, immediately but no later than 24 hours, to the local Department of Human Services office

or law enforcement and are subject to criminal penalty for failing to do so.

Call: 844-SAVEACHILD or 800-482-5964 at any time, 24/7

Online Report: <https://mandatedreporter.arkansas.gov/>

If you are one of the following people and have reasonable cause to believe that a vulnerable adult has been abused, you must make a report.

Call: 1-800-482-8049 for any reports, including urgent situations that must be investigated within 24 hours.

Online Report: (for reports that do not need to be investigated within 24 hours)

[https://arkansas.leapsportal.net/LEAPSINTAKE/VerifyIntakeEmergency\\_501.aspx](https://arkansas.leapsportal.net/LEAPSINTAKE/VerifyIntakeEmergency_501.aspx)

### 1. Pastor Has Reasonable Cause of Abuse or Neglect

If a Pastor has Reasonable Cause to believe that a child/youth/vulnerable adult is the victim of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, physical or mental abuse, or neglect, regardless of the source of the information, the confidential nature of the information, or any clergy-parishioner privilege that may otherwise exist, the Pastor must, within 24 hours of receipt of such report, notify Department of Human Services or the appropriate police authority or district attorney. The Pastor must also contact the Response Team.

### 2. Employee, Volunteer, or Independent Contractor Has Reasonable Cause of Abuse or Neglect

If an employee, volunteer, or independent contractor, in the course of attending to children or youth, has Reasonable Cause to believe that a child/youth/vulnerable adult is the victim of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, physical or mental abuse, or neglect, such employee,

volunteer, or independent contractor must, within 24 hours of such belief, notify Department of Human Services or the appropriate police authority or district attorney. The employee, volunteer, or independent contractor must also contact the 1) Stated Clerk, Presbytery Staff person for youth and young adult ministry, the General Presbyter or 2) the Response Team.

### 3. Presbytery Minister of Word and Sacrament (MWS), Employee, Volunteer, or Independent Contractor is Subject of Allegation of Abuse or Neglect

If any individual has Reasonable Cause to believe that a Pastor/MWS, employee, volunteer, or independent contractor has committed sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, physical or mental abuse, or neglect involving a child/youth/vulnerable adult, the individual must within 24 hours of such belief, notify Department of Human Services or the appropriate police authority or district attorney. The individual must contact the Stated Clerk within 24 hours of such belief.

If any individual suspects but does not have Reasonable Cause to believe that a Pastor/MWS has committed sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, physical or mental abuse, or neglect involving a child/youth/vulnerable adult, the individual must notify the Stated Clerk within 24 hours of such suspicion. The Stated Clerk will be responsible for handling the matter and making any reports required by law to Department of Human Services or the appropriate police authority or district attorney.

If any member of the Response Team is the subject of an allegation of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, physical or mental abuse, or neglect involving a child, the allegation will be handled in accordance with this Covenant, except that that member will not participate on the Response Team during any investigation of the allegation.

**Other Procedures Relating to Reports of Suspected Abuse or Neglect (a) Documentation of Oral Report.**

Following an initial oral report by an employee, volunteer, or independent contractor, such employee, volunteer, or independent contractor will document in writing (hard copy only) the date, time, and circumstances of the report on the “**Incident Report Form**” (see **Appendix B**). The Stated Clerk and the Presbytery Admin will maintain the Incident Report in a secure, locked file cabinet.

(b) No Interference with Investigation. To avoid compromising, interfering with, or delaying any future investigation, the employee, volunteer, or independent contractor who makes a report will not engage in questioning the parties to the incident or conducting an independent investigation. The employee or volunteer will, however, take reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of the child/youth/vulnerable adult.

(c) Full Cooperation with Outside Authorities. Presbytery staff will fully cooperate with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or governmental authorities.

(d) Removal of Accused from Activities. If an accused person is an employee, volunteer, or independent contractor, the person will be required to refrain from participating in all activities with children, youth, and vulnerable adults pending the outcome of any investigation by the Department of Human Services or the appropriate police authority or district attorney.

(e) Spokesperson. The Presbytery Executive, Stated Clerk, or legal counsel will either serve as or designate the sole spokesperson to communicate with outside authorities or other persons (including congregations and the media) regarding any reported incident. If the MWS/Pastor is the subject of an allegation, all inquiries or requests for information will be directed to and handled by the Stated Clerk.

**Reports to Insurance Company**

In addition to the requirements above, Presbytery staff will comply with any requirements to disclose reported incidents of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, physical or mental abuse, or neglect involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults who participate in Presbytery programs, or involving any Presbytery employee, member, volunteer, or independent contractor, to Presbytery’s insurer.

**Presbytery of Arkansas**  
**Children and Youth Ministry**  
**Information and Disclosure Form**  
(Appendix A)

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Last Name	First	Middle
<hr/>		
Street Address	City/State	Zip Code
<hr/>		
Cell Phone	Email	

I am a member of (Presbytery/congregation): \_\_\_\_\_ since  
\_\_\_\_\_

I have been a friend of (Presbytery/congregation) since  
\_\_\_\_\_

**I have never been convicted of, nor pled guilty or no contest to, a crime. (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged or legally eradicated, misdemeanor convictions for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or offenses about which inquiry is not permissible in this state)**

**True**       **Not True**

*If not true, please briefly describe the nature of the crime(s) at the end of this form, the date and place of conviction and the legal disposition of the case. The church will not deny a position to any applicant solely because the person has been convicted of a crime. The church, however, may consider the nature, date and circumstances of the offense, as well as whether the offense is relevant to the duties of the position applied for.*

**No civil lawsuit alleging actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct has ever resulted in a judgment being entered against me, been settled out of court, or been dismissed because the statute of limitations has expired.**

**True**    **Not True**

*If not true, give a short explanation of the lawsuit at the end of this form. (Please indicate the date, nature, and*

*place of the incident leading to the lawsuit; where the lawsuit was filed; and the precise disposition of the lawsuit.)*

**I have never terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position or had my employment, professional credentials, or authorization**

**to hold a volunteer position terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct.**

**True**             **Not True**

*If not true, give a short explanation at the end of this form. (Please indicate the date of termination; name, address, and telephone number of employer or volunteer supervisor; and nature of the incident(s) leading to your termination.)*

**With respect to my driving record, I have not had my license suspended or revoked within the last five years due to reckless driving or driving while intoxicated and/or under the influence of a controlled substance.**

**True**             **Not True**

**Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying?**

**Yes**                       **No**

*If yes, please provide a brief explanation on the back of this form.*

The covenants between persons seeking authorized volunteer positions with the Presbytery require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the church. To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between volunteers and the church they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize the Presbytery of Arkansas and/or its agents to make inquiries regarding my character and qualifications, including all statements I have set forth above. I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background, character, and qualifications. To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the bylaws and policies of Presbytery of Arkansas. I also hereby authorize Presbytery of Arkansas and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background, references, character, past

employment, education, credit history, criminal or police records, including those maintained by both public

and private organizations and all public records for the purpose of confirming the information contained on my application and/or obtaining other information which may be material to my qualifications for employment/service now and, if applicable, during the tenure of my employment/service with Presbytery of Arkansas.

These above-mentioned background information checks may include, but are not limited to, employment and education verifications, social security verification, driving record information, personal references, personal interviews and personal credit history. I further understand that an acceptable credit report and/or background check will allow me to continue the pre-employment/service process and that an unacceptable credit and/or background check may result in the discontinuation of my pre-employment/service process. I understand if I am hired/serving prior to the completion of the background check that an unacceptable background check will result in my termination. I understand that I am entitled to a complete and accurate disclosure of the nature and scope of any criminal background search prepared on me upon written request within a reasonable time after the date of such search.

I further authorize any person, business entity or governmental agency who may have information relevant to the above to disclose the same to Presbytery of Arkansas including but not limited to any courthouse, any public agency and all law enforcement agencies and any and all credit bureaus regardless of whether such person, business entity or governmental agency compiled the information itself or received it from other sources. I release Presbytery of Arkansas and/or its agents and any persons, business entities and governmental agencies, whether public or private, from any and all liability, claims and/or demands, of whatever kind, by me, my heirs and others making such claim or demand on my behalf, for procuring, selling, providing, brokering and/or assisting with compilation or preparation of the background information check hereby authorized.

I authorize Presbytery of Arkansas and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise both the position I am seeking to fill and program I am seeking to participate in. I understand that Presbytery of Arkansas will share with me information it has gathered about me, if I request it to do so.

I acknowledge my receipt and understanding of the Presbytery of Arkansas Safe Church Covenant.

---

**(PRINT NAME & SIGN)** **DATE**

**For Office Use Only:**

Sex Offender Registry ([www.nsopr.gov](http://www.nsopr.gov)) review performed on: \_\_\_\_\_

Background Check performed on: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal interview conducted by staff on: \_\_\_\_\_

Church/Faith Organization association for 6 mos. confirmed on: \_\_\_\_\_

Safe church awareness training and policy orientation performed on: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Disclosures, as applicable:



**Presbytery of Arkansas**  
**Children and Youth Ministry**  
**Incident Report Form**

(Appendix B)

To be completed when a child or youth becomes **ill** (i.e. vomiting) or receives **an injury that requires medical treatment** (i.e. blood beyond the treatment of a band-aid); receives a bump or blow **to the head** regardless of treatment; is transported by **ambulance** from the church activity; or experiences any other **unusual or unexpected medical or health related incident** that jeopardizes the safety of the child. This form will be retained on file by the Youth and Young Adult Developer and Presbytery Admin for 3 years from the date of injury.

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Age or Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the incident in as much detail as possible. What was the child/youth doing, where were they, how did it happen?

What First Aid treatment was given?

Name of person who administered first aid: \_\_\_\_\_

If the child required additional medical treatment, identify the individual or medical facility that

provided that treatment:

Parent(s) name: \_\_\_\_\_

Method of parent notification (who contacted parent and when):

I have reviewed the above injury report and certify it is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Any additional witnesses: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C:

### Information for Program Leaders in Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Note: “Adult Leader” used in the following may include, but is not limited to, Event and Trip Leaders such as volunteers, Clergy, Ministry Staff, Presbytery employees, etc. The term “adult leader” is to distinguish between youth and young adult program participants and the adults who are also participating, but in a leadership capacity. This includes leaders of groups within the bounds of the Presbytery, whether leading a congregational group or a group from various ministry contexts.

- **Welfare of Youth/Young Adults:** The first responsibility of each and every adult leader is the welfare of youth and young adult program participants. Each adult leader is expected to take every care to protect the physical and emotional safety of each youth/young adult participant. Physical punishment, harassment of any type, or any sexual contact between adult leaders and youth/young adult participants is inappropriate and will be grounds to immediately dismiss the adult leader from the program/event/trip.
- Caution should be taken any time an adult leader is alone with a youth/young adult participant (outside of the view of other adult leaders.) This is for the protection of all participants.
- **Harassment:** We are particularly concerned about harassment of our adult leaders and of our youth/young adults whether it be sexual, racial, or of some other type. Harassment in any form (verbal, physical, sexual, or emotional) is not allowed by the Presbytery of Arkansas and will result in corrective action. If you are aware of someone who has been the victim of harassment or have experienced it yourself, report it immediately to the Youth and Young Adult Developer.

### Media Contact

Contact with any form of media (print, radio, television or internet) in relation to an incident/accident related to the Presbytery of Arkansas should be referred to the Stated Clerk, legal counsel, and/or the General Presbyter.

### Emergency Communications

**PROCEDURE FOR LOSS, DROWNING, DEATH, OR SERIOUS INJURY:** In the event of an emergency, the adult leaders present is to hold the safety of youth/young adults and other persons as the top priority.

- If a youth/young adult participant suffers any injury that calls for medical attention beyond what can be provided at the host location/site, the youth/young adult’s parents must be notified. If the injury is serious, the parents must be notified immediately, and told where to find the youth/young adult and where to meet a leader. The Trip Leader or other adult leader should make the notification, and should

remain with the youth/young adult and parents. If the situation occurs off-site, communication may be made initially to the Youth and Young Adult Developer via cell phone.

- The General Presbyter or Youth and Young Adult Developer (or an appointed representative) will notify the program partners (i.e. hosts, site directors, conference leaders, etc.), appropriate agencies and personnel and any other appropriate agencies and officers.

If a youth/young adult is lost and cannot be found, if an accident strikes a number of persons, or if a death occurs during the program/trip/event, use the following procedure to minister to the victim's family, the other youth/young adult participants, and the adult leaders:

- The Youth and Young Adult Developer notifies:
  - The Presbytery Executive
  - The Stated Clerk
  - The youth/young adult's family pastor
  - The insurance company
- The Presbytery Executive will notify Presbytery's Legal Counsel
- The Youth and Young Adult Developer, Presbytery Executive, Stated Clerk, and the Family Pastor will meet with the family and offer assistance, and minister to the needs of the family
- The Youth and Young Adult Developer and Stated Clerk draft a letter to be sent to the parents of each participant and local pastors setting forth the facts, and steps being taken to minister to other participants.
- As soon as feasible, the appropriate reports will be completed by every person associated with or who observed the incident and sent to the Presbytery Executive.
- The Stated Clerk and Presbytery Executive will draft a media statement.
- Assess the incident and suggest changes to prevent reoccurrence.

# Accident/Incident Report

Name of Person Involved \_\_\_\_\_ Y/YA  Staff   Visitor

Name of Parent/Guardian (if minor) \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Incident  Behavioral  Accident  Illness  Other (describe \_\_\_\_\_)

Date of Incident/Accident \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ a.m.  p.m.

Place of Incident/Accident \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the sequence of activity in detail including what the (injured) person was doing at the time: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of witnesses: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe Actions Taken by Adult Leaders: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Could this have been avoided? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, then how? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who was notified (parent/guardian), when, how: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Leader Completing Report Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature & Date

## Non-Health Related Incidents

If incidents occur involving a youth/young adult during the program/trip/event that extends beyond a health-related incident, use the following procedure:

- The person making the report notifies:
  - The Youth and Young Adult Developer
  - Presbytery Executive
  - If the incident involves clergy/CRE, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery will be notified.
  - If the incident involves church ministry staff: COM chairperson and the clergy/staff person's supervisor/Head of Staff
    - The Pastor/Head of Staff is to notify the congregation's Personnel Committee or Clerk of Session and other appropriate committee chairs within 48 hours of receiving the incident report(s)
- The incident reports (which include the names of minors) will remain on file at the Presbytery office and held confidentially with Presbytery Staff.
- Multiple incident reports may be combined for distribution to appropriate parties, using pseudonyms or omitting the minor's name(s) from said reports.
- Assess the incidents, discuss accountability plans for persons involved in the incidents, corrective action, and suggest changes to prevent reoccurrence.

## Abuse Awareness

Abuse is one of the most horrific experiences a child or youth can ever have. Physical, sexual, and emotional abuse can devastate a child or youth. If you have reason to believe that a child has been abused then ***you are required by law to report it.*** As youth workers we must take our responsibility to fight the abuse of children very seriously.

### Reporting Abuse:

Reporting is done when a person either knows or has a reasonable suspicion that a child has been or is in danger of abuse or neglect. Reasonable suspicion means that most people, given the same facts and information, would suspect child abuse. Hard proof is not needed to make a report.

Mandated reporters include the following people: *any physician, surgeon, coroner, dentist, osteopath, resident intern, licensed nurse, medical personnel who may be engaged in admission, examination, care, or treatment of persons, teacher, school official, school counselor, social worker, Family Service Worker, Division of Youth Services employees, employees working under contract for the Division of Youth Services, domestic violence shelter employees, domestic violence volunteers, domestic abuse advocate, day care center worker, or any other child care worker, mental health professional, peace officer, or law enforcement official.*

While serving as an adult leader in the Presbytery, you are responsible for reporting suspected abuse. If you are at all in doubt about whether a report should be made about a particular situation, discuss it with the Youth and Young Adult Developer, Stated Clerk and Presbytery Executive. It will be referred for specific follow-up and reporting.



## What To Do If You Suspect or Know a Child or Youth Has Been Abused:

- REMAIN CALM - Understand that you will be thinking faster than you can speak out of concern for the youth. Typically the youth will need help sorting their own thoughts too. Stay calm and take your time. Remember the youth is now safe with you and you have plenty of time to listen and act.
- LISTEN - The youth obviously has entrusted you with something very personal and important. Try your best to actively listen to them. If you find yourself talking a lot, take a breath and relax. Your job is to gather information and understand the youth's needs, not talk constantly.
- NEVER AGREE TO KEEP SILENT - A youth may want to tell you a "secret," but only if you promise not to tell anyone. *Never* agree to this. If you discover that a youth is being abused, *you must report it*. If you make a promise to them and then break it, they might feel betrayed.
  - If it comes up, you can say something like, "I promise not to tell any of the other youth, but I can't promise not to tell anyone. If I have to share this with someone else, I will tell you who I'm talking to and you can be there when I tell them, if you would like..."
- AFFIRM THEM - You may be the first person they tell. If so, they may be blaming themselves for others' actions. Make sure you let them know it's not their fault and it's a good thing that they are telling someone.
- DO NOT GIVE ADVICE- The youth may ask your opinion. This is a difficult situation. While you may feel overly emotional, you need to remain objective. Try to tell them that they made a good choice by telling you. Also try to help them organize their thoughts but do not give them open advice. Someone professionally equipped to deal with the situation should give advice.
- REPORT IT TO YOUR SUPERVISOR - Tell someone immediately. Adult Leaders are obligated to report the abuse and the sooner the authorities know about it, the better. Also remember to tell your other adult leaders what is going on, especially if it is going to take you away from the group for an extended period of time.
- RECOGNIZE YOUR OWN NEEDS - Listening to our youths' experiences can be taxing. Make sure you take time to debrief the situation with the Presbytery Executive or the Youth and Young Adult Developer and recognize your own needs when providing care to others.

## Avoiding Abuse Accusations

Child abuse is a serious criminal offense. As an adult leader caring for youth or children, you may be placed in sensitive situations, making you vulnerable to charges of child molestation or abuse. If you take these simple precautions, however, you need not be afraid of groundless accusations.

A fair and discreet investigation of all alleged incidents will occur. The Stated Clerk, Presbytery Executive or Youth and Young Adult Developer will inquire with specific questions to determine situations and remedial actions. Any situation revealing a reasonable suspicion of abuse will be investigated. A dated log of the incident is kept on file. A report is made to the appropriate agency, which will include the what, who, when, and where of the alleged abuse.

- Do not be alone with a youth. Visit and talk where others can see you. If you are in a cabin/room/yurt, keep the door open. Don't linger in the bathrooms unaccompanied.
  - Remember the Rule of Three: always be in groups of at least three, such as one adult leader and at least two youth when a youth needs to go back to the cabin/room/yurt for something.

- Be affectionate and caring while reasonably limiting physical interaction. Avoid back rubbing, tickling, and physical contests like pillow fights and wrestling. Use “side hugs” when hugging youth.
  - Adult Leaders should set limits with youth who “cling” or spend significant time with them. Take care so the youth does not feel rejected, but avoid excessive time with a single youth.
  - Remember that youth have the right to reject any displays of affection if they feel uncomfortable about them. Not every child/youth comes from a background where affection is openly displayed.
- Never share a bed, sleeping bag, or shower with a youth.
- Avoid behaviors that could be misunderstood or misconstrued when described by a child or youth. “We went to bed together” may refer to an innocent effort to comfort a youth, but can be interpreted with a sexual meaning.
- Respect the privacy of the youth. Do not become intrusive or curious more than is absolutely necessary to monitor the health and safety of the child. Do not draw attention to a youth who is changing or showering.
- Details of your romantic life should never be shared with youths. General discussion of relationships is fine if you’re comfortable sharing that and the youth are age-appropriate. Protect your own privacy.
  - Be aware that adolescents tend to develop romantic fantasies and crushes. These may be directed toward adult leaders. Adult leaders must be very careful not to do or say anything that will encourage youth to act on these fantasies.
- Have several adult leaders as coverage when you need help. Having two adults present prevents a “my word against yours” situation.
- Absolutely no verbal put-downs, harassment, intimidation, or neglect is permissible.
- Absolutely no physical punishment is permissible. This includes spanking, hitting, or grabbing roughly, as well as things like hazing activities. (Using harassment or humiliation as an “initiation” into a group of youth by youth or adult leaders.)
- No romantic encounters or relationships are ever permitted between a youth and adult leader, even if the youth is close in age to the adult leader.
- Adult leaders and youth are not allowed to enter the cabin or room that is not assigned to them except in the case of an absolute emergency.

## **Section H**

# **Coordinating Team Report**

Moderator RE Mike Szabo

Actions taken on behalf of the Presbytery:

Moved the October Presbytery meeting from Second Little Rock to Trinity, Little Rock due to a conflict with a Senior PGA tournament.

Approved the sale of Central Presbyterian Church, Ft. Smith in the amount of \$2,150,000, to Western Arkansas Counseling and Guidance Center.

Approved the creation of a 1001 Working Group. This is a two (2) year term commencing on Sept 1, 2024. The membership will be composed of 5 voting members selected from the MWSs and REs of the presbytery through the Committee on Nominations and elected by the Coordinating Team.

Duties:

- \* Provide oversight of 1001 NWC and the organizers/organizing pastors of each one.
- \* Establish procedures for regular updates on activities of all 1001 NWC.
- \* Regular Financial review of all 1001 NWC.
- \* Update the presbytery at each stated meeting on the status and progress of all 1001 NWC.
- \* Approve all 1001 NWC grants to GA, Synod, Presbytery, or other PC(USA) entities.
- \* The 1001 Working Group will be a commission for the purpose of the above duties. All other actions (including the approval of any new 1001 NWC) will be actions of a committee requiring presbytery approval.

4. Approved declaring the Future of the Church Committee dormant and appoints five (5) members for two (2) year term commencing September 1, 2024, to serve as Future of the Church Grant Making Working Group. The working group of five (5) will be comprised of MWSs and REs of the presbytery through the Committee on Nominations and elected by the Coordinating Team.

Duties:

Oversee the FOTC grant program.

Report to the presbytery on awarded grants and grant results.

Approve that until a new presbytery structure is adopted, 1001 NWC matching grants requiring non-budgeted funds from the presbytery be submitted for approval or disapproval to the Coordinating Team.

Met with Ministry Architects about a proposed organizational chart.

Approved the hiring of a transitional interim general presbyter.

Approved a proposed fee schedule for outgoing general presbyter, Stewart Smith, should he be needed to fill-in until the transitional interim general presbyter starts.

Approved the Covenant between MWS Jim Poinsett and the Presbytery of Arkansas for his work as transitional interim general presbyter.

The terms are as follows:

Salary:	\$56,000
Housing	\$32,000
SECA	½ of actual
Pension/Medical	\$19,500
Con Ed. (reimb. Up to)	\$1,500.00
Professional Exp. (reimb. up to)	\$15,000
Total	\$124,000+1/2 of SECA

Continuing Education: 2 weeks

Vacation: 4 weeks

Family Leave: 12 weeks per BOO

Approved the Spring Presbytery Meeting to be held at Lyon College Feb 21-22, 2025. There will be a pre-presbytery workshop hosted by Maggie Alsup from 9am-4pm on Feb 21. The workshop is called Soulshop and is a faith based suicide prevention event. More information will be coming.

## **Section J**

### **Report from the Committee on Administration**

MWS Carl McCormack, HR Moderator

The Committee on Administration has met regularly to go over the financial reports of the presbytery and review them with the presbytery general presbyter, administrator, and treasurer. As has been reported several times in the past, our presbytery is doing well keeping expenses below budgeted amounts, while the Texas Presbyterian Foundation Spend Rate from our investment accounts has increased. But during the summer months we typically experience a “slump” in Mission Acceptance (the money donated by member churches). This reduction of giving has put us at a deficit for the month of August by about \$6,400.00. We are hopeful that our churches will be diligent in supporting the work of presbytery soon.

On August 26, 2024 the Committee on Administration met for a called meeting on Zoom. The purpose of the special meeting was to act upon a request from the session of a church in the presbytery for a Small Church Direct Loan. The request was for zero (0%) interest and a term of ten years. The committee received the loan application with all the necessary paperwork attached. The Motion was made, seconded and passed to approve the request.

The work of the Committee on Administration may seem tedious and even boring to some. But the committee’s work has been very rewarding, and over the past nine years, made easier and more enjoyable with the participation of our “now” former General Presbyter, Stewart Smith. The committee has enjoyed a wonderful relationship with Stewart. We wish him well, and pray God’s blessing as he embarks upon the next phase of his service to Christ’s Church.

There are no motions to be brought before the Presbytery at this time.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Carl McCormack, HR  
Committee on Administration, Moderator

## Section J, Exhibit 1

### THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS

Balance Sheet  
August 31, 2024

#### ASSETS

##### Current Assets

Cash - undesignated	14,021.53
Restricted Cash - designated	869,746.18
TPF Investments	5,238,989.23
N/R Ministers	6,833.44
N/R Churches	50,000.00
Financial Request Invest. Fund	1,152,205.36
TPF Mark to Market 52190	1,590,300.37

**Total Current Assets** **8,922,096.11**

##### Property and Equipment

Furniture & Fixtures	68,609.89
Land	128,571.00
Buildings	911,516.12

1,108,697.01

Accumulated Depreciation (331,498.31)

**Net Property and Equipment** **777,198.70**

**TOTAL ASSETS** **\$ 9,699,294.81**

#### LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

##### Current Liabilities

Payroll & Other Withholdings 0.00

**Total Current Liabilities** **0.00**

##### Fund Balance

Equity Beginning Balance	\$ 4,343,422.31
Fund Balance	3,394,261.52
Unrealized Gains/Losses	1,188,827.40
Net Income	772,783.58

**Total Fund Balance** **9,699,294.81**

**TOTAL LIABILITIES & CAPITAL** **\$ 9,699,294.81**



**Section J, Exhibit 2**  
**The Presbytery of Arkansas**  
**Benevolence as of August 31, 2024**

<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>2020 Benevolence</b>	<b>2021 Benevolence</b>	<b>2022 Benevolence</b>	<b>2023 Benevolence</b>	<b>2024 Benevolence</b>
Alma	-	-	-	-	-
Amity	-	-	-	-	-
Arkadelphia, First	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.01
Arkadelphia, West End	1,106.00	1,110.00	1,110.00	1,110.00	-
Atkins	-	-	-	150.00	-
Batesville	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	5,000.00
Beebe	600.00	1,200.00	900.00	900.00	600.00
Bella Vista	24,999.96	20,000.00	20,000.44	11,250.00	1,536.80
Benton	8,600.00	8,600.00	9,000.00	6,300.00	3,000.00
Bentonville, First	32,000.00	33,500.00	32,000.00	10,000.00	-
Bentonville, Vaughn	2,000.00	-	-	-	-
Bull Shoals	-	50.00	116.74	116.74	127.40
Cane Hill	-	-	-	-	-
Clarksville, First	-	-	-	-	-
Clarksville, Harmony	-	-	-	-	-
Conway	7,700.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	5,000.00
Dardanelle	6,000.00	5,500.00	3,500.00	3,000.00	-
Elkins	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	500.00	500.00
Eureka Springs*	2,550.00	2,750.00	2,250.00	2,750.00	2,000.00
Fairfield Bay	350.00	350.00	350.00	350.00	350.00
Fayetteville, First United	41,000.00	41,000.00	41,000.00	41,000.00	27,328.00
Fayetteville, Mt. Comfort	1,660.00	1,660.00	900.00	2,000.00	1,000.00
Forrest City	9,000.00	9,000.00	8,250.00	9,625.00	5,250.00
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	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	3,100.00
Holly Grove	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00
Horseshoe Bend	3,000.00	2,290.00	2,300.00	1,600.00	900.00
HSV, Kirk	27,270.00	27,270.00	27,270.00	22,000.44	12,833.25
H. Springs, First	20,000.00	20,013.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	10,000.00
H. Springs, Westminster	10,012.04	8,012.04	8,012.04	8,212.04	4,673.69
Huntsville	2,200.00	2,400.00	2,400.00	2,200.00	1,600.00
Jacksonville	2,800.00	3,250.00	3,000.00	3,224.95	2,320.00
Jonesboro	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	2,000.00
LR, Allison	-	-	-	-	-

<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>2020 Benevolence</b>	<b>2021 Benevolence</b>	<b>2022 Benevolence</b>	<b>2023 Benevolence</b>	<b>2024 Benevolence</b>
LR, First	-	-	-	-	-
LR, Grace	7,900.00	7,900.00	7,900.00	3,900.00	2,625.00
LR, Pulaski Heights	3,636.00	3,636.00	3,618.00	3,606.00	2,000.00
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	5,333.34
LR, Westover Hills	10,500.00	7,500.00	2,500.00	3,000.00	-
Malvern	5,241.71	5,241.72	5,241.60	-	-
McGehee	2,520.00	2,520.00	2,520.00	2,520.00	1,680.00
Mena	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,500.00	2,750.00
Morrilton, First	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,100.00	1,300.00	300.00
Morrilton, Hopewell	-	-	-	-	-
Mountain Home	1,000.00	750.00	500.00	-	884.16
Mountainburg	-	-	-	-	-
Newport	3,225.00	2,700.00	2,700.00	2,700.00	1,800.00
Norman	2,000.00	-	-	-	-
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	2,000.00
Pine Bluff, Central	-	-	115.80	-	-
Pine Bluff, Faith	-	-	-	-	-
Pine Bluff, First	4,999.92	4,583.26	6,996.00	5,000.00	2,500.00
Prairie Grove	7,150.00	6,960.00	4,730.00	6,022.00	1,559.00
Rogers	6,999.96	6,999.96	7,000.01	7,611.96	4,083.31
Russellville	-	-	-	-	-
Searcy	2,000.00	-	-	2,000.00	-
Springdale	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	17,500.00
Van Buren	-	-	-	-	-
Walnut Ridge	6,400.00	-	-	7,350.48	-
Wynne	7,500.00	7,500.00	9,999.96	5,000.00	1,250.00
Yellville	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>589,342.59</b>	<b>566,495.98</b>	<b>555,380.59</b>	<b>477,949.61</b> <b>480,949.61</b> Prior Year Adj	<b>145,383.96</b>

## Section J, Exhibit 3

THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS							
Operating Income Statement							
For the Eight Months Ending August 31, 2024							
		Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	Year to Date Actual	2024 Budget	Over/(Under) Budget
6000-01	Mission Acceptance	16,914.77	22,083.33	(5,168.56)	145,383.96	455,000.00	(309,616.04)
Misc (Acct. 6015)	TPF Investment Spend Rate	24,424.69	20,148.87	4,275.82	204,196.94	241,786.41	(37,589.47)
6015-01-1-000	Simmons Bank Interest	2,468.73	-	-	17,825.91	-	17,825.91
6000-01-1-101	Previous Years Pledges	-	-	-	3,150.00	-	3,150.00
6001-00-1-000	Miscellaneous Revenue	1,000.00	1,350.00	(350.00)	10,002.28	16,200.00	(6,197.72)
	<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>44,808.19</b>	<b>43,582.20</b>	<b>(1,242.74)</b>	<b>380,559.09</b>	<b>712,986.41</b>	<b>(332,427.32)</b>
	<b>Expenses</b>						
7000-01-1-000	Coordinating Team--Meeting Exp, Meals, Worship	-	100.00	(100.00)	8.56	1,200.00	(1,191.44)
7000-06-1-000	Coordinating Team--Gifts	-	4.17	(4.17)	-	50.00	(50.00)
7000-09-1-000	Coordinating Team--Moderator's Expense	48.88	37.50	11.38	48.88	450.00	(401.12)
7000-10-1-000	Coordinating Team--Vice moderator's Expense	-	95.83	(95.83)	-	1,150.00	(1,150.00)
7000-20-1-000	Coordinating Team--Presbytery Workshop/Speaker	-	125.00	(125.00)	100.00	1,500.00	(1,400.00)
7000-31-1-000	Coordinating Team--Background Checks	20.00	41.67	(21.67)	322.55	500.00	(177.45)
		<b>68.88</b>	<b>404.17</b>	<b>(335.29)</b>	<b>479.99</b>	<b>4,850.00</b>	<b>(4,370.01)</b>
7100-01-1-000	Administration--Meeting Expense, Financial Review	-	623.33	(623.33)	7,564.15	7,480.00	84.15
7100-05-1-000	Administration--Ferncliff General Site Support	-	2,166.67	(2,166.67)	13,000.00	26,000.00	(13,000.00)
7500-21-1-000	West End Operation Support	-	1,125.00	(1,125.00)	6,750.00	13,500.00	(6,750.00)
7500-53-1-000	Laotian Ministry support	-	300.00	(300.00)	1,800.00	3,600.00	(1,800.00)
7500-98-1-000	Faith Presbyterian Operation Support	-	594.00	(594.00)	3,564.00	7,128.00	(3,564.00)
		<b>-</b>	<b>4,809.00</b>	<b>(4,809.00)</b>	<b>32,678.15</b>	<b>57,708.00</b>	<b>(25,029.85)</b>
7700-01-1-000	Committee on Ministry--travel,food,meeting support	-	166.67	(166.67)	174.21	2,000.00	(1,825.79)
8000-01-1-000	Committee on Preparation for Ministry--Meeting Expenses, etc.	-	41.67	(41.67)	-	500.00	(500.00)
8000-09-1-000	Committee on Preparation for Ministry--Eval, Retreat, Support, Bkg Checks	-	125.00	(125.00)	-	1,500.00	(1,500.00)
8400-08-1-000	Committee on Ministry--Wellspring Contract	-	1,050.00	(1,050.00)	12,600.00	12,600.00	-
		<b>-</b>	<b>1,383.34</b>	<b>(1,383.34)</b>	<b>12,774.21</b>	<b>16,600.00</b>	<b>(3,825.79)</b>
7300-29-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--Campus Ministry/Program Support	2,356.66	2,500.00	(143.34)	18,853.28	30,000.00	(11,146.72)
7300-71-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT--Planning Retreats & Materials	81.31	83.33	(2.02)	856.93	1,000.00	(143.07)
7300-73-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT Scholarships	-	41.67	(41.67)	200.00	500.00	(300.00)
7300-74-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT Denomination Trips	-	166.67	(166.67)	-	2,000.00	(2,000.00)
7300-75-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT-Youth @ Presbytery	-	41.67	(41.67)	516.31	500.00	16.31
7300-76-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT YouthQuake	-	750.00	(750.00)	313.95	9,000.00	(8,686.05)
7300-78-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT Montreat	351.88	291.67	60.21	(2,070.47)	3,500.00	(5,570.47)
7300-79-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT--JR High Summer Trip	152.01	208.33	(56.32)	2,950.22	2,500.00	450.22
7300-80-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT--Matthew 25 Account	-	41.67	(41.67)	(868.72)	500.00	(1,368.72)

THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS

Operating Income Statement

For the Eight Months Ending August 31, 2024

		Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	Year to Date Actual	2024 Budget	Over/(Under) Budget
7300-84-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--Young Adult Ministries	-	125.00	(125.00)	-	1,500.00	(1,500.00)
7300-86-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--YAT--Student Leadership Development	-	41.67	(41.67)	-	500.00	(500.00)
7300-99-1-000	Youth, Collegiate, and Young Adults--Campus Ministry-Special Event Support	-	916.67	(916.67)	-	11,000.00	(11,000.00)
		2,941.86	5,208.35	(2,266.49)	20,751.50	62,500.00	(41,748.50)
7500-01-1-000	Future of the Church--Admin., Listening	-	83.33	(83.33)	-	1,000.00	(1,000.00)
7500-25-1-000	Future of the Church--Presbytery Technology Needs	-	625.00	(625.00)	-	7,500.00	(7,500.00)
7500-51-1-000	Future of the Church--New Ministries' Development	10,000.00	2,208.33	7,791.67	30,000.00	26,500.00	3,500.00
		10,000.00	2,916.66	7,083.34	30,000.00	35,000.00	(5,000.00)
7300-01-1-000	Christian Education--Education Events	-	200.00	(200.00)	54.31	2,400.00	(2,345.69)
7300-21-1-000	Christian Education--Ferncliff. Prog/Supt. Summer Camp		1,916.67	(1,916.67)	11,500.00	23,000.00	(11,500.00)
7300-24-1-000	Mission of the Church--Ferncliff--Block Grant	-	416.67	(416.67)	1,500.00	5,000.00	(3,500.00)
7300-30-1-000	Christian Education--Presbyterian Pilgrimage	-	166.67	(166.67)	4,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
7300-91-1-000	Christian Education--Ministry Resourcing	-	250.00	(250.00)	68.34	3,000.00	(2,931.66)
7600-03-1-000	Mission of the Church--Scholarship for Mission Trip	-	83.33	(83.33)	-	1,000.00	(1,000.00)
7600-05-1-000	Mission of the Church--International Mission Initiative	-	166.67	(166.67)	1,000.00	2,000.00	(1,000.00)
7600-26-1-000	Mission of the Church--Arkansas Interfaith Conference/End 6/30/2024	-	69.44	(69.44)	833.33	833.33	-
7600-42-1-000	Mission of the Church--Stewpot		62.50	(62.50)	750.00	750.00	-
7600-44-1-000	Mission of the Church--Lyon College	-	83.33	(83.33)	500.00	1,000.00	(500.00)
7600-45-1-000	Mission of the Church--Presbyterian Village Support	-	41.67	(41.67)	250.00	500.00	(250.00)
7600-49-1-000	Mission of the Church--University of Ozarks	-	83.33	(83.33)	500.00	1,000.00	(500.00)
7600-51-1-000	Mission of the Church--Vera Lloyd Mission	-	208.33	(208.33)	1,250.00	2,500.00	(1,250.00)
7600-62-1-000	Mission of the Church--Mission Initiative Grants		1,270.14	(1,270.14)	15,241.67	15,241.67	-
7600-96-1-000	Mission of the Church--Solar Under the Sun	-	83.33	(83.33)	500.00	1,000.00	(500.00)
8300-01-1-000	Mission of the Church--PW Exp., travel, postage, etc.	-	33.33	(33.33)	293.93	400.00	(106.07)
8300-07-1-000	Mission of the Church--PW--Spring & Fall Retreats, Synod Gathering	-	291.67	(291.67)	200.00	3,500.00	(3,300.00)
9400-01-1-000	Mission of the Church--Disaster Preparedness	-	8.33	(8.33)	-	100.00	(100.00)
		-	5,435.41	(5,435.41)	38,441.58	65,225.00	(26,783.42)
7800-01-1-000	Nominations--travel, food	-	8.33	(8.33)	-	100.00	(100.00)
8100-01-1-000	Representation--Meeting Expenses	-	4.17	(4.17)	-	50.00	(50.00)

THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS

Operating Income Statement

For the Eight Months Ending August 31, 2024

		Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	Year to Date Actual	2024 Budget	Over/(Under) Budget
8400-01-1-000	POA/Supplies & Office Exp.	72.80	125.00	(52.20)	617.82	1,500.00	(882.18)
8400-02-1-000	Utilities/Telephone	940.77	833.33	107.44	6,492.88	10,000.00	(3,507.12)
8400-03-1-000	Copy Machine	41.49	50.00	(8.51)	358.08	600.00	(241.92)
8400-05-1-000	Technology	698.99	1,291.67	(592.68)	10,234.80	15,500.00	(5,265.20)
8400-09-1-000	Insurance		2,166.67	(2,166.67)	6,600.66	26,000.00	(19,399.34)
8400-10-1-000	Miscellaneous Expenses	-	25.00	(25.00)	-	300.00	(300.00)
8400-12-1-000	Maintenance(Grounds, Building Upkeep)	597.44	791.67	(194.23)	5,030.58	9,500.00	(4,469.42)
		2,351.49	5,283.34	(2,931.85)	29,334.82	63,400.00	(34,065.18)
8400-13-1-000	Stated Clerk Professional Exp	298.46	250.00	48.46	644.06	3,000.00	(2,355.94)
8400-22-1-000	Administrator/Professional Exp	-	64.58	(64.58)	495.77	775.00	(279.23)
8400-25-1-000	General Presbyter/Professional Exp	3,968.27	1,250.00	2,718.27	12,929.72	15,000.00	(2,070.28)
8400-29-1-000	Salaries	16,262.36	16,262.36	-	130,098.88	195,148.28	(65,049.40)
8400-30-1-000	Pension/Major Medical	1,623.10	1,623.10	-	12,984.80	19,477.20	(6,492.40)
8400-31-1-000	General Presbyter/Continuing Ed.	1,317.33	125.00	1,192.33	1,317.33	1,500.00	(182.67)
8400-33-1-000	Payroll Taxes	741.10	741.09	0.01	5,928.82	8,893.13	(2,964.31)
8400-34-1-000	Housing	2,725.00	2,725.00	-	21,800.00	32,700.00	(10,900.00)
8400-40-1-000	General Presbyter/FICA	550.00	550.00	-	4,390.58	6,600.00	(2,209.42)
8400-41-1-000	Connector Professional Expenses	-	416.67	(416.67)	553.55	5,000.00	(4,446.45)
8400-49-1-000	Youth Developer Professional Expenses	-	250.00	(250.00)	451.58	3,000.00	(2,548.42)
		27,485.62	24,257.80	3,227.82	191,595.09	291,093.61	(99,498.52)
8600-01-1-000	General Assembly	1,008.99	1,895.83	(886.84)	7,900.24	22,750.00	(14,849.76)
8700-01-1-000	GA Per Capita	6,329.98	6,329.98	-	50,639.84	75,959.80	(25,319.96)
8800-01-1-000	Synod Mission	1,008.99	1,479.17	(470.18)	7,900.24	17,750.00	(9,849.76)
		8,347.96	9,704.98	(1,357.02)	66,440.32	116,459.80	(50,019.48)
	Total Expenses	51,195.81	59,415.55	(8,219.74)	422,495.66	712,986.41	(290,490.75)
	Net Income	\$ (6,387.62)	\$ (15,833.35)	\$ 6,977.00	\$ (41,936.57)	\$ -	\$ (41,936.57)

## Presbyterian to English Cheat Sheet

From time to time abbreviations and acronyms will be peppered through the meeting. The following is a quick primer on Presby-speak. If you have questions about any of these terms or the way they fit into the larger picture of the life of the church, feel free to ask the Stated Clerk!

- **AC-** An **A**dministrative **C**ommission is a group of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Ruling Elders given specific responsibilities and authority to act on behalf of the presbytery between meetings. They are typically formed to ordain and/or install pastors, perform the tasks associated with dismissing, closing, or merging congregations, deal with difficulties in a particular church, or assist a church in times of transition.
- **Board of Pensions-** The General Assembly agency charged with overseeing the benefits plans for pastors and some other church employees.
- **Candidate-** A person in the latter portion of the ordination process for the ministry of Minister of the Word and Sacrament.
- **COM-** The **C**ommittee **o**n **M**inistry provides oversight and advocacy for congregations and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament. It receives Ministers of the Word and Sacrament from other presbyteries, approves calls for pastoral services, oversees congregations without pastors, dissolves pastoral relationships, dismisses Ministers of the Word and Sacrament to other presbyteries, determines of the criteria for validating ministries of non-parish clergy, and oversees Commissioned Ruling Elders serving congregations.
- **CPM-** The **C**ommittee **o**n **P**reparation for **M**inistry oversees the process of preparation for the ministry of Ministers of Word and Sacrament, training of Commissioned Ruling Elders, and the process of certification for Christian Educators.
- **Council-** In the context of Presbyterian polity and governance, a council is a governing body of the church. The councils of the PC(USA) are the session, the presbytery, the synod and the General Assembly.
- **CT-** The **C**oordinating **T**eam of the presbytery acts on the presbytery's behalf on routine matters between stated meetings, coordinates the ministries of the presbytery, and plans for presbytery meetings.
- **GA-** The **G**eneral **A**ssembly of the PC(USA) is the highest council of the church. It meets in even numbered years for a week. The 2020 meeting will be held June 16-23 in Baltimore, Maryland.
- **HR- H**onorably **R**etired is a designation for Ministers of the Word and Sacrament retired from active service to the church who remain in good standing with the PC(USA).
- **Inquirer-** A person in the initial phase of the process of preparation for ministry as a Minister of Word and Sacrament.
- **MIF-** A **M**inistry **I**nformation **F**orm is the standardized format for advertising certain church professional positions through the PC(USA) Church Leadership Connection.
- **MWS - M**inister of the **W**ord and **S**acrament is an ordained Presbyterian minister member of the clergy, formerly called a **T**eaching **E**lder.
- **Moderator-** The Moderator is the person elected to keep order and chair the meetings of the presbytery. The pastor or CRE of a local congregation serves as the moderator of the local session.
- **NCD- N**ew **C**hurch **D**evelopments are new ministries of the presbytery engaged in a formal process to work toward establishing a new congregation.
- **PDA- P**resbyterian **D**isaster **A**ssistance is an agency of the Presbyterian Church (USA) Mission Agency. PDA assists communities coping with natural and human-caused disasters.

- **PJC- Permanent Judicial Commission** implements the disciplinary procedures required by the *Book of Order*. There is a Judicial Process Manual which gives details on these duties.
- **PMA- The Presbyterian Mission Agency** is part of the larger PC(USA) and is located at national church headquarters in Louisville, KY.
- **PNC- Pastor Nominating Committee** is a search committee elected by a congregation to seek, interview, and recommend a new pastor.
- **RE/Ruling Elder- Ruling Elder** is a lay member of a congregation who has been elected, ordained and installed to serve on the session of a church. Ruling elders are eligible for election as commissioners to presbytery, synod and General Assembly. Once ordained as a ruling elder one maintains that office whether serving on a session or not.
- **Stated Clerk-** Stated Clerk is the officer elected by the presbytery to maintain the official records, provide extracts when asked, prepare the docket for presbytery meetings, and answer questions about the records, Presbyterian polity, policies, procedures and history. The Stated Clerk is authorized to certify ministers and congregations are in good standing and qualify under the tax exemption of the PC(USA).
- **Synod of the Sun-** The governing body council which includes all the presbyteries in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana. It coordinates the work of the PC(USA) in this region.
- **TPF- Texas Presbyterian Foundation** is a financial service organization for Presbyterian members, councils and institutions. It invests funds and provides bookkeeping services for Arkansas Presbytery.
- **Validated Ministries-** Positions served by chaplains, professors and other Ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are not currently serving a congregation. Sometimes they are referred to as non-parish clergy.



## Tips for Commissioners on Procedure and Parliamentary Practice

Parliamentary procedure enables the presbytery to become a deliberative assembly, to seek the will of God and to witness to our faith in Jesus Christ. It is never an end in itself. Parliamentary gamesmanship is never appropriate. The will of the majority shall prevail, but the rights of the minority shall always be protected. Parliamentary principles balance individual conscience with the will of the majority. It takes seriously the following rights of individual members:

- (1) the right to know (due notice)
- (2) the right to speak (rules of debate)
- (3) the right to vote (membership)
- (4) the right to hold office (fair representation)

The Moderator represents the unity of the body. The Moderator preserves decorum and protects the rights listed above.

Parliamentary procedure allows discussion of a subject only when a motion about that subject has been made. To speak during the meeting, first go to a microphone. When recognized by the Moderator, state your name, church, city and status – such as Minister of the Word and Sacrament, Ruling Elder, or Honorably Retired. You may speak to a pending motion or ask a question. The person making the motion will have the first opportunity to speak to the motion. Only motions coming from individuals need a second. A motion made on behalf of a ministry area or a committee already has a second because it is the majority vote of the committee.

Ordinarily, only commissioners may speak and vote on motions (Minister of Word and Sacrament members of the Presbytery; Ruling Elders elected by their Session; Ruling Elders elected as General Presbyter, Stated Clerk, Assistant Stated Clerk, Treasurer, Moderator, or Moderator-in-Waiting (Vice Moderator); Commissioned Ruling Elders in current service; members of the Coordinating Team; current commissioners to General Assembly; and Ruling Elders who are Certified Christian Educators).

At the Spring meeting of the Presbytery Youth Advisory Delegates and Young Adult Advisory Delegates have “privilege of the floor,” meaning that they have permission to speak to motions, and they take an advisory vote prior to the vote by commissioners. At any meeting someone in attendance may be given privilege of the floor, allowing that person to speak to the body, which is ordinarily given near the beginning of the meeting. Privilege of the floor does not mean that person may vote.

It is advisable to speak only once on a subject, but you may seek to speak a second time only after everyone who wishes to speak has spoken. All remarks during debate shall be addressed to the Moderator. Questions seeking information from a person who has the floor shall be addressed to the Moderator. Speeches to an individual or the whole presbytery are not permitted during debate. Reading reports or documents out loud requires the permission of the body. In debate, remarks shall be confined to the pending motion. Remarks shall not impugn another commissioner or that person’s motives. Commissioners’ names shall not be used.

To end debate, a commissioner must go to a microphone and, when recognized by the Moderator, state: “I move the previous question.” It is not appropriate to call the question without going to a microphone. If you offer a substitute motion or a new item of business, you should give the Moderator and Stated Clerk

advance notice and written copy. An electronic copy is preferred – using Microsoft Word on a memory stick or thumb drive. Not only will this help these officers facilitate the work of presbytery, they may also be able to help you with suggestions as to how and when it would be appropriate to make the motion. The Stated Clerk and the Moderator are available to advise commissioners on the wording of any motion so that it can clearly express the concerns of the commissioner. When in doubt, ask. The Moderator and the Stated Clerk are eager to help you understand and use the process.

Commissioners should always read all information provided in the packets and subsequent information provided at the registration table. Whenever possible questions concerning reports or motions should be directed to the Moderator of a ministry area or committee making the report or motion prior to the meeting. Contact info on moderators may be obtained through the presbytery office. Often concerns may be cleared up prior to a meeting rather than on the floor of presbytery.

## Take a minute and submit your Visioning Survey



**Visioning Survey** - The Strategic Planning Leadership Team and the presbytery staff needs one person in each church to [complete this survey](#) ASAP. **Only one person**, the pastor/CRE, Clerk of Session, or church administrator needs to fill it out.

If you have any questions, contact [Julie Price](#), Presbytery Connector. If any of the information you list changes after you complete the survey, just contact Julie and she can update your responses.

We really appreciate the time you take to do this. Please know that this information will help the Presbytery serve you better. Thank you!

# **Take a minute and let us know what you think about this presbytery meeting!**

Take a few minutes and visit this [link](#) to provide feedback on the presbytery meeting held at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Little Rock.

We appreciate your input.

Or use the camera on your phone and point it at the QR Code below to access the survey on your cellphone.



# Presbytery of Arkansas