



A Voice in the Pines



Presbyterian Kirk in the Pines Newsletter

Volume 62

February 2025

What's going on here? Have we been missing something?

For a number of us in the Kirk, the Saturday evening informal service has been something other members attend. Until January 4th, 2025, I had only been there to appear as "The Woman at the Well" because Lowell Gardner had asked me to portray her in his script. Since I am also on the Revisioning Committee I wanted to experience how this service was conducted. Boy, did I get educated! The service is so well run – with song verse appearing on the large video screen – worship leaders conducting the scripture reading – prayers offered for those needing special remembrance – and Rev. Bill Seitz giving a message accompanied by humor as well as thoughtful consideration of those to whom he is preaching.

This service is filled with music, prayer, and on this day, communion by intinction. I have to admit, I apologized for

not visiting this service earlier. When I mentioned the "upstairs" group compared to the "downstairs" group – I got a goodhearted "boo" by making a bad comparison. The real truth is evident...this is not a separate group...this is a service for anyone or everyone who feels the comfort of the informality. We forget that people of faith have been gathered in homes and small places going back to biblical days. We are all invited to the Kirk as a family of faith.

As I reflected on the service, I couldn't help but think of the words of a hymn I learned years ago as a child... "softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me....See on the portals, He's watching and waiting, watching for you and for me....Come home, come home, ye who are weary, come home, come home"* Maybe that is it! Jesus is still watching for many of those we miss to come home to our beloved Kirk in the Pines, and it doesn't matter which service we attend!

Since Covid, our church and other churches in the Village have seen a drop in attendance. We don't know the cause, but we know that many have chosen to stay away from large crowds and have not returned to their normal custom of coming to church. We miss seeing you, we miss a chance to visit with you, we miss the fellowship the Kirk extends in both our services.

So what is going on here? What is missing here? What is missing..... is you!

Contributed by Judy A. Corwin

**Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling was written by Will L. Thompson in 1880*



Saturday worship is held in Bailey Hall at 4:00 p.m. CST or 5:00 p.m. CDT. The service currently led by Pastor Bill Seitz. Ruth Manweiler accompanies at the piano.

Judy Corwin photo

When We Meet

Sunday worship service
Begins at 10 a.m.

Saturday informal worship
Begins at 4 p.m.
in Bailey Hall

For more meeting times see
www.kirkinthepines.org/calendar



Pastor Nominating Committee takes shape, gets to work

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) is duly constituted and has begun its work! We thank you for the confidence you have in us. Our commitment to you is that we will seek to follow God's will in searching for a new pastor. Please include the PNC in your prayers for God's presence and guidance in this critical effort.

The members of the PNC are Priscilla Hayek, Arnie Holtberg, Ron Lovett, Mary Ann Reynolds, Vicki Rosenquist, Randy Toney, and Nell White. Randy Toney will serve as Moderator and Mary Ann Reynolds as Clerk.

The Arkansas Presbytery supports churches searching for pastors by providing guidance and a uniform system for matching our needs with potential candidates. We have a liaison from the Presbytery who will work alongside our committee, explaining the process and counseling us at every step.

Our first task is to create a profile for the Pastor position – akin to a job posting. It will help potential candidates understand the kind of church we are, the one we aspire to be, and the community in which we live. We will be working diligently on completing the profile during February. Upon completion, we will submit it for approval. Then, with all due haste, the profile will be posted in the Presbytery's system.

In the coming months, we will provide updates for Saturday evening and Sunday morning worship services. If you have questions about the PNC, please contact me at (225) 573-6493.

Contributed by Randy Toney, PNC Moderator



LUNCH & LEARN

**Thursday, February 13
12:00 P.M.**

Area Agency on Aging presents:
Guest Speaker – Dody Lewis Roberts
**“Active Living: Your Resource Center for Maintaining
Independence & Quality of Life”**

Sponsored by Kirk Congregational Care

BOX LUNCH \$12
Reserve by Feb. 11th

**To reserve a lunch
contact Susan Morrow at:**
susu2morrow@gmail.com

You may also bring your own lunch!

Bailey Hall, Kirk in the Pines
275 Asturias Dr., Hot Springs Village



Robin and Mike Terry call the Village and Kirk 'home'

Mike and Robin Terry are new Kirk members. They moved to the Village from Blytheville, Arkansas in 2018 and began attending the Kirk shortly thereafter. Mike always loved singing in church and school choirs and joined the Kirk choir as a bass. They both felt comfortable and at home here. They had been members of the First Christian Church in Blytheville where Mike was a lifelong member.

Mike graduated from the University of Arkansas with a major in business administration and then joined the U.S. Army and worked as an officer in Germany in air defense artillery. He said both the city of Blytheville and its churches there are declining. He was quick to add, in humor typical of Mike, "I didn't cause it." An abstract title company in town was begun by his grandfather in the early 1900's. The leadership was passed down to Mike's father, then to Mike, and now to Mike's son. In addition to his son, Mike has a daughter who works as an administrator in water management and lives in Memphis. Mike's first wife died in 2000.

Robin lived in Newport, a small town close to Blytheville. She and Mike have been married for twenty-one years and have five grandchildren. Robin worked in several different venues, portrait painting, opening an art gallery and dance school, real estate, and nursing. She has a degree in psychology and a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling. She is a retired Licensed Professional Counselor. Robin has two children; her daughter is a pediatric anesthesiologist in Springdale, AR and her son is a music professor at Ouachita Baptist and Henderson State Universities in Arkansas. Her mother, Bobbie Harper, lives here in Cedar Lodge. Robin's first love is in portrait painting,



which she was commissioned to do for years. She still enjoys volunteer work in art and counseling.

Mike and Robin discovered the Village when they were competing in a tennis tournament here. They felt it was so peaceful here. They both loved tennis. So, they moved here. They are thrilled with their home, the Village, and the Kirk. We welcome Mike and Robin.

Contributed by Dotty Rector, Communications Committee Member



Melissa Sonnen returns to the Kirk

I was born in Buffalo, but because of the Blizzard of '77, I decided to head south. I worked in LA, MS, TX (where I met and married Robert) and NM before moving to the Village in 2012. We soon started looking for a church home and found the Kirk to be a perfect match. The choir was important for me because my education was in music, and I also enjoyed the Communications Committee. I left the Kirk from 2016 to 2023, returning in 2024, and immediately rejoined the choir.

My work background is in music education, real estate appraisal, and seismic exploration for oil and gas. But my passion is photography and photo competition, and I am currently busy as Publications Vice-President for an international photo society. My goals lean toward finding ways to attract new members to the Kirk and helping where people are food-challenged.

Contributed by Melissa Sonnen

Bob Morrow photos



Celebration
Honoring
Randy and Donna Toney



February 23, 11:00 a.m., Bailey Hall

Come help us celebrate the retirement of Randy, Music Director, and Donna Toney Pianist/Organist after 9 years of faithful service to the Kirk and to the Lord.



Renowned pianist Scott Carrell to perform at the Kirk

The HS/HSV Symphony Guild is delighted to present "Scott Carrell in Concert" as part of our Classic Concert Series. The concert will be held at the Kirk on Sunday, March 2, at 3 :00 pm.

Carrell is in demand as a soloist, collaborative artist, teacher, and adjudicator. He is described as being a natural at the keyboard. Mr. Carrell has enjoyed a multi-faceted career as a pianist, collaborator, and composer, having performed in the U.S.A., Europe, and Asia. His virtuosic flair, expressive playing, informative comments, and innovative programming have garnered enthusiastic responses from audiences and presenters alike. His varied interests result in highly varied programs.

Carrell has held residencies at many academic institutions. Concerto performances include appearances with the Austin Symphony Orchestra, the Pine Bluff Symphony Orchestra, the Little Rock Wind Symphony, the New York Classical Players, the Russian String Orchestra, among many others.

Mr. Carrell received degrees from Southwestern University, the University of Illinois, and the D.M.A. from the University of North Texas. Carrell also studied with internationally known artists. He currently teaches piano, piano related courses, and music theory at Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas.



Scott Carrell

General admission is \$10 per person. You may register and pay in advance on the HS/HSV Symphony Guild website at <https://www.symphonymusicguild.org/> or this link [Scott Carrell HS/HSV Symphony Guild](#). Your email confirmation is your ticket. Or you may pay at the door. Please join us for what promises to be a very enjoyable Sunday afternoon with a variety of piano masterpieces.

Adapted from HS/HSV Symphony Guild publicity.

Kirk in the Pines Financial Report

Year to Date: December 31, 2024

	Month		Year to Date	
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
General Fund				
Receipts	\$38,992	\$29,638	\$467,904	\$442,883
Disbursements	\$38,992	<u>\$45,405</u>	\$467,904	<u>\$410,833</u>
Difference		(\$15,767)		\$32,050

Endowment and Program Funds

Checking Balance \$87,787

Special Funds

Memorial Fund \$109,875

Choir Fund \$9,354

Luke 12:48 Fund \$325,322

Endowment Fund \$1,034,765

Maack-Ormsbee Fund \$57,936

Total Special Funds (Nov. 30) \$1,537,252

Total All Funds \$1,625,039

Mission Offering **\$205**

Program Funds transferred to Endowment Fund as of June 1, 2024

FOCUS ON FINANCE

Contributed by Sharon Gardner, Finance Moderator

- Did you know that in 2020, a mere five years ago there were 300 Kirk members and 216 households but now there are 203 members and 138 households.
- Last year (2024) there were pledges equaling \$325,752 with a budget of \$467,903. This year there are pledges of \$266,866 with a budget of \$429,312.
- When we call a new pastor, our budget will need to increase about \$80,000 per year.

Your Finance Committee and Session are working diligently to balance our budget

Please pray for the Kirk and attend the Finance Committee Potluck
(described below, page 6)



Finance Committee Potluck *The Session on Trial* February 26, 5:00 p.m., Bailey Hall

Sign up at worship or coffee hour!



**Pre-Dinner
Music
By: John Story**





Defense
Daryl Henry



Judge Hyde



Prosecution
Melissa Sonnen

Do you wonder how the money is spent?

If you have specific questions you would like addressed contact :

**Sharon Gardner, Finance Moderator
puffchop38@yahoo.com 612-803-4421**

**The Prosecutor and Defense attorneys will interrogate each Session Member. The Judge will make the final determination.
Come join the Finance Committee for a good, educational and fun evening.**

Remember to bring a dish to share!



Pastor's Corner

Amy-Jill Levine seems to be a bit of a contradiction in that she is a *Jewish* scholar of the New Testament. It does give her a perspective that is unique, so generally when she has something to say I tend to listen, if for no other reason than her findings are often a bit different when placed alongside mainstream Christian thought. Recently, Richard Rohr, a progressive Catholic priest, quoted her in his daily devotional. She refers to Jesus' telling his disciples that they are salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16)...

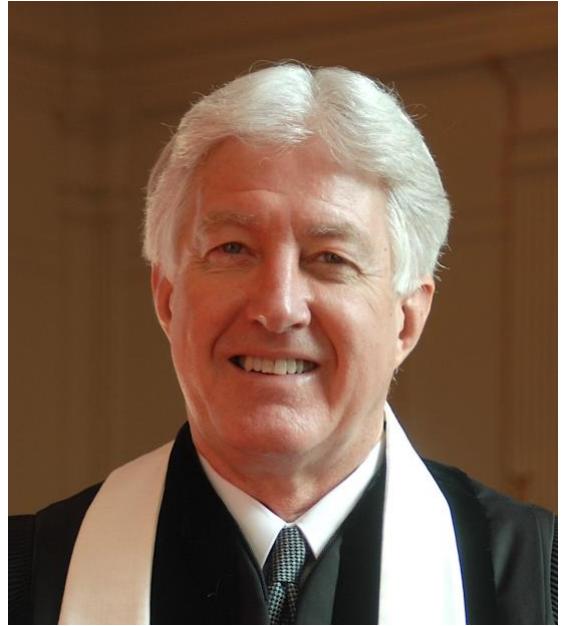
Once the disciples recognize that they are light, they also recognize that their role is to shine so that others can find their way. Jesus knows that, just as salt can lose its intrinsic identity, light can be hoarded and fail to fulfill its proper function. He states first the obvious: "A city built on a hill cannot be hid" (Matthew 5:14). His followers are to become like that city: a refuge, a home, a place where there is salt and light, love and compassion...

That light cannot be restricted to the house church (or any church building or community), as the city metaphor indicates. To be the light of the world is to shine ... in any place where there is loneliness or despair, sickness or pain. Even in times and places, still today, when the church has had literally to go underground, it cannot be hid since it is known for its good deeds.

Jesus' call to be salt and light impacts the choices we make: If we think of a church as a house, as a home where family and friends gather, we get a different image than if we think of a place to be visited maybe for an hour on Sunday. And if we think of our homes as the place where our light shines... we are more likely to find that light within ourselves as we go through the day.

Any faith that does not manifest itself in works is not faith; it is complacency and self-satisfaction. It is not salt, because it contributes nothing to the earth. It is not light, since its shining is only for self-reflection. Disciples are to glorify God by being their true selves: salt and light; existing for others rather than for only themselves.

It is this image of church as a home that captured my attention, "a place to be visited (for more than) an hour on Sunday. It is a base of



Pastor Randy Hyde

operations where we get our marching orders as disciples. This allows us to be more than merely fellow congregational members, even more than just friends. We are family, where one's concerns and needs become *my* concerns and needs, where, when others hurt I hurt, when others rejoice I rejoice. It is *home*.

Take that thought with you, if you will, as you consider your place in the family we call The Kirk in the Pines. My hope is that this might change or possibly re-adjust your perspective of what church means to you.

Appreciatively,
Randy

February Sermons

February 2 – *For the Living of These Days*
1 Peter 5:6-11

February 9 – *Deep Water*
Luke 5:1-11

February 16 – *Blessings and Woes*
Luke 6:17-26

February 23 – *Good Measure, Pressed Down,
Shaken Together, Running Over*
Luke 6:27-38

Our January Session meeting started on a high note. We had the pleasure of meeting with Robin and Michael Terry and Melissa Sonnen, our newest Kirk members. Then, after much sharing and laughing we convened our meeting and got down to work.

Of most importance was the passage of the Kirk budget for 2025 thanks to the hard work of preparing and refining it by our Treasurer, Richard McPheters and the Finance Committee. We also approved calling the Annual Congregational Meeting for Sunday, January 26. At that time the Kirk Nominating Committee will present the name of Wendy Gage for election as Elder for the Member Outreach position. Also on the agenda is a presentation of the "State of the Kirk" to the congregation as we enter the new year. Topics to be covered include a report from the Finance Committee, the work of the Re-Visioning Team and the progress of the Pastor Nominating Committee.

On a sad note, we accepted the resignation of our two wonderful musicians, Randy and Donna Toney effective February 23. Praise and appreciation go to them for their excellent and faithful service for 10 years of making music at the Kirk. A search committee has been formed to find and hire new staff for their positions.

Highlights of the January Stated Session Meeting:

Deaths since December 13, 2024:

Bernita Jean Eiler, December 21, 2024. Services are pending.

The Clerk's Corner

**Ruth
Hamilton**



Barbara Harris Chambliss, December 22, 2024. A private service has taken place in Pine Bluff.

Memorial Service: Nancy Patton, February 1, 2025, 11:00, Sanctuary

Church Statistics as of January 17, 2025:
Members: 203 Family Units: 138

Nominating Committee:

The committee nominated Wendy Gage to be an Elder, Class of 2027, serving in the area of Member Outreach. She has accepted the nomination, a vote for her election will occur at the Congregational Meeting.

Called Congregational Annual Meeting:

Sunday, January 26, 2025, for the election to fill the vacant Member Outreach position, and to hear the State of the Kirk Report.

True Love



Watching them pass, one turned to another
Saying "How is it they still hold each to the other
Being as they are, strong of will, hard-headed.
You'd think they would have long parted."

The other questioned: "romance? passion?
Is that what binds these two together?"
"Hardly" said the first. These come and go,
surge and fade away like bodies do."

"Then sameness, or difference, both bind.
Perhaps ritual, habitual togetherness,
accepting the harder way when others
follow culture's call to separate paths.

"No, said the first, it's true love's course.
To cling, to care, to cherish and commit,
choosing union of body, mind, and spirit
now, and yes, for the rest of their days.

Anonymous

Kirk leaders attend seminar on “Thriving Rural Congregations”

Ruth Hamilton, Carol Clark and Susan Pendergrass attended a 3-day seminar in Clarksville at the University of the Ozarks. This was organized by Reverend Philip Blackburn and sponsored, in part, by Eli Lilly's Religion and Cultural Institutions Initiative grant. Philip Blackburn is the director of the Thriving in Rural Ministry Program at the University of the Ozarks and also co-pastors the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith with his wife,



Reverend Tasha Blackburn.

Phil's perspective of the rural church is the foundation on which he designed this particular seminar focusing on lay leaders, shrinking congregations, rural churches, managing shifts in leadership, and the increasing percentage of aging congregations, to name only a few.

The Kirk hopes to continue to send delegates to these informative and interactive gatherings to share and observe how other fellow churches navigate their similar challenges.

To learn more go to <https://ozarks.edu/news/> or this link [Thriving Rural Ministries](#).

*Contributed by Susan Pendergrass,
Congregational Care Committee Moderator*

The Munger-Wilson Memorial Chapel (left) is a well-known landmark on the campus of the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Arkansas.

Peggy Sowers turns 100 !



Attending were Peggy (honoree, center), Patty Barnes (not pictured), (from left) Bev Mueller, next door neighbor, Marcia Bauer, Carol Clark, and Merilyn and Mike Seitz.

Photos by Patty Barnes



When Peggy Sowers gives her birthdate of 12/22/24, people do a “double take.” They are amazed to learn that it was 100 years ago!

A good time was had by all at the fun gathering. The birthday cards from the Kirk members, spaghetti dinner made by Carol Clark and the candled cake plus 100 \$1.00 bills from the Kirk were much appreciated and enjoyed.

Contributed by Merilyn Seitz



February Birthdays

1	Pat Bellamy	12	Beth Sampsel	20	Ellen Wilborn
3	Pat Maack-Ormsbee	13	Merily Seitz	22	Ruth Mattingly
4	Teresa Arant	15	Elijah Bailey		Barbara Mulley
	Jay Wilborn		David Rosenquist		Carol Sue Williams
8	Burle Mattingly	16	Fred Raskin	24	Judy Carroll
9	Becky Baldwin	17	Richard McPheters		Sylvia Gruben
10	Judy Corwin	18	Beverly Bullard		Joanne Hasper
	Marty Davis	19	Mike Seitz	28	Jane Moore
11	Rosalyn Halbert	20	Tony Booth		Jim Cordell
12	Jamie Federick				

February Anniversaries

9	Christine & Michael Hoagland	51yrs	24	Pat & Richard McPheters	35yrs
9	John & Lynn Burks	40yrs			

Don't miss out! Shepherd Groups are about food, fun, and fellowship!

2025 has started off with some change in our weather with the beautiful snowfall in January. The Kirk's Shepherd Program has also seen a change.

Jean Fisher (501-922-9344 Jeanf39@att.net) has graciously volunteered to take the responsibility of Head Shepherd. Thank you, Jean!

The groups are unchanged. If anyone would like to join or visit a different group, please let Jean know as well as the leader of the group you would like to join.

Contributed by Vicki Rosenquist, Past Head Shepherd

Group 1 - Breakfast : Last Friday - Gary or Dotty Rector, 501-922-5869 or gdirector@sbcglobal.net

Group 2 - Lunch : 3rd Friday - E.J. Pangle, 501-915-2104 or epangle628@gmail.com

Group 3 - Dinner : 3rd Tuesday - Marcia Bauer & Mary Ann Reynolds, 870-842-0004
mareynolds@suddenlink.net

Group 4 - Dinner : 3rd Thursday - Pat & Richard McPheters, 501-922-3527, 501-626-2500,
501-626-6795 or mcpheters@suddenlink.net

Group 5 - Dinner : 2nd Tuesday - Daryl & Barb Henry, 501-204-2788 or darylndbarb@gmail.com

Groups 6 - Traditional : (no leader at this time)

Kirk Calendar



(Changes may occur – check with Kirk office)

**Lunch and Learn,
February 13, 12:00 p.m.**

**Session Finance Presentation/
Potluck, Bailey Hall
February 26, 5:00 p.m.**

**Toney Retirement Celebration
February 23, 11:00 a.m.,
Bailey Hall following worship.**

Ageless Grace/Tai Chi- Feb.
4, 11, 18, 25 - 3:30 Bailey Hall

Pilgrimage Renewal-Feb.8,
10:00, Smallman Parlor

Helping Hands-Feb. 11 -9:00

Choir Rehearsal- Wed. 3:00,
Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26

Committee Meetings

Session- Feb. 14, 10:00

Administration- Feb. 11, 10:00

Communications- Feb. 5, 26, 1:30

Cong. Care- Feb. 27, 10:00

Fellowship- Feb. 11, 10:00

Missions - Feb. 13, 3:00

Kirk Staff

Randy Hyde- Pastor

Randy Toney- Music Director

Donna Toney- Organist/Pianist

Ruth Manweiler- Pianist (informal worship)

Carol Clark- Pastoral Care Coordinator

Chris Taylor-Wilmoth- Secretary

Beverly Schaumburg- Business Administrator

Arthur “Chip” Johnson- Sexton

Session

Clerk of the Session: Ruth Hamilton

Dave Hamilton- Administration

Robert Sonnen- Building

Susan Morrow- Christian Education

Bob Morrow- Communications (Trustee)

Susan Pendergrass- Congregational Care

Pat Kuntz- Fellowship (Trustee)

Sharon Gardner- Finance

Priscilla Hayek- Grounds/Memorial Garden

Wendy Gage- Member Outreach

Judith Rosenthal- Missions

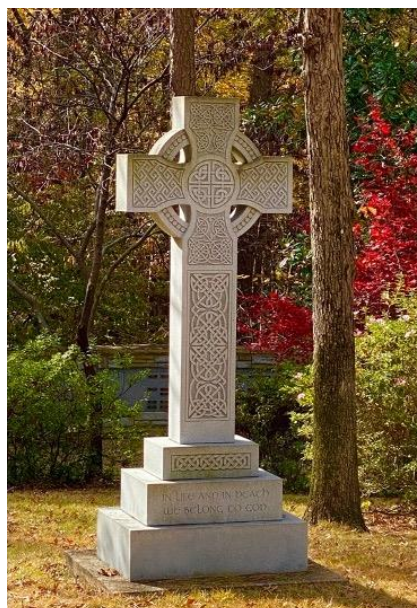
Jane Moore- Worship

PW Moderator- Becky Wakefield

A Voice in the Pines is a monthly publication of Presbyterian Kirk in the Pines. It is produced and edited by the Kirk's Communication Committee, Bob Morrow, Moderator.

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